

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



GENERAL

E/CN.7/193/Add.1
30 September 1950

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

Fifth Session

ABOLITION OF OPIUM SMOKING IN THE FAR EAST

Further Replies by Governments*

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Members of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs the replies of the following Governments on the "Progress of suppression of opium smoking" for the year 1949:

India, Burma, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (for North Borneo, Sarawak, the State of Brunei and the Federation of Malaya)

RECEIVED

OCT 3 1950

* For previous replies see documents: E/CN.7/156/Rev.1, E/CN.7/165 and Add.vols 2, 3, 4, and E/CN.7/193.

/GOVERNMENT
E/CN.7/193/Add.1

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (9 May 1950)

Report on the progress of suppression
of Opium smoking for the year 1949.

Present legal position regarding the suppression of opium smoking.

The Government of India announced the policy of total prohibition of opium smoking in the year 1946. In pursuance of this policy, smoking of opium has been generally prohibited by law in the Provinces and the States of the Indian Dominion subject to certain temporary concessions necessitated by local circumstances, the details of which have been given in paragraph 4 below. According to one of the decisions of the All Indian Opium Conference, 1949, the consumption of opium for any purpose other than medical and scientific, is to be totally eradicated within 10 years.

2. There has been no import of prepared opium or of raw opium for the manufacture of prepared opium.

3. No authorisations for export are issued except for medical and scientific purposes of raw opium to countries where opium smoking is still prevalent.

4. The following is the detailed position in the different parts of the country.

ASSAM: The Assam Prohibition Act, 1947, is in force since 1st April 1948. The prohibition is total.

BIHAR: The use of raw opium for opium smoking is prohibited throughout the Province.

C. P. & BIERAR: Smoking of opium is prohibited throughout the Province, exception being made only in respect of the registered and medically certified addicts in the territory comprising the old Indian State of Bastar. Fresh registration of addicts has been stopped since 1948.

WEST BENGAL: Opium smoking is generally prohibited, and fresh registration of addicts has been stopped since 1947.

EAST PUNJAB: Opium smoking is generally prohibited, and since 12th April 1949, fresh registration of addicts has been stopped.

UNITED PROVINCES: Opium smoking is generally prohibited, and no fresh registration of addicts is being allowed since 1948.

/ BOMBAY:

BOMBAY: Opium smoking is generally prohibited, and the quota allowed to the addicts holding permits is being progressively reduced.

DELHI: Opium smoking is generally prohibited since 1st March 1949, and the number of registered addicts is being progressively reduced.

AJMER-MERWARA: Smoking of opium and possession of prepared opium is prohibited except by registered addicts. Registration as an addict is restricted to persons of the age of 25 years or over. Registration of addicts, except under special sanction of the Excise Commissioner, was stopped with effect from 1st December 1949.

COORG: Smoking of opium and possession of prepared opium is prohibited except by registered (licensed) addicts. Only persons above the age of 21 years can register themselves as addicts, and that, only on production of a medical certificate issued by an approved medical practitioner of and above the rank of a sub-Assistant Surgeon of Coorg.

DHOPAL: Opium smoking in company is prohibited. Personal possession is allowed to the extent of one tola.

MYSORE: Possession of prepared opium except by licensed addicts has been prohibited since August 1949. The existing addicts are being registered with effect from the 1st August 1949, and only those who produce medical certificates will be given licenses. Further registration has been stopped.

HYDERABAD: Opium smoking has been prohibited except on medical grounds under orders issued in 1947.

TRIPURA: Complete prohibition of opium smoking is in force since 1946.

NOTE: Quotas allowed to registered addicts are being gradually reduced.

/BURMA

BURMA (27 JUNE 1950)

Report on the Progress of Suppression of
Smoking of Prepared Opium during the Calendar Year 1949

The Excise Department responsible for the administration of the Excise, Opium and Dangerous Drugs Laws had another successful year in the suppression of the opium-smoking habit. The drive against "the opium-den keepers", which seriously began in the previous year, continued with unabated zeal. That the opium habit had its genesis in "the opium dens" needs no emphasis, and relentless endeavours were therefore made to raid these illegal opium-smoking saloons wherever found and no large-scale sizable "opium-dens" functioning with a large number of smoking-pipes now exist in Rangoon, the capital city of Burma. Intensive action taken by the executive force has either resulted in the disintegration of these dens or has driven them underground. What exist now are "floating dens", which cater with one or at most two smoking pipes, and operate only in the back-drainage spaces, shifting from one place to another or in top-storeys of buildings not easily accessible and which cater only to hardened addicts during unusual hours. No efforts are however being spared to hunt down these new hide-outs. Two statements are annexed showing the results of action against these illegal dens during the year under review. In all, 4,301 (4,119) raids were conducted on opium dens all over the country, of which 1,325 (1,990) raids were successful, resulting in the prosecution of 687 (1,204) persons for illegal possession of prepared opium. The quantity of illicit opium (raw, prepared and refuse) seized in all these raids amounted to 3,047 (3,545) tolas or 36.56 kilograms (41.14 Kgs.), with 2,072 (1,882) opium-smoking pipes and other smoking paraphernalia. In Rangoon Town, where opium-smoking dens flourished in large numbers, mostly in China Town some 2,703 (916) raids were conducted on opium dens, of which 1,069 (491) raids proved successful, resulting in 339 (432) persons being prosecuted for illegal possession of prepared opium. In all, 2,981 (1,383) tolas or 35.77 kilograms (17.29 Kgs.) of prepared opium and refuse with 1,098 (701) pipes were seized in these dens. These relentless drives now being pursued with honesty of purpose can be asserted to have decidedly put a check at least to the spread of the opium-smoking habit in the country, and so far no recruits to this habit were reported from Rangoon.

2. As a further step towards taking more stringent measures against persons who own and run such opium-smoking saloons, a Bill known as "The Opium Den Suppression Bill" which, among others, makes illegal an assembly of two or more persons with the common object of smoking or preparing opium for smoking purposes and the possession of opium-smoking pipe, was introduced in the 1949 September Session of the Parliament and towards the close of the year, the Bill was referred to a Select Committee for examination and report. The bill has since become an Act and been brought into force, to start with, in the Rangoon Town District, with effect from the 1st April 1950.

3. Thousands of hardened addicts, however, still exist and there can be no denying the fact that opium is still being smuggled into Burma to meet the demand of these people. Strenuous efforts were continued to be made at the same time against opium smugglers and during the year under review several large consignments of contraband opium were intercepted at various parts of the country. In spite of the worsened conditions which prevailed during the year, a total of 1,53,298 (2,67,392) tolas or 1,839,58 Kgs. (3,124.98 Kgs.) of smuggled opium were seized and confiscated, as a result of which 2,582 (2,720) persons were prosecuted for illegal possession of raw opium and 2,468 (2,553) 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. As a further measure towards the suppression of the illicit importation of opium into the country, the Opium Laws were revised by an amending Act of the Parliament (Act No. XIII of 1949) which provides enhanced punishment for illegal possession of opium, making imprisonment compulsory in cases of offenders who are found to be true owners of the contraband and finally bringing in the abettors of opium offences within the law. This Act came into force with effect from the 6th April 1949.

5. During the year under report, in accordance with the revised opium policy, which has been described in the previous years' report, the anti-opium clinic scheme was brought into operation in Rangoon Town District with effect from the 26th August 1949 and the experiment is being watched with interest and closely studied with a view to its extension to other districts in the country.

According to the scheme, all addicts who submit themselves for treatment and

/cure are

cure are examined and admitted as in-patients in a hospital, which has been especially allotted for this purpose. They are given free medical treatment. Those who do not readily respond to the treatment are discharged, with a certificate given to each by the Medical Officer-in-Charge, recommending a fixed daily allowance of Opium for a limited period for consumption as medicinal doses. The responsibility for supplying opium to addicts certified as such has been given to the Excise Department, and an opium-supplying centre has been opened for the purpose. Government has fixed a nominal rate of Rs.2/- per tola, at which price these certified addicts can purchase opium from this depot. Within the period of a little over four months of the inception of the scheme, the number of opium addicts admitted into the hospital were 138 Burmans, 16 Chinese and 3 Indians, of whom 118 Burmans and 2 Indians were discharged as having been completely cured of the habit. Owing to the limited number of beds available at this hospital, the rate of admission have been necessarily slow. Towards the close of the year, arrangements were being made for more spacious accommodation in order to admit a good number of addicts at a time.

6. The statistics furnished are not for the whole country, as owing to disturbances which prevailed during the year, reports were received from only 27 out of 36 districts, and owing to disruption of communications, many reports were received late. This explains the delay in the preparation of this report.

/ / Statement

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 1949

Year and Months	Total No. of dens raided	Total No. of successful den raids	No. of prosecutions for illegal possession of prepared opium	Quantity Opium seized in dens (raw, prepared & refuse)	No. of smoking pipes seized in the dens.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
"Tolas"*					
<u>1949</u>					
January	337	Not reported	160	Not reported	152
February	194	76	76	47-1/2	47
March	303	125	172	131	135
April	210	114	Figures not separately available	176	139
May	277	126	279	296	131
June	257	146	Figures not separately available	168	164
July	340	145	do	462	164
August	446	203	do	392	182
September	774	296		310	252
October	679	260	do	391	225
November	Not reported	225	do	511	235
December	484	209		163	246
TOTAL:	4301	1925	687	3047	2072
PREVIOUS YEAR'S TOTAL	4119	1990	1204	3545	1882

* Note by the Secretariat:
1 Tola equals 11.66 grammes

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 1949

Year and Months	Total No. of dens raided	Total No. of successful den raids	No. of prosecutions for illegal possession of prepared opium	Quantity of opium seized in dens (raw, prepared and refuse) "Tolas"*	No. of smoking pipes seized in the dens
<u>1949</u>					
January	93	39	-	-	-
February	103	41	36	20 $\frac{1}{2}$	36
March	69	-	-	71	91
April	148	72	93	196	109
May	93	68	106	163	75
June	76	63	-	393	85
July	154	95	104	698	113
August	200	105		353	107
September	574	174		304	170
October	473	146		327	122
November	414	146		341	107
December	306	120		115	83
TOTAL:	2703	1069	339	2981	1096
PREVIOUS YEAR'S TOTAL	916	491	432	1383	701

* Note by the Secretariat: 1 Tola equals 11.66 grammes.

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

As stated in my previous report, one pound of first-quality raw confiscated opium was exported as a sample by a firm in Burma to be used in the manufacture of medicinal opium to a pharmaceutical firm in U.S.A. and this was the only solitary case of shipment of raw opium from Burma during the year covered both by export and import authorizations issued by the Governments of the exporting and importing countries in accordance with international regulations.

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

Under the existing law, import of dangerous drugs into Burma is prohibited except in the case of persons who are permitted to possess and use it for medical and scientific purposes. The Government of the Union of Burma does not contemplate importing raw opium in future. It is the intention of the Government to purchase no more opium from India. Its requirements for doling out opium from anti-opium clinics during the 5 years scheme to addicts on medical grounds will be met from the existing stocks of raw opium purchased from India in 1946, and of confiscated opium and also from opium produced in areas bordering the Shan States after the existing stock is exhausted.

C O P Y

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND
(FOR NORTH BORNEO) (14 AUGUST 1950)

Report on the Suppression of Opium Smoking for 1949

During the year there were no imports of prepared opium of chandu. No opium was imported for the purpose of manufacturing prepared opium.

The Commissioner of Customs and Excise reports that seizures of smuggled supplies for the year amounted to:-

	Tahil*	Chen	Hun
Opium	24	3	2
Chandu	28	1	9

Prosecutions were instigated in 27 cases for offences under the Opium and Chandu Ordinance. Twenty-five convictions were obtained involving 35 persons and fines totalling \$9,320 imposed.

Fines paid amounted to \$650.00.

* Note by the Secretariat: 1 Tahil equals 37.8 grammes.

C O P Y

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND
(FOR SARAWAK) (14 AUGUST 1950)

Report on the Suppression of Opium Smoking for the
Year 1949

1. The Customs Department continued its vigilance at all ports, resulting in the detection of 18 attempts to smuggle opium, mainly raw opium. In all cases where ownership could be established (17 in all) the offenders were prosecuted and received sentences varying from fines to two years' imprisonment.

2. The following are comparative figures for convictions for offences of all sorts against the Opium Ordinance and confiscations for 1948 and 1949:-

	<u>1948</u>	<u>1949</u>
Convictions	63	94
Confiscations	11.917 kg.	30.213 kg.

3. Nine persons were treated for opium addiction.

C O P Y

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND
(FOR THE STATE OF BRUNEI) (17 AUGUST 1950)

Report on the Suppression of Opium Smoking in
1949

So far as is known there were only two importations of opium during the year, one of which was of prepared opium and the other of raw opium. The circumstances were as follows:-

- (a) In July 12 tahils (40.8 grammes) of prepared opium were imported by a passenger in a public bus from Sarawak territory across the border. The chandu was wrapped in 500 bamboo leaf packets and hidden in a basket of vegetables, a search carried out by the Customs Officer in this State revealed the smuggled chandu. One male Chinese was arrested for possession and subsequently convicted and sentenced to 6 months R.I. The Chandu was confiscated and destroyed by fire.
- (b) In June 2 katis 3 tahils (119 grammes) of raw opium were imported by a passenger (male Chinese) on board m.v. "Klias" (Sabah Steamship Co., agents Harrisons and Crosfield (Borneo) Ltd.) whose last port of call was Labuan, North Borneo. The opium was hidden in two baskets (a) the first basket had a double bottom in which a quantity of opium was concealed wrapped in cellophane and (b) the second basket had not a double bottom, but contained trousers, a pillow and some Chinese ink slabs, the opium was concealed in all three articles. On arrival at this port the passenger passed into the Customs Examination Shed where the discovery was made. The passenger was arrested and subsequently convicted and sentenced to 9 months R.I. The opium was confiscated and destroyed by fire.

2. The draft Enactment to suppress opium smoking referred to in my report dated 2nd April 1949 was not passed by the end of the year.

3. The extent to which opium smoking is practised in Brunei is small and is confined chiefly to imported Chinese labour employed mainly in the rehabilitation of war damaged areas.

C O P Y

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

(for the FEDERATION OF MALAYA) (17 AUGUST 1950)

Annual Report on the Suppression of Opium Smoking for the Year 1949

1. History

The general background of the suppression of opium smoking in the territories now comprising the Federation of Malaya was given in paragraphs 1 to 8 of the Report for 1948.

2. Developments during 1949

There was no change in the general policy of suppression during the year but in the practical measures taken to implement this policy the emphasis was laid upon the detection and prevention of large-scale smuggling of opium and chandu rather than upon mass raids on chandu smoking saloons.

During the year 18,803.76 tahils (approximately 1,570 lbs.) of raw opium and 3,312.12 tahils (approximately 275 lbs.) of chandu were seized and 2,775 persons were prosecuted for offences under the Opium and Chandu Proclamation. The seizures of opium and chandu were nearly three times as great as the seizures made during 1948. Comparative figures are:-

	<u>1948</u>	<u>1949</u>
Opium seized	6,564.48 Tahils*	18,803.76 Tahils*
Chandu	1,544.95 "	3,312.12 "
Chandu Dross	374.53 "	603.36 "
Chandu Pipes	2,160	2,929
Persons prosecuted	2,279	2,775

3. Number of Addicts

As the registration of chandu smokers was abolished after the Japanese War it has not been possible to arrive at any reliable estimate of the number of addicts at present in the country.

* Note by the Secretariat:
1 Tahil equals 37.8 grammes

4. Sources of illicit supply

The majority of opium and chandu seized in the Federation was, as far as could be ascertained, of Siamese origin. There was little or no direct trade between China and Federation of Malaya ports and consequently opium and chandu of Chinese origin was little seen in the Federation - what there was of it probably entered via the Colony of Singapore. A comparatively small quantity of Indian opium found its way into the Federation via Penang and Port Swettenham.

5. Immense profits are still being made from the illicit traffic in opium and chandu and this fact taken in conjunction with the fact that large quantities of opium and chandu can be procured in Thailand (where a policy of controlled smoking is still followed) constitutes an almost irresistible temptation to certain sections of the population of this country to indulge in this illicit trade. Despite this the Government of the Federation of Malaya has made sure, if slow, progress towards the ultimate implementation of the policy of total suppression.
