U.S. Department of Justice
Drug Enforcement Administration

Drug Trafficking From Southwest Asia

Drug Intelligence Report

Intelligence Division

August 1994
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Drug Enforcement Administration

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Drug Intelligence Report

This report was prepared by the Europe-Asia-Africa Unit of the Strategic Intelligence Section. Comments and requests for copies are welcome and may be directed to the Publications Unit, Intelligence Division, DEA Headquarters on (202) 307-8726.

August 1994

ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE

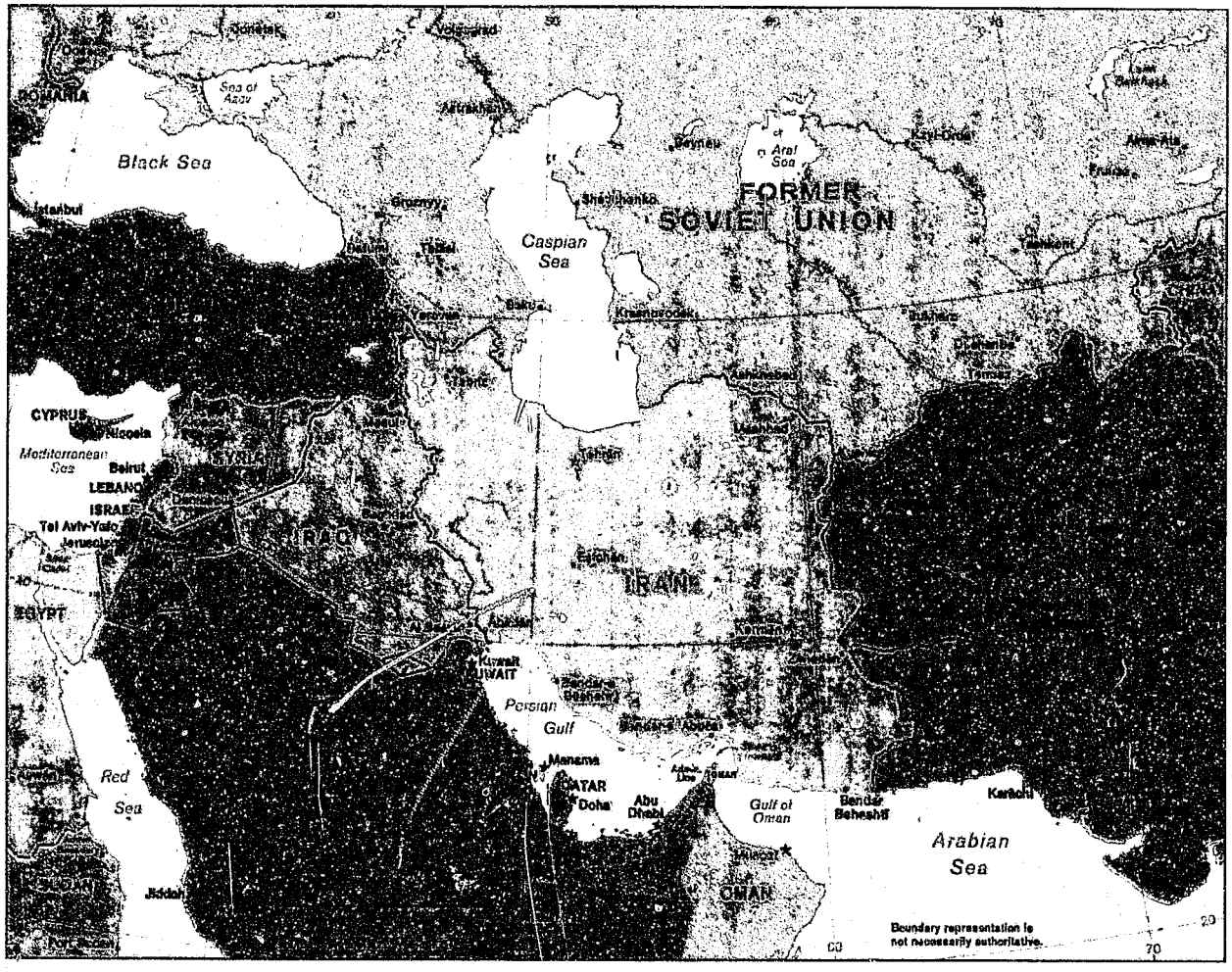
There is growing evidence that heroin consumption is increasing in the United States. While there is no evidence to suggest that a heroin epidemic has begun, various drug supply and demand indicators show heroin's prominence is growing. This increased demand is being met by new, as well as traditional, heroin sources in Mexico, South America, Southeast Asia, and Southwest Asia. This report examines the drug threat posed by Southwest Asia, from the opium poppy fields in the region to the trafficking networks throughout the world.

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has responded to this threat with a twofold approach: aggressive enforcement programs directed at heroin traffickers operating in the United States and energetic multilateral efforts abroad. For example, DEA has developed cooperative working arrangements with the Pakistani Government to combat drug smuggling, regulate essential and precursor chemicals, and address money laundering issues. Although these measures have achieved some degree of success, much more needs to be accomplished. With respect to Afghanistan and Iran, however, internal political situations complicate efforts to either establish direct working relationships with DEA, or to establish regional counter-drug programs. Nevertheless, DEA is committed to countering the continuing threat posed by the cultivation, manufacturing, and smuggling of illicit drugs in this important region of the world.

Thomas A. Constantine
Administrator

CONTENTS

Southwest Asia



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Western Europe is the primary market for Southwest Asian heroin; however, sufficient quantities are produced to satisfy the demands of a global market. In the United States, Southwest Asian heroin continues to be consumed by ethnic Southwest Asian populations living in the Northeast and on the West Coast.

The Southwest Asian source countries, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran, continue to produce opium at ever-increasing levels. Afghanistan alone produced a minimum of 640 metric tons in 1992 and a minimum of 685 metric tons in 1993. Given the poor economic conditions and the lack of enforceable government control in the region, the cultivation of opium poppies should continue to increase.

Opiate refining laboratories operate in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) with relative impunity. In most instances, the laboratories are situated in remote areas beyond the reach of law enforcement authorities. Moreover, laboratory operators often are afforded sufficient early warning to close down before interdiction forces can reach the site. Most of the laboratories are mobile and can easily and quickly be packed up and moved to a new location with little effort. The laboratories that operate in Afghanistan primarily produce heroin base (smokable heroin), which is consumed by drug users in the region. Reliable information concerning drug laboratories in Iran is scarce; however, reports indicate that laboratories have operated in the northwestern and southeastern regions of that country.

Although Turkey, situated in the Near East, has successfully eliminated illicit opium poppy cultivation and the diversion of licit opiates, it has become a major processing and distribution center for opiates from Southwest Asia. Heroin conversion laboratories which, at one time, were concentrated in the eastern areas of Turkey near the Iranian border, are now reported, in increasing numbers, in the vicinity of Istanbul. Two recent multiton seizures of morphine base from merchant vessels in the Mediterranean Sea, which were destined for Istanbul, indicate an increasing capability by laboratory operators to produce heroin.

Trafficking organizations vary in scope and size from small, independent, localized operations, to large international alliances. The small organizations are just as capable as the international alliances of delivering opiates locally, regionally, or internationally. For this reason, there are no typical profiles for drug traffickers in Southwest Asia.

Smuggling routes emanate from Southwest Asia to all parts of the world, with drug traffickers taking advantage of modern transportation systems and the volume of goods moving through the area. Heroin is smuggled from the region by road, sea, and air by drug traffickers and their couriers. Opiate products also are smuggled from Southwest Asia to Turkey for further refinement and subsequent transport over the Balkan Route into Western Europe and beyond.

Drug interdiction programs in the region are largely dependent upon government and individual interests. In Afghanistan, for example, the current government of President Rabbani has taken a strong anti-drug stand. However, at the present time, his government is incapable of enforcing its policies throughout the country due to the conflict between tribal factions for control of the government. Until a unified, strong central government is established, Afghanistan's annual opium production is likely to be affected more by adverse or favorable weather than government intervention. In Pakistan, the area where cultivation and processing occurs is an autonomous region and the Pakistani government claims it is virtually powerless to stop illicit drug activity. In Iran, the government simply has decided that opium poppies no longer are cultivated within its borders.

DYNAMICS OF SOUTHWEST ASIAN DRUG TRAFFICKING

INTRODUCTION

Southwest Asia plays a significant role in international drug trafficking. The area is a major cultivation, production, and transshipment location for illicitly produced opiate and cannabis products. Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran continues to increase despite the efforts of national drug enforcement agencies and claims to the contrary by governments seeking refuge from critical international attention. Opiate conversion activity continues unabated throughout the region to satisfy customer demand, from low-grade smoking heroin, preferred by local inhabitants, to high-grade, export-quality, injectable heroin. Drug trafficking networks and individual smugglers, ever ingenious and imaginative in their methods, maintain the flow of illicit drugs from laboratories, through transportation channels, to the streets of Europe and the United States.

The smuggling chain begins in the opium poppy fields of Afghanistan and Pakistan where hundreds of tons of raw opium are produced. The opium gum is taken to conversion laboratories throughout the region where it is converted into morphine base, heroin base, and heroin. Although part of the converted product is sold to regional consumers, the majority is smuggled out of the region to heroin processors and consumers in other areas. The bulk of the morphine and heroin base is smuggled into Turkey both overland and by sea. In Turkey, the morphine and heroin base are processed into heroin that is smuggled then to consumers in Western Europe and the United States.

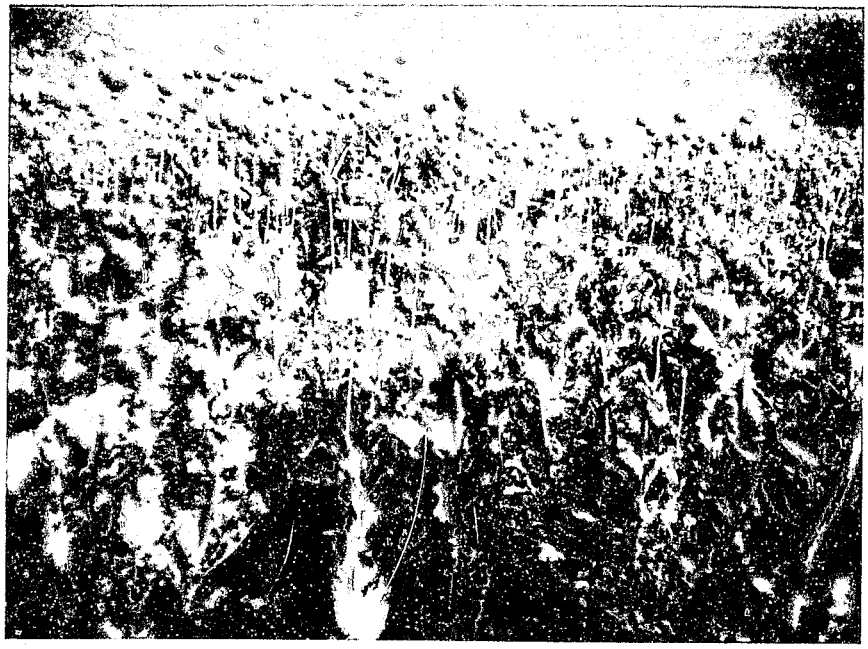
Typically, an Afghan farmer in need of funds plants opium poppies for the promise of higher profits. A Pakistani laboratory owner buys the opium gum from the farmer and transports it to his conversion laboratory to produce heroin base. A trafficker purchases the heroin from a laboratory owner. The trafficker then arranges to transport the heroin to an embarkation point—an international airport, a seaport, or a clandestine site along Pakistan's Makran Coast—from which it is smuggled aboard vessels anchored offshore. Finally, couriers smuggle the shipment to its final destination in Western Europe or the United States.

The people involved are brought together by opportunity and profit, not necessarily by organizational ties. However, there are instances where groups have been formed, most often along familial lines, which control the entire process, from cultivation in the region to wholesale distribution in the United States.

ILLICIT DRUG CULTIVATION & PRODUCTION

OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION

In 1993, according to the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), an estimated 1,125 metric tons of illicit opium were produced in the Southwest Asian countries of Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan. This illicit opium was produced despite a government-directed eradication program and an opium poppy cultivation ban in Pakistan, in addition to claims by the Iranian Government that no opium cultivation occurred within its borders.



Afghan opium poppies.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan is second only to Burma in the production of illicit opium and is a major producer of cannabis products. Although opium production is illegal, the current government does not have the capability to enforce its legal authority over most of the country. In the absence of a stable, strong, and universally recognized central government, the cultivation of opium poppy will continue to increase.

The present central government, led by President Rabbani, has taken a strong anti-drug position. He has affirmed this position by requesting international assistance to combat Afghanistan's internal drug problem. However, Afghanistan is divided into areas controlled by tribal leaders, all of whose support is necessary to govern effectively.

Most opium poppy cultivation and heroin production occur in areas under the control of former members of the Afghan Resistance or *Mujahideen*. The prevailing attitude concerning the cultivation of opium poppy is dictated generally by a decree or the preference of individual leaders. Some area commanders reportedly are opposed to drugs on moral or religious grounds, prohibiting cultivation of opium poppy and drug trafficking in areas under their control.[1] Other leaders seem to condone the practices, and actively participate, in some cases, to finance and maintain their power base. Moreover, local leaders unaffiliated with the resistance movement are active in drug cultivation and trafficking, or give tacit approval to others' participation.

[1] In 1990, production in the Helmand Valley decreased significantly due to the efforts of an anti-drug regional political leader. However, after his assassination by pro-drug forces, cultivation and production in the area resumed at pre-1990 levels.

Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan continues to increase as refugees return to lands abandoned during the invasion and subsequent occupation of their homeland by Soviet military forces. Possessing few resources with which to rebuild their lives, farmers have turned to the one cash crop, the opium poppy, that promises them a fairly lucrative return on a relatively modest investment. Few farmers grow opium poppy exclusively, choosing instead to plant a small area, usually 1 to 3 hectares,[2] and devote the remainder of their land to food crops.

The INCSR reports an estimated 21,080 hectares under opium poppy cultivation with a potential yield of 685 metric tons of opium[3] for 1993, an increase of 45 metric tons over the 1992 crop. This reflects a steady increase over the past 4 years. The major opium poppy cultivation areas are located in Bamian, Helmand, Herat, Konar, Nangarhar, Oruzgan, and Paktia Provinces (figure 1). Cultivation occurs in other provinces in varying degrees.

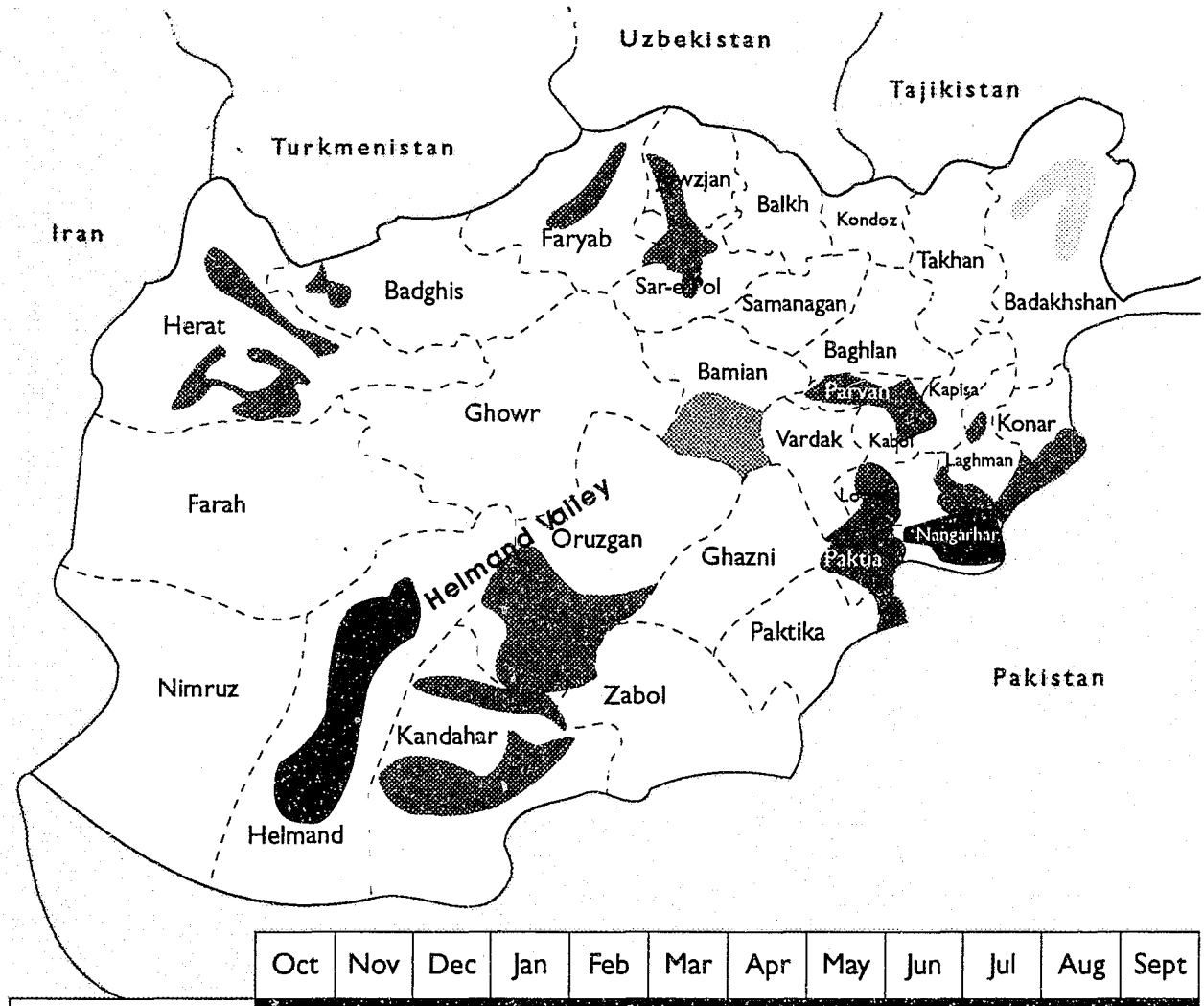
Afghan opium poppy fields viewed from inside Pakistan border.

[2] One hectare equals 2.47 acres.

[3] Based upon foreign reporting and human sources, DEA believes that opium production in Afghanistan may have exceeded 1,000 metric tons in 1993. Estimates by other groups, such as the United Nations Drug Control Program, indicate the figure may be as high as 2,000 metric tons.

Figure 1

Afghanistan: Opium Poppy Growing Areas, 1993



Iran

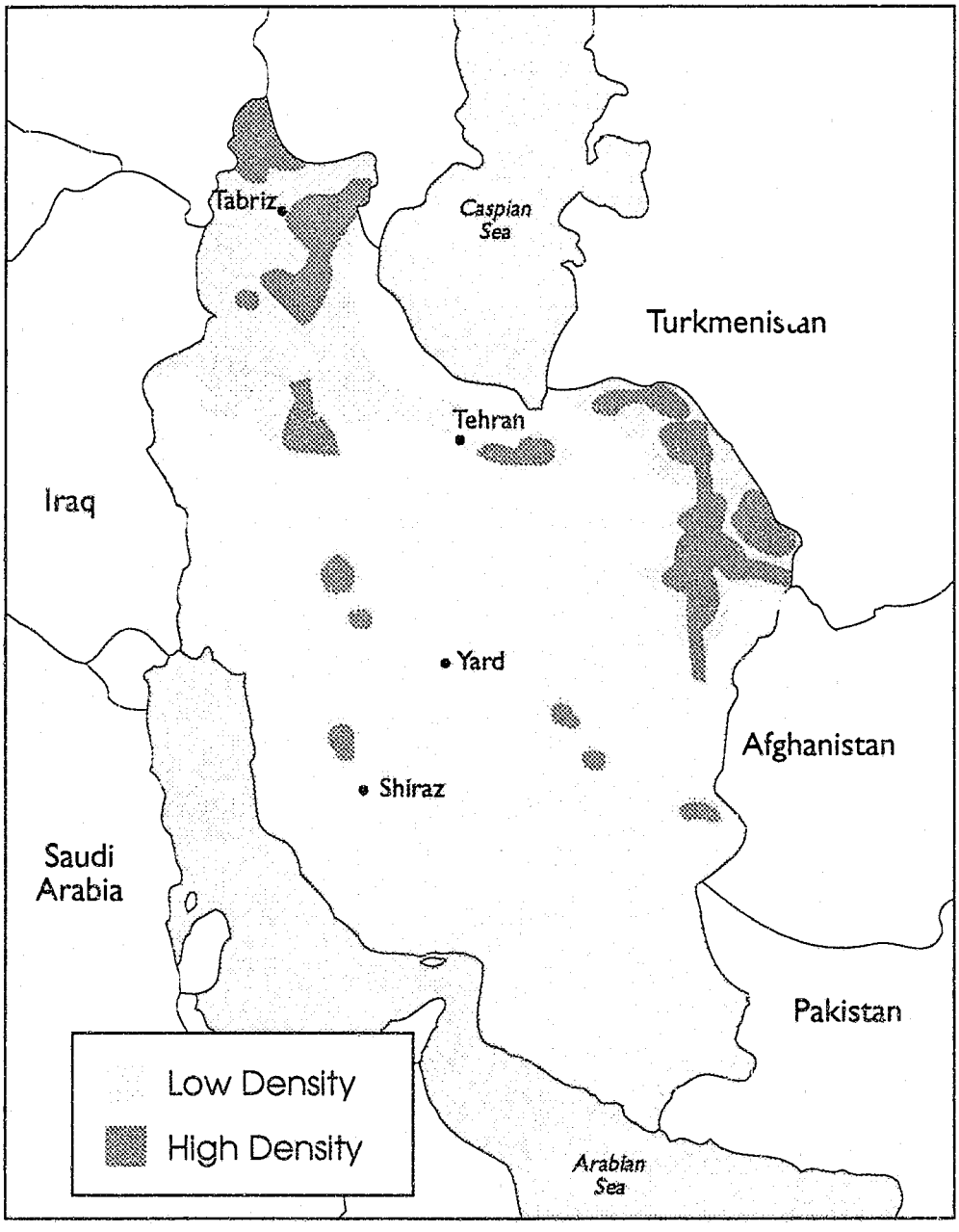
The Islamic Government of Iran claims total success in eliminating the illicit cultivation of opium poppy in Iran. The official U.S. estimate places the current potential opium yield at 300 metric tons, a figure consistent with opium production in Iran prior to the Islamic Regime's takeover. A recent, limited U.S. Government survey has identified 3,500 hectares under opium poppy cultivation (figure 2) with a potential yield of 35 to 70 metric tons of opium. While neither of these figures is exact, the unavoidable conclusion remains that Iran's claim of total eradication of the opium poppy is without merit.

Scored opium poppy pod with fresh opium latex.

Scored opium poppy pod with dried opium gum.

Figure 2

Iran: Opium Poppy Cultivation



Pakistan

The major growing areas are in the remote Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP). In 1993, an estimated 7,136 hectares of illicit opium poppy were planted in Pakistan, primarily in the NWFP, with a potential yield[4] of 140 metric tons of opium (after an adjustment for crops eradicated by Pakistani Government forces). This figure reflects a decrease from the estimated 1992 yield of 175 metric tons and a significant decrease from the estimated 1991 yield.

Figure 3

Pakistan				
Opium Poppy Cultivation	**1990**	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**
Potential Harvestable Land (After Eradication) (hectares)	8,220	8,205	8,170	6,280
Opium Poppy Crops Eradicated (hectares)	185	440	977	856
Land Cultivated with Opium Poppies (hectares)	8,405	8,645	9,147	7,136
Theoretical Potential Yield (metric tons)	165	180	175	140

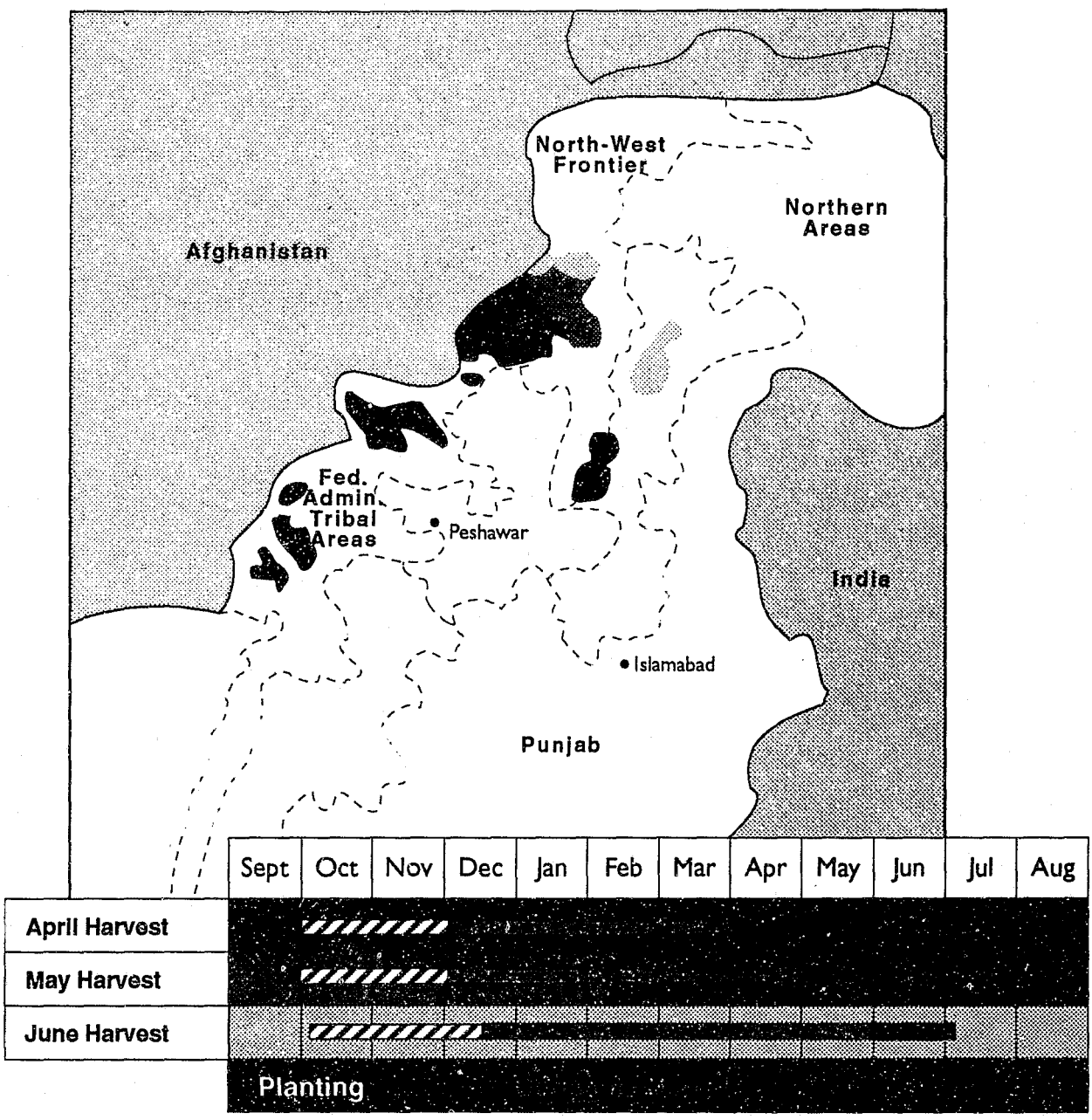
Source: INCSR

Pakistani officials attribute the decrease in potential yield to the opium poppy cultivation ban. The United Nations-sponsored opium poppy eradication program claimed 856 hectares in 1993. From 1990 through 1993, the Government of Pakistan reported a significant increase in the hectares of opium poppy eradicated—977 hectares in 1992 compared to 185 hectares in 1990 (figure 3). However, the area under cultivation (figure 4) has increased over this period from 8,405 hectares in 1990 to 9,147 hectares in 1992; this has kept the potential harvestable area over the last 3 years between 8,100 and 8,200 hectares.

[4] The potential yield is based upon past academic studies and the best intelligence available. It is meant as a mean figure and not an absolute.

Figure 4

Pakistan: Opium Poppy Growing Areas, 1993



PRODUCTION OF OPIATES

The conversion of opium into morphine base, heroin base, and heroin takes place in "laboratories" throughout Southwest Asia and Turkey. These laboratories often are referred to as "kitchen labs" or "bathtub labs." These terms may refer to the use of "equipment" that is readily available or easily obtained, the ease with which the laboratory can be packed up and moved, or the area where the processing occurs. The laboratories are generally primitive in construction and make use of items readily available on the local market. Many laboratories are located in remote locations and usually are dismantled easily for movement or storage. There also are large, permanent, family-run operations in areas where drug enforcement actions are encountered rarely, if ever.

Unlike the sterile, antiseptic environment that the term "laboratory" connotes, these operations use pots, pans, 55-gallon drums, and trash cans in place of beakers and test tubes. Usually a wood fire is the heating source, and the measurements are made without benefit of precision instruments. Formulas are "recipes" handed down from father to son, or learned as an apprentice to an established chemist, and are followed in the same fashion as a cook or baker. The "chemists" are actually cooks with little or no experience in the field of chemistry.

Although controls have been placed on the purchase and subsequent import and export of essential and precursor chemicals in many countries, they remain in plentiful supply for the illicit drug laboratories. In Pakistan, the cost of a liter of acetic anhydride, an essential chemical in the manufacture of heroin, has averaged $69* since the beginning of 1991. Prices of acetic anhydride have remained stable over the past several years despite large seizures. Stable prices are the best indicators of the quantities of the chemical available to the conversion laboratory operators. In 1990, Pakistani Customs officials seized 19 metric tons; however, the seizure only had a short-term effect on the price of acetic anhydride within the country, as well as opiate products produced in Pakistan. After new sources and routes of supply were established, however, prices of acetic anhydride fell to normal levels and production returned to "business as usual." A subsequent increase was noted in the amounts of opium and heroin base shipments smuggled from the region.

* Unless otherwise indicated, all monies are expressed in dollars.

Afghanistan

While the majority of Afghan opium is smuggled into Pakistan for conversion into morphine base, heroin base, and heroin, small bathtub labs operate in Afghanistan, primarily in Nangarhar Province. These laboratories, located in close proximity to the opium poppy fields, convert opium to heroin base primarily for local consumption.

During the Soviet occupation, Afghan refugees took jobs in opiate conversion laboratories in Pakistan, learned the process, and upon their return to Afghanistan, put their new-found skills to use. Since the Soviet withdrawal and the return of Afghan refugees, there have been reports of laboratories being moved across the Pakistani border into Afghanistan. This has placed the conversion process closer to the raw materials, reduced or even eliminated the cost of transportation, reduced the risks of interdiction by Pakistani drug enforcement forces, and minimized potential government interference.

Pakistan

In Pakistan, morphine base, heroin base, and heroin conversion laboratories are located in three areas. The highest concentration of laboratories is in the area that encompasses Bajaur, Khyber, and Mohmand Agencies, all of which are part of the FATA in the NWFP. Traditionally, the government has accorded autonomy to tribes in the FATA and, therefore, has declared the area "inaccessible." The practical result of the government's grant of autonomy is that opium conversion laboratory operators have been provided a sanctuary in which to operate. Laboratory operators in the Khyber Agency, to enhance security, continually relocate their operations throughout remote areas of the agency.

The second area of laboratory concentration is the Chagai Hills Division in Baluchistan Province. Stretching for 200 kilometers along the Afghan border, the region's desolate conditions make it uninhabitable for normal commerce or settlement.

The third area is in Ribat, located in the western tip of the country, at the border juncture of Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan. The Chagai Hills and Ribat areas are so remote that any attempt by Pakistani federal drug enforcement agencies to mount operations to destroy these laboratories would require a major logistical investment.

Demand for opium from the Pakistani laboratories drives the cultivation of opium poppy in Afghanistan. Although some laboratories process the raw material as it becomes available, others work on a consignment basis, processing only sufficient raw material necessary to supply the contracted amount of end product.

The heroin produced for delivery in the United States is predominantly injectable (export quality), although U.S. law enforcement agencies have seized small quantities of smoking heroin.

Iran

Iran is primarily a transit country, but reporting indicates that laboratories are operating in the southeast and northwest, converting raw opium into heroin base for local consumption. Traditionally, the Baluchi tribesmen of southeast Iran have been involved in drug smuggling. Reports indicate that they also operate conversion laboratories in the southeast. There are an estimated 2 to 3 million drug addicts in Iran. The Government of Iran claims only 200,000 heroin and 400,000 opium addicts. However, considering the severe penalties for drug addiction, the U.S. Government believes many are reluctant to declare their addiction.

Laboratories convert raw opium into heroin base for local consumption.

In the northwest, reporting indicates that the Kurds are well-established in the illicit drug business and control smuggling across the Iranian border. Ethnic Kurds occupy areas of Iraq and Turkey bordering Iran, and consider the entire area the Kurdistan homeland. Because Kurdish populations occupy territory along the borders of three countries, cross-border smuggling becomes a fairly simple process. Kurds also have established themselves in Istanbul, where they operate brokerage houses that sell opiates on the world market.

Turkey

Conversion laboratories in Turkey produce heroin from raw materials smuggled from Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan. Turkish traffickers believe their heroin is of higher quality than other Southwest Asian heroin and, therefore, can command a higher price. Traditionally, these laboratories have been located in the eastern provinces close to the Iranian border. However, reports indicate an increasing number of laboratories are located near Istanbul, which places the conversion process closer to the major ports and the hub of drug broker activity. Recent Turkish drug enforcement seizures of multiton quantities of morphine base destined for the Istanbul area tend to corroborate these reports.

CANNABIS

Although cannabis is not considered as great a threat to the United States as opiate products, it is a major commodity of Southwest Asian drug traffickers. The majority of cannabis is processed into hashish not only for consumers in the region but also for transshipment to Canada, the United States, and consumer countries in Western Europe.

Cannabis grows wild throughout Southwest Asia; it also is cultivated deliberately for the production of hashish, referred to regionally as *charas*. Estimates of the potential harvest are difficult to formulate. Hashish conversion laboratories are located throughout Afghanistan and Pakistan.

SOUTHWEST ASIAN DRUG TRAFFICKING

Traffickers smuggling Southwest Asian drugs to consumer countries take advantage of any opportunity and only are limited by their imagination and ingenuity. Drug traffickers exploit the changing political situation in the region, the inability of area governments to exercise effective control within and along their countries' boundaries, and the potential for corruption.

WITHIN THE REGION

Overland

The principal recipients of Afghan opiates are conversion laboratories located in Pakistan. Farmers either sell their expected harvest to a trafficker in advance or stockpile their opium gum, possibly anticipating higher market prices. If stockpiled, the opium gum usually is wrapped in opium poppy leaves or a plastic bag to maintain its moisture. Plastic keeps the opium gum moist longer; however, even if the gum dries, there is no deterioration of the substance. It is suspected that farmers believe the value of their opium increases with weight.

If sold to a trafficker in advance, the opium is transported to a central market in a large city such as Landi Kotal, Pakistan, near the Northwest Frontier Province, or directly to a conversion laboratory. Couriers, donkeys, mules, and vehicles are used to move the opium gum to market. Often, shipments are transported over the main roads from Kabul through the Khyber Pass to Landi Kotal and Peshawar, Pakistan. In an attempt to avoid checkpoints along the major routes, some shipments are smuggled across the Pakistan border on rugged mountain paths.

Opium is smuggled from cultivation areas in Afghanistan to conversion sites along the border in Pakistan. Heroin, heroin base, and morphine base are smuggled over the following routes:

- by road through Baluchistan, across the border into Iran, to heroin conversion laboratories in Turkey, then transshipped to Europe and the United States;
- by road from the Pakistani tribal areas, through Afghanistan, directly to Iran for local consumption and transshipment;
- by road and rail to Karachi, where it is routed by sea or air to Europe and the United States by way of Bombay, India, or Africa;
- by road and rail to Islamabad and Lahore for transshipment through Europe to North America;
- by road or rail to India, primarily for local consumption, but with a portion transshipped to Europe and the United States; and
- by road and overland to staging areas along Pakistan's Makran Coast and then smuggled aboard ships anchored off the coast destined for Western Europe, Turkey, and the United States.

THE QUETTA ALLIANCE

Three of the most powerful trafficking groups operate out of Quetta, the capital of Pakistan's Baluchistan Province, forming what is now called the Quetta Alliance. While there is no evidence to suggest that these three groups—all based upon established familial ties—have forged an official alliance, there are indications that they do cooperate for individual as well as mutual benefit. Their clandestine opium conversion laboratories are established in close proximity to enhance security. Often, raw materials and drugs are bought and sold among the groups which, on occasion, have pooled their resources to meet multiton drug orders. Ties between the groups have been reinforced by marriage.

The Quetta Alliance has been able to shield itself from law enforcement actions with payoffs, bribes, and the political power afforded the wealthy. These activities have provided the Alliance with advance notification of government raids and have helped cancel government plans to expand drug enforcement capabilities. Members of the Alliance also hold political office at the district and provincial levels, which provides access to federal ministers and senior Pakistani Government officials.

The Alliance has suffered setbacks that, at first glance, appear to be devastating. Members have been assassinated by rival groups and senior members have been arrested by Pakistani enforcement officials. In October 1991, the Pakistan Frontier Corps seized 3.2 metric tons of morphine base and 37 metric tons of hashish at a drug storage depot at Kisa Parosh, in southern Baluchistan Province. In July 1992, a drug storage depot, used by the Alliance in Choto Village, Afghanistan, was destroyed by Afghan *Mujahideen* factions fighting for control of the village. As a result, the Alliance lost 3 metric tons of heroin, 6 metric tons of opium, and a multiton quantity of hashish. In January 1993, the Alliance lost its share of a morphine base shipment when the crew of the *Kismetin I* scuttled the ship, rather than allow its seizure by the Turkish Navy. Although the size of the shipment is unknown, the Alliance's share was believed to have been approximately 1 metric ton.

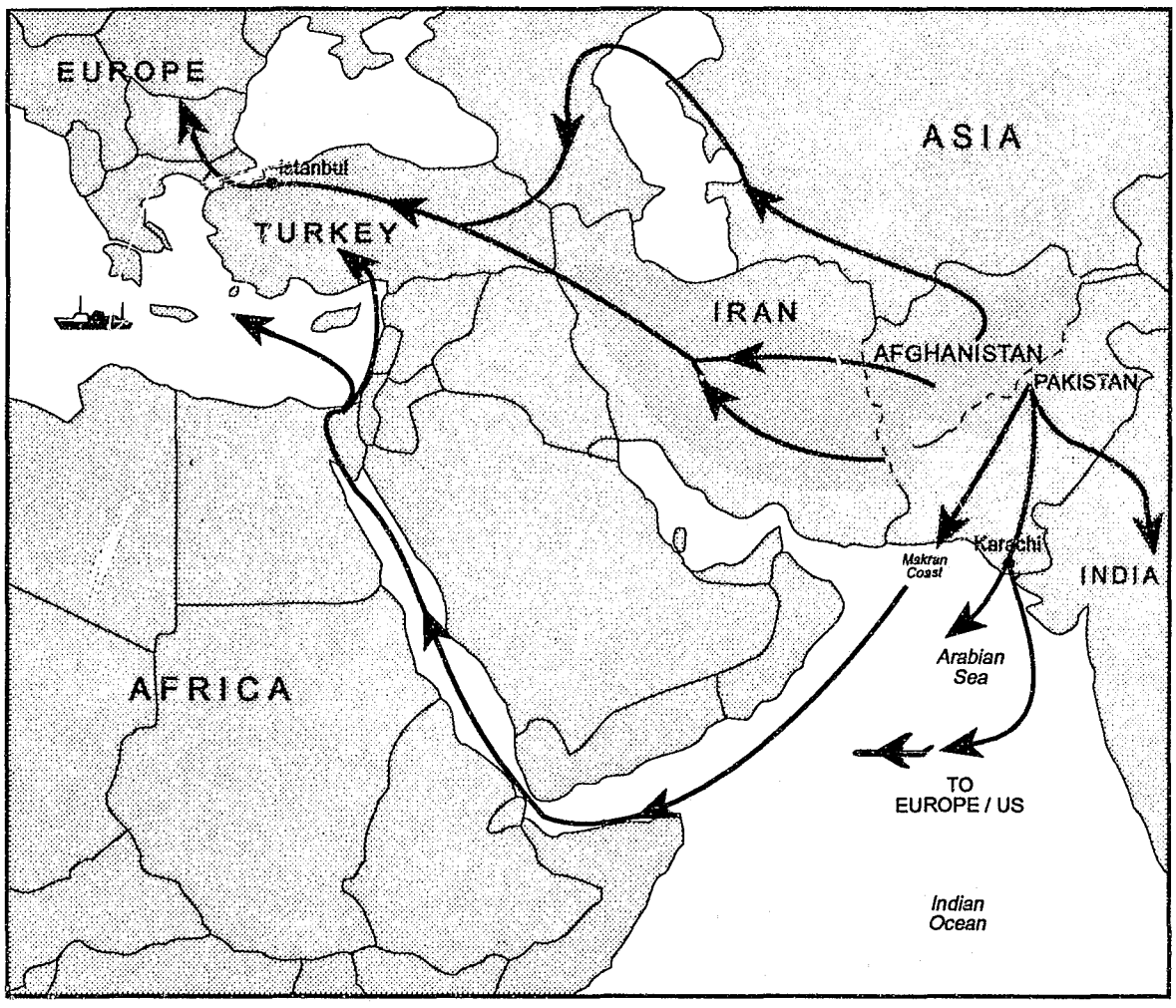
The loss of such a large amount of drugs probably would have destroyed a smaller group, but the Alliance's business does not seem to have suffered. At Kisa Parosh, the Frontier Corps failed to locate a second drug storage depot with an even larger cache of illicit drugs. Advance payments by consignees for the seized drugs—not refundable in some instances—probably offset, in part, the losses to the Alliance. Although Alliance leaders have been arrested and scheduled for trial, convictions and severe penalties are unlikely. Manipulation of the court system and payoffs to prosecutors and judges by drug traffickers are commonplace.

The Alliance operation is similar to a large manufacturing or service consortium. Each of the three groups brings individual strengths to the Alliance. One has extensive political power; another has strong ties to Iranian trafficking groups; and the third has a strong presence on Pakistan's Makran Coast and on the Arabian Peninsula.

Although the Alliance represents a major force in Southwest Asian trafficking, there are countless other smaller groups and individuals operating throughout the region.

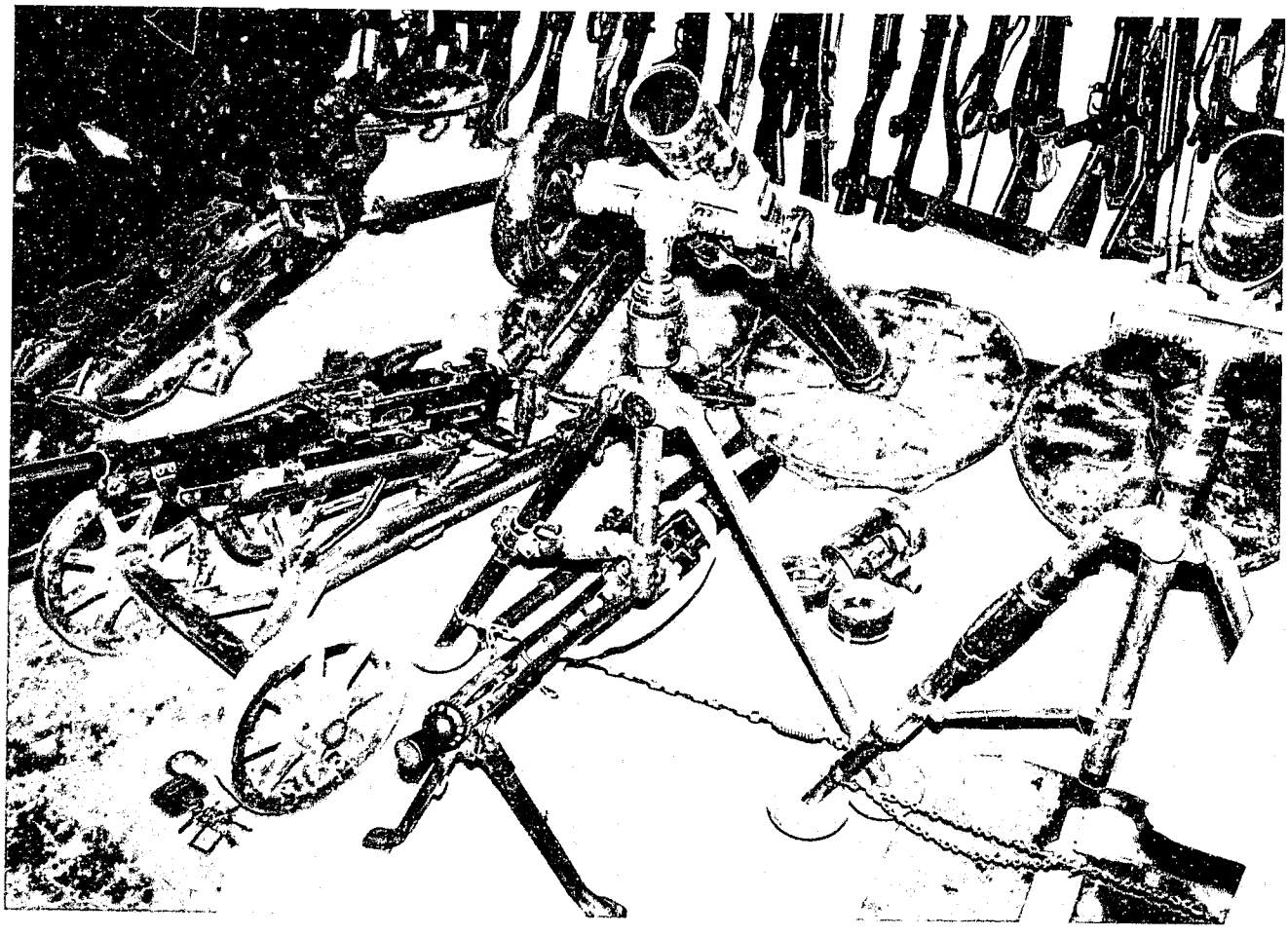
Figure 6

SOUTHWEST ASIAN TRAFFICKING ROUTES WITHIN THE REGION



Vehicle used in drug caravans.

Caravan vehicle with mounted anti-aircraft weapon.



Weapons seized from caravan group.

Heroin, heroin base, morphine base, and small quantities of opium are smuggled overland from Afghanistan and Pakistan through Iran to heroin conversion laboratories in Turkey. Quantities of smuggled raw materials range from kilograms to metric tons and are moved by individuals using vehicles and pack animals. Newspaper and radio reports from Iran routinely announce large seizures of drugs and mass executions of drug smugglers. Independent verification of these claims is difficult given the prevailing Iranian attitude toward the West.

Since 1979, Iran has expanded the road system within the country from 50,000 kilometers to 136,381 kilometers (41 percent of which are hard surfaced). Reportedly, Iran respects regional international customs agreements and allows trucks ease of passage. Civil strife between Turks and ethnic Kurds in southeast Turkey, however, has slowed the movement of raw opiate products across the Iranian-Turkish border.

Recent seizures in Turkey indicate that smugglers have established overland routes through the Central Asian Republics of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkmenistan, using ferry service across the Caspian Sea to avoid Iran.

Reporting also has described drug smuggling caravans consisting of both personal vehicles and large four-wheel-drive trucks purchased specifically for these ventures. Usually, these caravans are organized near conversion laboratories in western Afghanistan and Pakistan, and are destined for northwestern areas of Iran, primarily those areas occupied by Kurds. Within the caravan, some vehicles are fitted with heavy weapons such as antiaircraft guns; other vehicles are laden with illicit drugs. All vehicles carry small arms and ammunition. Caravans are capable of engaging either rivals or government forces, and stand a good chance of defeating either one. Once the caravan arrives at its destination, all vehicles, weapons, and drugs are turned over to the consignee.

TIR Route Through the Newly Independent States

On December 31,1992, based on intelligence from a joint DEA-Turkish National Police program in Istanbul, 1,356 kilograms of morphine base were seized from two TIR trucks that entered Turkey from Georgia, a former Soviet Republic. The trucks began their journey in Turkey, traveled north through Georgia and Azerbaijan, across the Caspian Sea by ferry, then south through Turkmenistan to Kabul, Afghanistan. There, the trucks were taken from the drivers, who remained in Kabul for approximately 3 to 4 months. After the trucks were loaded with the morphine base, they were returned to the drivers, who drove back to Turkey, reversing their original route.

Drug traffickers use the steady flow of vehicular traffic over the region's main transportation arteries to conceal their smuggling activities. Possibly the most exploited means of road transport is the Transport International Routier (TIR) system. In this international customs agreement, subscriber nations allow TIR-bonded cargo to cross their borders with a minimum of bureaucratic "red tape." The TIR agreement places the cargo under seal at the embarkation point and precludes physical inspection of the cargo at intermediate border crossings. The cargo is inspected by customs officials at the final destination.

Customs officials along the route normally do not conduct inspections unless specific information is provided that a particular truck contains illicit cargo. The average time required to search a tractor-trailer rig, without prior information concerning illicit cargo and its location, is 14 to 16 hours. On average, an estimated 250,000 TIR trucks pass through Turkey's border crossings each year—over 650 crossing each day. Smugglers rely on the "trust" inherent in the agreement and are aware that the immensity of the effort required of law enforcement agencies to search each truck precludes rigorous inspections.

Smugglers secrete their drugs in special compartments, or "traps," built into truck or trailer cavities or within the legitimate cargo. Seizures from TIR trucks have ranged from kilogram to metric-ton quantities.

Buses move throughout the area routinely, carrying both commuting passengers and tourists. Buses present inspection problems similar to trucks due to their number on the road and the volume of passengers involved. Past seizures indicate that this means of transportation has been exploited at every level—by bus owners, drivers, and passengers.

Means to conceal the illicit drugs are limited only by the resources and ingenuity of the smuggler.

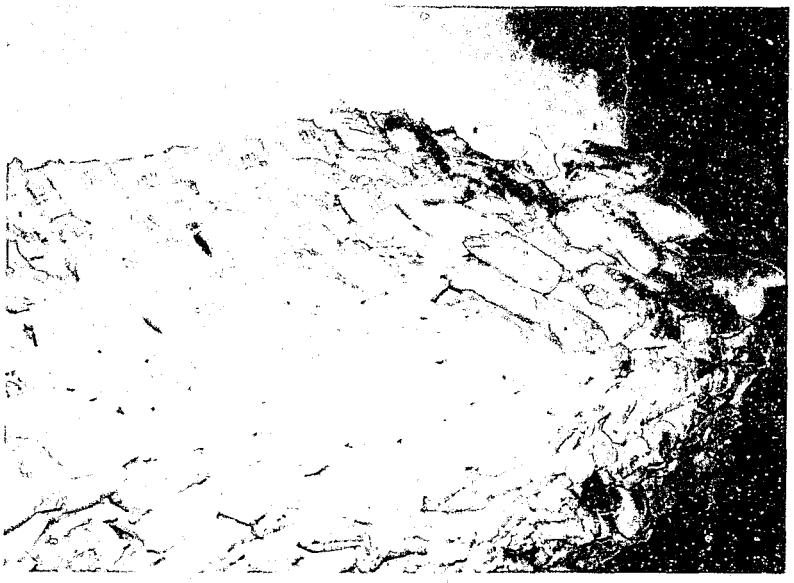
Private automobiles are used to transport illicit drugs. Means to conceal the illicit drugs are limited only by the resources and ingenuity of the smuggler. Illicit drugs have been discovered inside spare tires, in specially designed reservoirs inside vehicle fuel tanks, and in seats and interior moldings. Automobiles usually are easier to search and lend themselves more readily to inspection by trained K-9 teams. Unfortunately, these resources are in short supply in Southwest Asia.

By Sea

Maritime transport of raw materials for the production of illicit drugs provides smugglers the means to transport bulk quantities at reduced costs and lowered risk. Long coastlines in both Pakistan and Turkey and insufficient maritime interdiction forces permitted smugglers to exploit this means of transport with, until recently, only minor losses.

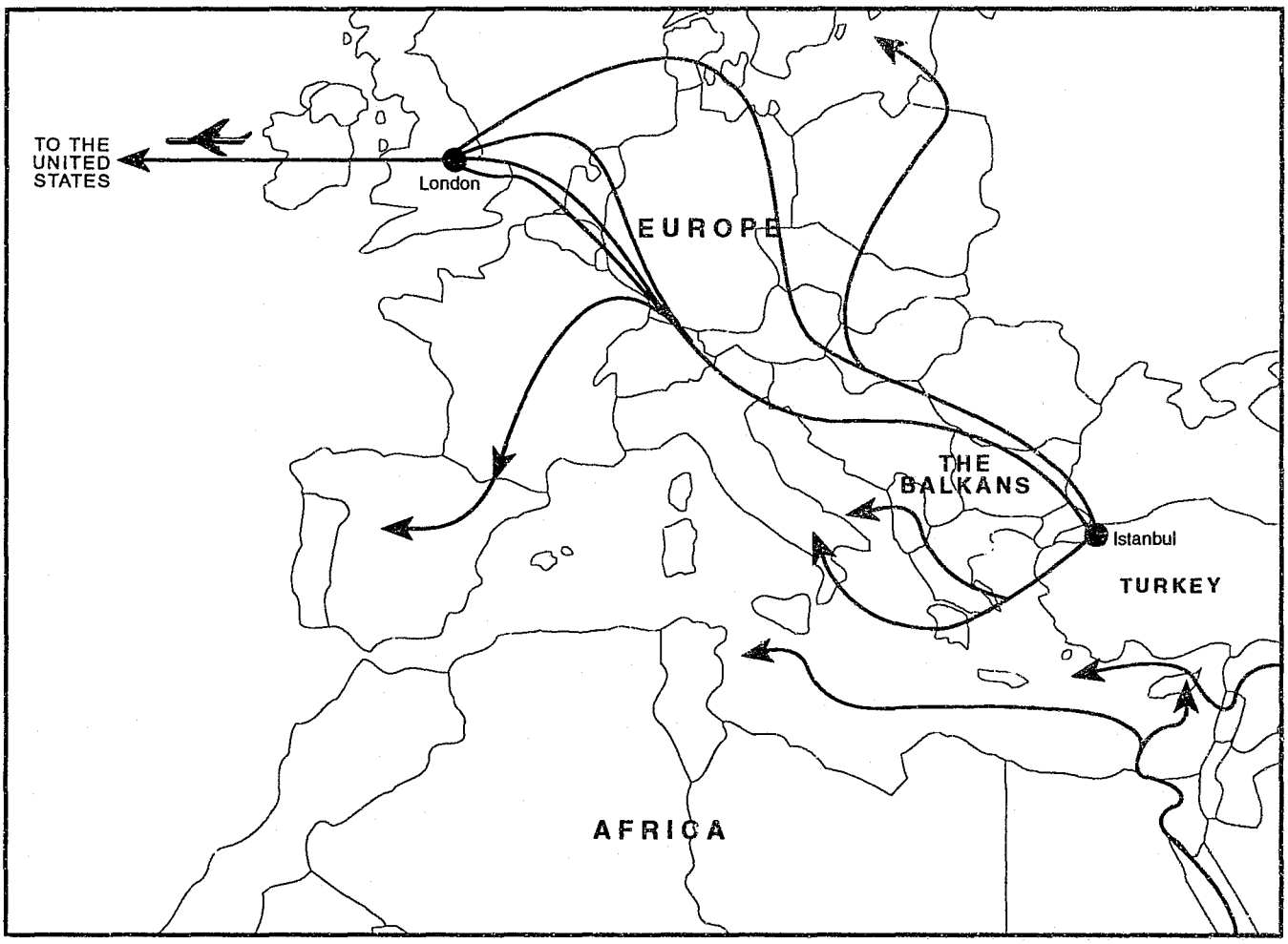
By Air

Although this means of transport is available to drug smugglers, there have not been any reports indicating that raw materials (i.e., morphine base, heroin base, and essential chemicals) are moved within the region by air.



Drugs seized from caravan group by Frontier Corps.

Figure 7



Southwest Asian trafficking routes outside the region.

TURKISH MARITIME SEIZURES

Recent seizures by Turkish drug enforcement forces indicate the advances made by Turkish law enforcement in stemming the flow of illicit drugs to Western consumers. The seizures described below were the result of close cooperation between the Turkish National Police (TNP) and DEA.

In December 1992, the M/V *Kismetim I*, out of Karachi, Pakistan, and bound for Istanbul, Turkey, was scuttled by its crew after it had been stopped in international waters by the Turkish Navy and the TNP. The vessel was interdicted based upon information that it was transporting a large quantity of illicit drugs from Pakistan. Interviews of the ship's crew revealed that approximately 3.1 metric tons of morphine base had been concealed on board. The TNP arrested the owners of the illicit drugs. Prosecution of the drug traffickers by the Government of Turkey is proceeding.

On January 7, 1993, the Turkish Navy and TNP, without incident, intercepted and boarded the M/V *Lucky S*, a Panamanian-flagged bulk carrier in international waters. Approximately 2.75 metric tons of morphine base/heroin and 11.35 metric tons of hashish were removed from the ship in port. A Turkey-based trafficking network had arranged for the transport of the drugs from Pakistan.

OUTSIDE THE REGION

Drug traffickers take advantage of every means of transport to smuggle their illicit drugs to distribution locations. New routes and methods of concealment are developed in a continual effort to keep ahead of drug enforcement agents. In order to maximize their profits and avoid enforcement efforts, smugglers are willing to try any method of concealment. For example, in 1992, a woman had packets of heroin implanted surgically in her buttocks before boarding a commercial flight to the United States.

Overland

Most often, heroin produced in Turkey is brokered from Istanbul, where contracts are made and orders passed on to the laboratory operators. Once the heroin is produced, it often is moved overland in TIR trucks along the "Balkan Route." Statistics collected by the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) for the period 1986 through 1992 indicate that between 65 and 75 percent of the heroin seized in Western Europe was transported in road vehicles that transited Turkey.

The Balkan Route links Istanbul with Western Europe by a modern, international road system. The "route" is actually a network of highways and border crossings that provide the trafficker a variety of alternative land routes. This allows smugglers to avoid problem areas—such as the war in the former Yugoslavia, or identified surges in local drug interdiction efforts along specific highways—and deliver their illicit drugs safely.

According to INTERPOL, during a typical 6-month period, over 25 million vehicles pass through checkpoints linking Germany with Austria, the former Czechoslovakia, and the former East German Democratic Republic. Since the breakup of the Warsaw Pact, the major frontier crossings, such as Kapitan-Andreevo in Bulgaria, Borogodica and Gradina in Yugoslavia, and Waidhaus in Germany, have recorded a dramatic increase in the volume of road traffic, especially TIR trucks carrying goods from the Middle East to West European markets. Consequently, most border crossings are reporting an increase in the amount of heroin seized.

Smuggling techniques vary with each shipment. In some cases, the drugs are hidden within legitimate cargo. In others, the drugs are secreted in professionally fitted traps (concealed compartments) specifically designed to carry illegal cargo. For example, heroin has been found in waterproof reservoirs inside fuel tanks, in false panels inside trailers, inside rear axles, in spare tires, and in false housings disguised as functional equipment.

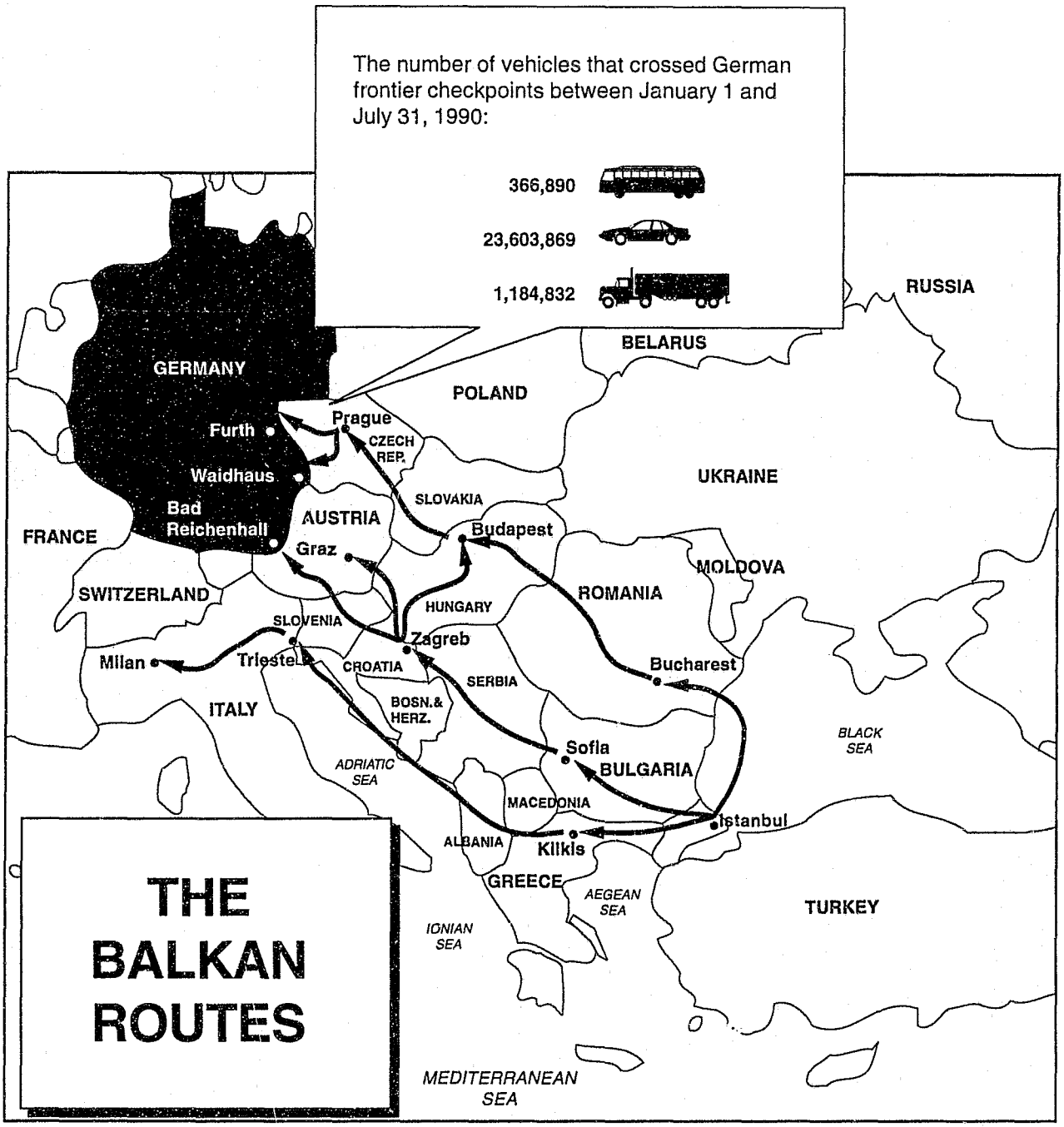
As previously noted, in the absence of a tip-off, the average time required to search a tractor-trailer rig is from 14 to 16 hours. However, drug interdiction promises to become an even more daunting task. As traffic volume on these routes continues to rise, emerging inter-European political and economic ties work to lower restrictions on regional trade and travel.

Recent reporting indicates that routes are being developed to take advantage of the social and political upheaval in the former Soviet Republics. These newly formed countries are trying to reinstitute government systems that either were weakened severely or destabilized completely by the withdrawal of the Moscow bureaucracy. National and local law enforcement duties have become the responsibility of forces that, in most cases, have not received the proper training, equipment, or staffing.

Traffickers are developing new routes to take advantage of the social and political upheaval in the former Soviet Republics.

At the same time, these countries are establishing economic links with other nations to create interstate commerce. This will engender closer ties between the countries and will open a greater range of overland routes for smugglers, as well as private access to seaports in the Scandinavian countries and northern Russia.

Figure 8


The number of vehicles that crossed German frontier checkpoints between January 1 and July 31, 1990:
366,890
23,603,869
1,184,832
THE BALKAN ROUTES
GERMANY
FRANCE
SWITZERLAND
AUSTRIA
ITALY
SLOVENIA
CROATIA
BOSN.& HERZ.
SERBIA
HUNGARY
SLOVAKIA
CZECH REP.
POLAND
BELARUS
RUSSIA
UKRAINE
MOLDOVA
ROMANIA
BULGARIA
GREECE
ALBANIA
MACEDONIA
TURKEY
Furth
Waidhaus
Bad Reichenhall
Prague
Budapest
Graz
Zagreb
Trieste
Milan
Sofia
Bucharest
Istanbul
Kilkis
ADRIATIC SEA
IONIAN SEA
AEGEAN SEA
BLACK SEA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA

By Air

There are over 500 operable airports in the region, of which 300 have permanent surface runways of various lengths. Each country in the region has at least one international airport.

Drug smugglers constantly change their methods of operation to respond to the effectiveness of drug enforcement techniques at regional airports. Nigerian traffickers, for example, have come under closer scrutiny by airport drug enforcement forces of late. In response, Nigerians now hire couriers from other countries to carry the drugs for them on the same flight. While the Nigerian, after disembarking from the airplane, attracts the attention of drug enforcement officials, the other couriers, generally unchallenged, carry the drugs through customs.

Nigerian heroin smugglers often are arrested at Karachi International Airport before boarding direct flights to Lagos, Nigeria, and Nairobi, Kenya. Pakistani officials recently established air routes between Karachi and Tashkent, capital of the newly established country of Uzbekistan, a former Soviet Republic. On the inaugural flight, Pakistani Customs seized 2 kilograms of heroin from a Pakistani businessman.

Pakistani drug enforcement agencies at Karachi International Airport have a very active drug interdiction program, with extensive experience in discovering caches of illicit drugs. A favorite smuggling method employed by Pakistani traffickers is secreting drugs in false-sided suitcases.

Reports of drug seizures at Turkish international airports are sporadic, possibly due to smugglers' preference for road transport.

Figure 9

1993 Southwest Asian Heroin Seizures from Nigerians

Karachi International Airport, Pakistan

Date	Kilograms Seized	Destination	Location of Drugs
22 Feb	17.40	Africa	Ingested
8 Mar	5.00	Kenya	Inside suitcase lining
21 Mar	30.00	Nigeria	Inside TV picture tubes
13 Apr	4.50	Romania	Unknown
7 May	11.00	Kenya	Inside suitcase lining
10 May	114.00	Nigeria	Inside lining of satchels
26 May	2.20	UAE	In spools of copper wire
5 Jun	3.00	UAE	In rolls of paper
5 Jun	0.30	UAE	In rolls of paper
12 Jun	10.50	Egypt	In rolls of paper
23 Jul	5.50	Nigeria	Vinyl-coated binders
30 Jul	123.00	Nigeria	Rolls of teleprinter paper
14 Aug	123.00	Nigeria	Pesticide spray tins
18 Aug	29.00	Nigeria	Pesticide spray tins

By Sea

Maritime transportation has been, and continues to be, an important means of moving consumer goods and passengers throughout the region. Major ports—Bandar-E-Abbas, Iran; Istanbul, Turkey; and Karachi, Pakistan—account for the movement of hundreds of thousands of tons of cargo. Numerous passenger and vehicle ferries ply the Mediterranean Sea between Turkey and Western Europe. Drug traffickers have exploited this means of transport to move multiton shipments of illicit drugs both within the region and to consumer countries.

Seizures reported by Pakistani Customs at the Port of Karachi indicate that illicit drugs are smuggled through the port in cargo destined for Western Europe and the United States. As previously mentioned, Turkish drug enforcement officials have seized large consignments of heroin base from ships that had picked up their illicit cargo off the Pakistani coast.

Large shipments of hashish destined for consumer countries also are smuggled out of Pakistan aboard these ships. The *Lucky S* was carrying over 11 metric tons of hashish, along with the 2.75 metric tons of heroin base, when she was seized in January 1993 by Turkish authorities. Moreover, Canadian officials have seized shipments of Pakistani hashish from vessels that sailed directly from the Indian Ocean to Canadian waters.

Ferries traversing the Mediterranean Sea transport passengers and their vehicles directly from Turkey to Western Europe, avoiding many border crossings and points of inspection by drug interdiction forces. These ferries also carry large numbers of buses, lorries, and TIR trucks. Considering the time required to search a vehicle for contraband, it is unlikely that host country enforcement officials would do so without specific information of drug shipments.

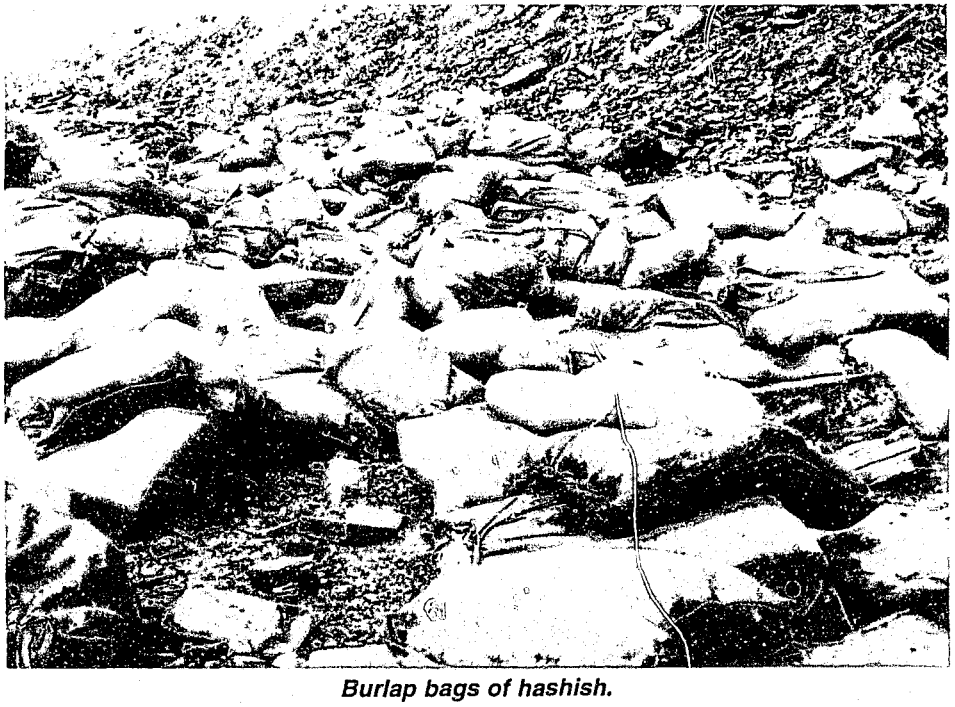
HASHISH SEIZURES ON THE MAKRAN COAST

Usually, traffickers move hashish by sea in multiton quantities. First, it is moved from regional conversion laboratories to staging areas close to the Pakistani coast. After arrangements are made with a captain of a ship making port in the area, traffickers move the hashish to a designated area on the Makran Coast of Pakistan. Then the hashish is transported by small craft, usually fast boats, to the waiting ship.

On May 19, 1993, in the first joint operation between Pakistani Customs and the Pakistani Navy, 50 metric tons of hashish were seized in Kerman Dahat, Baluchistan, Pakistan. An overflight by Pakistani Navy helicopters observed several armed individuals, believed to have been guarding the hashish, running from the area to hide in a mountainous region. Further investigation located the hashish in a small canyon, stored in burlap sacks that blended with the terrain and made detection from the air almost impossible. Each burlap sack contained 100 one-kilogram bricks. The kilogram bricks were wrapped further in aluminum heat-sealed packages that had a ketchup logo, a French dry-fruit-wrapper logo, or no logo. Each brick was wrapped in an off-white burlap cloth and placed in the brown burlap sacks.

The export-quality hashish was worth an estimated US$3 to US$5 million in Pakistan. In all, two 50-metric ton hashish shipments, and a total of 139 metric tons of hashish, have been seized under similar circumstances along the Makran Coast.

Hashish cache site, Kerman Dahat.



Burlap bags of hashish.

Hashish bricks from cache at Kerman Dahat.

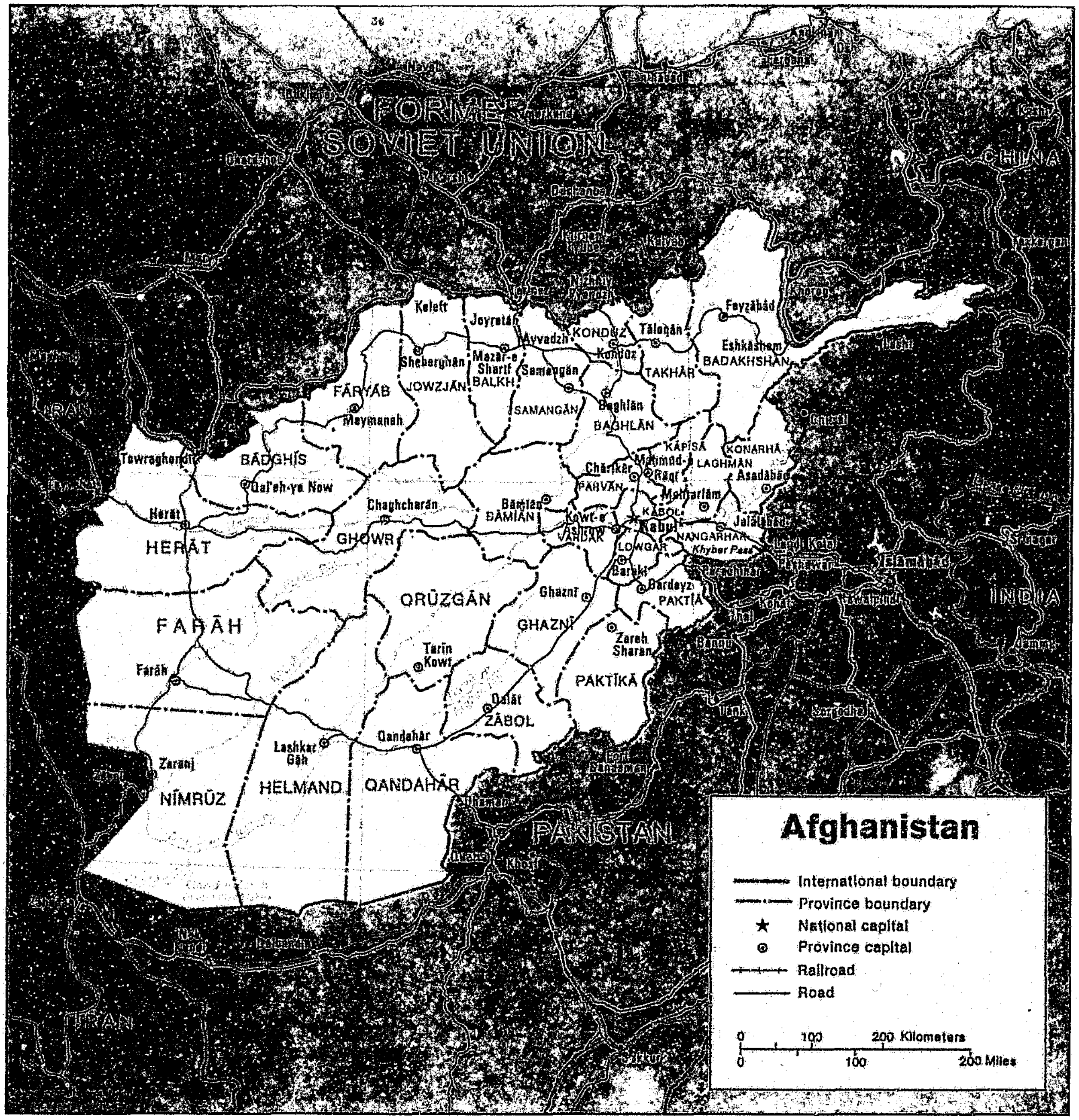
OUTLOOK

Due to internal political problems and other factors, drug law enforcement authorities are unlikely to record significant gains against major traffickers in the region. Usually, pressure brought by the international community is directed at regional government institutions that often are hampered by legal restrictions, corruption, and severely unstable political structures. Regional drug enforcement agencies report significant seizures of drugs, but few major traffickers are in prison. Traffickers take advantage of often-confusing legal codes and trial systems. Without substantial restructuring of the legal systems in the region, major traffickers will continue to evade imprisonment.

In **Afghanistan**, opium production has become a means to an end, as more returning refugees turn to opium poppy cultivation. The annual opium harvest will continue to increase, thus securing Afghanistan's position as the world's second largest opium producer.

The Government of **Pakistan** is in transition following the 1993 resignation of the president. A caretaker government, headed by an executive of the World Bank, established a strong, anti-drug policy and program of reforms. As a result of fall 1993 elections, Benazir Bhutto was elected President and vowed to continue the anti-drug program. Considering the political influence a number of major traffickers wield in the provinces, any new national government will face severe challenges to any form of effective drug law enforcement efforts.

The outlook for **Iran** remains unclear due to the lack of substantiated information. The country's strained relations with Western governments will restrict verification of the claimed drug interdiction successes of the Islamic Regime. Because it is impossible to patrol Iran's vast and uninhabited borders, they will continue to be breached, both to the east and to the west, by drug smugglers.


Afghanistan
International boundary
Province boundary
National capital
Province capital
Railroad
Road
0 100 200 Kilometers
0 100 200 Miles
FORMER SOVIET UNION
CHINA
PAKISTAN
INDIA
IRAN
HERĀT
FARĀH
NĪMRŪZ
HELMAND
QANDAHĀR
ORŪZGĀN
GHAZNĪ
PAKTĪKĀ
ZĀBOL
GHOWR
BĀDGHĪS
FĀRYĀB
JOWZJĀN
BALKH
SAMANGĀN
BAGHLĀN
KONDUZ
TAKHĀR
BADAKHSHĀN
KĀPĪSĀ
KONARHĀ
LAGHMĀN
PARVĀN
BĀMĪĀN
VARDAK
KĀBOL
LOWGAR
NANGARHĀR
PAKTĪĀ
Herāt
Towraghondī
Qal'eh-ye Now
Meymaneh
Sheberghān
Mazār-e Sharīf
Keleft
Feyzābād
Tāloqān
Eshkāshem
Baghlān
Chaghcharān
Bāmīān
Chārīkār
Kabul
Mehtarlām
Asadābād
Jalālābād
Khyber Pass
Gardeyz
Ghaznī
Zareh Sharan
Tarīn Kowt
Qalāt
Qandahār
Lashkar Gāh
Farāh
Zaranj

APPENDIX A: AFGHANISTAN

Capital: Kabul
Government: Republic (Authoritarian)
Population: 18,614,000
DEA Country Office: Islamabad, Pakistan

DRUG ABUSE & TREATMENT

Hashish, opium, and heroin are the local drugs of choice. The abuse of opium and hashish has occurred in Afghanistan for centuries and is treated with considerable tolerance. No reliable information is available on addict populations, treatment centers, or drug abuse programs. Although official estimates on heroin abuse are unavailable, it is believed there are more than 100,000 addicts. The preferred method of abuse is smoking.

Reports indicate drug addicts are treated in hospital psychiatric wards in Afghanistan. Due to the major problems facing the Afghan Government, little attention has been focused on internal drug abuse programs. Detoxification clinics in Peshawar, Pakistan, report an increasing incidence of heroin abuse among Afghan refugees.

PRICES

Figures 10 through 12 contain information reported by the U.N. Drug Control Office, Peshawar, in February 1993. All prices are based upon the exchange rate 26.15 Pakistani *rupees*/1250 *Afghanies* equal one U.S. dollar.

The price of cannabis has increased significantly, according to dealers, since a "new, better variety of cannabis plant was introduced to local farmers." This new cannabis allegedly produces a better quality hashish that is more in demand.

Figure 10

OPIUM - KILOGRAM PRICES		
Origin	Price in Afghanistan	Price in Pakistan (Khyber Agency)
Badakshan	$95 - $99	$118
Nangarhar	$68 - $84	$114
Kunar	$53 - $80	N/A

Figure 11

HEROIN - KILOGRAM PRICES		
Quality	Conversion Laboratory Rate	Retail Market Rate
White	$1,797 - $2,026	$2,294 - $2,676
Brown	$573 - $650	$764 - $1,147

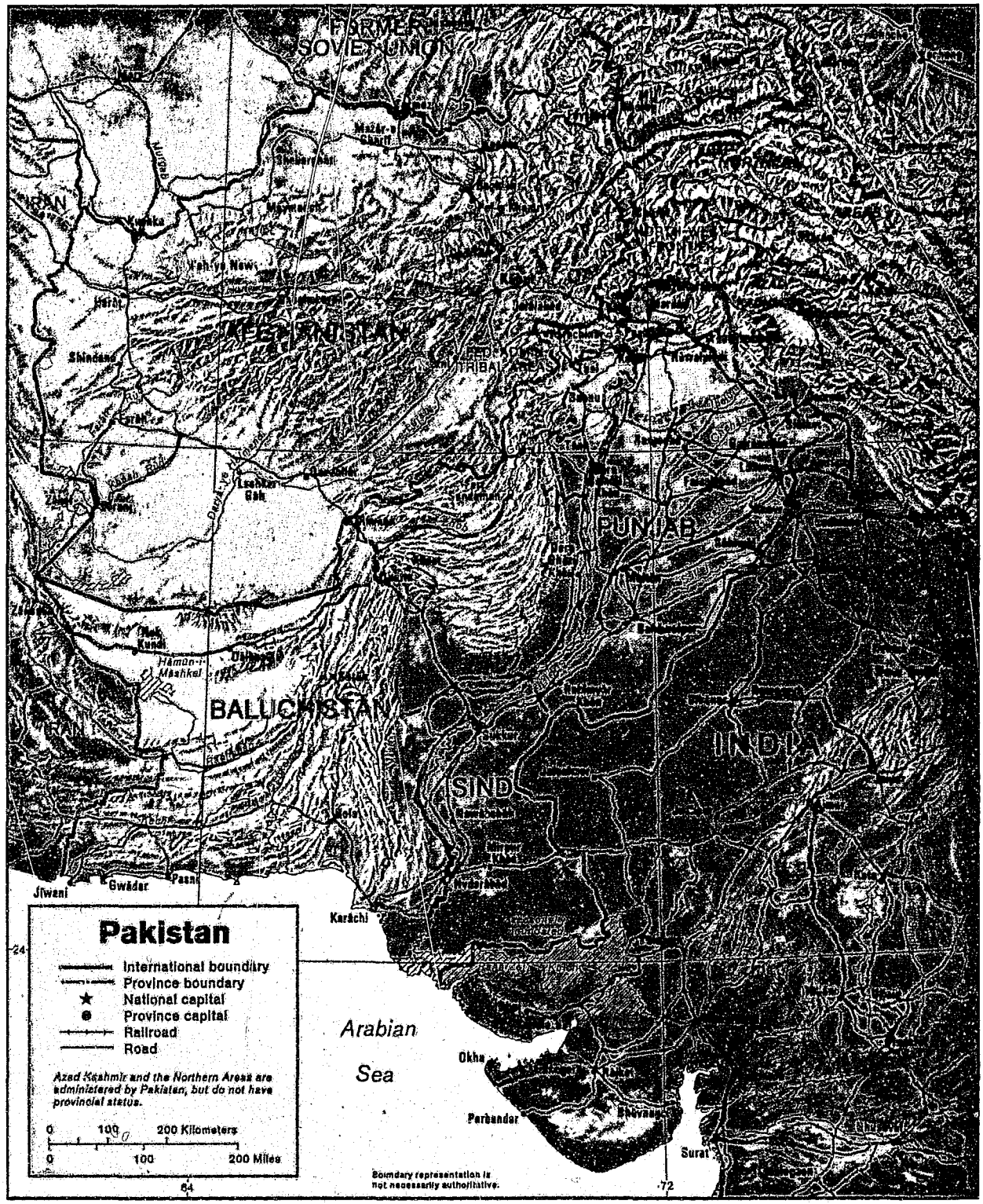
Figure 12

CANNABIS - KILOGRAM PRICES		
Quality (Origin)	Price in Afghanistan	Price in Pakistan
Afghan (Logar-Maraz)	$45 - $95	$53 - $99
Pakistan (Terah-Chitral)	$76 - $104	$91 - $133

DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES & LEGISLATION

The April 1992 change of government was seen as an opportunity to establish a strong anti-drug program, a goal embraced by the new leadership. In June, President Rabbani publicly pledged that ". . . by fully observing foreign commitments, and in order to wage an extensive and comprehensive struggle, the Islamic state will prevent drug trafficking, production, smuggling, and use." This, he stressed, could be accomplished only with international financial and technical support.

The Afghan political situation since has deteriorated and several tribal factions again have taken up arms. Until a stable government is established, with a strong central leadership recognized by all factions, a viable countrywide counter-drug program will be difficult, at best, to establish and impossible to maintain.


FORMER
SOVIET UNION
IRAN
AFGHANISTAN
TRIBAL AREAS
PUNJAB
BALUCHISTAN
SIND
INDIA
Arabian
Sea
Pakistan
International boundary
Province boundary
National capital
Province capital
Railroad
Road
Azad Kashmir and the Northern Areas are administered by Pakistan, but do not have provincial status.
0 100 200 Kilometers
0 100 200 Miles
Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.
64
72
24

APPENDIX B: PAKISTAN

Capital:	Islamabad
Government:	Federal Republic
Population:	114,649,000
DEA Country Office:	Islamabad
DEA Resident Offices:	Karachi
	Lahore
	Peshawar

DRUG ABUSE & TREATMENT

In 1980, there were virtually no heroin addicts in Pakistan. By mid-1982, drug rehabilitation and treatment experts estimated a minimum addict population of 30,000. Today, according to the Government of Pakistan, heroin addicts comprise the largest group of drug abusers. The most recent estimates, by both Pakistani and foreign experts in 1988, put the addict population between 1.2 and 1.7 million.

Hashish users form the second largest group of drug abusers. Hashish use is common in the region and Pakistan has an estimated 750,000 regular abusers.

In the past, the official and public attitude toward drug abuse was one of benign tolerance. However, the dramatic increase in heroin abuse has created considerable official interest. The Ministry of Health has sponsored mass media campaigns to educate the public on the dangers of heroin use. In addition to treatment at hospitals and clinics, Pakistan has 30 drug treatment centers for addicts.

PRICES

Figure 13

PRICES - KARACHI, NWFP	
Substance	**Price**
Opium - Raw, Unrefined	$92 per kilogram
Acetic Anhydride	$69 per liter

Figure 14

PRICES - ISLAMABAD	
Substance	**Price/kilogram**
Heroin - White Export Quality	$3,285
Heroin - Off-White Export Quality	$2,475
Heroin - Brown Export Quality	$1,390
Heroin - Brown Local Quality	$1,025
Hashish - Export Quality	$105
Hashish - Local Quality	$100
Opium - Refined	$110

DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES & LEGISLATION

The Government of Pakistan has banned all opium poppy cultivation. However, some cultivation and most conversion activity take place in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), over which the government claims it can exercise only limited control.

The agencies with drug law enforcement responsibilities are: the Airport Security Force, the Coast Guard, the Federal Investigation Agency, the Frontier Constabulary, the Frontier Corps, Pakistan Customs, Pakistan Narcotics Control Board, the Pakistan Rangers, the four Provincial Departments of Excise and Taxation, the four Provincial Police Forces, and the tribal militia groups that operate under the authority of provincial and federal governments.

Law enforcement agencies in Pakistan regularly seize large shipments of opiate and cannabis products; however, major traffickers rarely are arrested, tried, and sentenced to jail terms. In October 1990, the Baluchistan Frontier Corps seized approximately 2 metric tons of suspected heroin, morphine base, and adulterants. The Government of Pakistan continues to attempt to prosecute the politically influential traffickers who organized the drug shipment. In October 1991, approximately 3.2 metric tons of morphine base and opiate constituents and 39 metric tons of hashish were seized in Baluchistan. No significant traffickers have been charged in this case. In July 1991, two major traffickers were prosecuted, convicted, and sentenced to 7 years; but, due to the intricacies of the Pakistani sentencing and penal system, they will serve only 3.5 years in prison.

In 1993, 41,932 drug-related arrests were made; however, only a few of these cases involved major traffickers and laboratory operators. The law enforcement and prosecutorial systems have been subverted by wealthy and politically influential traffickers.

Nevertheless, during 1992, one major Pakistani trafficker, a former member of the NWFP provincial assembly, was sentenced to life imprisonment in Karachi. Prosecutions also advanced against other major traffickers who are members of the Quetta Alliance and powerful Baluchistan politicians.

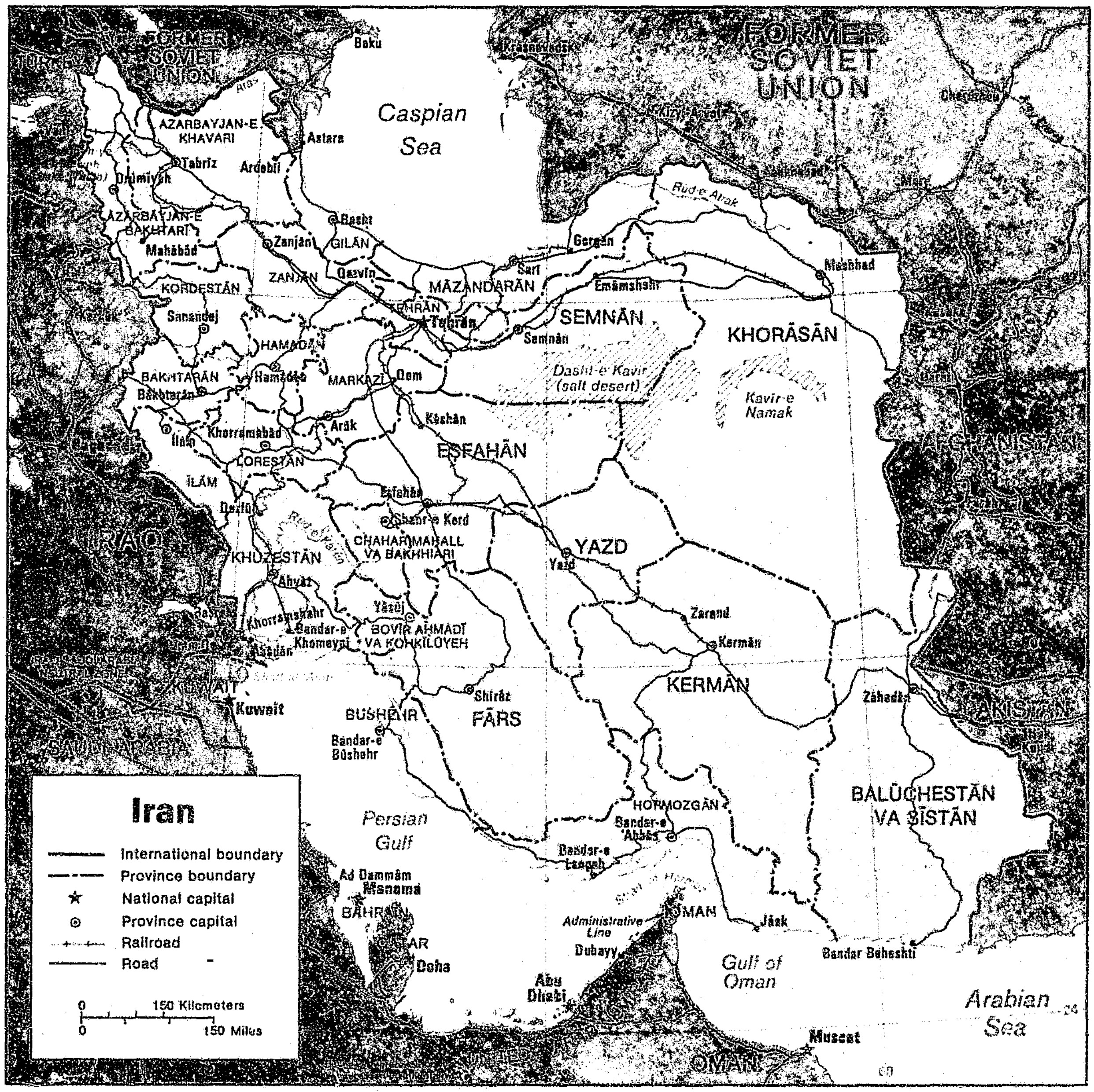
In 1993, the government initiated prosecution of a major trafficker who was arrested in connection with a 12 metric ton hashish seizure in May 1993. However, a reputed drug trafficker was released when prosecution witnesses failed to appear to testify. Sakhi Dost Jan Notezai, whose case was opened in 1991 and has not reached final disposition, successfully ran for a seat in the Balochistan Assembly from his jail cell.

The Government of Pakistan has established some control over acetic anhydride, an essential chemical in the manufacture of heroin. Since acetic anhydride is used legitimately, in large quantities by the Pakistani textile and leather tanning industries, it is produced as well as imported into Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan has mandated that its import must be under license by an industrial consumer. Smuggling acetic anhydride is a criminal offense, punishable by up to 14 years in prison. In October 1990, approximately 19 metric tons of acetic anhydride, shipped from Belgium to a commercial importer in Karachi, were confiscated by Pakistani Customs.

As a result, the black market price of the chemical doubled, and a severe shortage was reported in the tribal areas where heroin conversion takes place. In the spring of 1991, 5 metric tons of this seizure were stolen from police custody, illustrating the ineffectiveness of law enforcement authorities and the level of corruption facing reformers. Approximately 75 percent of the stolen chemical subsequently was recovered and those responsible for the theft arrested.

DRUG-RELATED MONEY LAUNDERING

Pakistan is not a major center for international money laundering activity. The widespread use of the informal financial sector, known as the *Hundi* system, to transfer funds internationally makes it extremely difficult to estimate the amount of drug-related money circulating in Pakistan. While some drug money infiltrates into the Pakistani banking system, it is believed that the majority of drug profits is invested in Pakistani real estate.


Iran
International boundary
Province boundary
National capital
Province capital
Railroad
Road
150 Kilometers
150 Miles
Caspian Sea
Persian Gulf
Gulf of Oman
Arabian Sea
FORMER SOVIET UNION
AZARBAYJAN-E KHAVARI
AZARBAYJAN-E BAKHTARI
KORDESTAN
ZANJAN
GILAN
MAZANDARAN
TEHRAN
SEMNAN
KHORASAN
HAMADAN
MARKAZI
BAKHTARAN
LORESTAN
ILAM
ESFAHAN
KHUZESTAN
CHAHARMAHALL VA BAKHHIARI
YAZD
BOVIR AHMADI VA KOHKILOYEH
BUSHEHR
FARS
KERMAN
HORMOZGAN
BALUCHESTAN VA SISTAN
Baku
Astara
Tabriz
Ardebil
Rasht
Zanjan
Qazvin
Mahabad
Sanandaj
Tehran
Semnan
Gorgan
Sari
Mashhad
Qom
Arak
Kashan
Khorramabad
Esfahan
Yazd
Ahvaz
Yasuj
Shiraz
Zarand
Kerman
Zahedan
Bandar-e Bushehr
Bandar-e Abbas
Jask
Bandar Beheshti
Kuwait
Manama
Doha
Dubayy
Abu Dhabi
Muscat
Dasht-e Kavir (salt desert)
Kavir-e Namak
Administrative Line

APPENDIX C: IRAN

Capital:	Teheran
Government:	Islamic Republic
Population:	61,183,138
DEA Country Office:	Ankara, Turkey

DRUG ABUSE & TREATMENT

Iranian officials place the heroin addict population at 500,000, but it is suspected to be much larger, possibly as high as 2 to 3 million. Although there is some local cultivation in Iran, most of the opiate supplies available in Iran originates in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the former Soviet Republics.

The Ministry of Health and Medical Education is responsible directly for control over and the proper use of licit drugs. The Narcotics Control Administration and Drug Abuse Coordination Council collects data throughout the country, then complete and forward questionnaires and statistics to the United Nations.

Drug abuse is considered a crime in Iran. Abusers are sent to 1 of 17 drug rehabilitation centers for treatment, which usually involves immediate forced withdrawal (cold turkey) and "labor therapy." Traffickers in possession of more than 30 grams of heroin or 5 kilograms of opium are subject to the death penalty and the confiscation of all their property. This penalty can be carried out within 2 weeks of the arrest, according to Iranian law.

PRICES

No current information is available on illicit drug prices.

DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES & LEGISLATION

The highest ranking official in the country responsible for combatting drug trafficking is the Commander in Chief of the Islamic Revolutionary Corps (IRC). The IRC is responsible for all law enforcement, to include drug-related crimes and defending Iran's borders against smuggling. In addition, each province has an Islamic Revolutionary Committee that fights drug trafficking as one of its priority tasks.

Since 1980, the Iranian Government has reported large seizures of opium, morphine, heroin, and cannabis. The information has not been verified independently and is based upon pro-government press reporting. In 1983, the last year for which DEA has complete figures, Iran reported the seizure of more than 3.4 metric tons of heroin, 1 metric ton of morphine, 35 metric tons of opium, and nearly 500 kilograms of cannabis.

In 1991, INTERPOL reported that Iran seized 5.4 metric tons of morphine base; in 1990, only 1.4 metric tons were reported seized. Most of these seizures took place in northwestern Iran, an area populated largely by Kurds and a major staging area for opiates smuggled into Turkey.

The Iranian media frequently report seizures of drugs and executions of traffickers. Unconfirmed reports indicate that some of these executions are motivated by politics and that drug trafficking is the official excuse.

The Iranian media reported that, in 1993, more than 65 metric tons of drugs had been seized and 53,000 drug smugglers were arrested.

APPENDIX D:
MANUFACTURE OF SOUTHWEST ASIAN HEROIN

Generally, the following 9-step process is used to convert opium to heroin base in Southwest Asia. It produces approximately 1 kilogram of heroin base from 7 kilograms of opium.

STEP 1: A 55-gallon drum or other large container is placed on a crude stand constructed of bricks at a height of approximately 10 to 12 inches above the ground. Water is poured into the drum and a wood fire is started under the drum. Opium, broken into pieces of 1 to 2 inches, is added to the water. The mixture is stirred and water added, as necessary, until all the opium is dissolved.

STEP 2: The fire is intensified and lime is added to the mixture. When sufficient lime has been added, the fire is extinguished with water. The drum is left undisturbed for approximately 12 hours (overnight). A precipitate, called "dregs," settles in the bottom of the drum. The dregs contain plant and mineral debris, as well as large quantities of certain opium alkaloids. Of the major opium alkaloids contained in the original opium, approximately 90 percent of the noscapine and papaverine, 70 percent of the thebaine, 50 percent of the codeine, and 5 percent of the morphine will be contained in the dregs. The water mixture contains the remaining quantities of opium alkaloids. The majority of the morphine forms a stable complex with calcium, called calcium morphinate.

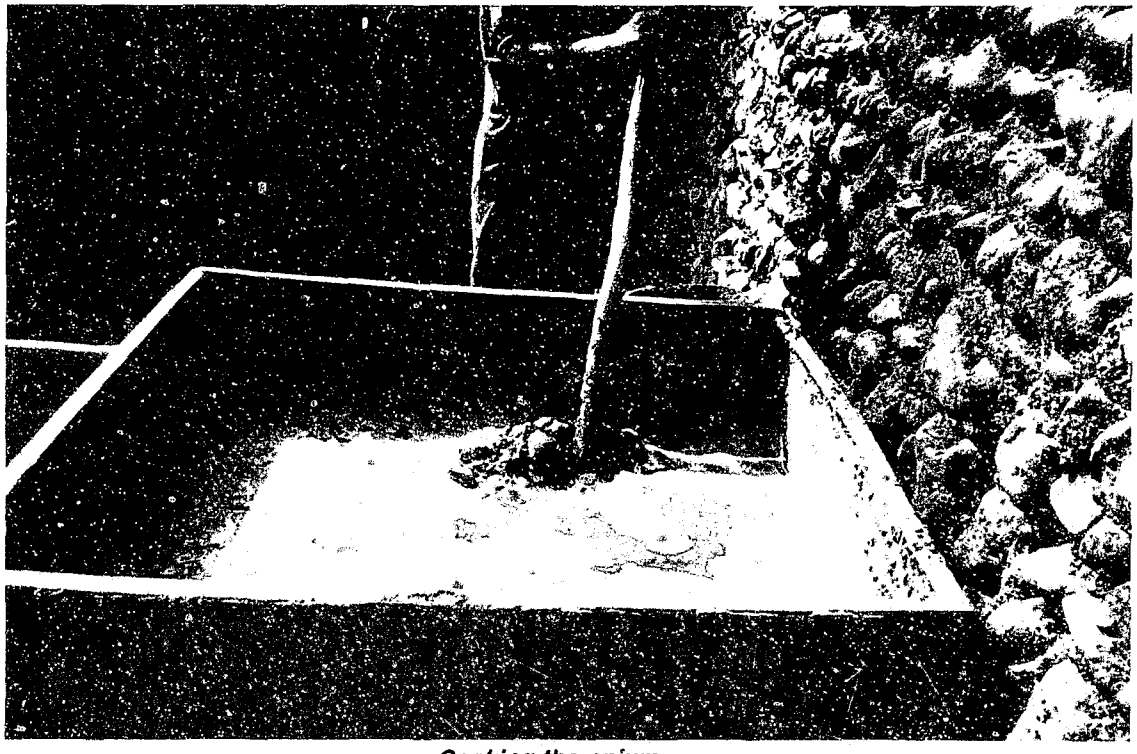
Preparing opium for processing.

STEP 3: The drum's mixture is scooped into rice sacks which, when full, are tied at the top. Pressure is applied to the sacks to filter the liquid calcium morphinate. Usually this is accomplished with a press that uses some form of hydraulic jack or screw mechanism.

The dregs are removed from the sacks and placed in a washtub heated by a wood fire. After the mixture is brought to a near boil for 30 minutes, the contents are scooped into the rice sacks again and filtered as before. The liquid from this process is added to the previously obtained calcium morphinate. This process is usually repeated until the chemist feels all the calcium morphinate has been extracted. The collected calcium morphinate is placed back in the 55-gallon drum, which has been rinsed with clean water.

STEP 4: Ammonium chloride, called *nashadar* locally, is added to the mixture. This causes the calcium morphinate to break down into calcium salts and morphine base. The morphine, which is not soluble in water, settles at the bottom of the drum.

STEP 5: The solution is filtered as previously described except that a tightly woven cotton cloth is used in place of the rice sacks. After the filtration is complete, the residue, which is trapped in the cloth, is placed in the sun to dry. The chemist works this material continually to expose a fresh surface to the sun and speed the drying process. The product of Step 5 is morphine base.

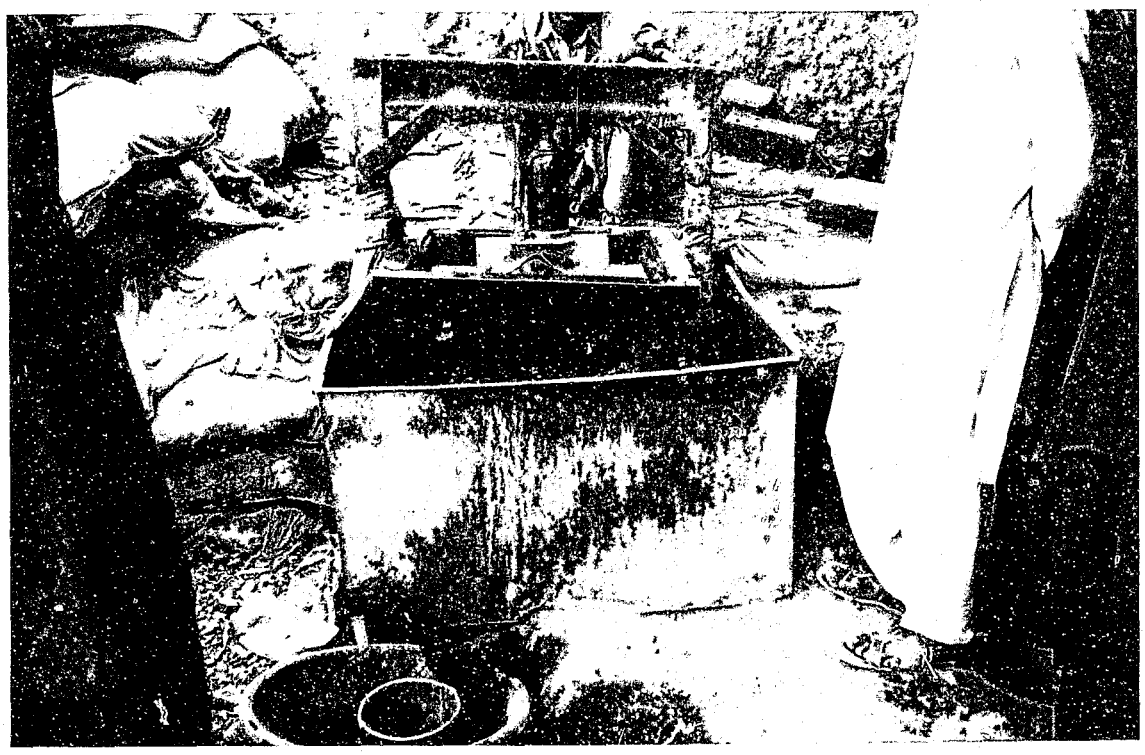


Cooking the opium.

STEP 6: An aluminum pot is washed, then dried over a fire. After it cools, the morphine base is placed in the pot. Acetic anhydride (locally referred to as "acid") is stirred into the morphine base, generating a considerable amount of heat and causing the contents of the pot to "steam." After a short time, a cloth is wrapped around the pot's lid, which is used to cover the pot and is kept in place with a weight, such as a brick. Presumably, this is done to contain the fumes. When the pot cools, it is placed on a hot plate and heated until the solution is "rolling." The solution is maintained at these conditions for 30 minutes.

STEP 7: The aluminum pot's contents, the reaction mixture, are placed in a second container, which holds a small amount of cool water. After a short time, the reaction mixture from the first pot is poured into the water in the larger container and more water is added. This process converts excess acetic anhydride to acetic acid and the heroin to heroin acetate. The solution is filtered in the same manner as the morphine base; however, the residue trapped in the cloth during this step is discarded.

Drums used in processing the opium.



Typical press used in processing heroin base.

STEP 8: Water and soda ash (locally called "carbon") are mixed in a container. The heroin acetate is added to this mixture, causing a strong effervescence. This process continues until the effervescence stops. The soda ash converts the heroin acetate to heroin base, which is not soluble in water. The heroin base falls to the bottom of the container, leaving a "scum" on the surface of the water. The scum appears as a light brown material intermixed with a black tar-like substance. The chemist works this tar-like substance with his hands until it too falls to the bottom of the container.

STEP 9: The product of Step 8 is filtered in the same manner as described for the morphine base. The material trapped in the cloth is heroin base. The heroin base is returned to a container, into which water is stirred. This step "washes" the heroin base and eliminates the soda ash, which is soluble in water. At the completion of this step, the heroin base is placed in the sun to dry.

APPENDIX E:
TREATIES, CONVENTIONS, & INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

Figure 15

International Agreements, Conventions, and Treaties	Country			
	Afghanistan	Iran	Iraq	Pakistan
Membership in INTERPOL		x	x	x
U.N. Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961	x	x	x	x
1972 Protocol to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs			x	x*
U.N. Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971	x*		x*	x
U.N. Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988				x

* With reservations.

Other international anti-drug agreements include:

Pakistan

- Drug liaison officers from several nations are stationed in Pakistan.
- Pakistan is a member of the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Narcotics Control Committee.
- A treaty with the United States allows for the extradition of all persons, including Pakistani citizens, charged with drug trafficking and associated crimes in the United States.

APPENDIX F:
SIGNIFICANT HASHISH SEIZURES OF PAKISTANI ORIGIN

- **May 11, 1993:** At Karachi Harbor, the Pakistan Narcotics Control Board (PNCB) seized 12 metric tons of hashish destined for Montreal, Canada. The hashish was packed in banded cartons and seized while still on the delivery truck. The individual bricks were embossed in gold with either the word "ROMEO" or a crown symbol.
- **April 24, 1993:** Pakistani Customs officers in Peshawar seized 3.3 metric tons of hashish. The hashish was concealed in traps on a dump truck.
- **April 14, 1993:** Customs officers in Karachi seized 2 metric tons of hashish. The hashish was discovered during a raid of a stash house.
- **January 7, 1993:** In the Mediterranean Sea, the TNP and Turkish Navy seized 11.34 metric tons of hashish from the M/V *Lucky-S*. The hashish had been loaded aboard the *Lucky-S* off the Makran Coast and was bound for Istanbul.
- **December 27, 1992:** Customs officers in Uzbekistan seized 13 metric tons of hashish. The hashish was hidden in a containerized shipment of raisins that had originated in Pakistan.
- **November 11, 1992:** Pakistani Customs officers at the NWFP border seized 6 metric tons of hashish. The hashish was concealed in a load of stones on a truck.
- **September 14, 1992:** The PNCB seized 2 metric tons of hashish at the port of Karachi. The hashish was hidden in a false-walled compartment built into a shipping container.
- **August 26, 1992:** Pakistani Customs officers in the NWFP seized 3.6 metric tons of hashish. The hashish was concealed in a trap on a truck.
- **August 21, 1992:** The Defense Police (Military) seized 5.6 metric tons of hashish in Karachi. The hashish was packed in bales in two trucks.
- **August 17, 1992:** Pakistani Customs at the port of Karachi seized 8 metric tons of hashish. The hashish was mixed in with a containerized consignment of kitchen towels. The kilogram bricks were embossed with the word "ROMEO" in gold.
- **July 23, 1992:** Pakistani Customs officers in Peshawar seized 6 metric tons of hashish at the train freight yard. The hashish was packed professionally in sealed drums labeled as marble chips; it was destined for the port of Karachi by train.
- **May 18, 1992:** Pakistani Customs officers seized 1.344 metric tons of hashish near the NWFP border. The hashish was secreted in 65 fertilizer bags.
- **May 5, 1992:** Pakistani Customs officers on the Afghan-Pakistani border seized 8.5 metric tons of hashish. The hashish was concealed in hidden cavities among sheets of asbestos.
- **May 1, 1992:** Pakistani Customs officers in Karachi seized 6.2 metric tons of hashish at a stash house.
- **February 24, 1992:** The Makran Scouts, Pakistan Frontier Corps, seized 50 metric tons of hashish northeast of the coastal town of Makola. There were approximately 600 burlap bags—each containing 80 kilograms of hashish—some of which had the embossed gold "ROMEO" markings. Although the scenario is identical to the May 1993 seizure, the location is different.
- **October 1991:** Close to the Makran Coast, authorities seized 39 metric tons of hashish along with 3.2 metric tons of morphine base and opium. This seizure was near the February 24, 1992, seizure.

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