

# Review on Cross Border Drug Trafficking in India

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**Abstract:** *Drug trafficking routes in India can be through land borders with neighboring countries like Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Bangladesh. Additionally, maritime routes along the coastline are also used for smuggling drugs. Various types of drugs are trafficked across borders, including heroin, cocaine, marijuana, synthetic drugs like methamphetamine, and prescription drugs like opioids.*

*Drug trafficking is often associated with organized crime syndicates that operate across borders. These organizations have networks for production, transportation, distribution, and sale of drugs. Efforts to combat cross-border drug trafficking require a comprehensive approach involving law enforcement, border security measures, international cooperation, and addressing root causes such as poverty and drug demand.*

**Keywords:** Narcotics, Psychotropic substances, Methamphetamine, Synthetic drugs, Cross border trafficking, Drug cartel.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Drug trafficking across borders in India is a complex and multifaceted issue that poses significant challenges to law enforcement agencies and national security. With its vast geographical expanse, diverse cultural landscapes, and porous borders, India has become a hub for illicit drug trade, involving the smuggling of narcotics such as heroin, cocaine, cannabis, and synthetic drugs. This illicit trade not only fuels addiction and destroys communities but also funds organized crime syndicates and terrorist organizations. The illicit drug market in India is intertwined with international networks, making it a global concern with far-reaching consequences. In this context, understanding the dynamics, impact, and measures to combat drug trafficking across Indian borders is crucial for safeguarding public health, security, and social well-being.

## II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Opium and cannabis both have an ancient history in India. Opium was first introduced by Arabs as a medicinal commodity in India and China around the 8th century A.D. Opium was said to be in traditional use in India in tantric rituals and herbal treatments of diarrhoea, dysentery and fever. Cannabis derivatives like ganja, bhang, charas have found mention in Indian mythologies and folklores. Opium is a drug that has been long associated with imperialist designs. During the Mughal empire, poppy was extensively grown and became an important article of trade with China and other Eastern countries. During the later part of the 16th century, opium was made a state monopoly, however with the fall of the Mughal Empire, the state lost its hold over the monopoly and control of the production and sale of opium was appropriated by a ring of merchants in Patna.

## III. METHOD

Doctrinal Method Relying Upon Secondary Data.

Collecting data about drug trafficking involves gathering information from various sources to understand the scope, trends, and impacts of illegal drug trade. Here are some steps and sources you can consider for data collection:

- Government Reports
- Media Reports
- International Organizations
- World Drug Report

#### IV. DISCUSSION

- **India- Pakistan Border :-** India shares land borders with Pakistan from where traffickers have access to the States of Jammu and Kashmir (now Union Territory), Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat. Most of the heroin and hashish transited through India comes from Pakistan and Afghanistan. Some percentage of heroin is also transited to international destinations via India, especially from Delhi or Mumbai by the commercial airlines.
- **India- Nepal Border :-** Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Sikkim and West Bengal share a long border with Nepal. There is entirely free movement without any requirement of passport/visa across this border. Nepal is the major producer of cannabis and hashish, which are often smuggled into India.
- **India- Bhutan Border :-** This border is used for trafficking of various pharmacy drugs like prescribed medicines and antidepressant pills into Nepal and Bhutan from India. Brown-sugar, which is produced in India, is also smuggled to these countries. Codeine based cough syrups are also smuggled from India to Bhutan. Usually, Cannabis from Bhutan is trafficked into India. SamdrupJongkhar - Daranga has been the most importer route for trafficking and it is into existence since 1980s. Udalguri in Darrang district of Assam is an important center for collection and distribution of Cannabis, which comes in from Bhutan.
- **India- Myanmar Border :-** India shares 1,463 km border with Myanmar, which is the major source of inward movement of heroin. From here, the drugs enter into the North-Eastern Region, especially Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Mizoram. It has been observed that the demand for the psychotropic substances and various other drugs are constantly on the rise in North-Eastern Region of India which is giving air to the fire of drug trafficking across this border. 31 Factors like weak security, good roads, insurgency, political instability, existence of drug cartels, porous and poorly guarded border and official announcement of business via Moreh in 1994 further heightened the smuggling activity of illegitimate drugs across this border.
- **India- Bangladesh Border:-** The long border that Bangladesh shares with India and Myanmar makes it vulnerable to drug trafficking. Moreover, Bangladesh has a long history of cannabis production and consumption. It is also smuggled into the country from India and Nepal. Indian states of West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram share border with Bangladesh. Smuggling of illicit cannabis also takes place across this border. One of the most trafficked substances of abuse from India to Bangladesh is phensedyl cough syrup. These syrup bottles are many times filled with enhanced narcotics drugs and are renamed as „phensedyl plus“ and then, these are illegally exported to Bangladesh at much higher prices.

#### V. FINDINGS

- BSF personnel are sometimes involved in drug trafficking.
- Pakistan border is a hotspot of drug trafficking.
- Myanmar border works as a trafficking corridor for the North Eastern states of India.
- India faces a critical challenge to tackle drug trafficking across borders.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

Drug trafficking across Indian borders presents a complex and multifaceted challenge that requires a comprehensive approach to address its various dimensions effectively. Several key points emerge from an analysis of this issue:

**International Cooperation:** Given the transnational nature of drug trafficking, international cooperation is crucial. India must collaborate closely with neighboring countries, regional organizations, and international bodies to share intelligence, coordinate law enforcement efforts, and implement joint initiatives to disrupt drug networks operating across borders.

- **Law Enforcement:** Strengthening border security and enhancing the capacity of law enforcement agencies are paramount. This includes deploying modern technology, improving surveillance measures, conducting regular patrols, and training personnel to detect and intercept drug shipments effectively. Collaboration with customs authorities is also vital to prevent the smuggling of drugs through ports of entry.

- **Legislative Measures:** Enacting and enforcing stringent laws and penalties for drug trafficking offenses are essential deterrents. This should be coupled with measures to combat money laundering and seize assets linked to drug proceeds, depriving traffickers of their financial resources.
- **Demand Reduction:** Addressing the demand side of the equation is equally critical. Investing in drug prevention programs, expanding access to treatment and rehabilitation services, and raising public awareness about the dangers of substance abuse can help reduce demand for illicit drugs and alleviate the social and health consequences associated with addiction.
- **Community Engagement:** Engaging communities, especially those vulnerable to drug trafficking and consumption, is key to developing tailored interventions. Empowering local stakeholders, including NGOs, community leaders, and youth organizations, can foster grassroots initiatives focused on prevention, education, and support for individuals at risk.
- **International Obligations:** India's commitment to international conventions and agreements on drug control must be upheld. Fulfilling obligations related to information sharing, extradition of drug traffickers, and mutual legal assistance strengthens global cooperation and contributes to a collective effort against drug trafficking at the international level.

In conclusion, addressing drug trafficking across Indian borders requires a holistic strategy encompassing international cooperation, robust law enforcement, legislative measures, demand reduction efforts, community engagement, and adherence to international obligations. By adopting a multifaceted approach and leveraging partnerships at various levels, India can make significant strides in combating this pervasive threat to public health, security, and well-being.

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