

European Update

Czech Republic

Beginning January 1, Czechs can grow up to five marijuana plants or have several marijuana cigarettes in their pockets without fear of criminal prosecution. Previously what constituted a small amount was not specified and the police and courts loosely interpreted the penal code case by case, often resulting in incarceration of home growers.

http://www.ncpa.org/sub/dpd/index.php?Article_ID=18793

Ireland

Jail drug seizures treble to 1,100 in just 8 months. A huge increase in the number of drugs seized by prison warders in Irish jails has been reported this year by the Department of Justice. <http://www.herald.ie/national-news/jail-drug-seizures-treble-to-1100-in-just-8-months-1983528.html>

Isle of Man

A cocaine dealer has been jailed for four years by Deemster Doyle. A 27 year old man admitted possessing cocaine with intent to supply and possessing cannabis bush and resin. He was arrested on July 23rd after police searched his room and found over £1000 worth of cocaine and £100 pounds worth of cannabis,

<http://www.isleofman.com/news/article.aspx?article=22825&area=2>

Spain

Spanish police have found over 100kg of cocaine in banana shipment after earlier they found huge quantity of cocaine in flower shipment at an Airport in the country. According to the police traffickers have made a mistake and the boxes of bananas were delivered to supermarkets. It is believed that the cocaine was intended for Valencia. Over 25kg of cocaine were found in a shop in Madrid.

<http://www.focus-fen.net/index.php?id=n205567>

Spain

Spanish police intercepted a two-tonne shipment of cocaine, smuggled into the country from Colombia. The drugs, which Spanish media reports say were worth 70m euros (£62.8m), were hidden beneath a consignment of thousands of cut flowers. They were discovered by police in an operation code-named "Flower Power" at Foronda airport, in the Basque Country.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/8433220.stm>

Turkey

Turkish police recently confiscated 185 kilograms of heroin in the eastern province of Agri, in a counter-narcotic operation was launched six months ago and was carried out in three stages.

<http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/94366/turkish-police-seize-185-kg-heroin-in-eastern-province.html>

United Kingdom

A bacteria could be used to reduce the addictiveness of cocaine, scientists have found. The discovery has been hailed as possible method of helping addicts get off Cocaine and could prevent deaths from overdose. The naturally-occurring bacterial enzyme Cocaine esterase, CocE, breaks down cocaine which reduced its addictive properties. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/science-news/6922242/Bacteria-could-tackle-cocaine-addiction.html>

United Kingdom

Top British athletes suspected of doping offences could be followed by private detectives and banned from sport even if they have never failed a test. The new national anti-drug agency will encourage athletes to call a hotline if they suspect fellow competitors and coaches.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/sport/olympics/article6973922.ece>

United Kingdom

Children as young as ten are getting addicted to cocaine, according to reports. In the last three years, there has been 65% increase in the number of kids trying to get rid of the drug in England. According to the National Treatment Agency, more than 746 under-18s were nursed through their dependency on the Class A drug this year, which is higher than 453 in 2005/6.

http://www.nta.nhs.uk/publications/documents/nta_substance_misuse_among_yp_0809.pdf

United Kingdom

As part of the government's commitment to tackle the emerging threat of so called 'legal highs', the substances now banned under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 include:

- Chemical solvent GBL (Gamma-Butyrolactone) and a similar chemical – which are converted into GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate) in the body and often used as 'club drugs' – are now controlled as Class C drugs when intended for human consumption;

- Synthetic cannabinoids – man-made chemicals sprayed on herbal smoking products such as 'Spice', which act on the body in a similar way to cannabis but can be far more potent, are now controlled as Class B drugs alongside cannabis; and
- BZP (Benzylpiperazine) and related piperazines, which are stimulants, similar to amphetamine, are now controlled as Class C drugs.

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/content/detail.aspx?NewsAreald=2&ReleaseID=409832&SubjectId=2>

World Update

UNODC

Looking back and forging ahead: 10 ways UNODC makes a difference. At the end of 2009 the UNODC revisits its work to promote global justice, integrity, health and security.

http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2009/December/looking-back-and-forging-ahead_-tens-ways-unodc-makes-a-difference.html

Afghanistan

Status of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Counternarcotics Programs in Afghanistan. Full Status report. 67-page PDF [United States Department of State, Office of Inspector General]

<http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/134183.pdf>

Algeria

Algerian border guards have seized more than four tonnes of cannabis following a skirmish with smugglers. Officials stopped two four-wheel-drive vehicles carrying 4.4 tonnes of the drug in Algeria's far southwest. After clashing with the border guards, two suspects fled towards the Moroccan border while a third was arrested.

http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5g9SfmUTGFJTPeexs4_3Cwlxqjmq

China

A British man convicted of drug smuggling in China has been executed. Akmal Shaikh, 53, of London, had denied any wrongdoing and his family said he was mentally ill. The execution took place despite repeated calls from his family and the British government for clemency.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8433285.stm>

Bolivia

President Evo Morales said that he plans to make it legal for Bolivia's farmers to grow small parcels of coca plants. Morales, who also heads a coca growers association, said he wants to permit individual farmers to cultivate coca plots of 40 meters by 40 meters (130 feet by 130 feet). Coca leaf is the key ingredient of cocaine.

http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2009/12/26/world/AP-LT-Bolivia-Coca.html?_r=1

Colombia

Drug enforcement agents in Colombia's Pacific port Buenaventura seized some 750 kg of cocaine in separate shipments bound for Belgium and Spain. The cocaine was hidden in coffee and polypropylene shipments. Drug enforcement agents have seized 123.5 tons of cocaine this year. The cocaine was mixed with the polypropylene, and it took chemists four days to separate the drug from the thermoplastic polymer, which is used to make packaging materials, textiles and other products. The smugglers painted the material green, black, yellow, blue and other colours in an effort to throw off police.

<http://www.vamban.com/colombia-seizes-750-kg-of-cocaine-bound-for-europe/>

Colombia

Colombia says it has fallen short of its goal for eradicating coca crops in 2009, blaming it on violent reactions from drug traffickers and budget problems despite having received billions of dollars in U.S. aid. In 2009 nearly 60,000 hectares (232 square miles) were eradicated manually in Colombia, about 10,000 hectares (39 square miles) short of the government's goal.

http://www.seattlepi.com/national/1102ap_lt_drug_war_colombia.html

Israel

A 14-year-old Israeli cancer patient has been allowed to smoke cannabis to relieve the effects of chemotherapy. The Health Ministry approved a request to treat her side effects, including pain and loss of appetite.

http://current.com/items/91805659_israeli-girl-14-gets-medical-cannabis.htm

Lebanon

Lebanese customs officials confiscated seven kilogrammes of cocaine worth \$1m at Beirut International Airport on Thursday. Customs officials discovered the cocaine in the suitcase of a 23-year-old Lebanese man arriving from Nigeria on an Ethiopian Airlines flight.

<http://www.punchng.com/Articl.aspx?theartic=Art2009122614234298>

Nigeria

The Nigerian National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has intercepted 56.25 kg of heroin concealed inside car shock absorbers at the Murtala Mohammed International Airport in Lagos. The car shock absorbers, which originating from Pakistan, were intercepted at the cargo section of the airport before the new year.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2010-01/02/content_12743808.htm

Philippines

Police seized 16 kilos of high-grade cocaine found in the reefer machines of several container vans inside the Maersk container yard in Sasa.

<http://www.mapinc.org/drugnews/v09.n1106.a03.html>

Venezuela

Venezuela reported 60 metric tons of drugs were confiscated in 2009, an 11 percent bigger haul than the previous year, and said anti-narcotics efforts had improved since it ended cooperation with the United States. The South American nation is a major transit country for Colombian cocaine to Europe and, to a lesser extent, the United States. Cocaine and marijuana accounted for nearly all of Venezuela's drug confiscations in 2009.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE60118H20100102>

Drug Update

Web Watch

World Anti-Doping Agency

WADA was established in 1999 as an international independent agency composed and funded equally by the sport movement and governments of the world. Its key activities include scientific research, education, development of anti-doping capacities, and monitoring of the World Anti Doping Code (Code) – the document harmonizing anti-doping policies in all sports and all countries. WADA is a Swiss private law Foundation. Its seat is in Lausanne, Switzerland, and its headquarters are in Montreal, Canada. WADA works towards a vision of the world that values and fosters a doping-free culture in sport. <http://www.wada-ama.org/>

European cities against drugs

ECAD is Europe's leading organization promoting a drug free Europe and representing millions of European citizens. Drug dealing and drug abuse cause enormous problems in Europe. Nations and their citizens are affected by the consequences of drug abuse. ECAD member cities work to develop initiatives and efforts against drug abuse supporting the United Nations Conventions which oppose legalization and promote policies to eradicate drug abuse worldwide. <http://www.ecad.net/>

Future Issues

I would like to express thanks to those persons around the world who have contributed to this issue in particular to **Jim Young and Roger van de Sompel**

Items for inclusion in future issues should be forwarded to paul@paul-cook.net

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