

Amit Shah calls for ruthless action against drugs syndicate

He chaired the 7th apex level meeting of Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD) today

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THE HINDU BUREAU



Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah chairs the 7th Apex Level Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD) Meeting, in New Delhi on Thursday. The meeting is aimed to coordinate and synergise the efforts of various Central and State government agencies involved in countering drug trafficking and abuse in India. | Photo Credit: ANI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah called for ruthless action against drug smuggling syndicates stating that police and other agencies should not only aim to arrest those who consume narcotics. The Minister launched a toll-free helpline called MANAS (Madak Padarth Nishedh Asuchna Kendra) at 1933, a web portal, a mobile app for citizens to connect round-the clock with Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) to share anonymous

information on drug peddling, trafficking or consultation related to issues such as drug abuse, de-addiction and rehabilitation.

He chaired the 7th apex level meeting of Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD) on Thursday.

Highlighting the major challenges posed by synthetic drugs, Mr. Shah said a new danger has emerged as the entire business of such substances is getting linked with terrorism and the money coming from drugs has emerged as the most serious threat to the security of the country.

He added that due to the drugs trade, other channels of economic transactions meant to weaken the economy have also been strengthened. Many such organisations have been formed that are getting involved not only in drugs trade but also in illegal hawala dealings and tax evasion, he said.

“Foreign countries have decriminalised drugs-related offences as they do not have enough space in jails, it is not due to any humanitarian approach. Don’t only aim to arrest people who consume drugs, don’t go after the small fish, unearth the entire chain and network of drug supply,” Mr. Shah pointed out.

He added that maritime routes were being used for smuggling drugs. “Sometime back, I met an officer who casually said that a drug consignment was meant to go to Maldives or Sri Lanka. There should be a conscious decision to strike against such networks,” Mr. Shah said.

He asked all agencies to increase the usage of the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (PITNDPS). “Harsh laws are made to fight organised crimes. Strategy for coastal and land-locked areas should be unique. It should be outcome and result oriented,” he said.

The Minister said all agencies should move from ‘Need to Know’ policy to that of ‘Duty to Share’. “There should be a ruthless approach towards supply of drugs, a strategic approach towards demand reduction and a humane approach towards harm reduction. He said that all three are different but unless they do this they will not be successful,” he said.

He inaugurated NCB's zonal office in Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir that will focus towards curbing drug trafficking through the north-western border of India. NCB now has 30 zonal offices and 7 regional offices.

Mr. Shah said that from 2004 to 2023, 1.52 lakh kg of drugs worth ₹5,933 crore were seized, while in the 10 years from 2014 to 2024, this quantity increased to 5.43 lakh kg, which is worth more than ₹22,000 crore.