

Narco-Terrorism: A Persistent Menace

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ABSTRACT

This conceptual paper explores the complex interplay between narco-terrorism and traditional terrorism, particularly within the context of the Indian subcontinent, revealing the various gaps prevailing in the control of drug trafficking. It traces the evolution of terrorism from its historical roots to contemporary forms, emphasizing the rise of narco-terrorism as a significant threat characterized by the intersection of drug trafficking and political violence. The paper highlights how narco-terrorism primarily serves economic motivations, with drug-related violence employed to achieve political or social objectives, often involving organized crime groups that operate with impunity. It examines the socio-economic implications of narco-terrorism, particularly in regions like Punjab and Kashmir, where drug trafficking is intricately linked to funding militant activities. The research underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of the motivations and operations of both drug traffickers and terrorists, as well as the socio-economic conditions that facilitate their activities. It also discusses the challenges faced by law enforcement and the Indian government's response to the growing threat of narco-terrorism, including the establishment of task forces and awareness programs. This paper can be further used as a base for future research in the field of Narco-Terrorism.

1. Introduction

Acts of political violence and intimidation have existed for a millennium. However, the term 'terrorism' is relatively modern. The evolution of politically violent acts of terrorism has seen its rise and metamorphosis since the 1960's. During the era, terrorist organizations were more Eurocentric, and the war was more ideological. A contemporary form of terroristic act is Narco-Terrorism, which is nothing different from other forms of terrorism, however; it inclines towards economic motivations more. Narco-terrorism is a term that has emerged in the context of the intersection between drug trafficking and terrorism, particularly in Latin America. It refers to the use of drug-related violence to achieve political or social objectives, often involving organized crime groups that operate with impunity. The concept gained prominence in the late 20th century, particularly with the rise of powerful drug cartels in Colombia and Mexico (Rojas, 2015).

The basic motive of the drug trade is to weaken, and destabilize, the warring country by fuelling and regulating illegal drug cartels within the country, proliferating drug usage among the youth of the warring country to disturb the economy of the nation and vehemently paralyze the mental stature of the young minds. Such activities result in maximum monetary gains which are later used for personal benefits or the procurement and purchase of arms and ammunition to

create a simmering and persistent insecurity in society employing vandalism and violence.

As we can trace the history of terrorism, we can find that there is a shift from a direct yet simple form of violence to a complicated and sophisticated pattern of terrorism. Ancient times had seen the rise of assassins' brotherhood as a protest against the Roman occupiers in the first century. Further, in history, revolutions have taken place to revolt against the unjust rule of the emperors and other ailments of the society. However, ever since then political violence has evolved to become an act of terrorizing citizens and weakening the roots of the opposing country for personal gain. Recent horrors of violence are trans-border terrorism which has become a significant source of concern for the nation. A creeping fear and an uncanny sense of insecurity are haunting the minds of one and all.

The author of this article has dealt with all aspects of terrorism in her book "Terrorism The Many Dimensions"¹ and she is convinced that when people perceive that their liberty is under threat, they will revolt – mostly violently, irrespective of their social or economic status. It is asserted by many, that the terrorism of today is purely a result of altruistic philosophy and the stifling of initiative.

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Therefore, our attention should shift to the fact that poverty is not the only potential factor of terrorism, rather terrorists with their activities affect the economic stability of the society. The conditions in which terrorism flourishes must be studied to obtain a definite reply. We must realize that human conditions will necessarily lead to ideas that necessitate violence to achieve its goal. According to Newman, (2003), the challenge is not in preventing these ideas from materializing, but rather it is to create a proactive means by which we can identify and deal forcibly with terror in its infancy before it gathers the momentum and means to infect a society.

Narco-terrorism is in no way different in its objective to instill fear among the government and establish control over the concerned geographical territory, except the strategy to operate is something quite different. In this respect, narcotics are trafficked across the border and distributed, sold, and spread to various states and areas in the country via other mediums such as couriers, agencies, and drug mafias. The substantial profits from drug trafficking are then used for personal benefits or funding terrorist activities and the purchase of arms and ammunition to equip the terrorists and facilitate terror in the country. Moreover, funds generated from the trafficking of narcotics are also used by some terrorist groups for digital attacks against different law enforcement agencies.

Sponsoring terrorism is an expensive affair that demands a lot of monetary funding which comes through illegal or unofficial channels such as drug trafficking. The market value of narcotic drugs is much higher than any consumer product in the world. It fetches voluminous amounts of financial gains and that too in hard cash. For instance, one kilogram of heroin from the Golden Crescent which costs approximately one lakh rupees in South Asia, fetches nearly a crore rupee in the US market. The figure varies from place to place, which further depends on the law-and-order situation. The price for heroin originating from the Golden Crescent ranges from Rs. 30 lakhs to Rs. 1 crore a kg. (1) It is worth noting that Pakistani heroin and Colombian marijuana are the most demanded narcotic drugs in the US and European countries. (2) The volume of money these drugs generate in the West is mind-boggling. It is because of the enormous money involved in the illicit drug trade that terrorists have established links with drug traffickers, smugglers, and the underworld to meet the expenses for 'operation terrorism'. (Kshitij Prabha, 2001)² 2 this indicates a sharp and defined linkage between the drug cartels and the terrorists. The linkage as defined is not simply confined between the Drug Mafias and the Terrorist

Groups but also the youth and the common people get involved in the whole process.

If studied and probed closely it will be revealed that the linkages extend to many stakeholders who often knowingly and willingly participate in trafficking and spreading the drugs to different sections of the society. These stakeholders primarily are Drug Lords / Mafias who are connected with eminent businessmen, bureaucrats, and even officers occupying influential posts in the Government of the country implementing the smuggling of drugs across the border. The second group which you can label as mules, helps in distributing and selling to the people particularly the youth now assisted by vendors, peddlers, restaurant owners, cafeterias, and even peer groups of the vulnerable person. Reports also come of medical shops selling drugs in the guise of painkillers and other physical ailments.

Broadly described in (*FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* Volume: 56 Issue Narco-Terrorism)³ the involvement of terrorist organizations and insurgent groups in drug trafficking, has become a problem with international implications' The report says that in the United States, contacts between terrorist groups and traffickers appear to be the result of the clandestine nature and criminal activities of both types of groups rather than more formal relationships. Although an anti-Castro group was known to have collected money for a drug trafficker in the early 1980's, Mariya Y. Omelicheva and Lawrence Markowitz⁴ contend that the relationship between drug trafficking and terrorism remains a contentious issue. While some asserted that drug trafficking is a strong predictor of terrorism, others contest this observation. Many critics of the drug-terror thesis point out the ideological and operational divide between these two types of organizations. They suggest that these two organizations are mutually exclusive and prevent their collaboration. Some even contend that the drug-terror narrative has been deliberately concocted by public officials to "act as a cover for [their] involvement" in the drug trade. Therefore, links between drug trafficking and terrorist violence are quite varied, with some defined by direct intersections of violent and criminal nonstarter actors, while others are shaped by the deep involvement of the state in the drug trade.

With the world undergoing digital evolution, the drug Mafias have also started taking advantage of such movements. Such narcotics organizations have also

2. Kshitij Prabha, Associated Fellow, IDSA **Narco-Terrorism and India's Security Strategic Analysis: A Monthly Journal of the IDSA** January 2001 (Vol. XXIV No. 10)

3. Narco-Terrorism D Boyce NCJ Numbe107705Journal *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* Volume: 56 Issue: 11 Dated: special issue (October 1987) Pages: 24-27

4. Mariya Y. Omelicheva omeliche@ku.edu 1541 Lilac Ln., rm. 504, Lawrence, KS, 66044, USA. © 2018 Taylor & Francis Group, & Terrorism <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1434039> 2019, Vol. 42, No. 12

started the use the Internet to sell drugs, making delivery and distribution of drugs easy and safe from the eyes of the law and law enforcement agencies such as NCB in India [27]. These mafias use encrypted messaging, electronic payment platforms to receive payments from unidentified accounts, and various other digital means to remain masked from the eyes of law enforcement agencies. In India, the dark net is becoming a popular platform among drug dealers. Many drugs are sold through this secret platform which is generally used for various illicit activities such as sharing pornographic content and dealing narcotics and pharmaceuticals drugs. Drug traffickers also use electronic pockets to store information related to drugs, establish surrogates at airports, and clone mobile phones.

When we discuss narco-terrorism, it is important to note that there is often a differentiation between criminal insurgency and traditional terrorism. According to Rojas (2015), criminal insurgency relates to the use of violence by organized criminal groups to exert pressure over territories and populations, blurring the lines between criminal and political motives. On the contrary, some researchers argue that narco-terrorism is majorly profit-driven, while political objectives are secondary (Kalyvas, 2006). This distinction is vital for understanding the motives for cartel violence and implications for state responses.

A dynamic interplay of economic motivations and need for power, forms the psyche of narco-terrorists and distinguishes them from traditional terrorists. The core of narco-terrorism is profit-driven, and violence is viewed as a necessary means to protect and expand lucrative operations (Rojas, 2018). This does not have to be driven by any ideological beliefs – political, religious, or social, unlike traditional terrorism (Crenshaw, 1981). Another difference that can be noted between traditional and narco-terrorism, is of target selection. Traditional terrorists generally target political figures, institutions, or civilians to advance their ideological agenda, whereas narco-terrorists have their focus on rivals, law enforcement, and anyone who threatens their drug operations, reflecting a more opportunistic and self-serving approach (Rosen, 2014). Although traditional and narco-terrorism are viewed differently, there is still a fine interrelatedness between the two. As per research, funds collected by narco-terrorists are not only used for personal acquisitions but also to fuel politically violent ideologies and traditional terrorism (Wani & Patil, 2024).

If you study the psyche of the drug mafias and drug traffickers, it would be noted that they are no different from the hardcore terrorists who are motivated to destroy the financial status and the social security of a country be it a neighboring country or a country where they reside but nurture no loyalty for the nation. These are homegrown

terrorists maintain a concealed network and alliance with other countries. The isolation of attributes or traits shared by terrorists is a formidable task because there are probably as many variations among terrorists as there may be similarities. Efforts to create a profile of a “typical” terrorist have had mixed success. It is believed by social scientists that people who have joined terrorist groups have come from a wide range, and their personalities and characteristics are as a result, as diverse. Experts generally agree that there is no psychological attribute that can be used to describe the terrorist or any ‘personality’ that is distinctive of him. Yet, what motivates an individual to violent suicidal act, or what propels him to attain his goal constantly keeps the experts intrigued. (Sanyal, Terrorism the Many Dimensions 2015)⁵.

However, there has been literature that indicates the difference in the personality profiling of narco-terrorists from that of traditional terrorists. Narco-terrorists may possess distinct personality traits compared to their ideologically driven counterparts. For instance, narco-terrorists often display higher levels of impulsivity and sensation-seeking behavior, which are linked to their engagement in high-risk activities such as drug trafficking and violence (Meyer, 2014). In contrast, traditional terrorists may exhibit traits such as conscientiousness and a strong sense of duty, reflecting their commitment to a cause (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008).

A study by Bhatia (2018) highlights that narco-terrorists often come from backgrounds marked by socio-economic disadvantage, which may contribute to a personality profile characterized by aggression and a lack of empathy. This contrasts with many traditional terrorists, who may have more stable backgrounds and a greater sense of belonging to a cause (Hoffman, 2006). The differences in personality traits can influence the recruitment strategies employed by both types of groups, with narco-terrorist organizations often targeting individuals who are already involved in criminal activities.

The phenomenon of narco-terrorism, characterized by the intersection of drug trafficking and terrorism, presents unique challenges in understanding the psychological and personality profiles of those involved. While traditional terrorists often operate with ideological motivations, narco-terrorists are frequently driven by financial gain and the drug trade.

State of Narco-Terrorism in the Indian Sub-Continent

Narco-terrorism in the Indian Sub-Continent is unique. While going through various research papers and data, it

5. Ketan Patil & Astha Pandey Drug Trafficking: A Growing Problem for India Article, February 2022 DOI: 10.55141/AJFS.2022.000 Gujarat Forensic Sciences University 12 Publications 0 Citations 112

was brought to notice that narco-terrorism is primarily profit-driven and holds ideological values as secondary. However, in India, most narco-terroristic activities are done to promote and finance traditional terrorism that flourishes on ideological perspectives, particularly in Kashmir, where drug-trafficking funds militant activities (CIAOTEST). Unlike countries like Colombia, where the drug trade is economically driven, India's narco-terrorism has an ideological basis and intertwines with traditional terrorism and cross-border dynamics with Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Narco-terrorism has emerged as a significant concern in the Indian subcontinent, particularly in regions like Punjab, Kashmir, and the northeastern states. The interplay between drug trafficking networks and militant groups has profound implications for national security, governance, and public health (Bhatia, 2018).

While exploring the roots of narco-terrorism in the Indian subcontinent, can be traced back to the 1980s and 1990s, particularly during the insurgency in Punjab. The rise of Sikh militancy was closely linked to the drug trade, with militant groups reportedly financing their operations through narcotics (Kaur, 2016). The Golden Triangle, encompassing parts of India, Myanmar, and Laos, has been a significant source of heroin, which has fuelled both local and international drug markets (Bhatia, 2018). The historical context is crucial for understanding how drug trafficking has been utilized as a tool for financing terrorism and insurgency.

In India, various actors contribute to the narco-terrorism landscape in the Indian subcontinent. Militant groups, such as those operating in Kashmir, have been known to engage in drug trafficking to fund their activities (Chakravarty, 2019). The connection between drug cartels and terrorist organizations complicates the security landscape, as these groups often collaborate to achieve mutual objectives (Kaur, 2016). Additionally, the involvement of transnational criminal organizations has further exacerbated the situation, as they exploit local conflicts to expand their operations (Bhatia, 2018).

the implications of narco-terrorism for national security are profound in the Indian Sub-continent. The intertwining of drug trafficking and terrorism poses significant challenges for law enforcement and counter-terrorism efforts. The Indian government has recognized the threat posed by narco-terrorism, leading to increased military and police operations in affected regions (Chakravarty, 2019). However, the effectiveness of these measures has been questioned, as the socio-economic conditions that facilitate drug trafficking and terrorism remain largely unaddressed (Kaur, 2016).

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between drug trafficking networks and militant groups has profound implications for national security, governance, and public health (Bhatia, 2018)⁶.

Studies Reviewed

Tracing to the past, D Boyce⁷ narrated that In the United States, contacts between terrorist groups and traffickers appear to be the result of the clandestine nature and criminal activities of both types of groups rather than more formal relationships. Although an anti-Castro group was known to have collected money for a drug trafficker in the early 1980s, no recent cases of such cooperation are known. Two recent cases, one involving the Provisional Irish Republican Army and a known trafficker and the other involving the sale of narcotics to finance an assassination attempt, illustrate how each group used the criminal networks of the other to fulfill their specific objectives.

Relating to India and the impact of Narco-Terrorism on India Security Kashtiji Prabha said that Narcotic trafficking, the phenomenon, which started as an organized cross-border crime has now emerged as a threat to nation-states because of its diabolic alliance with terrorist groups. The Golden Crescent is the largest producer of illicit opium. Afghanistan and Pakistan alone shared nearly 6000 metric tons of the total illicit production in 1999.

It is a matter of serious concern to India because these drugs are the major source for funding Pak-sponsored terrorism in this country. Also, India is the only licit supplier of opium to the international pharmaceutical industry, which generates approximately Rupees 209 crores per annum (1999) as revenue from exports. The economy of the Pak-Afghan frontier is dependent on the production of poppy and cannabis. The drug money is being floated in an unorganized but systematic manner into the Indian market thereby damaging financial institutions. Therefore, the illicit drug trafficking from Afghanistan and Pakistan threatens both the polity and the economy of India. This demands serious consideration from both, the policymakers and the law enforcement agencies before it gets too late.

According to a report in the year 2024 (July) by the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs, the latest data on cases registered under the Narcotic Drugs & Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS Act), 1985 for the year 2022, is 38064 throughout the States and Union Territories of Indian Sub-continent. The number of cases of Drug seizures from the year 2020, up to April 2024, involving Darknet and Crypto Currencies

6. Bhatia, S. (2018). *Narco-Terrorism in India: A Growing Threat*. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 48(3), 362

7. D, Boyce *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* Volume: 56 Issue: 11 Dated: special issue (October 1987) Page:24-27

has been a total of 92 and nearly 1025 cases involving drug smuggling through couriers or parcels have been registered. However, these reports are just estimations and can be fabricated since states do not provide detailed and complete information regarding the condition of drug trafficking, arrest, and conviction.

Kashtiji Prabha (2001)⁸, stated that Narcotic drugs are the The report by the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs, from which the above data has been procured also supports this claim as it cites that clarifications regarding the data provided are still pending from Nagaland for the year, 2022. main source for funding terrorist activities in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir where the Pakistan government overtly sponsors terrorism. There is no authentic estimate available for the assessment of expenses incurred by Pakistan for creating the specter of terrorism in India. However, based on information gathered from terrorists and drug traffickers it could be roughly estimated that Pakistan spends approximately 20 to 30 crores a month on payment to militants alone. During personal interaction with militants the author was told that besides weapons and logistics, ISI pays Rs. 15 to 20 lakhs to militant leaders per month, 3 to 5 lakhs to Afghan Mujahids on a contract basis, and 15 to 20 thousand to recruits from both sides of Kashmir.

Scientists are seen establishing a relationship between drug trafficking and terrorism as both activities and organizations assume that terrorist and criminal groups are strategic actors. By looking at terrorism and the drug trade as activities, we can explore their linkages through various socioeconomic, political, and topographic characteristics of the space, where these activities take place. By viewing terrorist and drug trafficking organizations as pragmatic actors, we can allow for the possibility that these groups may collaborate or appropriate each other's activity, despite differences in the underlying motivations. (Mariya Y. Omelicheva & Lawrence Markowitz (2019)⁹. The authors stressed the fact that transnational organized crime has become a major source of funding for terrorist organizations facilitating their activity in different parts of the world. Although terrorist groups have been implicated in a wide scope of illicit economic activities (such as human trafficking, money laundering, oil smuggling, and looting of diamonds and cultural artifacts), it is the involvement of terrorist groups in the drug trade that has

received considerable attention from the politicians, academics, and policy analysts.

Lastly, the personality profile of the traffickers and whether they are in any way different from the other categories of terrorists, disputes and differences are still prevailing. A few researchers believe that the drug trade often thrives in regions with weak governance and high levels of corruption, creating an environment where criminal behavior is normalized (Rojas, 2015). It is further discussed by Bhatia (2018), that the environment can foster a personality type that is more adaptable to violence and criminality, as individuals learn to navigate a landscape fraught with danger and competition.

2. Methodology

This paper is an exploratory study that is based on a meta-analysis of various secondary sources. This paper intends to project the negative consequences of drug trafficking on the security of the country.

Rationale

Narco-terrorism is a major threat to national security. It creates disharmony within the nation and weakens the economy of country. Narco-terrorism or drug trafficking not only threatens public health but also exacerbates the existing addiction crisis among the youth. This paper focuses on raising awareness and shedding light on the condition of narco-terrorism and drug trafficking within the country. It would also help restructure policies on drug trafficking convictions and the rehabilitation of drug addicts.

Significance of the study

This study indicates the strategies adopted to curb the menace of drug trafficking and narco-terrorism. Although the present government is stringently enforcing measures to control drug trafficking, this paper aims to reflect on the policies and initiatives of the government. It helps us to develop an understanding of the ill effects of drug trafficking and abuse, and it also highlights the vulnerability of the nation's youth towards drug addiction. It would also help restructure policies on drug trafficking convictions and the rehabilitation of drug addicts.

3. Discussion

It needs to be understood that drug mafias and drug traffickers follow the same ideology to destabilize the economy of the country, create insecurity in the society, and strengthen the motives of the terrorists by providing them financial support, arms, and ammunition for helping the militants inside the country, even providing monetary benefits to enemy countries for constant and continuous cross-border terrorism and war on the border. The prevailing and persistent fight among the tribal in Mizoram is the outcome of drug selling, drug taking, and drug trafficking. Unless the porous borders of Myanmar,

8. Kshitij Prabha, Associated Fellow, IDSA 2001. **Narco-Terrorism and India's Security Analysis: A Monthly Journal of the IDSA** January 2001 (Vol. XXIV No. 10)

9. Mariya Y. Omelicheva & Lawrence Markowitz (2019) Does Drug Trafficking Impact Terrorism? Afghan Opioids and Terrorist Violence in Central Asia, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 42:12, 1021-1043, DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2018.1434039

Thailand, and Bangladesh are sealed, and a uniform policy is adopted by the respective governments to impose stringent punishment on the drug traffickers infiltrating into another country with drugs or arms and weapons, the process of drug trafficking and unrest in the border states will continue.

Drug abuse is a global problem. That is why the UN Office on Drugs and Crime calls it a 'World Drug Problem'. This underscores the need for information exchange and cooperation between the countries and all relevant stakeholders to take appropriate preventive and punitive actions at the regional, national, and international levels. The transnational drug peddling and the damaging roles played by criminal networks in areas such as Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle are well known.

Thus, attention must be given to these salient issues,

1. It is essential to assess the level of social auditing and monitoring regarding the involvement of special agencies in managing cases related to Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances within State Police Forces and the Narcotics Control Bureau
2. There is a necessity to evaluate whether special agencies or relevant governments have implemented age-specific awareness initiatives aimed at combating drug abuse. This includes gathering information on the funds allocated for such programs, the number of initiatives conducted, their locations, and the effectiveness of these programs and schemes.
3. An examination of the FIRs filed under the NDPS Act is required to monitor their progress and analyze the conviction rates. Additionally, it is important to investigate the adherence to the Supreme Court's ruling in the case of *State of Gujarat vs. Kishanbhai* (January 7, 2014) by establishing a committee to review cases of acquittal and determine accountability for failures in securing convictions. This involves assessing whether the shortcomings were due to the investigation or prosecution. We should also research whether the actions mandated by the Supreme Court's ruling are being implemented and followed.

According to a report from the Ministry of Home Affairs (India), the Indian government is actively working to combat the illegal use and trafficking of drugs nationwide. Some key initiatives include:

1. Establishing a dedicated Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) in every state and union territory.
2. Launching the 1933-MANAS Helpline, a unified platform for citizens to report drug-related issues through various communication channels.
3. Forming a Special Task Force on Darknet and Cryptocurrency to monitor suspicious drug-related transactions on the Darknet.

4. Empowering the Railway Protection Force (RPF) under the NDPS Act, 1985, to prevent the inter-state movement of narcotic drugs via the railway network.
5. Collaborating with the Interoperable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) to create the National Integrated Database About Arrested NDPS Offenders (NIDAAN) by the Narcotics Control Bureau.

To tackle drug abuse, the Government of India has developed and implemented the National Action Plan for Drug Reduction (NAPDDR), which aims for sustained and coordinated efforts to address substance abuse among youth. Key highlights of this initiative include:

1. The Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) launch across all districts, engaging over 8,000 youth volunteers and reaching more than 110 million people, including 35.3 million youth and 23.4 million women.
2. Supporting 345 Integrated Rehabilitation Centres for Addicts (IRCA) to provide treatment for drug victims, preventive education, awareness, motivational counseling, detoxification/de-addiction, aftercare, and reintegration into society.
3. Establishing 47 Community-based Peer-led Intervention (CPLI) Centres to focus on vulnerable and at-risk children and adolescents.
4. Supporting 74 Outreach and Drop-in Centres (ODICs) that offer safe spaces for treatment.
5. The government, through the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) and other collaborating agencies like the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs) and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, conducts regular awareness and sensitization sessions for stakeholders, including students, teachers, and parents.
6. Developing Navchetna Modules and teacher training programs by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE) to educate students (grades 6-11), teachers, and parents about drug dependence, coping strategies, and life skills.

In 2025, India continues to grapple with escalating drug trafficking issues, particularly with the rise of synthetic drugs and international cartel involvement. Recent operations have led to significant seizures, including a notable bust of a methamphetamine lab linked to the *Cártel de Jalisco Nueva Generación*, highlighting the urgent need for enhanced enforcement and public health strategies.

The emergence of international drug cartels has transformed India into a significant hub for drug production and trafficking. In recent months, law enforcement agencies have reported alarming trends, including the establishment of sophisticated methamphetamine manufacturing facilities disguised as

legitimate businesses. The presence of these cartels not only threatens public health but also exacerbates the existing addiction crisis among the youth. With millions of young people battling substance abuse, the government faces mounting pressure to implement comprehensive strategies that address both the supply and demand sides of the drug problem.

Moreover, India has seen a significant rise in convictions related to narco-terrorism, with the conviction rate in drug-related cases increasing notably. The government is actively working to dismantle the narco-terror ecosystem, implementing stricter measures against those involved in drug trafficking and terrorism.

The conviction rate for drug-related offenses has surged, with the number of convictions nearly doubling from 54 in 2022 to 104 in 2023. This increase reflects the government's zero-tolerance policy towards narco-terrorism, which includes imposing restrictions on government jobs and contracts for individuals associated with terrorist activities. Additionally, initiatives like the 'Drug Disposal Fortnight' aim to eliminate large quantities of illegal drugs, further demonstrating the commitment to combating this pressing issue.

4. Conclusion

The need of the hour is to develop strong policies and strategies for apprehending and arresting the drug traffickers who continue their work fearlessly and flawlessly till they are arrested. In the meantime, much damage is caused to the young generation who not only get attracted but also addicted haplessly and helplessly ruining their careers, family life, and prospects the outcome is a sick generation and a distorted society. It is time that the Indian government with strong foresight understands the "diverse" cation of both terrorist groups and drug traffickers and the convergence between the two types of organizations in recent decades. As financial markets have become globalized, so have opportunities for illicit groups to transact with each other." (Joel Hernández 2013).

This article aims to convey that ongoing research is necessary to redefine definitions and develop comprehensive strategies to combat the multifaceted

challenges posed by narco-terrorism. As the landscape of drug trafficking and organized crime continues to evolve, understanding the motivations and operations of these groups will be crucial for effective policy formulation. Somewhere, this ongoing process must stop, and other drug trafficking will remain a "Persistent Menace."

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