

UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



GENERAL

E/CN.7/229  
11 January 1952

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS  
Seventh session

ABOLITION OF OPIUM SMOKING IN THE FAR EAST

(Resolution 159 II B (VII) adopted by the  
Economic and Social Council -  
3 August 1948)

Note by the Secretary-General: As a supplement to documents E/CN.7/219/Add.2 and E/CN.7/219/Add.3 (sixth session) which contained reports for the year 1950 on the Abolition of Opium Smoking in the Far East, the Secretary-General has the honour to communicate to the Members of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs reports for that year which have been received since the sixth session of the Commission from the following Governments: Burma, India, Pakistan.



BURMA  
(13 July 1951)

1. During the year under report the Opium Den Suppression Act, 1950, was brought into operation in Rangoon Town and, as a consequence, the drive against the opium den-keepers continued more seriously and with unabated vigour. An all-out campaign was launched against the forces of opium den-keeping by combing out all petty dens seeking refuge in back-lane spaces and other remote places with a view to evading detection and prosecution. As a result, most organized opium dens have ceased to exist, leaving a few "floating dens" to cater to the requirements of addicts still remaining in hiding. From the time the Opium Den Suppression Act came into force, several petty dens flared up in the adjoining areas of Rangoon Town District, where the provisions of the Opium Den Suppression Act were not operative. No efforts were, however, being spared to hunt down these dens. During the year under review, 7031 (4301)\* raids were conducted on opium dens all over the country, of which 2778 (1925) raids were successful, resulting in the prosecution of 2581 (687) persons for illegal possession of prepared opium. The quantity of illicit opium (raw, prepared and refuse) seized in all these raids amounted to 2650 (3047) tolas or 31.8 kilogrammes together with 2443 (2072) opium smoking pipes and other smoking paraphernalia. In Rangoon Town, where opium smoking dens flourished in large numbers, mostly in China Town, 3279 (2703) raids were conducted on opium dens, of which 967 (1069) raids proved successful, resulting in 967 (339) persons being prosecuted for illegal possession of prepared opium. In all, 644 (2981) tolas or 7.728 kilogrammes of opium (raw, prepared and refuse) with 644 (1098) pipes were seized in these dens.

2. The Opium Den Suppression Act, as stated in the report for the calendar year 1949, was brought into force in the Rangoon Town District with effect from 1 April 1950. There has been no report of any difficulty in the enforcement of the provisions of the Act. The Act has made the suppression of opium dens in Rangoon more effective. As a result of the successful enforcement of the Act, both the Collector of the Rangoon Town District and the Chief Superintendent of Excise, Burma, recommended in their reports on the working of the Opium Den

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\* The figures in brackets represent corresponding figures for the previous calendar year.



Suppression Act, 1950, that this Act should be extended to other towns in the country. However, the purpose of this Act in conjunction with the operation of the anti-opium clinic scheme has been held over pending the establishment in other districts of anti-opium clinics where addicts could be cured of their habit.

3. Strenuous efforts continued to be made at the same time against opium smugglers. During the year under review several large consignments of contraband opium were seized in various parts of the country, of which the most remarkable seizure was that of 1,27,780 tolas (1533.36 kilogrammes) in a truck in Rangoon on 16 December 1950. This seizure broke all previous records of individual largest seizures ever made in the annals of the Excise Department in the country. In spite of unsettled conditions in the country, a total of 4,18,148 (1,53,298) tolas or 5017.776 kilogrammes (1839.576 kilogrammes) of smuggled opium were seized and confiscated as a result of which 1517 (2582) persons were prosecuted for illegal possession of raw opium and 1414 (2468) persons convicted. The Police and the Customs Departments also made seizures of contraband opium during the year under review. No opium was imported during the year from India.

4. The anti-opium clinic scheme which was brought into operation in the Rangoon Town District with effect from 26 August 1949, as mentioned in the previous reports, continued in force. Admissions to the clinic at Tadagale since its opening on 26 August 1949 show a total of 431, including 377 Burmans, 46 Chinese and 8 Indians, of which 320 were cured, 52 were issued certificates of registration and supplied with opium in individual doses by the Excise Department, 40 absconded, 5 died and 14 were under treatment.

Reference paragraph 4 of the Resolution requesting Government forthwith to prohibit the import of raw opium into their territories except for medical and scientific purposes

(i) Under the existing law, import of dangerous drugs into Burma is prohibited; the possession or use of such drugs is limited to medical and scientific purposes. No raw opium was imported during the year under report.

(ii) The quantity of opium (excise and confiscated) now held in stock is more than sufficient for distribution to addicts throughout the country under the anti-opium clinic scheme.



Reference paragraph 5 of the Resolution recommending that export authorization should not be issued for the export of opium to countries where opium smoking is still prevalent except for medical and scientific purposes

During the year under report, no raw opium was exported for medical and scientific purposes from Burma to foreign countries.

Statement showing the results of action taken month by month in the suppression of the illegal opium smoking establishments in the Rangoon Town District for the calendar year 1950

Month (1950)	Total number of dens raided	Total number of success- ful den raids	Number of prosecu- tions for illegal possession of prepared opium	Quantity of opium seized in the dens (raw, pre- pared and refuse) (Tolas)	Number of smoking pipes seized in the dens
January	159	65	65	72.1	40
February	181	62	62	56.13	43
March	296	100	100	48.8	81
April	271	92	92	45.8	53
May	262	86	86	96.2	54
June	331	101	101	63.12	64
July	315	93	93	86.2	70
August	330	91	91	59.1	56
September	337	81	81	21.8	55
October	294	75	75	45.10	45
November	223	54	54	20.7	34
December	278	67	67	28.7	49
TOTAL	3,279	967	967	644	644
Previous Year's Total	2,703	1,069	339	2,981	1,098



Statement showing the results of action taken month by month in  
the suppression of the illegal opium smoking establishments  
in Burma for the calendar year 1950

Month (1950)	Total number of dens raided	Total number of success- ful den raids	Number of prosecu- tions for illegal possession of prepared opium	Quantity of opium seized in the dens (raw, pre- pared and refuse) (Tolas)	Number of smoking pipes seized in the dens
January	340	154	169	147	133
February	471	213	209	228	193
March	600	230	232	250	218
April	570	230	204	179	192
May	499	215	224	216	191
June	617	243	247	320	202
July	627	244	252	265	207
August	661	254	-	288	221
September	701	245	253	200	221
October	667	262	257	186	224
November	569	248	262	185	225
December	709	240	272	186	216
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,031</b>	<b>2,778</b>	<b>2,581</b>	<b>2,650</b>	<b>2,443</b>
<b>Previous Year's Total</b>	<b>4,301</b>	<b>1,925</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>3,047</b>	<b>2,072</b>



INDIA  
(11 June 1951)

1. The special report on the progress of suppression of opium smoking for the year 1949 has been considerably amplified in Chapter XII of the Annual Report by the Government of India on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs. For reference a copy of that Chapter is attached as an Appendix.
2. During 1950, very rapid progress has been made. In the States of Assam, Orissa, Madhya Bharat, Rajasthan, Coorg and Manipur, the smoking of opium and the possession of prepared opium, are totally prohibited. In all the remaining States except the Patiala and East Punjab States Union, Kutch and Vindhya Pradesh, the smoking of opium is prohibited except by addicts who had applied for, and been granted, special registration before 31 December 1950.
3. In Kutch and Vindhya Pradesh, legislation to prohibit opium smoking, except by persons who have applied for, and been granted, special registration as opium smoking addicts, is being enacted. It is regarded as improbable that any person will apply for registration by the final date that will be specified, so that the objective of total prohibition will be very quickly achieved. It is expected that the Government of the Patiala and East Punjab States Union will enact during 1951 legislation to restrict the smoking of opium to registered addicts.
4. Full statistics of the number of registered opium smoking addicts in India on 31 December 1950 are not yet available. Excluding the States of Bombay, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab (India), Hyderabad, Mysore, Saurashtra, Travancore-Cochin and Bhopal, the total is 2,737 distributed as follows:

/State

<u>State</u>	<u>Number of persons registered as addicted to opium smoking</u>
1. Bihar	920
2. Madras	54
3. Uttar Pradesh	133
4. West Bengal	1,557
5. Jammu and Kashmir	Nil
6. Ajmer	32
7. Bilaspur	Nil
8. Delhi	41
9. Himachal Pradesh	Nil
10. Tripura	Nil

5. Except in the Ports of Bombay and Calcutta, where there are large Chinese colonies, and in one or two other large cities, illicit smoking of opium does not take place on any appreciable scale.



APPENDIX

Chapter XII - Prepared Opium

1. India has adopted the policy of total prohibition of opium smoking in 1946 - vide Appendix II of the Report by the Government of India for the Calendar Year 1946 on the traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs. Responsibility for giving practical effect to this decision had to be delegated to the Provincial and State Governments. Constitutional developments have enabled very rapid progress to be made during 1949. The power to enact Legislation is now concentrated in the 27 Governments of the 27 States that comprise the Indian Union. All except 2 of these 27 Governments have enacted and brought into effect, throughout the territories within their jurisdiction, laws to control opium smoking. The two exceptions are the Chief Commissioners' Provinces of Kutch and Vindhya Pradesh where, in practice, opium smoking is not a prevalent vice. It is expected that these two Governments will shortly introduce appropriate legislation totally prohibiting smoking of opium and the possession of prepared opium.
2. The position reached by 31 December 1949 is summarized below for each State separately:

Assam

The smoking of opium and possession of prepared opium are totally prohibited under the Assam Opium Smoking Act, 1927. Oral consumption of opium is also prohibited except by registered addicts, and the legal consumption of opium in this State for other than medical and scientific purposes has now been reduced to negligible proportions.

Bihar

(1) The Bihar and Orissa Opium Smoking Act (II of 1923) has been in force for over 20 years. As the first step, smoking of opium and the manufacture or possession of prepared opium was prohibited except by persons who applied for, and were granted registration as addicts. No fresh registration of addicts has been permitted since 31 December 1931.

(11) The provisions of this Act have been extended to the territories of all the former Indian States that are now included in the territory of the Bihar Province. No representations for special concessions have been received

/from the



from the inhabitants of these former Indian States and it can safely be assumed that they include very few persons addicted to the smoking of opium. There is no evidence to suggest that illicit smoking of opium takes place to any serious extent anywhere in the extended territory of the Province of Bihar.

#### Bombay

(i) The first step to control opium smoking was taken in 1936 with the enactment of the Bombay Opium Smoking Act (XX of 1936) which, by prohibiting smoking of opium in assembly, enabled opium smoking dens to be suppressed. The final action to give effect to the policy of total abolition is being taken under the Bombay Prohibition Act, 1949.

(ii) Possession of opium (except opium to be legally used for medical or scientific purposes) by any persons other than a permit holder is prohibited. Permits to persons (using) opium in any form for their personal consumption are only issued to persons certified by a Medical Board constituted by the Government to require opium for some specific medical reason. Legal consumption of opium, whether orally or by smoking, is thus restricted to addicts who are passed by the Medical Board and are granted permits by the Collector. Such permit holders are required to obtain the quotas allowed to them under their permits from a Government depot. Trade in opium has been abolished and the strictly limited and steadily diminishing supplies made available for permit holders are distributed solely through official channels. The maximum quantity which a permit holder is allowed to purchase and possess at a time, is half a tola and during the period of a calendar month, is specified in the permit by the Collector (subject to a maximum of 7 1/2 tolas), and such monthly quota is further subjected to a further progressive quarterly cut at the rate of 1/8 of the quota.

#### Central Provinces and Berar

(i) Control was first introduced in 1929 by the promulgation of the Central Provinces and Berar Opium Smoking Act (IV of 1929) and the issue of the Central Provinces Opium Smoking Rules, 1929. Possession of prepared opium and the smoking of opium has been totally prohibited since 1934. When the territory of the former Indian State of Eastar was merged into the Central Provinces and Berar in 1948, special provision had to be made, because smoking



of opium by registered addicts was permitted under the old State Laws. There are at present 957 registered addicts in this territory. Fresh registration has been stopped since July 1948.

(ii) Opium smoking is not indulged in illicitly to any appreciable extent, and it is estimated that the number of unregistered addicts does not exceed 4,000.

#### Madras

(i) Control was first introduced in 1934 by the issue of a Rule under Section 4-(2) of the Dangerous Drugs Act (II of 1930) to regulate the manufacture and possession of prepared opium (Government of Madras Notification No. 164 Rev. dated 29 May 1934). This rule was amended by a Notification dated 13 June 1947 and the resultant legal position is that the smoking of opium, and the possession of prepared opium by any persons other than a licensed addict, is prohibited.

(ii) During the year 1949 the total number of licensed addicts was 45. Licenses are only granted to persons who submit a written declaration that they are addicted to opium smoking, certified by a registered medical practitioner. Although registration of addicts has not been finally stopped, no new application will be granted except after very careful enquiry.

(iii) A definite programme has been laid down, and is being enforced to bring about the total abolition of the use of opium in any form, except for medical and scientific purposes by 30 September 1953. The quantity of Excise opium issued to registered addicts is being progressively reduced. During the year ending 30 September 1950, all issues will be restricted to not more than 80 per cent of the quantity issued in the previous year ended 30 September 1949, and an equal reduction will be made in the quantities to be issued in the following three years. There is no evidence to suggest that illicit smoking of opium takes place anywhere in the State of Madras to any great extent.

#### Orissa

(i) In the territories formerly included in the Province of Bihar and Orissa, control over opium smoking has been in force since 1928 under the Bihar and Orissa Opium Smoking Act II of 1928. In 1947 this Act was replaced by the Orissa Opium Smoking Act XVI of 1947.

(ii) The smoking of opium and the possession of prepared opium is totally prohibited. In 1949, 92 offences punishable under the Opium Smoking Act were

/detected but



detected but there is not evidence to suggest that illicit opium smoking takes place anywhere in the State on any appreciable scale.

#### East Punjab

Control is imposed under the East Punjab Opium Smoking Act XXV of 1948 which has replaced the Punjab Opium Smoking Act VI of 1923. Possession of prepared opium and smoking of opium by any person, other than an addict who has applied for, and been granted registration under Section 5 of the Act, is prohibited. Registration of addicts is now complete and the registers have been closed since 12 April 1949.

#### United Provinces

Control was first imposed in 1925 under the United Provinces Opium Smoking Act, 1925. This Act was superseded by the Opium Smoking Act III of 1934. The smoking of opium, and the possession of prepared opium, is prohibited except by registered addicts. Since 31 December 1936, registration of new addicts has been forbidden, except with the previous sanction of the Excise Commissioner. The number of registered addicts on 31 March 1947, was 133, and no new addicts have been registered after that date.

#### West Bengal

(1) Under the Bengal Opium Smoking Act, 1932 smoking of opium and possession of prepared opium is prohibited except by registered addicts. No fresh registration of addicts has been permitted since 1947. The total number of registered addicts on 31 December 1949 was 1,580 of whom 1,231 are Chinese. Only two registered addicts belong to the age group 20-30; 244 belong to the age group 31-40 and 1,334 are above 40.

(11) Most of the registered addicts are labourers and mill-hands. There is no evidence to suggest that illicit opium smoking takes place on a large scale. The police and excise records included the names of 1,638 persons not registered as addicts who are known to indulge in opium smoking. 234 prosecutions for offences under the Bengal Opium Smoking Act were launched in 1949 of which 215 resulted in conviction.

#### Hyderabad

Control over opium smoking has been introduced with effect from 8 August 1949 under the Hyderabad Opium Smoking Rules, 1949, made in exercise of powers under the Opium and other intoxicating Drugs Act of 1333 F (1924 A.D.). The possession

/of prepared



of prepared opium, and the smoking of opium, by any person other than a registered addict is now prohibited. Applications for registration as an addict will be entertained up to 7 August 1950 after which date no fresh registration will be permitted.

#### Kashmir

Opium smoking is prohibited subject to certain reservations. Possession of prepared opium by a person who has prepared it from opium lawfully obtained and possessed by him is permitted. So far as is known, opium smoking is not practiced except in the city of Srinagar, and in Jammu.

#### Madhya Bharat

Under Section 5 of the Madhya Bharat Opium and other Dangerous Drugs Act of Samvat 2006 which came into effect on 1 June 1949, the smoking of opium and possession of prepared opium, is totally prohibited. There is no evidence to suggest that enforcement of this law will present any serious difficulty.

#### Mysore

(1) In certain areas possession of opium in any form is prohibited. In other areas, where this total prohibition is not in force, possession of prepared opium is prohibited, except under, and in accordance with, the terms and conditions of a licence. The maximum quantity that may be legally possessed at any one time is 1/2 tola. (.0057 kgs.).

(11) The issue of licenses is restricted to persons, who have applied for registration as an addict, producing in support of their application, a medical certificate confirming that they were addicts to opium smoking before 1 August 1949.

#### Patiala and East Punjab States Union

Action to bring opium smoking under control was initiated in 1931 by the introduction of the Patiala Opium Smoking Act (I of 1933)<sup>1/</sup> in the former Indian State of Patiala. This Act has now been extended to all the former Indian States included in the Patiala and East Punjab States Union. Under this Act, opium smoking in an assembly of three or more persons in towns and "mandies" is prohibited.

#### Rajasthan

(1) Action is being taken to replace the existing separate laws by a single

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<sup>1/</sup> Indian calendar.



Rajasthan Opium Smoking Act under which opium smoking will be totally prohibited.

(11) The present state of Rajasthan comprising the former Rajasthan Union and the Indian States of Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Sirohi (excepting Abu Road tehsil and a portion of Dilwara tehsil) and the Matsya Union came into being on 7 April 1949. Before that date, opium smoking was prohibited in all these territories under the local excise acts.

#### Saurashtra

The Bombay Opium Prohibition Act XXV of 1949 has been made applicable in Saurashtra. Special legislation to control opium smoking is, therefore, not necessary. Possession of opium by any person other than a permit holder is prohibited. By the end of 1949, no permits to possess prepared opium had been applied for.

#### Travancore-Cochin

Control over opium smoking has been introduced with effect from 19 March 1949 by the enactment of the Travancore Opium Smoking Act, 1124. Smoking of opium by any person other than a registered addict is prohibited. Registration as an addict is restricted to persons not below the age of 25 whose application is supported by a medical recommendation. Provision has been made in the Act empowering the Government to stop all fresh registration by Notification. Opium smoking is not prevalent and no application for registration had been received by the end of 1949.

#### Ajmer

The United Provinces Opium Smoking Act (III of 1934) was extended, subject to certain modifications, to the territory of Ajmer-Merwara by Government of India Notification No. 3 dated 14 December 1948 issued under Section 2 of the Ajmer-Merwara (Extension of Laws) Act III of 1947. In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 10 (1) of this Act, the Chief Commissioner has promulgated the Ajmer Opium Smoking Rules, 1949, which have been in force since 1 August 1949.

Smoking of opium, and possession of prepared opium, are prohibited except by registered addicts. Registration is restricted to persons over 25 years of age who applied for registration before 1 December 1949. Thirty addicts have been registered, and no fresh registration will be permitted except with the previous sanction of the Excise Commissioner.

/Dhoral



#### Bhopal

Control over opium smoking has been enforced since 1922 under the Bhopal State Opium and other intoxicating Drugs Law. Smoking of opium in an assembly of two or more persons is prohibited. Sale of prepared opium is prohibited, and possession is restricted to not more than one tola at any one time, manufactured from opium legally obtained for the personal consumption of the holder.

#### Bilaspur

The East Punjab Opium Smoking Act (XXV of 1948) and the Rules framed by the East Punjab Government under that Act have been extended to the State of Bilaspur with effect from 29 June 1949. It is expected that very few, if any, applications for registration as an opium smoking addict will be received. So far as is known, the inhabitants of this territory do not indulge in opium smoking.

#### Coorg

It has not been found necessary to take special measures to restrict opium smoking in addition to the general action taken to control the oral consumption of opium. The Coorg Opium Rules, 1935 have now been superseded by the Coorg Opium Rules, 1949, made in exercise of the powers conferred by Sections 5 and 13 of the Indian Opium Act, (Central Act I of 1878). Possession of opium by any person other than licensed vendor or registered addict is prohibited. Registration as an addict is granted only to applicants over 21 years of age certified by a registered medical practitioner to be addicted to opium eating or opium smoking. On 31 December 1949 the total number of registered addicts was 142. Consumption will be progressively curtailed in accordance with the general policy to bring about total abolition by 31 March 1959.

#### Delhi

Control is being imposed under the Delhi Opium Smoking Rules 1949, which came into effect on 7 September 1949. Smoking of opium and possession of prepared opium by any person other than registered addict is prohibited. Forty-one persons have applied for and been granted registration as addicts and fresh registration is now not permitted.

#### Himachal Pradesh

Control over opium smoking has been imposed under the Punjab Opium Smoking



Act No. XXV of 1948 which has been made applicable to this State with effect from 25 December 1948. Possession of prepared opium and smoking of opium by any person, other than registered addicts are prohibited. No applications for registration have been received.

Manipur

The Assam Opium Act (III of 1927) has been extended to the territory of Manipur with effect from 22 October 1948. The smoking of opium and possession of prepared opium are totally prohibited. There is no evidence to suggest that illicit smoking of opium takes place on any serious scale although about 100 persons are known or believed to be addicted to smoking opium.

Tripura

Opium smoking has been prohibited by a proclamation issued by His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur, Ruler of Tripura, in exercise of powers inherent in his Highness as well as under Section 44 (a) of the Tripura Government Act of 1351 T.E. Provision is made for registering addicts, but no application for registration has been received. There is no evidence to suggest that illicit smoking of opium takes place.



PAKISTAN  
(11 July 1952)

1. Opium smoking is already prohibited in Pakistan except in favour of the existing addicts, on medical grounds so long as they survive. The number of these addicts is decreasing and no fresh registration of addicts is made. Further, in May 1950, the Government of Pakistan issued a directive to the Provincial Governments and to the Federating States to consider and adopt more stringent measures to ensure complete prohibition of opium smoking without any exception. This may entail hardship to the existing addicts but still the Governments concerned are considering necessary legislation as well as administrative measures to ensure total prohibition of opium smoking.
  2. There has been no import or export of prepared opium from or into Pakistan during the year 1950. The negligible quantity of opium consumed in smoking was prepared out of the excise opium imported from India on Government account.
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