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- ❖ **Indian Diaspora in West Asia**
- ❖ **Reconciliation Struggle in the Balkans**
- ❖ **APTA Countries**
- ❖ **Agri-Business In India**
- ❖ **GST-Way Ahead**
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Third Concept aims at providing a platform where a meaningful exchange of ideas can take place among the people of the Third World. The attempt will be to communicate, debate and disseminate information, ideas and alternatives for the resolution of the common problems facing humankind. We welcome contributions from academics, journalists and even from those who may never have published anything before. The only requirement is a concern for and desire to understand and take the issue of our time. Contributions may be descriptive, analytical or theoretical. They may be in the form of original articles, reactions to previous contributions, or even a comment on a prevailing situation. All contributions, neatly typed in double space, may be addressed to:

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Designed by: Pt. Tejpal

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Drug Menace

Drug menace is assuming serious proportions in the wake of recent reports of drug-related suicides in many states of the Indian Union. Media reports indicate that in the wake of recent drug-related suicides in Telangana, the state officials have launched the massive crackdown on junkies. Undoubtedly, state authorities claim Telangana's place is much lower than the other states in the numbers' game and as far as the drug menace is concerned in India; nonetheless, the possibility of a strong presence of narcotic drugs, from marijuana to cocaine, especially in a few sections of the society, cannot be ruled out by some experts. Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala are reportedly at the top of the list of drug-related suicides in the country. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, there were 3,647 such suicide cases in India in a year, of which Maharashtra reported the highest, at 1,372. This was followed by Tamil Nadu, with 552 cases and Kerala, with 475. The drug-related suicide rate in Kerala, for instance, is at least 10 times higher than Punjab. According to media reports, the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands stands out as an outlier with almost 37 such instances in a population of just about three lakh. Maharashtra may have reported the highest number of drug-related suicides in the country, but Kerala topped the list in terms of incidence rate. Additionally, at least 12 states and Union Territories had a higher incidence of these cases than the national average.

Undoubtedly, Telangana officials claim that drug abuse is not so widespread in the state because the strict enforcement so far has helped to keep the drug racket in check and that the youngsters in urban areas are also fairly conscious about the dangers of drug abuse; nevertheless, there is increasing need for sensitizing the youth about the ill-effects of drug abuse, especially in the rural and semi-urban areas as well. Sports in India have fallen prey to increasing cases of doping. Reports indicate that more than 850 Indian athletes have succumbed to doping charges since 2009, according to an Anti-Doping Rules Violation (ARDV) report recently published by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA). The shocking revelation came after a female Indian shot-putter was provisionally suspended after being tested positive for banned stimulant DMBA dimethylbutylamine.

In another most recent case, one female Indian weightlifter was also suspended provisionally after her 'A' sample was found to be positive for a banned substance in April this year. Indian wrestler Narsingh Yadav, who was handed a four-year ban ahead of the Rio Olympics for failing two dope tests, was another notable case. He was tested positive for banned anabolic steroid Methandienone. In April 2015, 21 weightlifters were provisionally suspended by the Indian Weightlifting Federation after they failed doping test across different championships. Trade in illegal drugs is widespread globally. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's *World Drug Report 2005* estimates the size of the global illicit drug market at US\$321.6 billion in 2003. With a world GDP of US\$36 trillion in the same year, the illegal drug trade may be estimated as nearly 1% of total global trade. Undoubtedly, statistics about profits from the illegal drug trade are largely unknown; however, in its 1997 World Drugs Report the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimated the value of the market at \$4 trillion, ranking drugs alongside arms and oil among the world's largest traded goods. An online report published by the UK Home Office in 2007 estimated the illicit drug market in the UK at £4–6.6 billion a year. In the wake of growing vulnerability of the India youth to drug abuse, it becomes our collective responsibility to stem this tide by sensitizing the youth on the issues of drugs. Some experts suggest that parents or guardians should adequately discharge their responsibilities of bringing up a child in a way that depicts moral uprightness and abstinence from drugs. The dangers of taking harmful drugs should be emphasized such that, a child detests such activities and stays away from it. Government programmes should be established in conjunction with civil society to sensitize the youth on the issues of drugs via awareness programmes, rallies and lectures.

— BK