



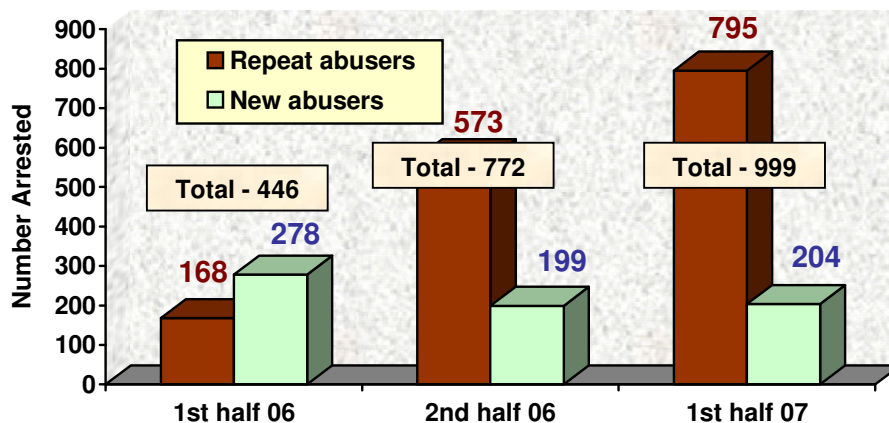
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CNB NEWS RELEASE

Drug Situation for Jan to Jun 2007

The Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) continues to sustain its intensive enforcement efforts in keeping a tight lid on the supply of drugs in Singapore as well as in suppressing the demand for drugs. In terms of major operations, CNB mounted 26 major operations against drug traffickers and abusers in the first six months of 2007, resulting in the breakup of 14 syndicated drug trafficking activities.

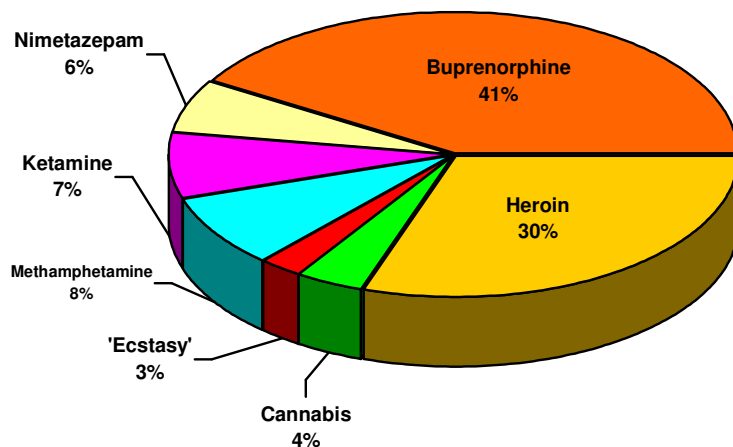
Total and New Abusers arrested



2 In the first six months of 2007, 999 drug abusers were arrested as compared to 772 in the preceding half year and 446 in the first six months of 2006. On the other hand, the number of new abusers had fallen. 204 new abusers were arrested in Jan to Jun 2007 as compared to 278 arrested in the same period last year.

3 The increase in the number of abusers arrested came from the repeat group of abusers who formed 80% of total abusers arrested. This is an indication that the drug abuse problem is largely contained within the existing pool of abusers.

Abusers by Drug Type



4 In the first half of 2007, buprenorphine abusers formed the majority (or 41%) of abusers arrested. In terms of absolute numbers, this translates to 414 as compared to 419 arrested over four and a half month in 2006. Since buprenorphine was classified as a controlled drug in August 2006, CNB has carried out dedicated and sustained operations to weed out these abusers. As with any new drugs that we start to test for or classify as a controlled drug, the numbers are likely to be high in the initial period. However, with sustained enforcement and tough legislation, it is likely that the number of abusers will decline subsequently.

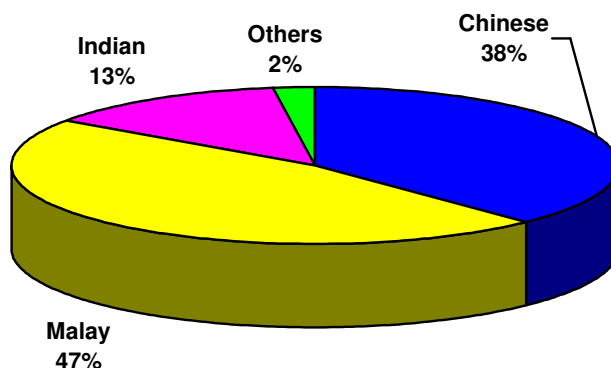
5 Heroin abusers formed the next largest group, making up 30% (or 303 abusers) of the total abusers arrested. Synthetic drugs, which refer to 'Ecstasy', methamphetamine, ketamine and nimetazepam formed 25% of total abusers arrested while cannabis abusers formed the remaining 4%.

Impact of Classification of Buprenorphine as a Controlled Drug

6 Overall, the rise in the number of abusers arrested in the first half of 2007 came from the repeat group of buprenorphine and heroin abusers arrested. This is not an unexpected development given that there were a significant number of known buprenorphine users prior to the classification of the drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act.

7 In terms of new abusers by drug type, it is noteworthy that except for heroin, new abusers of all the other drug types had registered declines. Even for heroin, the number of new abusers is low at 30.

Abusers by Ethnicity



8 In the first half of 2007, Malay abusers formed a larger proportion of abusers arrested at 47%, followed by the Chinese abusers at 38%. Most of the Malay abusers were arrested for abuse of buprenorphine while most of the Chinese abusers were arrested for abuse of heroin.

Drug seizures

Drug type	1st half 2006	1 st half 2007
Heroin	2.6 kg	6.8kg
Cannabis	3.5 kg	28.5kg
'Ecstasy'	2,224 tablets	3,985 tablets
Methamphetamine	0.3 kg	0.8kg
Ketamine	3.6 kg	2.7kg
Nimetazepam	17,362 tablets	11,850 tablets
Buprenorphine	-	1,731 tablets

9 In terms of seizures, more heroin and cannabis were seized in Jan to Jun 2007 as compared to the same period last year. For cannabis, there was a large single seizure of 20kg of cannabis in an operation conducted in Apr 2007. For heroin, CNB has successfully intercepted several seizures at wholesale level before they reached the retail levels. This has kept the average street price of heroin high and constant at \$50 per straw.

Conclusion: CNB Remains Vigilant on Enforcement

10 The rise in the number of abusers arrested in the first half of 2007 came from the repeat group of buprenorphine and heroin abusers arrested. CNB has thus kept up its enforcement to weed out both categories of abusers so as to ensure that they do not become drugs of serious concern.

11 The number of new abusers arrested had been decreasing. This shows that the drug abuse problem is largely confined to the pool of repeat abusers. Among the repeat abusers arrested, more than 60% were prosecuted for the long-term imprisonment (LT) regime. This means that a significant proportion of the abusers arrested will be kept away for a long period and prevented from further abuse or contaminating others.

12 The LT regime has been effective in deterring recalcitrant abusers from relapsing again into drug abuse. From the first batch of LT1 inmates released since 2001, over a 6-year period, fewer than 10% have been convicted under LT2.

13 CNB will maintain its rigorous enforcement and take recalcitrant abusers out of circulation to ensure that the drug situation remains under control. At the same time, a high profile preventive drug education will remain critical in preventing potential abusers from falling prey to drug abuse and keeping the new abuser figure low.

14 Overall, the local drug situation remains well contained, with drugs remaining scarce and prices high. In terms of the number of abusers, whether in absolute numbers or as a percentage of resident population, Singapore's drug abuse prevalence rate compares favourably with any other country in the world as we maintain our policy of zero tolerance for drug abuse.

Central Narcotics Bureau
16 August 2007