

NEWS RELEASE ON PAST ANTI-DRUG EVENTS

(from the media)

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ON CARICC MEMBER-STATES

REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

THE OSCE HAS TRAINED DRUG CONTROL AGENCY STAFF IN THE INVESTIGATION OF CRIMES RELATED TO DRUG TRAFFICKING VIA THE INTERNET

In Dushanbe, a three-day training course on how to investigate crimes related to drug trafficking via the Internet, supported by the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe, was completed.

About 22 staff members of the Drug Control Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan and other law enforcement agencies of Tajikistan participated in a training course conducted by experts from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation.

The training course was aimed at strengthening the capacity of Tajikistan's law enforcement agencies to combat transnational organized crime, including trafficking in drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors. It used interactive methods and practical examples to show participants how to use cellular phones and personal computers in drug-related crime.

<https://www.osce.org/ru/programme-office-in-dushanbe/440705>

ON OTHER COUNTRIES

GEORGIA



NARCOLOGIST: MORE THAN 60,000 INJECTING DRUG USERS IN GEORGIA

TBILISI, December 7th - News-Georgia. According to recent studies, there are over 60,000 injecting drug users in Georgia. The newspaper "Rezonansi" writes about it with reference to the narcologist Zurab Sikharulidze.

"Today there are 60 thousand problem drug users in the country, i.e. people who inject drugs. This study was conducted when no new psychoactive substances were consumed on a mass scale. Accordingly, I think that this figure has probably increased by 20-25%," Sikharulidze said.

The state-funded drug detoxification procedures are carried out by an average of 40 people every month. The number of beneficiaries throughout the country does not exceed 500 per year. Meanwhile, the effect of such a procedure is observed in 10% of cases.

As for methadone substitution therapy, 13 thousand people are undergoing it in Georgia, Sikharulidze noted.

The narcologist is sure that services for drug addicts will not be able to work effectively until the legislation on drug policy is changed in Georgia.

It is not the first year that the drug policy of Georgia, which was tightened under the previous government, requires reforms, human rights defenders and representatives of non-governmental organizations. The opposition also agrees with their conclusions.

Supporters of the reform note that the current legislation is not focused on preventing drug use and treating drug addiction, but on punitive measures that are ineffective and do not reduce the number of drug addicts.

In November 2017, the Constitutional Court of Georgia abolished criminal liability for marijuana use. At the time, many called this a historic but insufficient breakthrough in the fight to liberalize Georgia's drug policy.

Several different draft laws have been submitted to the Parliament, providing for the relaxation of legislation in this area, as well as a clear distinction between consumers and distributors of narcotic drugs.

There were many opponents of the reform among the members of the parliamentary majority. None of the proposed draft laws were ever adopted.

<https://www.newsgeorgia.ge/narkolog-v-gruzii-bolee-60-tysyach-potrebitelej-inektsionnyh-narkotikov/>

THAILAND



THE THAI MINISTER OF HEALTH CALLS ON FARMERS TO GROW MARIJUANA

Anutin Charnvirakul, who is also Deputy Prime Minister in Thailand, said he signed a draft decree allowing farmers to grow marijuana. The regulation on cannabis will be reviewed by the State Council and then submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers.

The proposed regulation was intended to allow individual farmers to obtain permission to grow cannabis plants for medical purposes. He said that the agriculture should grow drugs for the medical industry together with an authorised state body. Authorization to grow cannabis will be reviewed by the Food and Drug Administration in Thailand.

"When the regulation comes into force, those who want to grow cannabis can register as farmers. They will be able to cooperate with public hospitals by growing cannabis plants for them," he said.

The campaign to allow cannabis plants to be grown at home has not yet been studied by the government house. The minister said he is amending the Narcotics Law in Thailand. First of all, to allow farmers to grow at least six plants each.

Meanwhile, Chiang Mai has already grown 2,000 cannabis plants. The largest batch of 12,000 cannabis plants in Thailand was planted in a greenhouse at Maejo Medical University. It is believed to be the first ever medical cannabis manufacturing facility in ASEAN.



They were planted to produce a batch of one million bottles containing five milliliters of hemp oil for patients. The facility is under strict security because, technically, cannabis continues to be considered a narcotic drug in Thailand. However, a recent amendment to the law allows for the cultivation and prescription of cannabis for medical purposes. Cultivation of crops can only be carried out legally by government agencies.

Maeho University, the Department of Medical Services and the State Pharmaceutical Organization signed a memorandum of understanding in June. The Department has donated 12,000 seeds to develop cannabis plantations, including the development of local cannabis varieties for medical use.

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