



The 6th Meeting of the AIPA Fact-Finding Committee (AIFOCOM)
to Combat the Drug Menace
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COUNTRY REPORT OF SINGAPORE

Singapore has maintained its status as a relatively drug-free society and continues to adopt a firm stand against drug trafficking. It is a non drug-producing country and there are no major syndicated drug activities linked to organised crime in the country.

DRUG SITUATION

2. The drug threat has been contained in Singapore. There are no areas where drugs are openly sold or blatantly abused.

Abuse Situation

3. 1,925 drug abusers were arrested in 2008 as compared to 2,211 in 2007. The drug abusers arrested were confined mainly to repeat abusers, who made up 74% of total abusers arrested.

4. 508 new abusers were arrested in 2008, compared to 520 in 2007. The number of new abusers arrested remained low and stable. They formed 26% of total abusers arrested in 2008 as compared to 24% in 2007.

5. With the classification of buprenorphine as a controlled drug in the Misuse of Drugs Act in Aug 2006, CNB has enhanced enforcement against buprenorphine abuse. This has since enabled us to control the buprenorphine abuse situation in Singapore. Therefore, unlike in 2007 when buprenorphine abusers made up the majority of drug abusers arrested, the drug abuse trend reverted to years prior to 2007 where heroin drug abusers made up the majority of drug abusers arrested. Specifically, heroin abusers made up the largest proportion at 46% in 2008. Buprenorphine accounted for 19% of drug abusers arrested in 2008, down by half from 38% in 2007.

Trafficking Situation

6. The drug traffickers in Singapore generally operate on a small scale with the majority of them trafficking drugs in small amounts. In this regard, there are no syndicated drug activities linked to organised crimes in Singapore, in contrast to the hierarchical and organised drug syndicates or cartels in some countries. The drug traffickers in Singapore are mostly small bands of people who come together to traffic drugs and their association with each other is often loosely based on friendship or mutual gain with little loyalty to the group. Their modus operandi for trafficking drugs is not so sophisticated. They rely mainly on traditional methods of transactions involving cash and drug exchange between the seller and buyer.

7. Illicit drugs are mainly brought into Singapore via the land route. They are usually found hidden on the person, although for some of the larger drug seizures, the drugs had been found hidden in the specially constructed compartments of motor vehicles.

8. The number of drug traffickers arrested for the unauthorised importation or exportation of drugs across our national borders has remained relatively small over the years. For the year 2008, 100 such drug traffickers were arrested and the drugs seized from them included about 2.4kg of ketamine, 1.1kg of cannabis, 0.2kg of 'Ice', 3.1kg of heroin, 959 Yaba tablets, over 7,465 Nimetazepam tablets and over 956 'Ecstasy' and 1,240 Subutex tablets.

ANTI-DRUG STRATEGY

9. Singapore's anti-drug strategy is targeted at reducing both drug supply and demand. To this end, it adopts a multi-pronged approach comprising tough legislation, vigorous enforcement, intensive preventive drug education and co-ordinated rehabilitation as well as aftercare in its fight against drugs.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

10. CNB co-operates actively with foreign law enforcement agencies on a bilateral basis. Such co-operation can range from the exchange of information and intelligence to joint investigations and operations. Much of CNB's success in fighting drugs would not have been possible without such bilateral co-operation.

11. CNB works closely with the US Drug Enforcement Administration, the Australian Federal Police, the Narcotics Crime Investigation Department of the Royal Malaysia Police, the Thai drug enforcement agencies such as the Police Narcotics Suppression Bureau and the Office of Narcotics Control Board, and other anti-drug agencies in the region. It also maintains liaison contacts with the International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL) and the Regional

Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO), Asia and the Pacific, of the World Customs Organisation.

12. Singapore is party to all three multilateral Conventions aimed at fighting the drug problem, namely, the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

CONCLUSION

13. Illicit drugs continue to be a world-wide concern and Singapore is not isolated from it. To ensure that the drug problem remains well-contained, Singapore will remain vigilant and sustain our vigorous drug enforcement and preventive drug education efforts. Singapore will also continue to forge closer co-operation and work with our partners and the community to combat drug trafficking on both the domestic and global fronts.

CENTRAL NARCOTICS BUREAU
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One ASEAN Vision

