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DUBLIN GROUP REPORT FOR SOUTH WEST ASIA

JUNE 2004

PREPARED BY THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE, LONDON

The following report, submitted by the UK as regional chair for South West Asia, covers the work of the Mini Dublin Groups in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka during the period June 2003 to June 2004, as reported by our Embassies and High Commissions in those countries.

COUNTRY REPORT ON AFGHANISTAN

General Situation

Based on anecdotal evidence, Afghanistan is likely to remain as the world's largest producer of illicit opium in 2004, with production occurring in nearly every province of the country. The extent of cultivation in 2004 will become clearer in the autumn when 2004 UNODC opium poppy survey results are published.

The commitment of the Afghan Government, with the support of the international community, to the complete and sustainable elimination of illicit drug production, processing and trafficking through implementation of the Afghan National Drug Control Strategy (ANDCS) was reconfirmed at the Berlin Conference in March 2004. Work on all the streams of the ANDCS continued throughout 2003. However, implementation continues to be hampered by security problems, political instability, lack of institutional capacity and corruption. Poppy production continues to play a significant role in rural economies and greater efforts need to be put into provision of alternative livelihoods.

Institutional Framework

The Counter Narcotics Directorate (CND) of the Presidential Office of National Security retains prime responsibility for co-ordinating drug control policy across the Afghan Government. In May 2004, a new Counter Narcotics Steering Group was established to support CND's role in bringing together key international partners and relevant Afghan Ministries.

Most line Ministries have a role to play in implementing the ANDCS. Demand reduction is the lead of the Ministry of Health, in co-ordination with a wide range of other departments. The Ministries for Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Food and Light Industry and Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment are all closely involved in alternative livelihood activities. The Ministry of Justice leads on all justice and prisons issues.

A new Drug Law was passed at the end of 2003, but detailed implementation regulations are required. Counter narcotics law enforcement activity is carried out under the direction of the Ministry of the Interior, through the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) and the Afghan Special Narcotics Force.

Poppy eradication is directed from the Central Eradication Planning Cell within the Ministry of the Interior, and from mid 2004 will be carried out by the Central Poppy Eradication Force (prior to that, all eradication has been under the control of provincial Governors). The Border Police will have an important role to play in enforcing counter narcotics law. Although Afghan law enforcement agencies are assigned roles and responsibilities under the criminal procedural law, greater clarity is needed on how this works in practice so that appropriate training and assistance can be offered.

On interdiction, progress is being made. The Afghan Special Narcotics Force is an Afghan initiative to create a special drugs interdiction force under the control of the Ministry of Interior. Since it became operational at the end of 2003, it has seized over 32 tonnes of opiates (30.5 tonnes opium, 1.5 tonnes heroin) and destroyed 32 laboratories, storage sites and significant quantities of precursor chemicals. The Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) was also created as a specialist unit in 2003. A UK mentored anti-smuggling team has seized 125 kg of heroin, 30 kg of opium and a significant amount of precursor chemicals. UNODC and France are also training an interdiction force within the CNPA. Nevertheless, much more needs to be done. In particular, the CNPA needs to develop a permanent regional interdiction capability in the coming months. This will require significant assistance from the international community.

Production

According to UNODC figures, in 2003 Afghanistan was the world's largest producer of illicit opiates. An estimated 80,000 hectares of opium poppy was cultivated in 2003, compared to 74,000ha in 2002. This represented approximately 3,600 tons of opium. Cultivation spread to 28 provinces out of 32, but was less intensive in some of the traditional areas (49% decline in Helmand and 23% decline in Kandahar). Nangarhar was the largest cultivating province, followed by Helmand and Badakhshan. Cultivation is expected to increase significantly in 2004.

The Afghan government agreed to conduct an uncompensated eradication campaign in 2004 targeting poppy-growing areas where farmers have access to alternative livelihoods. The impact of the 2004 eradication campaign will likely not be known until the publication of the UNODC survey in the autumn.

But early reports suggest that Governors' implementation of the Ministry of the Interior's instructions have been patchy. UNODC report that some Governors continue to place a levy on poppy production. The Central Poppy Eradication Force of the Ministry of the Interior will be the main vehicle for effective, targeted eradication in 2005.

Demand

NGO reports suggest that drug abuse continues to grow in Afghanistan. Together with opium and heroin, hashish and pharmaceutical drugs are also frequently abused. Many factors have contributed to this, including the mental health problems caused by war and conflict, poverty and unemployment and the return of refugees from neighbouring countries with high rates of addiction. Some drug use is traditional in certain communities, particularly in the north.

Afghan capacity to deal with the economic, social and health related problems of individuals, families and communities caused by drug abuse and addiction is limited. Demand reduction services and facilities tend to be provided by NGOs rather than the Government.

Trafficking

Iran and Pakistan are the main trafficking routes out of Afghanistan, mostly on the way to markets in Europe, the Middle East and South Asia. There is also evidence of trafficking through Afghanistan's northern borders on the way to Central Asian and Russian markets. All precursor chemicals used for the production of heroin are likely smuggled into Afghanistan, rather than being produced indigenously. The creation and proper training of an Afghan Border Police force is a vital component in countering such trafficking. An agreement with all of Afghanistan's neighbours to co-operate on counter narcotics issues was signed at the Berlin Conference under the framework of the Kabul Declaration on Good Neighbourly Relations.

External Assistance

The Afghan Government receives a considerable amount of external assistance from donors, but more is required. The UK, as lead nation on counter narcotics, is co-ordinating the delivery of international assistance. Germany is the lead nation on police reform, and Italy on assistance to the justice sector.

In particular the Afghan Government needs further assistance to:

- develop a comprehensive approach to reform of the criminal justice system for counter narcotics cases;
- enhance the counter narcotics capabilities of the CNPA and Border Police;
- deliver broad-based development assistance to poppy growing communities;
- tackle apparently increasing drug abuse rates.

Recommendations

The Kabul Mini Dublin Group meeting recommends the following:

- (a) The international community should continue to maintain pressure on the Afghan government to implement the Afghan National Drug Control Strategy and at the same time strongly support the government's declarations on illicit drugs.
- (b) The Central Dublin Group should endorse the sectoral action plans agreed at the February 2004 International Conference in Kabul and included in the Counter Narcotics paper presented at the Berlin Conference.
- (c) The international community should support the new Counter Narcotics Steering Group as the primary co-ordination mechanism in Kabul to implement the Afghan National Drug Control Strategy and the Action Plans adopted as part of the Berlin workplan.
- (d) Donors should be urged to provide sufficient financial resources and technical assistance to enable the Afghan government to implement the action plans. In particular, countries should consider how they can support the development of a more effective Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan, e.g. through the provision of trainers and mentors to support a greater interdiction capability.
- (e) The international community should encourage and support Afghanistan's neighbours to work with Afghanistan on counter narcotics issues in support of the Berlin Declaration on Counter Narcotics, including specific projects identified in follow-up meetings between Afghan Ministers and their counterparts in neighbouring states.

COUNTRY REPORT ON PAKISTAN

A disappointing year with expiry of the master plan, an increase in poppy cultivation and CN dropping down the agenda both within the Government of Pakistan (GoP) and also in the international community. There is an enormous drug addiction problem within the country. The long promised anti money laundering legislation is yet to be enacted

The GoP needs to commit more resources, both human and financial, to curb the increasing cultivation of poppy and to tackle the narco-trafficking within its borders.

The international community needs to engage the GoP on CN issues, especially at senior levels and have this subject raised by visiting ministers

Regionally, Pakistan needs to work with her neighbours, especially Afghanistan and Iran, sharing information and expertise and to fulfil their GNRD commitments towards Afghanistan.

Institutional Framework

The policy framework remains the Drug Abuse Control Master Plan (1998-2003) prepared in collaboration with UNODC even though it expired in July 2003. The Prime Minister has in principle agreed to extend the expired plan, but this has not had formal approval from the Cabinet.

The Narcotics Control Division of the Interior Ministry leads on implementing the policy. The police and the Anti Narcotic Force (ANF) are the principal law enforcement agencies involved, while Customs and Excise and the Frontier Corps (Baluchistan and NWFP) also play a substantial role.

There are many laws in place to combat the production, consumption and trafficking of drugs in Pakistan, the keys ones being;

- The Anti-Narcotics Force Act, 1997
- The Control of Narcotic Substances Act, 1997
- Dangerous Drug Act, 1930

- Drugs Act, 1976
- Opium Act, 1878, and consequent Opium Rules Act of 1956
- The Hadood Ordinance, 1979
- The Customs Act, 1969

Anti money laundering legislation has been redrafted and is with the Ministry of Finance, but it remains unclear when it will be submitted to the National Assembly and in what form; a bill or an ordinance. When the law is enacted its effectiveness will turn on investment of training and other resources by the international community as well as the GoP.

The international community's CN focus on Pakistan has shifted in the last couple of years with focus directed at Afghanistan due to the larger production problem there. Domestically CN has been consistently overlooked in problem areas, with CT operations taking priority.

Relationships with others in the region do look encouraging. GoP and the Government of Iran (GoI) do have a good operational relationship, with officers taking part in Senior Law Enforcement Officer (SLEO) meetings and Inter Governmental Technical Committee (IGTC) meetings. It is planned for Afghan representatives to be present at the next IGTC meeting in June this year. These discussion groups were established through the UNODC. There have also been meetings through the Good Neighbourly Relations Declaration (GNRD) on narcotics, with the next meeting planned in June 04 in Kabul.

It is vitally important that this is seen as a regional problem and that it is addressed accordingly.

Production Related Issues

Measures remain in place to eradicate opium production. In 2001 Pakistan was poppy free, but recently production has been on the increase. According to ANF figures, 2003 saw 6,700 hectares, with the eradication programmes wiping out 4,500 hectares. Worryingly, cultivation is taking place in non-traditional areas such as Baluchistan and there are anecdotal reports of cultivation in Sindh.

A combination of factors may have led to the resurgence in poppy cultivation including the high price of opium, favourable climatic conditions and the availability of expertise in poppy production (including the expertise of Afghans who are reportedly involved in poppy production in Baluchistan and in some other areas).

Moreover, many of the areas where poppy has been cultivated are difficult to access and are amongst the poorest in Pakistan. The provincial governments have been coming under pressure from some local leaders to allow farmers to grow poppy. There are reports that politicians/clerics are making public statements that poppy growing is a legitimate source of income. With counter terrorism operations taking place, provincial and federal government policy has been not to stir up the local farmers further by destroying their only income stream, thus hampering eradication programmes. This is particularly true for FATA. It is also thought that cultivation is being used as a political tool, as generally, where there is cultivation there are development programmes.

Demand Related Issues

Drug abuse, in particular heroin and hashish is widespread in Pakistan. It is estimated that there are around 4.5 million drug users in Pakistan (ANF source) with 500,000 chronic heroin abusers, which is on a par with the US (UNODC source), with a massive 77% of users reportedly using the drug on a daily basis (ANF source). Trends suggest a shift from inhaling and smoking heroin to intravenous injection of drugs, bearing the risk of an HIV/AIDS epidemic and the spread of other blood borne diseases. It is estimated that there are 60,000 intravenous users, with the majority located in Karachi and Lahore. The most commonly used drug in Pakistan is cannabis and it can be consumed in a number of forms, e.g. charas, marijuana.

There is no coordination within central government on how to cope with drug addicts. Drug addiction centres are few in number and only a small number of addicts receive any treatment. Most treatment centres are run through NGO's supported by donor funding. UNODC is supporting a network of 17 drug treatment centres within the NGO and Government sector to provide quality treatment and rehabilitation for drug addicts. In addition, UNODC in cooperation with UNAIDS have established two drop-in centres for injecting drug users in Karachi to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and other blood borne diseases.

A further problem for the GoP is addiction to pharmaceutical drugs. Pharmacies in Pakistan do not have to be registered and are unregulated. Any prescribed drug can be sold over the counter. The Group agrees that it is important the Government of Pakistan enforces proper regulations of pharmacies.

Demand reduction is at least partly a development issue, which Development Ministries of foreign Governments and NGOs need to address.

Trafficking Issues

The ANF figures record seizures by all law enforcement agencies in Pakistan (to the nearest kilogram). The official figures for the last four years are as follows:

	2003	2002	2001	2000
OPIUM	5,612	2,678	5,175	8,927
HEROIN	32,855	12,691	8,755	9,495
HASHISH	85,246	85,486	75,164	129,833

No acetic anhydride was seized in Pakistan. (ANF source)

External Assistance Priorities and Islamabad Group Recommendations

The Group recommends that lobbying on drug related matters should be taken up by Ambassadors and also included in ministerial briefs;

The Group recommends a joint demarche outlining the Group's concerns on current CN measures, with particular focus on the non delivery of promises made by the Prime Minister in February 04;

The Group recommends that it establish a list of current and planned assistance programmes in order to avoid duplication and to encourage more discussion amongst donors;

The Group recommends that there is more inter-agency co-operation and sharing of information between departments and organisations, i.e. ANF, Frontier Corps, Ministry of Interior and Federal Investigation Authority (FIA). Group countries should co-ordinate to encourage this;

Group members should press the GoP for speedy approval of anti-money laundering and conspiracy legislation. Once implemented donors should support the GoP by giving assistance through legal and police assistance programmes. This should include training on the different Dublin Group countries legal systems;

The Group recommends that the GoP should continue to co-operate and co-ordinate with its neighbours (Iran and Afghanistan). This includes fulfilling GNRD pledges;

The Group should continue to support the GoP in its programme to curb the misuse of drugs through the Group countries Development Ministry's and also encourage continued support from other NGOs, e.g. ADB programmes;

COUNTRY REPORT ON IRAN

General Situation

Iran remains committed to combating the flow of narcotics from Afghanistan and increasingly recognises the dangers posed by domestic consumption. The Iranian authorities have shown a deep commitment to combating drug trafficking and the physical struggle to prevent drugs transiting the border with Afghanistan has continued unabated. Iran's primary concern is to stop drugs from reaching its domestic market. Their efforts are therefore focused on the eastern border with Afghanistan, but some seizures do occur elsewhere in Iran, even in western provinces close to exit routes. Iran estimates that it interdicts between 10-15% of the opiates transiting its territory, but in the process sustains heavy casualties. Government figures suggest that that over 3,500 Iranians involved in CN work have been killed since 1979. There are some suggestions of individual officials being complicit in the drug trade, but the Iranian government is rightly proud of its efforts.

Comparative Table of Seizures 2002/2003 (KG)

Kind of Narcotics	2002	2003
Heroin	3366	3294
Morphine	6110	12943
Opium	55716	96542
Hashish	52297	75415
Other	1095	1584
Total	118584	189778

SOURCE: UNODC IRAN

Iran has expanded the range of its anti-drug activities to include measures aimed at demand reduction and social problems allied to the drug trade. These are still viewed as secondary to main CN effort. The work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has been helpful in this area, raising the awareness of key Iranian decision-makers on demand related as well as linked issues such as money laundering and corruption. However, there is still a long way to go before Iran can truly claim to have a balanced approach to counter narcotics work that encompasses the full range of anti-drug activities. The international community will need to ensure that Iranian government continues to diversify its efforts, balancing its robust stance on law enforcement with demand reduction and treatment for addicts.

Iran recognises the need for international assistance and is in principle willing to work with other countries, but in practice co-operation is severely limited by the regime's wariness of foreign interference. They call for the international community to donate more resources, but in practice it seems that they regard the degree of outside influence that goes with genuine international co-operation as too high a price to pay. As a result, bilateral co-operation is often hindered by administrative, and sometimes political, difficulties. The lengthy delay in issuing a permanent visa to the British Drug Liaison Officer (DLO) is just one example of where Iranian bureaucracy has held back progress.

Drug Liaison Officers

The arrival of the British and Italian DLOs offers the chance to step up international co-operation. If the Iranians match their stated enthusiasm for international co-operation with a genuine willingness to engage in day-to-day law enforcement co-ordination and information sharing then the arrival of foreign DLOs could mark a real watershed. The German government has a long-term aspiration to appoint a DLO in Tehran.

Afghanistan

It is widely acknowledged that Iran has a key role to play in stemming the flow of opiates from Afghanistan. Iran maintains a regular dialogue with the both the Afghan Counter Narcotics Directorate (CND) and is engaged with the UNODC on Afghan related projects.

In April Iran was one of the signatories to the “Good Neighbourly Relations Declaration” (GNRD) on counter narcotics co-operation in Afghanistan. Iran and Afghanistan have also concluded a bilateral border security agreement. It is hoped that this will lay the foundation for improved co-operation with regional partners and a series of cross boarder projects are already in the offing. In partnership with the EU and the UNODC, Iran has contributed \$960,000 to set up 25 new border posts and construction work is already underway.

Production Issues

According to UNODC there is no significant illicit cultivation of narcotic plants, nor manufacture of illicit drugs in Iran. [Confirmation to be sought from UNODC].

Demand Issues and Domestic Usage

Iran has a huge domestic drugs problem and acknowledges the need for outside help in dealing with it. Official Iranian estimates suggest Iran may have as many as 300,000 heroin addicts and 2 million opium users.

Other estimates suggest that some 2% of the population of 70 million citizens are addicted. Unofficial figures from the Iranian judiciary suggest that 60% of inmates in Iran's severely overcrowded prisons have been detained for drug-related offences and drug related deaths continue to rise from 2,989 in 2002 to 4,400 in 2003. This continues the trend which is believed to be linked to an increase in the number of people injecting heroin, synthetic heroin and opium residue. An additionally worrying result of the increase in injectors is the spread of HIV –there are no reliable statistics available but there has been a clear increase in the number of HIV carriers within society year on year, 70% of them confirmed intravenous drug users. However, a positive development is the more open official recognition of the HIV/AIDS problem.

The Iranian authorities are trying to update their domestic legislation on drug use in reference to both past experience and the research studies conducted by UNODC. The constructive elements in the new draft are the incorporation of controlled delivery, the extradition of criminals and money laundering into the new law. The draft law has been criticised, with opponents saying it has serious deficiencies in the area of demand reduction and harm reduction.

Money Laundering

Money laundering in Iran has been increasing since the end of the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. According to the central bank of Iran the money laundered in Iran rose from about 6% of GDP in the mid-1970's to close to 15% in the 1980's. In 2003 it was estimated that money laundering encompassed 20% of Iran's economy. Of the \$11.3 billion a year that is spent on smuggling commodities in Iran, around \$6.1 billion is laundered by international criminal networks.

The UNODC is currently providing assistance to the launch of anti-money laundering legislation in Iran. A draft bill was passed by the Sixth Majlis in its last few days. However, the Council of Guardians rejected the bill on constitutional grounds, saying that certain responsibilities mandated to the proposed High Council on money laundering would overlap with those of the judiciary. Further questions were raised over the validity of decisions made by the High Council and whether a non-judicial authority is competent to deal with particular money laundering cases. The council was also concerned that the requirement to identify customers conflicted with the basic rights of the people and was detrimental to the economic requirements of the State.

Mini Dublin Group Activity

The last full meeting of the Iran Mini-Dublin Group was in May 2003. An interim report was produced in December 2003.

Most Pressing Needs for External Assistance

The UNODC's CIRUS project aimed at strengthening the drug interdiction capabilities of Iran's law enforcement agencies is the only one of their current projects lacking funding. We hope that donors will be able to make up the gap, as it is an important project.

Law Enforcement and Border Control

One key priority is improving border controls between Iran and Afghanistan. The SAID project aimed at Strengthening Afghan-Iran Drug border control and enhancing cross border co-operation between the two countries is ongoing. The project, led on by UNODC Kabul, has not yet been presented to donors for funding. The lack of control along much of the border should not be underestimated.

The group should aim to support such activities wherever possible. The German police are currently training the Afghan police force while Austria has provided funding for the construction of twenty-five new border posts on the Iran-Afghanistan border. In June 2003, British and Iranian officials together held a training course for Afghan personnel.

The group also supports the development of an additional 2-3 "canalised" or legitimate crossing points along the Iran Afghanistan and Iran-Pakistan borders that will permit people to cross under closer supervision. We should aim to support the construction of these canalised crossings by providing training and non-lethal equipment that will enhance the Iranian authorities capability to detect drug smugglers. This will include projects aimed at improving IT systems and intelligence gathering tools and donation of equipment i.e. vehicle inspection pits and machine tools.

Afghanistan

We should aim where possible to encourage bilateral exchange between Iran and Afghanistan and tri-lateral exchange between Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan. To date this has not been easy, but we must increase our efforts to make this work. Our aim should be a constructive and regular dialogue between Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan on drug related matters.

Money Laundering

We should encourage the exchange of expertise between legislators in Iran and our own countries so that Iran can draft effective anti-money laundering laws. The relevant authorities: MFA, Judiciary, Finance etc. should be encouraged to send representatives to Dublin Group member nations to observe the anti-money laundering measures they have put in place.

Recommendations

Iran needs still more encouragement to integrate fully into the international anti-narcotics community. The acceptance of British and Italian DLOs is a step in the right direction. More international co-operation, including an increased number of DLOs from Dublin Group countries, is the key to making progress.

The Mini-Dublin group needs to encourage the Iranian authorities to share their anti-narcotics strategy and be more open in their exchanges so we can identify the areas in which we can help, bilaterally and multilaterally. We need to find out more about where the Iranians themselves most want support. Iranian co-operation will be more effective if they perceive it to be on their own terms. The priorities are information sharing, border control work and training.

The Iran Mini-Dublin Group should take a more active role and aim to develop a dialogue with the Iranians on drug matters. The group could act as forum in which anti-narcotics issues could be raised and discussed collectively with the Iranian authorities. Experience shows that this more effective. The group should also focus on lobbying for more effective engagement. As a first step we will issue an invitation to DCHQ to meet with us collectively in the autumn.

We will improve communication between Mini-Dublin Group members by setting up an email net. We should endeavour to keep each other informed of our activities.

A copy of this Mini-Dublin Group report will be sent to the Embassy of Turkey and the Embassy of the Russian Federation. They will be invited to attend future Mini-Dublin Group as observers.

COUNTRY REPORT ON INDIA

To be submitted separately

COUNTRY REPORT ON BANGLADESH

General situation in the country

There are no accurate figures available for the number of drug users. But Phensidyl (an addictive cough syrup with a very high Codeine content) remains the main drug of abuse. Heroin and cannabis are also available. Drugs issues are not high on the agenda of the country, but occasional large seizures and significant police raids receive media coverage.

Institutional framework

Adequate legislation is in place under the Narcotics Control Act. Policy is driven by the Narcotics Control Board. Counter drugs work is co-ordinated by the Department of Narcotics Control (but this is under resourced and has limited impact). The police and customs play only a minor role in disrupting the drugs trade. Corruption is widespread. However small amounts of drugs are seized every month.

Production related issues

Small amounts of cannabis (for local use) and opium are grown in the country.

Demand related issues

Drug use is widely believed to be increasing. The poor law and order situation and unemployment are all contributory factors. It is thought that there is an increasing use of illicit drugs among young people from the middle and the upper middle class. However a lack of data means it is not possible to make an accurate assessment. There is little information available on the use of synthetic amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS). There is some NGO work in relation to drug use by low-income groups (rickshaw or van pullers/day labourers, unemployed youths, floating prostitutes etc). But this is not a main development theme.

Trafficking issues

Trafficking: There is some evidence that Bangladesh is increasingly being used as a transit country for heroin to Europe. It is possible that commercial quantities of heroin from Burma are being sent by sea, via the Bay of Bengal, and distributed into fishing vessels for transit through Bangladesh. In the past a number of people have been detained attempting to carry heroin through Dhaka's international airport, transiting from Pakistan to Europe.

Money Laundering: Attempts have been made to investigate a number of alleged money laundering cases with little success. It is possible that Bangladesh is an attractive country for money laundering given the weak judicial system and widespread corruption. Bangladesh adopted in February 2002 the "Money Laundering Prevention Bill". At the time the economic press in Bangladesh saw this as insufficient to tackle the main problems linked to money laundering in the country. Efforts in regard to money laundering are apparently having some success in encouraging overseas workers to send remittances back to Bangladesh through official channels, rather than through the illegal "hundi" network (but this is still widely used).

Precursors: Efforts are made to tightly control precursors, but these may not be entirely effective. Hydrochloric and Sulphuric Acid are produced commercially; other precursors are imported legally for commercial use. The Department of Narcotics Control does not think these are used for in country drug production. Bangladesh is a beneficiary of the EC-UNDCP project "Precursor Control in the SAARC Region". In February 2002, a training workshop for members of law enforcement agencies was jointly organised in Dhaka by the UNDCP and the Bangladeshi Department of Narcotics Control under that project.

Needs for external assistance as put forward by authorities.

The Department of Narcotics Control has not produced details of assistance needed, however it is likely they would welcome training and or equipment. They have said they would welcome equipment / training for drug detection at airports, and would also welcome supplies of field drug testing kits. They also see a need for assistance in developing the current limited provision of drug detoxification centres.

Recommendations

The Government of Bangladesh should be encouraged to continue efforts to tackle drug issues, and to take forward relevant reforms, especially in areas where donors are offering to help, such as reform of the police.

Donor community priorities

Only the US are providing significant assistance to Bangladesh in this area. They have provided some equipment for a drug analysis laboratory, which is functioning adequately, and have signed a Letter of Agreement with the government to provide about \$500,000 worth of anti-narcotics equipment and training.

COUNTRY REPORT ON NEPAL

Institutional Framework

New legislation to strengthen the authorities' ability to combat the drugs trade was being drafted, but was delayed due to political instability. The government did decide to establish a Department of Drug Control. Previously this responsibility was with the Home Ministry and is now recognised as an increased priority.

Production

Cannabis is native to Nepal and although the government is making efforts to eradicate its growth, a lack of resources and the poor security situation mean that cultivation is rising.

Opium cultivation in Nepal is growing, but from a low base, and mainly destined for consumption within the region

Demand

There are an estimated 50,000 (unspecified) drug users. Intravenous drug use is increasing, with a consequent rise in the incidence of HIV/AIDS. As part of a regional UNDCP HIV/AIDS initiative a study will be conducted on intravenous drug use in Nepal. The Home Ministry has established a drugs awareness project aimed at school children. There is growing concern about use of synthetic drugs.

Trafficking

Seizures of and arrests related to cannabis have decreased over recent years, most probably because the attention of the Nepalese security forces has been diverted to higher priorities, including, most notably, combating the Maoist insurgency

Heroin trafficking through or directed from Nepal is a growing problem, with evidence to suggest there are new routes by which South West Asian heroin is reaching markets in developed countries. There are reported to be five heroin-trafficking syndicates operating in Nepal which employ not only Nepalese citizens as couriers, but also growing numbers of foreign citizens, including, for example, citizens of the United Kingdom and Australia. Evidence from intelligence suggests that some South West Asian heroin reach the United Kingdom through these syndicates; evidence from seizures confirms it is reaching the United States via this route. Other trafficking routes have been traced to Cambodia and Macao, but the ultimate destination is unknown

Hashish is still trafficked on conventional, known routes, including via India and China. There is evidence of significant hashish trafficking from Nepal to Japan, including the recent arrest of three members of Japanese organised crime syndicates in Nepal and the seizure in Japan of the largest ever quantity of hashish in a move related to the earlier arrest of a trafficker in Nepal.

External Assistance

Mr Poudyal of the Home Ministry reported to the MDG last year that the Government of Nepal was encountering significant difficulties in tackling the problem of production and consumption of illegal drugs in Nepal because of lack of resources. Cultivation of cannabis in Nepal was easy, and in some areas a traditional crop. Demand for cannabis and opium and its derivatives in neighbouring and foreign markets were growing and would stimulate supply. There was a real risk that Nepal could become a significant source of supply, but the government lacked the resources to tackle the problem seriously.

UNODC had given some assistance (e.g. to assist in the drafting of pre-cursor control legislation), but Mr Poudya appealed to members of the Dublin Group to consider ways in which they might provide further assistance, both bilaterally and through multilateral agencies.

COUNTRY REPORT ON SRI LANKA

Production

Opium poppy is not cultivated in Sri Lanka and there is no evidence of any processing of opiates. Cannabis is grown in significant quantities and is thought to be exported to Europe.

Demand

Sri Lanka has a comparatively modest but increasing drug problem. UNODC estimate that 0.3% of the adult population use opiates and concern is rising about the use of heroin, particularly outside Colombo. There are believed to be some 50,000 regular users of heroin. The government has a nation-wide demand reduction and drug abuse education campaign.

Trafficking

The majority of heroin enters from India, either by air from Chennai or by sea from South India. A UK study into likely transshipment, in 2002, found that the annual quantity of heroin smuggled into Sri Lanka exceeds the amount needed to meet domestic use by at least 3,000kgs. They found little evidence to indicate where the excess drugs are destined. The study recommended some technical assistance to the Sri Lankan law enforcement agencies. A container profiling training course took place last year with Sri Lankan Customs officials. India and Sri Lanka hold operational-level talks in order to coordinate efforts against trafficking, but indications are that actual co-operation between the two customs organisations is limited.

The Police Narcotics Bureau seized 102.22kg of heroin in 2001, up from 94.15kg in 2000. In 2001 77 tonnes of cannabis was seized, up from 37.5 tonnes in 2000.

Money Laundering

There is no evidence of large scale money laundering in Sri Lanka. There is currently no legislation against money laundering although this is in the pipeline.

Precursors

Sri Lanka is not thought to be a producer of precursors.

Work of Mini Dublin Group

There have been no meetings of the MDG since February 2001. The MDG in Colombo operates a watching brief only.
