Narcotics Control in Pakistan

The Government of Pakistan attaches the highest importance to control and to eliminate the narcotics menace from the country, in particular, the processing and trafficking of heroin. The Government has taken effective measures to combat all aspects of this multi-faceted drug problem. This effort has been internationally acknowledged. Here is a brief resume of the related measure.

Pakistan’s outstanding performance in countering narcotics enabled it to obtain Full Certification for the years 1999 and 2000. According to the U.S. law (Foreign Assistance Act 1961 (as amended), countries identified as major drug producing or major drug transit countries are subject to certification by the U.S. President on the basis of their overall counter narcotics performance and cooperation with the United States Government.

The Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Mr. Rand Beers, in his letter to the Pakistan’s Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control, stated that Pakistan has achieved a reduction of well over 40% in the size of its poppy crop for the year 1998-99.

During his visit to Pakistan in April 1999, Mr. Pino Arlacchi, Executive Director UNDCP, expressed full satisfaction and appreciated the measures taken by the Government of Pakistan regarding eradication of poppy crops. Because of poppy eradication measures adopted by Pakistan, he agreed to the extension of Dir and SDU projects for a further period of 4 to 5 years.

Reduction in Poppy cultivation

In Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATAs)/Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATAs), poppy has been cultivated since long. Due to small and uneconomic land holdings, high monetary gains for the crop, non-availability of other equally paying crops and lack of alternate sources of livelihood the locals tend to grow opium poppy.

Having ratified various UN Conventions on Narcotics, the Government of Pakistan is trying its best to eradicate opium poppy by the end of year 2000. With this in view, the Area Development Projects are under implementation in Dir District, Mohmand and Bajaur Agencies with the assistance of UN Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and US Government, in order to provide alternate sources of income to the farmers in the poppy growing areas and to improve the quality of rural life by introducing better varieties of grain, vegetables, breed of livestock and grass, besides introducing new techniques in farming.

Farm to market roads, provision of electricity, construction of irrigation channels and measures to control land erosion have also been undertaken. These development projects in poppy-growing areas have resulted in significant drop of acreage under poppy cultivation which nose-dived from 80,500 acres in 1978-79 to 2,565 acres during 1995-96 and further to 1,554

In order to prevent poppy cultivation, NWFP Government has held numerous meetings with local Jirgas and notables to dissuade the people from growing poppy in the “Enforced Areas”. The Government has also announced relief package to meet local demands which include (1) provision of wheat as compensation proportionate to the number of acres of poppy crop destroyed, (2) provision of seeds for alternate crops, (3) Rupees five million for development work in the area, and (4) provision of jobs to 200 people as levies.

**Special Courts**

The Control of Narcotics Substances ACT 1997 envisages establishment of Special Courts having sole jurisdiction to try narcotic offences. At present narcotics cases are being dealt with by the Sessions Judge of each district. Ten Special Courts of Sessions/Addl. Sessions Judges and 34 Courts of Judicial Magistrates are being setup in the country.

**Seizure of Assets and Drugs**

Assets of narcotic smugglers/drug barons worth Rs. 351 million were frozen by the Anti Narcotics Forces upto 30th September, 1999.

During the months of October, November 1999, 4,890 kgs. Opium, 930 kgs. Heroin; 16,261 kgs. Cannabis and 366 kgs. Bhang were seized and 7,080 cases registered.

**International Cooperation**

The narcotics problem has global dimensions and no country can tackle it without international cooperation. For this purpose, Pakistan has interaction with USA, South Asian States (SAARC countries), Iran and Afghanistan.

**Drug Abuses Control Master Plan**

The Drug Abuse Control Master Plan for Pakistan (1998—2003) prepared in collaboration with the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) has been duly approved by the Government. Its highlights are:

a) Reducing the demands for illicit drugs by launching campaigns for creating general awareness

b) Undertaking, treatment and rehabilitation programmes of drugs addicts;

c) Eradication of opium poppy crop by the year 2000;

d) Eliminating heroin laboratories;

e) Curb the smuggling, trafficking and distribution of narcotics into, within and out of
the country through stringent interdiction measures;

f) Stepping-up efforts to forfeit during generated assets;

g) Checking money laundering; and

h) Enhancing international cooperation to counter drug related activities.

The strategy laid down for Drug Abuse Control Master plan is being complied with letter and spirit. The details of Government of Pakistan fund of the said plan are as under:-

(i) **Mass Awareness programme:** Rs. 2.2 million have been utilized during 1999-98 and an amount of Rs. 4 Million has been allocated during the current financial year i.e. July, 1999—June, 2000. The Project envisages the following activities:-

   a) Radio Programme.

   b) Advertisement in the national newspapers/magazines,

   c) Printing of stickers/posters/literature brochures, pamphlets etc.

   d) Painting competition among amateurs/professionals,

   e) Sports tournaments.

(ii) **Community Participation in Drug Demand Reduction:** An amount of Rs. 4.5 million was allocated during 1998-99 and Rs. 5 million have been allocated during the current financial year in the project. The following activities are planned:-

   a) Community Action Programme (CAP),

   b) Production of Awareness Material,

   c) Puppet Shows,

   d) NGOs support programme.