

UNODC IN SOUTH ASIA: UNODC helps countries and its people to reduce illegal drugs and crime throughout the world and to address justice and human security. It helps Member States with technical assistance, legal advice and research within the framework of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three Protocols, the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the three United Nations Conventions on Drugs.

UNODC South Asia is present in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka

India: 'Think health – not drugs' at the UN panel discussion



Every year on 26 June, the world commemorates World Drug Day which serves as a reminder of the need to address seriously drug issues and to raise awareness on the risks and consequences of drug use. To this end, UNODC South Asia in collaboration with the UN Information Centre (UNIC) organized a panel discussion at the United Nations Hall, New Delhi. At the core of the discussion was the testimonial of Ms. Manveer Kaur, from Maqboolpura, a district in Punjab, known as 'widow district' due to the high number of women who have lost their husbands due to drug use. She shared her experience of being married to a drug user and having had lost two husbands to drug use. She also moved the audience with her story sharing, how her children were discriminated against not being allowed to attend the public school, in addition to the financial problems she faced after having lost the main family breadwinner twice. Dr. C.L. Muana, Medical Doctor from Mizoram in the North East drew the audience's attention to the increasing injecting drug use in the North East highlighting the trend of use of prescription drugs and their specific health implications. Dr. Prasada Rao,

UNAIDS, Ms. Cristina Albertin, UNODC, Mr. Gerry Pinto, Butterflies, a NGO that works with street children commented on the testimonials and the required policy measures to scale up prevention and treatment in India. A passionate audience from different Government Representatives, Embassies, NGOs, Youth Parliament and the media attended the event. UNODC displayed information material on drug use prevention and treatment.

India: Minister launches module on drug prevention On 26 June, Mr. Mukul Wasnik, the Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, released the module for 'Drug use prevention for out of school children' at an event organized by his Ministry in New Delhi. The module has been prepared under a joint cooperation project between the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and UNODC.



Mizoram – North East of India: Chasing away the dragon



On the morning of 26 June (World Drug Day) The Hon'ble Minister of Excise and Narcotics, Government of Mizoram (GoM), set fire to a mountain of drugs that had been seized in the state during the year 2009-2010. The huge bonfire included 4,466 kg of heroin, 2,500 kg of opium, 48,501 kg of hashish and 2,14,925 capsules of spasmoproxyvon (a prescription drug used as a painkiller). At another special event in Aizawl, the Hon'ble Minister, GoM expressed his concern about the drug situation stressing the need for better coordinated actions in curbing drug use. At a special exhibition, paintings, chairs, tables and hats made of bamboo, hand-made designs on T-shirts, aprons, pot holders and folders were displayed for sale. The items had been produced by recovering drug users and noted artists of Mizoram.

India: Health campaign for street children



On the evening of 25 June 2010 at Jama Masjid, Old Delhi, the Indian Harm Reduction Network, Sharan, Society for Urban Poverty and Delhi Network of Positive People organized a UNODC-supported 'Health campaign' with this year's slogan – 'Think health – not drugs' for street children and young women. The children

thronged the stalls where they could access information on drug prevention. Quiz-games, visual documentaries, short plays, a live musical concert and sharing of personal accounts by recovering drug users kept the children busy and entertained throughout the evening.

Sri Lanka: Thank you to outreach workers



Some 20 outreach workers and volunteers were given certificates and awards at a special ceremony held at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute in an effort to give recognition to their dedicated work and contribution to drug use prevention at the grass-root level. The event was organized by UNODC, SL FONGOADA and non governmental organizations. UNODC appreciates the presence of the UN Resident Coordinator in Sri Lanka, Mr. Neil Buhne at the ceremony and thanks the workers for their dedication.

Bhutan: 'Royal celebrations for World Drug Day'



Ms. Cristina Albertin, UNODC Representative for South Asia attended the official 26 June celebrations at the new drop-in-centre for recovering drug users in Bumthang, Bhutan. The events were organized by the Bhutan Narcotics Control Agency (BNCA). The Queen Mother Ashi Tshering Pem Wangchuck, as the Chief Guest, launched the new BNCA website, the new IEC material and inaugurated the drop-in-centre as well. Additionally, the ever-first UNODC-supported Bhutanese National Baseline assessment on drug use in Bhutan was launched.

UNODC INTERNAL NEWS CORNER

UNODC bids farewell and wishes all the best to Mr. Olivier Lermet!



Olivier joined the UNODC Nepal office as HIV Advisor in 2005 where he played a key role in positioning UNODC, not only in the HIV sector, but

also in other UNODC-mandated areas. He moves on with his family to take up his new assignment as UNODC Country Manager in Cambodia. We wish him success and that he enjoys his new duty station!

