

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Communicated to the  
Council and the Members  
of the League.

C.75.M.75.1944.XI.  
(O.C./A.R. 1943/21).  
(Issued in English only).

Geneva, December 18th, 1944.

TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS.

ANNUAL REPORTS BY GOVERNMENTS FOR 1943.

MAURITIUS

Communicated by the Government of the United Kingdom.

Note by the Acting Secretary-General.

In accordance with Article 21 of the Convention of 1931 for limiting the Manufacture and regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs, the Acting Secretary-General has the honour to communicate the above-mentioned report to the parties to the Convention. The report is also communicated to other States and to the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs.

(For the form of annual reports, see document O.C.1600).

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A. GENERAL.

I. Laws and Publications.

No new legislation bearing on opium and other dangerous drugs was enacted during 1943.

II. Administration.

The administrative arrangements for the execution of the International Conventions are as follows :

(a) The Medical and Health Department is responsible for the preparation and submission of all returns, reports, statistics, import certificates, etc., etc., relating to dangerous drugs, in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Conventions of 1925 and 1931. The Officer in charge of this work is also entrusted with the inspection of pharmacies and laboratories, as far as dangerous drugs are concerned. The results of his inspections are shown under C below;

(b) The Police and the Customs Authorities are responsible for preventing the smuggling of drugs (mainly opium and gandia for smoking purposes) in the Colony;

(c) The Police are responsible for the tracking of opium and gandia smokers and the occasional raiding of opium dens.

There is no special administration in this Colony such as that defined in Article 15 of the Geneva Limitation Convention of 1931.

### III. Control of International Trade.

The international trade is controlled by the import certificate system, which has worked satisfactorily during the year under review.

Notwithstanding the fact that dangerous drugs imported in this Colony are not to be re-exported, the Medical and Health Department, in response to an urgent appeal from the authorities in Reunion, sent over to them, in March 1943, 128 grammes of morphine (in terms of the pure anhydrous alkaloid). Vide Statistical Form A (GL) relating to the first quarter of 1943, dated April 20th, 1943.

### V. Illicit Traffic.

The cultivation of the opium poppy (Papaver Somniferum), the gandia plant and any other plant of the genus of the Erythroxylaceae from which cocaine can be derived is strictly prohibited by law.

Raw opium and Indian hemp (locally known as gandia) are the only narcotic drugs which are known to be illicitly imported in the Colony.

Traffic in dangerous drugs has been on the decrease and no legislation was passed during the year.

Opium is introduced in the Colony by the crews of certain vessels, but very little is now being imported. Police and Customs Authorities combine their efforts in reducing to a minimum the smuggling of this drug. Arrivals and departures of vessels are being closely watched, and the security measure of preventing the boarding of vessels by unauthorised persons has been of great help in this connection.

Gandia is cultivated secretly in the Colony, mostly in the woods.

The smoking of opium is confined to that part of Port Louis known as the Chinese Quarter and is indulged in by members of the Chinese community and a few Mauritians. The suspected opium dens, which are not more than four in number, are occasionally raided by the Police.

Gandia is smoked, on a very small scale, by members of the Indian community.

There is no evidence that other narcotic drugs are being illegally made use of.

Sixteen persons were prosecuted for violation of the narcotic drugs laws :

- 1 person for possession of 2 pipes for smoking opium,
- 1 person for possession of 1/2 gramme of opium.

The two pipes and the 1/2 gramme of opium were seized and destroyed.

9 persons were prosecuted for possession of gandia,  
4 persons for possession and cultivation of gandia, and  
1 person for cultivating gandia.

2 pounds (909 grammes) and 181 grammes of gandia and  
about 800 plants of gandia were seized and destroyed.

The punishments inflicted in the above mentioned cases  
ranged between 15 days' and 3 months' imprisonment with hard  
labour and the fines imposed ranged between Rs. 25/- and Rs. 500/-.

The 395 grammes of gandia, which were reported to be  
still in the custody of the Police in a case awaiting trial at  
the end of 1942, were destroyed in 1943 after the case had been  
disposed of.

Two cases of illicit importation of drugs were recorded  
during the year.

On March 30th, 1943, 25 grammes of crude opium  
were found in the shirt-pocket of a Chinaman, assistant steward  
on board a vessel, on his landing at the Customs steps. The  
offender was fined Rs. 25/- by the Comptroller of Customs and  
the opium was seized and destroyed.

On July 27th, 1943, 700 grammes of gandia, found  
concealed in the hold of a ship, were handed over to the Customs  
Authorities and were subsequently destroyed.

Owing to the increased difficulty of supply, opium is  
sold at high prices, the retail figure being Rs. 3/- per gramme.

Gandia is retailed in very small quantities at the  
rate of 25 cents per gramme.

#### B. RAW MATERIALS.

There has been no change in the conditions described  
under this Head during the year under review.

#### C. MANUFACTURED DRUGS.

##### 4. Trade and Distribution.

(a) There are 29 pharmacies in the Colony which carry  
on the retail trade in dangerous drugs. Most of them import their  
drugs direct from abroad. There are also 2 laboratories which  
prepare medicinal tinctures containing dangerous drugs, for retail  
in pharmacies.

(b) The pharmacies were inspected on a few occasions  
during the year.

In one case, it was observed that the pharmacist in  
charge had not entered in a register, required to be kept under  
Article 10 of Government Notice No. 5 of 1925, dealings in  
dangerous drugs effected by him, over a considerable period.  
The pharmacist was prosecuted and fined Rs. 10.- and costs.

In another case, the pharmacist in charge failed to  
produce a certain part of his stocks of dangerous drugs - a batch  
of Article 23(2) of Ordinance No. 5 of 1934.

It was also detected that the same pharmacist, among other things, had submitted an erroneous statement of consumption of a certain drug for the preceding year - a breach of Article 25 (c) of Ordinance No. 5 of 1934. The case has been referred to the proper Authorities for prosecution.

The powers of the Officer in charge of the inspection of pharmacies and laboratories are such as to allow him :

1. power of entry on the premises of any pharmacist and/or manufacturer of any drug to which Ordinance No. 5 and Proclamation No. 13 of 1934 apply,
2. power to demand the production of and to inspect any books and documents required to be kept under the laws and regulations in force in the Colony, and
3. power to demand the production of and to inspect any stocks of any such drugs.

The methods of inspection are as follows :

All entries on the receipt side of the Register of Dangerous Drugs are checked against the relevant vouchers (delivery permits issued by this Department for imported drugs and certified vouchers of purchase for drugs obtained locally from fellow-pharmacists). The issues are checked against medical prescriptions and certified vouchers of sales to fellow-pharmacists.

The figures appearing as consumption for a year and those for stocks and the beginning of the following year are checked against the statement submitted by the pharmacist in accordance with Article 10 (g) of Government Notice No. 5 of 1925.

Special attention is also given to the requirements of the Law in regard to drugs which might be issued for the use of the prescriber himself (Article 6 of Government Notice No. 5 of 1925), and to drugs which might be prescribed in excess of normal therapeutic doses (Government Notice No. 285 of 1942), and also to the conditions of storage of narcotic drugs.

The register is finally balanced and closed, and the actual stocks in hand are checked against the balances shown by the register.

Should the Officer in charge of the inspection of pharmacies and laboratories have the slightest doubt as to the nature of the drugs produced or of any admixture or preparation compounded in the pharmacy, he takes samples for purposes of analysis, according to the procedure laid down in Article 31 of the Pharmacy Ordinance, 1912.

#### D. OTHER QUESTIONS.

##### XII. Prepared Opium.

It has not been possible to suppress entirely the habit of smoking opium among the Chinese population, though difficulty of supply has perforce reduced the number of opium smokers.

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