

**64th Session of Commission on Narcotic Drugs
(CND)**

12th April, 2021

Statement by Mr. Rakesh Asthana, DG, NCB

Chair, Her. Excellency, Ambassador Dr. Dominika Krois

Her. Excellency Ghada Fathi Waly, ED UNODC,

President INCB,

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and
Gentlemen;

On behalf of the Government of India let me congratulate you Ambassador on your election as Chair and other members of the Bureau. You can count on our full support and cooperation for successful conclusion of this session.

2. At the time when the world continues to grapple with Covid-19, I appreciate the zeal of every member state participating here to discuss the world drug problem.

3. The recent World Drug Report has brought again our focus to the ever-mutating complex challenges including the economic downturn associated with the Covid-19 which may push disadvantaged people to engage in harmful evil of drug

use. This needs greater commitment and better resources for prevention and treatment networks.

4. During 2020 an action oriented and participatory Campaign called the 'Drug Free India Campaign' has been launched in the areas found most vulnerable to Substance Abuse. A three-pronged approach of Demand Reduction, Harm Reduction and Supply Curb has helped the campaign gain momentum with millions participating towards the goal of making India Drug Free.

5. In pursuance of the UN spirit of "health and welfare of mankind" India is committed to ensure the availability of substances for medical purpose, while preventing their diversion. During Covid-19 induced worldwide lockdown, to facilitate the legitimate trade of drugs, we reacted to dynamically evolving situation and provided necessary relaxations to the manufacturers, traders, importers and exporters.

6. Excellency, during pandemic we have noticed and countered spike in drug trafficking through courier/ parcel services based on internet and dark-net. The real time data sharing and symbiotic cooperation between Public-Private stake holders has led to 34 seizures in last 10 days with a cumulative figure of 3 million psychotropic substances

including tramadol and 15 kg of Amphetamine in India. Despite challenges of Covid-19, drug law enforcement agencies were able to unearth such cases and surpassed the seizures of previous year. This pandemic has made us to realize that the problem having global spread needs close international cooperation.

7 In conclusion, I compliment the international community for the tremendous work and understanding shown during last one year when the whole world was facing multiple challenges. I would also reiterate India's strong commitment to curb the menace of drugs. I am confident that this session and its outcome will give a new impetus to the national, bilateral, regional and international action towards realizing our shared objectives.

Thank You.