



# High on rhetoric: on Punjab's drug menace

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Punjab's drug menace demands an all-out war that goes beyond empty gestures

Causes:

- Given the geography, the drugs, whether it is opium or heroin, make an easy and assisted entrance into Punjab from the Golden Crescent (Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan)
- Unemployment due to Low presence of manufacturing. Based industrial occupations infuses hopelessness which further aggravates the situation
- Nexus between Politicians-Religious institutions-Trade cartels make it difficult to destroy
- Opium was part of Cultural landscape before partition and ramped up after the Green Revolution

Measures should be taken and are as follows:

- Security-organisations have to make sure that the border is properly barred to the flow of narcotic substances.
- Effective affordable rehabilitation centres, focus on high-prevalence drug groups such as sex workers, transportation workers and street children,
- Redressal of the unemployment situation.
- A zero-tolerance policy towards drug cartels, syndicates and peddlers.
- Try to break the nexus between the Politicians-Religious institutions with Drug traders by involving civil society, local public and enforcement of strict laws.

This is a national problem as a substantial portion of the drugs that land in Punjab make their way to the rest of the country. Given the links between drugs and terror, this poses a national security threat. Proactive measures such as the ones above must be taken to resolve the issue as reactive policies (death penalty, drug test etc) are not sustainable

Source: [The Hindu](#)