

# NCORD

Shyamanta Das<sup>1</sup>, Dyutimitra Sarmah<sup>2</sup>

## Background

During the 33rd Annual Conference of the Indian Psychiatric Society, Assam State Branch 2023, we discussed on “Assam: the opioid epidemic and the way forward.” While Dr Sushil Agarwal had outlined the treatment part, Dr Utpal Bora drew our attention to the existing scenario. It was quite obvious that to deal with this massive problem, we need a multidisciplinary approach.

## National Narcotics Coordination Portal (NCORD)

NCORD is such an approach that stands for the National Narcotics Coordination Portal. Let us begin with the pledge, ‘Say Yes to Life, No to Drugs’.

The multiplicity of stakeholders in Drug Law Enforcement has necessitated coordination between various agencies on real time basis. The Ministry of Home Affairs has constituted a four-tier coordination mechanism for increasing coordination amongst the nationwide stakeholders from grass root level to apex level and effectively combating the menace of drugs. The Apex NCORD (chaired by Union Home Secretary), Executive NCORD (chaired by Special Secretary, Internal Security), State NCORD (chaired by State Chief Secretary), and District NCORD (chaired by District Magistrate) are four pillars of mechanism. In addition to this 04-tier structure monthly NCORD meetings are chaired by the Director General, Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). This mechanism aims to bring all agencies on supply, demand and harm reduction side under one umbrella.

## Supply reduction

Department of Revenue (<https://dor.gov.in>), Central Bureau of Narcotics (<http://www.cbn.nic.in>), Government Opium & Alkaloid Factories (<http://goaf.gov.in>), Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (<https://dri.nic.in>), Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (<https://www.cbic.gov.in>), and Financial Intelligence Unit



(<https://fiuindia.gov.in>) joins hands to combat supply reduction.

### **Demand reduction**

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (<https://socialjustice.gov.in>), National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (<https://ncpcr.gov.in>), and Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) (<https://nmba.dosje.gov.in>) come together in order to address the demand reduction.

### **Harm reduction**

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (<https://socialjustice.gov.in>), National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (<https://ncpcr.gov.in>), and National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre (<https://www.aiims.edu/en/departments-and-centers/specialty-centers.html?id=414>) are the agencies to deal with harm reduction.

### **Department of Psychiatry, Dhubri Medical College Hospital**

We in the Department of Psychiatry of the Dhubri Medical College Hospital, Dhubri, Assam are participating in this endeavour of NCORD. Associate Professor and Head of the Department, Shyamanta Das attended two such NCORD meetings on 29 July 2023 and 10 August 2023 so far chaired by Hon'ble Chief Minister and District Commissioner respectively. On 30 August 2023, Assistant Professor, Dr. Sonit Kalita and Registrar, Dr. Dhruba Jit Boro attended an awareness programme on narcotics among the e-rickshaw pullers in Dhubri town at the Office of the Joint Director of Health Services (JDHS) and talked about the harmful

effects of narcotics and their treatment and also how to prevent oneself from getting engaged in such kind of activities. Dr. Boro was present in the meeting on 13 September 2023 chaired by Additional Deputy Commissioner (Health).

### **Events**

NCB regularly organises online and offline events such as drug disposal, international day against drug abuse, international meetings, drives on digital solutions to monitor problems of drug trafficking, drives for arrest of absconders, etc.

### **Resources**

The resources include World Drug Reports, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) Annual Report, National Policy on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS), references, publications, and National Integrated Database on Arrested Narco-offenders (NIDAAN).

### **About Nar-K9**



National Narcotics Canine Pool (Nar-K9) was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Union Home Minister as a National Asset during the 'National Conference on Drug Trafficking and National Security' held at Chandigarh on 30-31 July, 2022. A pool of Nar-K9 along with dog handlers/

assistant dog handlers are being provided to NCB by the Border Security Force (BSF), Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and Assam Rifles. As-on-date, Nar-K9 squads are available at facilities in Delhi, Jammu, Ahmadabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Imphal, and Chandigarh while it is under advance stages of establishment in Guwahati, Bangalore, and Chennai. NCB Zonal Directors have been designated as Nodal Officers for all practical purposes of K9 Squad under guidance of Regional Deputy Director General (DDG's) in their respective Zones.

### **Manas**

'Manas', a National Narcotics Call Centre was formed which is working as a communication bridge between all agencies and the public (Tele Manas helpline number: 14416).

### **International cooperation**

Illicit drug trafficking is a major transnational organised crime with the potential to undermine national security. The growing nexus between drug smugglers and terrorist groups is a serious concern. Such complex security concerns can only be dealt with holistic and cooperative relations with all other nations, who are also facing such serious concerns. NCB, India shares cordial and friendly relations with

international drug law enforcement agencies worldwide on drug supply reduction. The Director General (DG), NCB is the competent authority for controlled delivery operations in India and abroad. It already has 17 memoranda of understanding (MOUs), 28 bilateral agreements, and 49 extradition treaties.

### **Awareness**

The misuse and abuse of prohibited and prescription drugs amongst youth is a major health problem also identified internationally. The national survey of drug dependence published in 2019 explains the gravity of situation. NCB shares responsibility of drug demand reduction and endeavours to aware the youth on harmful effects of drug abuse. Some examples include Hon'ble Prime Minister's Message to the nation on International Anti-Drug Day on 26th June, Hon'ble Home Minister's Message to the nation on International Anti-Drug Day on 26th June, and DG, NCB Message.

### **Not the end but just the beginning**

The National Policy on NDPS is based on the Directive Principles, contained in Article 47 of the Constitution of India, which direct the State to endeavour to bring about prohibition of the consumption, except for medicinal purposes, of intoxicating drugs injurious to health.

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor and Head of the Department, Department of Psychiatry, Dhubri Medical College Hospital, Dhubri, Assam, India

<sup>2</sup>Counselling Psychologist, Mental Health Division, Project "CHILD", Guwahati, Assam, India