

PRESS NOTE

13th June 2018

Subject: DRI busts International Drug syndicate of party drugs

(308 kg Ketamine seized - Four manufacturing facilities dismantled)

DRI developed intelligence that certain international narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances trafficking and smuggling organized syndicates had set-up manufacturing facilities in India to manufacture, sell and illicitly export banned synthetic drugs, such as ***Ketamine***.

DRI sleuths, in an all India operation, (code named “**Operation Vitamin**”), spanning more than 3 days, spread across multiple states and covering 14 residential and industrial premises, dismantled **four illicit *Ketamine*** manufacturing facilities/ illicit laboratories located in Goa, Vadodara & Raigad. This pan-India network was controlled by an international drug syndicate. In all, about **308 kgs of *Ketamine*** has been seized by DRI along with 2000 kgs of raw material enough to manufacture another 250 kgs. The significance of this seizure can be gauged from the fact that all India seizure of ***Ketamine*** during the calendar year 2016 was **68.06 kgs** only.

In DRI operation, total 10 persons, including the main organizers and financiers of the manufacturing facilities/ laboratories, sellers and buyers in the supply chain have been apprehended/ arrested under the provisions of the NDPS Act, 1985. Out of the apprehended/ arrested persons three are foreign nationals, two from UK and one from Vietnam. These persons were key members of an international syndicate which had close linkages in South-East Asia and Canada.

Ketamine (also called ‘K’, ‘Special K’ or ‘Vitamin K’) is a potent anaesthetic commonly used in veterinary medicine. However, this drug is extremely popular as a **recreational drug** in the rave parties due to the detached high it provides. Ketamine’s dissociative effects are so powerful that it is also referred to as a “date rape drug”. Mixing the drug with other depressants like alcohol and heroin intensifies the danger of respiratory depression, which can be deadly. According to WHO, among recreational users of ***Ketamine*** there is growing evidence of symptoms of dependence, as well as adverse physical effects, particularly urinary and biliary tract problems, after prolonged use.

This drug smuggling syndicate is believed to have supplied ***Ketamine*** to international drug traffickers in countries like Sri Lanka, Mozambique, United Kingdom, Canada, Malaysia, Nepal, Australia, Vietnam and Kenya. Mostly, drug was smuggled through courier/ posts. This syndicate is suspected to have supplied large quantities of ***Ketamine*** to various international and domestic buyers.

In addition to Ketamine, DRI teams also recovered small quantities of other drugs suspected to be cocaine and hashish during the raid.

The drug syndicate had a well-established chain of supply within India and abroad, which has been neutralized. The payments for the raw material and finished products were taking place through *hawala* channels. DRI is investigating roles of other entities and individuals connected with this syndicate.