

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

**TEXT OF THE SPEECH OF FM ON THE RELEASE OF NATIONAL POLICY ON
NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES AND HIGHLIGHTS OF
THE POLICY**

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Following is the text of the Speech of the Union Finance Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee at a function to release “National Policy on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances” here today.

“While presenting the Union Budget for 2011-12, I had stated that trafficking in narcotic drugs is also a contributor to the generation of black money in India and had accordingly announced the Government’s intent to bring out a comprehensive national policy to strengthen controls over prevention of trafficking and improving the management of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Let me, therefore, begin with congratulating the officers of the Department of Revenue, for translating this intent into reality. I also congratulate and acknowledge the other Ministries and Departments under the Government of India as well as the various State Governments, for their valuable contribution and inputs for the policy. A ‘National Policy’, as the name implies, has to reflect the viewpoint and mandate of all Ministries and Departments in the Government of India as also the State Governments involved in the field of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; and as such the policy would not have come into being, were it not for your participation in the framing of the same.

Today, the entire mankind is confronted with the problem of drugs in some form or the other. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the World Drug Report of 2011 has estimated that between 149 and 272 million people or 3.3 to 6.1% of the World’s population aged 15-64 used illicit substances at least once in the previous year. What is more alarming is the fact that this number has increased since the late 1990s. It is obvious that the international community needs to raise the level of response to the challenge posed by drugs, and India, which is home to one-sixth of the global population, has an added responsibility in this regard. The National Policy on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances is one such effort by the Government of India, in this direction.

The problem of drugs is compounded by the fact that the types of drugs, which are abused, do not remain the same. World over, a perceptible shift has been noticed from abuse of the so-called traditional drugs like heroin or cocaine, to synthetic and prescription drugs. While all drugs are bad, the effect of synthetic drugs on the human body is far worse than in other forms of drug abuse. For certain synthetic drugs, a single dose is sufficient to make the person an 'addict' of the drug and such a person does not have any control over his senses. He/ she can then commit any other crime just to have access to more of such drugs. It is this, that makes trafficking of drugs, such a unique form of criminal activity. It not only creates a victim in the person subjected to drug abuse, it also creates in him, a perpetrator of other crimes, which leads to further criminal activity. I cannot, therefore, overemphasize the degree of vigilance that needs to be exercised by policy makers and law enforcement officer the world over on matters relating to drugs. I am happy that in the form of the National Policy on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substance, there is evidence of such vigilance, by India.

Apart from the obvious damage to the health of individuals and society, an obvious offshoot of drug trafficking activity is the quantum of black money that it generates. While it is difficult to pinpoint the exact numbers, I am told that the UNODC estimates the quantum of global market in illicit drugs to be of the order of several hundred billion dollars. The deleterious effect of this quantum of black economy in the world can well be imagined. That this money can then finance several other forms of criminal activity including terror financing and other forms of transnational organized crime does not require much elaboration.

The National Policy released today, presents evidence of India's strong commitment and intent to rise to the challenges posed by the drug menace. It also reflects the country's willingness to shoulder the responsibility which is cast upon it because of its strategic position, sandwiched between two major regions of the world producing illicit narcotics, and on account of being a traditional cultivator of licit opium and a supplier of this raw material for medical and scientific needs of pharmaceutical industry, which makes use of such narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances to make critical medicines.

I sincerely hope that this policy document will provide a useful benchmark not only for regulatory authorities, but also other stakeholders from the civil society engaged in any activities pertaining to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, without the involvement of whom, the fight against drugs is not likely to yield the desired results.

I congratulate once again all the officers of the Government of India involved in formulating this National Policy.”

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES

- (i) The policy recommends production of Concentrate of Poppy Straw (CPS) in India by a company or body corporate. This would enable India to retain its status of a traditional supplier of Opiate Raw Material (ORM) to the rest of world, while remaining competitive.
- (ii) The consumption of poppy straw by addicts will be gradually reduced and finally stopped in a time frame decided by the States.
- (iii) On the illicit cultivation of poppy and cannabis, the policy emphasizes use of satellite imageries for detection of illicit crop and its subsequent eradication and development of alternate means of livelihood in respect of cultivators in pockets of traditional illicit cultivation.
- (iv) The private sector may be allowed production of alkaloids from opium. At present alkaloids from opium are produced only in Government Opium and Alkaloid Factories (GOAFs).
- (v) Non-intrusive methods of regulating the manufacture, trade and use of such psychotropic substances will be introduced,
- (vi) Emphasis will be laid on adequate access to morphine and other opioids necessary for palliative care, a strategy to address street peddlers of drugs, periodic surveys of drug abuse to gauge the extent, pattern and nature of drug abuse in the country, recognition of de-addiction centers,
- (vii) There will be a time bound plan of action, detailing the steps to be taken by different Ministries/ Departments/ agencies, in response to the recommendations of the International Narcotics Control Board.

The policy attempts to curb the menace of drug abuse and contains provisions for treatment, rehabilitation and social re-integration of victims of drug abuse. Implementation of the provisions of the policy will lead to reduction of crime, improvement in public health and uplifting of the social milieu.

The NDPS Policy will serve as a guide to various Ministries and organizations and re-assert India's commitment to combat the drug menace in a holistic manner.

Background: There are four broad aspects of narcotic drugs and

psychotropic substances –

- (i) Administration of the NDPS Act and Rules framed there under,
- (ii) Legal production, manufacturing, trade and use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific uses,
- (iii) Drug (Illicit) supply reduction, and
- (iv) Drug (Illicit) demand reduction.

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