

Drug Abuse Among Prison Population - A Case Study of Tihar Jail

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**National Survey on Extent, Patterns and Trends
of Drug Abuse in India**

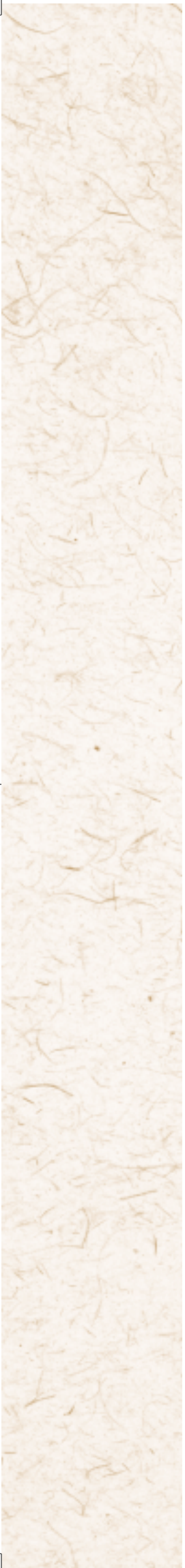
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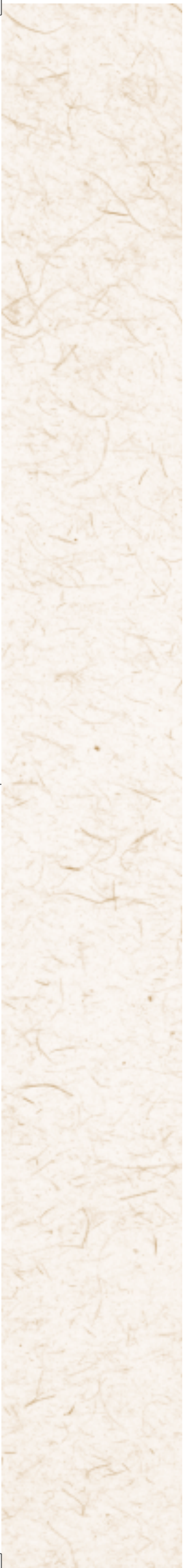


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Foreword

In order to generate more knowledge in the area of drug abuse, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, Regional Office for South Asia commissioned a few thematic studies as part of their project, National Survey on Extent, Pattern and Trends of Drug Abuse in India. What has emerged from these studies are monographs, which attempt to analyze and disseminate data based on this research. One component of this project is a monograph entitled “*Drug Abuse among Prison Population: A Case Study of Tihar Jail*”.

The monograph attempts to provide the reader an insight into issues pertaining to drug abuse and drug abusers over a period of four years, in the largest jail in Asia, the *Tihar Jail*.

This study is certainly a stepping-stone towards generating meaningful data in future. I hope that these studies will raise more questions than they can answer, because the purpose of every study is not merely to provide answers to known questions but to begin a quest for more informative knowledge and understanding. I hope the monographs succeed in doing first that.

Jayati Chandra, IAS
Joint Secretary (SD)
Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment



Prologue

The drug menace touches millions of lives in both developed and developing countries. Its most negative impact is concentrated amongst the vulnerable and marginalized in societies.

Cognizant of this fact and in line with its mandate, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, Regional Office for South Asia (UNDCPROSA) and the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment have launched major initiatives in the area of drug demand reduction through several projects. One of these includes a focussed thematic study on drug abuse among prisoners.

This monograph entitled "*Drug Abuse among Prison Population: A Case STUDY OF Tihar Jail*" highlights the various issues concerning drug abuse among prisoners over last four years as seen in *Tihar Jail*, New Delhi, India. The aim is to make this data available to a wide section of people and provide understanding of the issues in drug abuse relating to prison population.

This monograph is an important step forward in the joint efforts of UNDCP-ROSA and the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment to generate knowledge on vital drug related issues in the region. It is hoped that this research will also provide reference points for assessing long-term change in years to come. We hope to undertake a number of specialized studies in the future, with greater depth of analysis, to serve as useful tools for decision makers in the region.

Renate Ehmer
Regional Representative
UNDCP, ROSA

Preface

Much of the information on abuse of drugs in India is anecdotal and the available reports are from small-scale surveys carried out in isolated areas of the country. Rational response and national programme planning require accurate data through painstaking research from many parts of the nation. In 1999, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, Regional Office for South Asia decided to undertake a large-scale national survey to obtain information on extent, pattern and magnitude of drug abuse in the country. For this purpose multiple indicators and several methods to assess the situation were chosen.

The major components of this study are National Household Survey, Drug Abuse Monitoring System and Rapid Assessment Survey (RAS). Additionally, special studies on exclusive population like women, rural subjects, people living in border towns and prison population have also been carried out. The data on drug abuse among prison population in India is virtually absent, though it is widely believed that a significant percentage of population in the prison may be addicted to one or more drugs.

The current project provides a unique opportunity to study the extent and pattern of drug abuse in a large prison of the country and describes the profile of drug abusers. Further more, the organisation (*An Association for Scientific Research on the Addiction, AASRA, New Delhi*) was already involved in collection of data in a systematic fashion from drug abusing subjects in the *Tihar Jail* and over last several years. Thus it was possible to compare the data on several parameters over four years (1997-2000) and judge the changing pattern of drug abuse among this population. The monograph extracts information from the special focussed thematic study titled "*Drug Abuse among Prison Population in India: A Case Study of Tihar Jail*". The information described in the monograph enriches the National Survey and for the first time, describes the profile of incarcerated addicts in a methodical way.

The report is the collective effort of several persons who designed, executed and analysed the data obtained by several staff members of AASRA. It is hoped that the monograph would provide sufficient scientific leads to plan a larger study on Drug Abuse among Prison Population in India.

It is expected that the voluminous information in this monograph would acquaint the policy makers to frame responses and strategies for interventions for special population like prisoners.

Rajat Ray
Scientific Editor

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The UNDCP, Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the research team from AASRA, who carried out this study

The focussed thematic study “*Drug Abuse among Prison Population: A Case Study of Tihar Jail*” was carried out by Dr. H. S. Sethi, (An Association for Scientific Research on the Addiction, AASRA, New Delhi) at the Tihar Jail, New Delhi. The study would not have been possible without the support of Mr. Ajay Agrawal, Director General, Delhi Prisons, Officer-in-charge, Statistical Department of Prison Headquarters, Dr. Aruna Jain, Resident Medical Officer, Tihar Jail, Delhi Prison and members of I.C. Trust, New Delhi.

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