

## Opinion Survey on Heroin Trafficking in Sri Lanka

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Drug trafficking and drug abuse is one of the main causes of loss of well-being in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is a transit country for heroin trafficking. Thus, the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB) conducted an opinion survey on heroin trafficking in Sri Lanka. The aim of the study was to obtain a wider view of the possible scenarios related to illicit drug trafficking in the country. A non-probable sample of law enforcement officers and the residents of the NDDCB-Treatment centre, was interviewed during February 2005.

More than 90% of the sample revealed that most of heroin was smuggled to the country from India and Pakistan. Heroin from India is mainly smuggles via South India to Western coast of Sri Lanka using fishing boats. Pakistanis smuggled heroin mostly by air. In addition to heroin, hashish, opium, ecstasy and morphine also smuggled to Sri Lanka in lesser quantities.

There is a network of Sri Lankan heroin business. Most of the interviewees' opinion was that politicians, underworld gangs and L.T.T.E. senior business magnates and Muslims are involved in the business. The majority of those live in Colombo and its suburbs. The law enforcement agencies had identified three grades of heroin businessmen as 'A', 'B', 'C' and categorized them into six stages. 19 persons belong to grade 'A'. The ringleaders are in the first stage and had not seen or touched heroin.

Heroin sellers and traffickers have connection with the buyers in different ways depending on the quantity of heroin buying and selling. Unloaded heroin in Colombo city had taken to safe houses and distributed to various places of the country by using luxury vehicles, three wheelers and fish transport lorries. The supply generally decreases in June, August and increases in March, April, and May.

The study reveals that, there was no rational estimation of the number of heroin traffickers as well as the quantity of heroin trafficked to Sri Lanka. Therefore, all interviewees mentioned the necessity of reorganized, effective illicit drug control scheme for the country.

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