



## Drugs and Punjab

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## ABSTRACT

'Punjab' a land of five rivers; a bread basket of India and a very prosperous state is today on verge of drug addiction. It is a menace to our society and a drain to our economy. Illicit trafficking of drug has emerged as one of the biggest threats to modern civilization, with sinister links to terrorism, extortion and urban crim. Punjab Government has no control over the from of drugs into the state from Pakistan, but this statement also establish the fact that, Punjab for many years, has been a transit point for drugs flow Pakistan as well as Afghanistan. Drugs in the form of Opium and Poppy Husk and other synthetic forms are consumed. Punjab Government and the union government is committed to dealing firmly with this scourage. It is the time when we all should work together to stop drugs from our life and make our country healthy and happy one.

## KEYWORDS

## DRUGS AND PUNJAB POLITICS

Punjab is one of the most prosperous state of India. It is known as Nation's Bread Basket. It is the land of five rivers which is famous for his folk dances, Bhangra & Gidda. Ironically this state now a days is in international news because of 'Drugs Trafficking & Addicts'.

Punjab Shares his boundaries with Pakistan and has been a transit point for drugs from Afghanistan via Pakistan. Drugs such as heroin, smack, charas, opium, pills are being routed to other parts of India or the world through this state only. It is estimated that Pakistan's ISI is also pushing consignments of drugs in Punjab to raise money and involve people in this trade. It can be a part of his Aproxo-War in India.

Drug trafficking in the state is up now a days up by 40% according to a survey conducted by Department of Social Security Development of Women and children. But the most shocking report which emerge through this survey states that 67% of the rural households in the state have at least one drug addict.

- 15% of them are young farmers.
- Most of addicts take poppy husk while 20% of addicts are addicted to synthetic drugs only.
- This report further state that once an affluent village in the heart of Amritsar, Maqboolpura has come to be known as a 'Widow Village'<sup>1</sup> where almost every home has lost some of its male members to menace of drugs.
- Havelian village<sup>2</sup>, of the distt. Tarn-Taran of Punjab located along the international border has gained notoriety as a village of drug smugglers. Intelligence sources admit that most residents here have been involved in drug smuggling not just for supply in local market. The drug consignment that reaches this village from Pakistan is taken by villages and their aids to Delhi from where it reaches Mumbai for onwards Journey to Us and Canada. The residents are falling prey to heroin, the very substance that earned them the ill-gotten wealth Villagers say the successive governments have ignored this area and there is widespread unemployment in the village.
- Many reasons can be stated for growing dependency on drugs in Punjab like militancy, poverty, frustrations in career and so called Anti-farmer Government policies etc. but the basic question is **Who drugged Punjab?**

Traditionally, people in Punjab were known to take opium from generations. Gradually, more drugs made inroads into the state and Punjabis used it to be able to work in farms for

longer hours.

Between 2005 and 2007, international security agencies cracked down on drug smuggling and routes from China, Japan, Middle East and Burma were cut.

The smugglers turned their attention towards porous borders in Punjab, Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir. Peddling drugs from Indo-Pak border became a lucrative profession. Smugglers earned up to Rs 50,000 for one consignment or per kg of heroin. In the meanwhile, locals too started consuming it. This created the real problem. Drugs like smack, charas and heroin are negative drugs that turn addicts into criminals. The situation was compounded with easy availability of psychotropic drugs like pain killer capsules, cough syrups, and some aphrodisiac tablets.

All this while, drugs like opium and poppy husk grown freely and legally in Rajasthan also kept pouring in. The state cracked down on drug addicts and smugglers off and on but the real impetus was given when AICC vice-president Rahul Gandhi claimed in October 2012, that 70 per cent of Punjab youths were addicts. He quoted a study by a GNDU professor. Though the researcher later claimed his study was misquoted as he had said out of a sample of 100 youths, 70 were found hooked to one drug or the other.

According to WHO 'substance Abuse' means harmful or hazardous use of psycho active substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs.<sup>3</sup>

Use of these drugs lead to dependence syndrome-a cluster of behavior cognitive and physiological phenomena that develop after repeated use of that substances. It induces strong desire to take the drug, difficulties in controlling its use, persisting in its use despite harmful consequences.

## DRUGS COMMONLY USED

Alcohol, Amphetamines, Anabolic Steroids Cannbis, Ecstasy, Hallucinogens, inhalants, Nicotine, Opiates, Sedatives and anti anxiety drug.

Depending upon the actual compound of the drugs, it may lead health problem, social problems, morbidity, injuries, unprotected sex, violence, deaths and accidents, suicides.<sup>4</sup>

There is a high rate of suicides in drug abusers. The reasons believed to cause the distortion of brain chemistry as well social isolation.<sup>5</sup> In many cases criminal or anti social behavior

occurs when the person is under the influence of drug and long term personality changes may occur resulting in to rapes, thefts, burglaries and assaults.<sup>6</sup>

#### **SIGNS OF DRUG ABUSE**

- Sudden Change of mood/temper
- Lack of appetite
- Drowsiness or sleeplessness
- Aggressiveness, defiant and violent behavior
- Involvement in law breaking activities and criminal attempts
- Shirkers and disobeying nature
- Increasing demand for money/stealing
- Keeping tablets, capsules, cigarettes, syringes

#### **What parent should do**

- Caring for your children, spending time with them
- Keep an interest in children's activities and his friends
- Consult doctor frequently to over come drug addiction
- Motivate your children and always guide them to bear the peer group pressure

#### **What student's should do**

- Always say no to drug
- Report drug abuse or trafficking to you school/ college principal or police.
- Have a strong will power.
- Girls student's should be conscious while taking drinks containing 'date rape drugs' at rave parties.

#### **DRUGS AND THE LAW**

(NARCOTICS DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES ACT, 1985)

#### **Following constitute of offence in relation to illicit drugs:**

- Possession even in small quantity
- Cultivation or drug crops without permission
- Allowing your premises to store, sell or consume
- Illicit manufacture, sale purchase and transportation
- Trafficking of drugs, a non-bailable offence (imprisonment up to 20 years and fine up to Rs. 2 lac.)
- Death penalty for repeat offenders

So in the light of the above discussion, I conclude my paper with following inference- Drug abuse is a psycho social medical problem requiring a holistic approach and comprehensive treatment programme attention should be focused on enabling addicts become productive member of the society by making them drug free, crime free and gainfully employed.

I exhort the people of India, especially the youth of Punjab to join the hand to fight illicit trafficking and abuse of drugs.

**LET'S Develop our lives, our communities, our identities without drugs.**

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