



Narcotics, Organized Crime and Security in Eurasia

Weekly Digest: 3-10 April 2006

The following are summaries of articles related to narcotics and security in the Central Asian 5 and Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, and Europe. Where possible, web addresses for the entire article are provided.

UNODC signs protocol on fighting drugs and crime

The UNODC has signed a protocol with Russia and Central Asian and other states on fighting drug trafficking, terrorism and cross-border crime, according to the UN Information Service. The agreement was with the six-nation Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), of Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The protocol was signed on Wednesday by UNODC Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa and CSTO Secretary General Nikolay Bordyuzha. The two organizations will develop joint projects and share information.

APA News Service, 6.4.2006

Bomb kills 2 Afghan police on opium eradication patrol

A bomb blast on Monday killed two Afghan policemen and wounded two others during an opium eradication patrol in the volatile southern Helmand province, a police official said. The incident happened at 8.00 a.m. in Helmand's Nawa district, said provincial police chief Gen. Abdul Rahman Saber. It was not immediately clear whether the blast was caused by a roadside bomb or a land mine.

Dow Jones International News, 10.4.2006

Afghan farmers sue over poppy crops UK lawsuit could affect co-operation with troops

A group of 400 Afghan farmers is suing the UK government for GBP12.5m over what they claim is unpaid compensation for eradicating their opium producing poppy crops. The farmers, from Helmand province, have instructed the British legal firm of Leigh Day and Co to file the action on their behalf, citing breach of contract. They say that at a meeting with Foreign Office officials in 2002, they were promised GBP200 for each jerib - about a fifth of a hectare - cleared. Cheques were issued when the farmers provided proof that more than 10,000 hectares of poppies had been destroyed, but after the first few were cashed, the farmers say they were told funding had run out.

The Herald, 10.4.2006

Tajik general says fighting drugs in Afghanistan ineffective

Efforts by the international antiterrorist coalition in Afghanistan to fight drugs "have given no results yet", Lt-Gen Abdurahmon Azimov, deputy head of the department for defence, law and order of the Tajik president's executive office, said today. Azimov was speaking at a meeting of international experts on cooperation in the sphere of border crossing between Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries taking place in Dushanbe.

BBC Monitoring Central Asia (Source: Russian news agency ITAR-TASS) 10.4.2006

Seizures and Arrests

Police confiscate 48.8 kg of heroin in Ankara

Police confiscated 48.8 kilograms of heroin in Ankara on Tuesday. Launching a joint operation, Van and Ankara police forces stopped a minibus and found the drug. Driver of the minibus was arrested in the operation.

Anadolu Agency, 4.4.2006

Large batch of heroin seized in Russia's Nizhniy Novgorod

Over 10 kg of heroin has been seized in Nizhniy Novgorod, the press service of the Russian FSB [Federal Security Service] directorate for Nizhniy Novgorod Region told RIA-Novosti on Tuesday [4 April]. "FSB employees have completed another operation to liquidate a trans-shipment point for the delivery and sale of the powerful drug. Operatives detained two local Gypsies who were trying to smuggle drugs from Nizhniy Novgorod to Moscow," the source said.

BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union (Source: RIA Novosti) 4.4..2006

Afghan anti-drugs operation moves into Nimroz Province

After a massive operation in Helmand two days back, the counter-narcotics forces of the Interior Ministry Wednesday launched a similar raid on a suspect area in neighbouring Nimroz Province. Accompanied by the local police, the special force recovered a huge quantity of hashish and a small amount of brown heroin besides arresting two people in Zaranj, capital of Nimroz, says a press release issued here.

BBC Monitoring South Asia (Source: Pajhwok news agency website) 5.4.2006

Police seize nearly 120 kilos of heroin in south Turkey

Police confiscated 119.6 kilograms of heroin in Mediterranean port city of Mersin, said Suleyman Ekizer, deputy Police Chief of the city on Wednesday [5 April]. Ekizer added that six people were detained and the market value of the drug is estimated at 5m euros. In another operation in eastern city of Van, police also seized 87.2 kilograms of heroin in a truck and arrested two people.

BBC Monitoring Newsfile (Source: Anatolia news agency) 5.4.2006

Tajik police caught red-handed taking bribes

The regional prosecutor's office has reported a bribe-taking incident involving an assistant head of the Isfara town [northern Tajikistan] police department, Police Maj Yormahmad Shaitboyev. He was caught red-handed while taking bribes. A resident of Isfara, M. Dodojonov, complained to law-enforcement agencies that Shaitboyev demanded bribes from him. Shaitboyev was detained in an operation near the Classic restaurant in Isfara on 6 March while taking a 100-dollar bribe. The banknote was found in his ID card during his search. Moreover, a powder with a specific smell was seized in a safe in his office during a search. Forensic examination established, the powder was heroin weighing 37.1 grams.

BBC Monitoring Central Asia (Source: Tajik newspaper Leninabadskaya Pravda) 5.4.2006

Four drug-traffickers shot dead in Helmand

At least four drug traffickers were killed by Police on Wednesday during its anti-poppy in Nawzad district in the southern Helmand province. The local police was on its mission of eradicating poppy crops in the district when were ambushed by some armed smugglers, said a press release issued here by the interior ministry. On retaliation of the law enforcers four outlaws were killed and three Kalashnikovs seized.

Pajhwok Afghan News, 5.4.2006

Police seize 6kg of heroin in Kyrgyz south

Police officers have seized 6 kg of heroin in the town of Osh [in southern Osh Region] during a special anti-drug operation. Half of the drugs was confiscated from a resident of Kara Su District and the rest from a resident of Lyaylyak District. The detainee from Kara Su has a criminal record. He is dumb. However, he is refusing to testify.

BBC Monitoring Central Asia (Source: Kyrgyz public educational TV) 6.4.2006

In - Brief [2 kg of heroin intercepted]

Customs inspectors at Kalotina (on the border with Serbia) have intercepted 2 kg of heroin. The drug was found under the clothes of a woman during a routine check of a bus travelling on a regular route from Bulgaria to Germany.

Bulgarian News Agency, 6.4.2006

Turkey: Istanbul police seize over 330 kg of heroin since beginning of 2006

Istanbul police has launched 148 operations since the beginning of 2006 and seized 339.3 kilograms of heroin, 178.1 kilograms of hashish and 43.4 kilograms of cocaine. Istanbul Security Department stated on Friday that 33 foreigners and 294 Turks were arrested in these operations. Briefing journalists about the details of operations, the Department noted that police staged 33 operations in January 2006, and seized 100.8 kg of heroin, 139.9 kg of hashish and two grams of cocaine, and arrested seven foreigners as well as 89 Turks in the operations. During 59 operations launched in February, police confiscated 57.9 kg of heroin, 43.8 kg of cocaine and 9.3 kg of hashish; 16 foreigners and 91 Turks were arrested. Police staged 56 operations in March and seized 180.5 kg of heroin, 28.8 kg of hashish and 386 grams of cocaine, and arrested 10 foreigners and 114 Turks. (Passage omitted) The Department stated that police staged 448 operations in 2005 and confiscated 3.9 tonnes of heroin, 517.5 kg of hashish and 34.7 kg of cocaine. A total of 98 foreigners and 1020 Turks were arrested during those operations.

BBC Monitoring European (Source: Anatolia) 7.4.2006

Turkish Cypriot police seize 2 kg of heroin, arrest three

In an operation in Girne [Kyrenia], narcotics police seized 2 kgs of heroin. Three persons have been arrested. [passage omitted]

BBC Monitoring European (Source: Turkish Cypriot BRT-1 television) 7.4.2006.

Bulgarian customs seize 6 kg of heroin at Turkish border

Late yesterday night the Kapitan Andreevo border checkpoint officers seized 6.099 kg of heroin. The narcotic was discovered during the inspection of a BMW private vehicle registered in Serbia-Montenegro and driven by A.G., a Serbian citizen. A 19-year old female, also a Serbian citizen, was travelling with him. The heroin had been distributed in 12 packages, 503-513 gram each, concealed in a special secret compartment. According to the judicial system price list, the value of the seized narcotic is about 550,000 leva [about 250,000 euros].

BBC Monitoring European (Source: Bulgarian news agency BGNES website) 7.4.2006

Uzbek man detained with 50 kg of opium smuggled from Tajikistan

Security services in Uzbekistan's southern Surxondaryo Region have seized 50 kg of opium, Uzbek TV reported on 7 April. "While working on a report which said that a big consignment of drugs had been smuggled from Tajikistan, officers of the National Security Service have found the owner of a secret storehouse of drug dealers. It was Doniyor Orinov, a resident of Denov District, Surxondaryo Region, born in 1961, with a previous conviction," the report said and added that Orinov smuggled the opium from Tajikistan through a mountain path.

BBC Monitoring Central Asia, 7.4.2006

Afghan police seize 448 kg of opium in northern city

Some 448 kg of opium were seized from a mini-bus in Mazar-e Sharif last night following a tip-off, says a senior Balkh security official, Nasiroddin Hamdard, who spoke to AIP today.

BBC Monitoring South Asia (Source: Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press news agency) 7.4.2006

Central Uzbekistan: 51 kg of heroin seized

Uzbek customs in the central region of Tashkent has discovered 51 kg of heroin when a mini-bus was examined, Uzbek TV reported on 8 April. Four men were arrested in connection with the drug seizure, which was made as the Damas vehicle was being checked in Bekobod District in a joint operation with National Security Service agents, the report said. The heroin, in 54 plastic bags, was found hidden in two metal barrels in the mini-bus's cargo compartment, the television said.

BBC Monitoring Central Asia, 8.4.2006

Afghan official says "serious" anti-drugs campaign continues in 11 provinces

[Correspondent] According to Gen Mohammad Daud Daud, deputy interior minister for counter-narcotics, the government of Afghanistan has had remarkable achievements in decreasing the poppy cultivation over the past year, reducing poppy cultivation by 21 per cent.

[Gen Daud] We witnessed a remarkable reduction in the level of poppy cultivation all over Afghanistan last year. We worked very hard in the provinces where poppy cultivation was higher last year. The poppy eradication campaign is extensively under way in 11 provinces. Some 45,000 jeribs [9,000 hectares] of poppy cultivated land have so far been cleared. The campaign will start in 11 other provinces soon.

BBC Monitoring South Asia (Source: Afghan state TV) 8.4.2006

Suspected Afghan drug smuggler arrested in Tajikistan

Tajik security forces have arrested an Afghan citizen on suspicion of drug trafficking after he was caught with two kilogrammes (4.5 pounds) of heroin and a firearm, Tajik police said Sunday. "The drugs and a gun with seven cartridges were found while carrying out a personal search" of the 32-year-old man in eastern Tajikistan, a police spokesman said. "He had been under surveillance."

Agence France Presse, 9.4.2006

Police seize huge opium cache in Iran

Police confiscated more than 3,000 pounds (1,500 kilograms) of opium in southeastern Iran and arrested two suspected traffickers, the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported Sunday. Police Col. Mahmoud Ghalekhani said police caught two men carrying the shipment in two cars after an ambush in Bam on Saturday, some 600 miles (1,000 kilometers) southeast of Tehran.

Associated Press Newswires, 9.4.2006

Turkey accuses armed groups of drug trafficking

Kurdish rebels from the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and smaller armed leftist groups in Turkey are deeply involved in drug trafficking according to a Turkish police report, the Anatolia news agency said Sunday. Since 1984, the report contends, the PKK, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia, and two extremist communist groups have been involved in 333 separate drug trafficking incidents. The two extreme-left groups are the Turkish Communist Party, and the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party Front. A total of 3.7 tons of heroin, four

tons of morphine-base, 710 kilos of cocaine and various quantities of other drugs have been seized by police, who also shut down two illegal drug-making laboratories, Anatolia said.

Agence France Presse, 9.4.2006

Police seize 46 kg heroin in eastern Turkey

Some 46 kg of heroin have been seized in an automobile in Van's Muradiye District. It has been ascertained that acting on information, the teams of the Gendarmerie Command in the area searched an automobile driven by Sahin H at the gendarmerie checkpoint near the Ovapinar village. The teams searched the automobile, registered as 34 JPT 92, and seized 46 kg of heroin in 46 packages.

BBC Monitoring European (Source: Anatolia) 10.4.2006