

Committee: World Health Organization (WHO)

Issue: Resolving the ongoing Yaba Drug Epidemic in Bangladesh

Student Officer: Ioannis Pitsiavas

Position: Deputy President

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear delegates,

I am delighted to welcome you all to the 6th Pierce-The American College of Greece Model United Nations conference, and specifically to the World Health Organization. This year, the theme of the conference is “Breaking Barriers”, a theme that can be quite a challenge when referring to topics related to health issues, like those that are present in this year’s conference in World Health Organization.

My name is Giannis, I am 16 years old, and currently an IB year 1 student at Geitonas School. The start of my MUN “career” was when I transferred schools and since then, I have been to five conferences as a delegate, in multiple committees, thus, I can say that I have some experience when it comes to challenging and diverse topics, like the ones that are present in the conference. This will be my first time as a Deputy President and so I look forward to meeting you all, hearing your opinions on the topics in our committee, and of course, coordinating the debate in the best way that I can.

You can always reach me at the following email address: ip11675@geitonas.edu.gr. If you need assistance or have any questions about this topic, please do not hesitate to contact me. Of course, aside from this guide, you need to conduct your own additional research to gather information on the topic and on your country’s stance on it.

I hope that you all have fruitful debates that provide you with knowledge of the issues that will be discussed. I am looking forward to meeting you all!

Kind regards,

Giannis Pitsiavas

TOPIC INTRODUCTION

The problem of drug usage and drug trafficking has existed for many years in Bangladesh. However, the scope and severity of the problem have changed over time and may have been impacted by a range of social, economic, and political variables. Of course, drug abuse and trafficking are complex issues that cannot be easily summed up into a single narrative, while addressing these problems requires a multifaceted

approach that takes into account the unique context and circumstances of each community, and in our case, the circumstances of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh's Yaba drug outbreak requires immediate action for multiple reasons. Bangladesh has lately seen a substantial rise in the "madness drug" Yaba. Yaba abuse may cause heart attack, stroke, anxiety, and sadness. Additionally, it may worsen crime, violence, and social instability. Yaba drug use in Bangladesh must be addressed to protect public health and maintain social stability and peace.

Despite its severity, the Yaba epidemic offers many intriguing aspects. It is important to examine the situation starting from the drug's origins. Manufactured illicitly in industrial quantities in Myanmar, it is smuggled into Bangladesh in the far southeast of the country. However, the medication is used oddly. Bangladeshis become addicted to Yaba tablets, at work. As Yaba contains methamphetamine and caffeine, its short-term effects are favorable for workers since it gives them energy to work. Yaba may also help Bangladeshis avoid reality. Dhaka doctor Ashique Selim says Yaba replaces alcohol in Muslim Bangladesh. He stated that Yaba is so widely used since there are no visible changes to an addict's appearance, nor any particular odor or other distinct characteristics. When taken in little dosages, the impacts the following day are minimal¹.

Averting the current Yaba drug epidemic in Bangladesh might have substantial economic and social advantages for the nation. First, there would be a decrease in crime and social disorder. Abuse of Yaba can contribute to criminal activity and societal unrest, which can have detrimental economic and social effects. Treating the Yaba epidemic may decrease crime and social discontent, creating a more peaceful and prosperous society. Education and employment would improve as well. Abuse of Yaba can have detrimental effects on education and employment outcomes, such as a high number of school dropouts and, in the case of many elderly individuals, an inability to work owing to addiction. By treating the Yaba epidemic, it may be feasible to enhance the education and job opportunities of Bangladeshi citizens, contributing to economic progress.

Last but not least, eradicating the current drug epidemic in Yaba will boost the country's international prestige. The Yaba epidemic in Bangladesh has captured the interest and concern of the world community. By efficiently resolving the issue, Bangladesh might improve its reputation and status on the international stage, which could lead to increased foreign investment and economic growth.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Golden Crescent

¹ Recovery, Landmark. "What Is Yaba? Panic Over Drug in Bangladesh." *Landmark Recovery*, 10 June 2019, landmarkrecovery.com/what-is-yaba-panic-over-drug-bangladesh/.

“The Golden Crescent region of South Asia—comprising Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan—is a principal global site for opium production and distribution. Over the past few decades, war, terrorism, and a shifting political landscape have facilitated an active heroin trade throughout the region.”²

Golden Triangle (Southeast Asia)

“The ‘Golden Triangle’ region of Southeast Asia has become the centre of a thriving opium economy and a crucial source of narcotics for the world. The current oversupply has led to warehousing of huge quantities of opium, making the heroin problem in the area intractable and a spreading heroin epidemic possible.”³

Opium

“A reddish-brown heavy-scented addictive drug prepared from the juice of the opium poppy, used illicitly as a narcotic and occasionally in medicine as an analgesic.”⁴

Precursor Chemicals

“Precursor chemicals, also known as scheduled substances or drug precursors, are used in the illegal manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychoactive substances. They also have legitimate commercial uses and are legally used in a wide variety of industrial processes and consumer products, such as medicines, flavourings and fragrances.”⁵

Psychotropic substances

“A drug or other substance that affects how the brain works and causes changes in mood, awareness, thoughts, feelings, or behaviour. Examples of psychotropic substances include alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, marijuana, and certain pain medicines. Many illegal drugs, such as heroin, LSD, cocaine, and amphetamines are also psychotropic substances. Also called psychoactive substance.”⁶

Seizure of drugs

² Farooq, Syeda Ayesha, et al. “Opium Trade and the Spread of HIV in the Golden Crescent - Harm Reduction Journal.” *BioMed Central*, BioMed Central, 21 July 2017, harmreductionjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12954-017-0170-1.

³ Author(s) S Sen. “Heroin Trafficking in the Golden Triangle.” *Heroin Trafficking in the Golden Triangle | Office of Justice Programs*, www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/heroin-trafficking-golden-triangle.

⁴ (“Oxford Languages and Google - English | Oxford Languages.” *Oxford Languages | The Home of Language Data*, 20 May 2020, languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/.)

⁵ *Precursor Chemicals*, www.hpra.ie/homepage/controlled-substances/precursor-chemicals.

⁶ “NCI Dictionary of Cancer Terms.” *National Cancer Institute*, www.cancer.gov/publications/dictionaries/cancer-terms/def/psychotropic-substance.

“The action of taking something or taking control of something, especially using power or force. In the case examined with drugs, is when the government has ordered their forces to seize drugs from someone/an organization.” ⁷

Yaba

“Methamphetamine with caffeine make yaba. Southeast and East Asia manufacture yaba, or Thai mad medicine.” ⁸

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Drug situation

Manufacture

In early 2021, the Directorate of Narcotics Control of Bangladesh discovered three Yaba plants in India close to Bangladesh. The government asserts that Yaba tablets from these manufacturers have entered Bangladesh for four years. These facilities were constructed to transport narcotics into Bangladesh.

During a virtual chat between the Department of Narcotics Control of Bangladesh and the Narcotics Control Bureau of India, it was discovered that one of Cooch Behar's plants was 50 meters from the Kurigram border. There is another factory nearby. The third factory is 5 kilometers over the border from Satkhira.

Despite the summit recognizing just three factories, the Bangladeshi government asserts there are many more. There are factories in West Bengal, Assam, and Meghalaya, according to intelligence assessments. Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) officers claimed to have proof of eleven Yaba businesses near the Indian border. This information has been confirmed. ⁹

In addition to India and Burma, other Southeast Asian nations produce Yaba. Narcotics from the Golden Triangle and Golden Crescent are brought to Bangladesh through the routes detailed in the next section of this guide.

Trafficking

⁷ ("SEIZURE (noun) Definition and Synonyms." *Macmillan Dictionary | Free English Dictionary and Thesaurus*, www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/seizure.)

⁸ "Yaba Fast Facts." *Yaba Fast Facts*, www.justice.gov/archive/ndic/pubs5/5048/index.htm.

⁹ (Hassan, Ahmadul. "Three Yaba Factories Found Along Indian Border." *Prothomalo*, 13 Nov. 2021, en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/three-yaba-factories-found-along-indian-border.)

Several accessible routes continue to be employed to progress Yaba trafficking, with Bangladesh serving as both a key destination and a transit country. There are two major international drug trafficking routes that are interconnected with the region and are used to carry a large amount of Yaba and other illicit narcotics throughout the world every year, profiting millions of dollars.

Yaba is smuggled into the country through some 45-50 points along the borders with Bangladesh's two neighboring countries: mainly Myanmar and somewhat India. Among all the routes the most vulnerable situation for drug trafficking continues on the Hill tracts of Dinajpur, Jhenaidaha, Shatkhira, Rajshahi, Benapole, Chowgachha of Jessore, and Teknaf of Cox's Bazar.



Figure 1: Main routes for drug smuggling in Bangladesh¹⁰

Among the trafficking routes, the vast forests and terrain areas of hill tracts, the Bangladeshi, Myanmar, and Thai Fishing Trawlers are being safely used for trafficking Yaba into Bangladesh.¹¹

Through Yaba Trafficking networks, physical and mental illnesses spread. Therefore, much more effort must be made into treating these diseases before declaring that the issue has been resolved. The manufacturing country manufactures the drug, local agents transport it to the cross-border trafficking zone, the drug is then

¹⁰ KHAN, MOHAMMAD J., and MOHAMMAD A. JINNAT. "Crazy Pills Spill Via New Routes in Bangladesh | #AsiaNewsNetwork." *Eleven Media Group Co., Ltd*, 5 Apr. 2019, elevenmyanmar.com/news/crazy-pills-spill-via-new-routes-in-bangladesh-asianewsnetwork.

¹¹ Anjum, Iffat. "The Crux of Transnational Yaba- Trafficking Nexus in Bangladesh: Explaining the Reasons and Advocating Counter- Strategies." *Research and Scientific Innovation Society (RSIS International)*, Feb. 2020, www.rsisinternational.org/journals/ijrsi/digital-library/volume-7-issue-2/13-20.pdf.

trafficked, and a portion of it returns to the nation's capital. This intricate process involves a profit-maker, a manufacturer, and end-users. It requires several layers of inquiry since it resembles a cobweb. Several years of examining Bangladesh's primary Yaba-trafficking pathways may provide a networked picture.

<u>Region</u>	<u>Border Crossing Country</u>	<u>Border Crossing Points</u>
Eastern and Northern	Myanmar: Naf River	Teknaf of Cox's Bazar
Eastern and Northern	India West Bengal	Jheneidah
Eastern and Northern	Myanmar; Bay of Bengal	Chittagong
Eastern and Northern	India: Tripura	Feni
Eastern and Northern	India: West Bengal	Dinajpur

Table 1: Table depicting the major Yaba smuggling route as per borders ¹²

Demand

Bangladesh has transitioned from a transit nation to one where "heavy" narcotics are utilized. The number of drug users is increasing in both urban and rural areas.¹³

In the Department of Narcotics Control's (DNC) 2014 annual report, it was estimated that 88% of drug users were aged below 40. A study in Sylhet city, released this year, found 55% of drug users were aged 22-29.¹⁴

Costs and Consequences

The economic effects of the Yaba drug epidemic in Bangladesh have been the subject of much research, with one prominent study being that of M. Rahman (2004), a medical practitioner. In his investigation, Rahman determined that the amount of money drug users spend annually on drugs is much more than the average per capita income in Bangladesh. The author predicted that, when extended to the complete population of drug users in Bangladesh, the total amount spent by drug users would be astronomically large compared to the yearly expenditures on healthcare, pharmaceuticals, and development projects in Bangladesh. These results emphasize the

¹²(Anjum, Iffat. "The Crux of Transnational Yaba- Trafficking Nexus in Bangladesh: Explaining the Reasons and Advocating Counter- Strategies." *Research and Scientific Innovation Society (RSIS International)*, Feb. 2020, www.rsisinternational.org/journals/ijrsi/digital-library/volume-7-issue-2/13-20.pdf.)

¹³ "BANGLADESH." *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, www.unodc.org/pdf/india/publications/south_Asia_Regional_Profile_Sept_2005/08_bangladesh.pdf.

¹⁴ Thompson, Nathan A. "Yaba Addiction: The Dark Side of Bangladesh's Increasing Affluence." *CNN*, 6 Aug. 2017, edition.cnn.com/2017/08/05/asia/methamphetamine-yaba-bangladesh/index.html.

substantial economic impact of the Yaba drug epidemic in Bangladesh and the necessity for effective strategies to combat it.¹⁵

The consequences of Yaba on the health of the user is another domain to the problem of the epidemic. Yaba is a central nervous system (CNS) stimulant drug. Its primary ingredients are methamphetamine and caffeine. This makes its effects similar to other illicit stimulants like illicit amphetamines and crystal methamphetamine¹⁶.

The most common consequence of Yaba is increased heart rate and blood pressure which can increase the risk of heart attack or stroke. Additionally, it may highly damage the nervous system, leading to problems with memory, attention, and decision-making. Apart from those, it also triggers mental and physical health problems. Yaba can cause or exacerbate such problems including anxiety, depression, and psychosis. Concerning physical health problems, long-term use of Yaba can lead to malnutrition, weight loss, dental problems, and other such issues. As a result, in many cases, addiction to the Yaba drug is proven fatal.¹⁷

Another effect of Yaba is the loss of employment, making it destructive in a social aspect as well. When BBC asked addicts how they feel about Yaba, they received a variety of responses. One, though, captured the attention of the globe. "You're awake longer, have more energy, and feel more confident. There are no withdrawal symptoms associated with Yaba, unlike alcohol or heroin. However, Yaba's effects are very addicting. It is an extremely hazardous medicine." ¹⁸ When under the influence of Yaba, one may make some rash judgments. Such a choice may be to abruptly cease going to work. And even if it is not considered, the fact that Yaba is extremely addictive may and will negatively impact the addict's work performance.

Lastly, drugs can bring legal problems. In Bangladesh, the possession, distribution, and use of Yaba are illegal. According to the Narcotics Control Act 1990 of Bangladesh, the possession, distribution, and use of Yaba is a punishable offense. If a person is found to be in possession of Yaba, they may be arrested and charged with a crime. If convicted, they may face fines and imprisonment.¹⁹

It is important to note that the laws and penalties for Yaba possession, distribution, and use may vary depending on the specific circumstances of the case and the jurisdiction in which the offense takes place.

¹⁵ "BANGLADESH." *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, www.unodc.org/pdf/india/publications/south_Asia_Regional_Profile_Sept_2005/08_bangladesh.pdf.

¹⁶ Siamrehab. "Yaba Addiction - Physical and Psychological Effects - Thailand's Non-12 Step, Fitness Based Drug and Alcohol Rehab." *Thailand's Non-12 Step, Fitness Based Drug and Alcohol Rehab*, 20 Aug. 2020, siamrehab.com/yaba-addiction/.

¹⁷ "What Is Yaba? Dangers Of Caffeine-Laced Meth." *Bedrock*, 1 Nov. 2022, bedrockrecoverycenter.com/articles/what-is-yaba/.

¹⁸ "Yaba: The Cheap Synthetic Drug Convulsing a Nation." *BBC News*, 24 Apr. 2019, www.bbc.com/news/stories-48041414.

¹⁹ "THE NARCOTICS CONTROL ACT,1990." *Justice Audit Bangladesh – Justice Audit Bangladesh*, bangladesh.justiceaudit.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Narcotics-Act-1990.pdf.

Bangladesh Drug War

Historical Background

For numerous decades, drugs have been a major issue in Bangladesh. The country has been a key transit route for illegal narcotics, notably those entering India and other countries in the area via Myanmar. Although the Bangladeshi government has made significant efforts to curb drug trafficking and misuse, the problem remains.

The government initiated the "War on Drugs" in the 1990s, a significant crackdown on drug dealers and consumers. Thousands of individuals were arrested as a consequence of this effort, but it also resulted in human rights violations and did nothing to address the underlying social and economic factors that contribute to drug use.

However, Bangladesh's drug problem remains a big burden to the rest of the world, since the nation remains a key transit point for illegal substances, and drug usage remains a huge social and health issue.

Seizure of Drugs and Yaba

The Bangladeshi government has made steps to prevent Yaba trafficking and consumption, with law enforcement officials routinely capturing massive amounts of the narcotic. Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), a paramilitary unit, and the Coast Guard have been active in intercepting Yaba shipments entering the country, usually in coordination with regional and international law enforcement agencies.

Several high-profile Yaba seizures have occurred in Bangladesh in recent years. The Coast Guard confiscated a significant shipment of Yaba tablets worth an estimated \$30 million in 2018, while the BDR seized approximately 20 million Yaba tablets worth more than \$50 million in 2019. In the supplied image, the estimated value of these Yaba pills is shown, as well as the value of Yaba pills seized in the past.

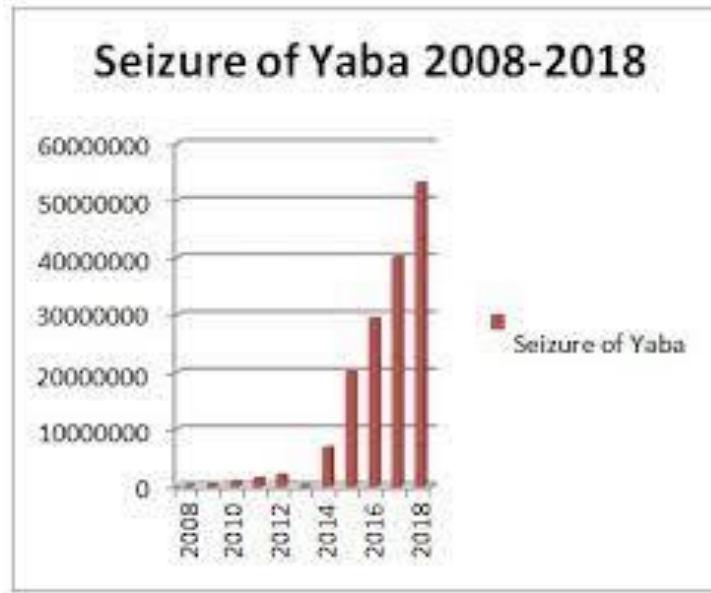


Figure 2: Yaba tablets that were seized per year²⁰

In addition to seizures, the government has enacted tighter drug legislation with harsher punishments, as well as enhanced attempts to target people and groups implicated in drug trafficking. Despite these attempts, the Yaba problem in Bangladesh remains a huge burden and a serious worry for the government and the people of the country.²¹

That eventually led to clashes between drug cartels and Bangladeshi armed personnel. Despite several attempts to resolve the matter without further casualties, the consequences of this "war" have been severe for this country.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of tablets</u>
2008	36,543
2009	129,644
2010	812,716
2011	1,360,186
2012	1,951,392
2013	2,821,528
2014	6,767,338
2015	20,000,000
2016	29,400,000

²⁰ Anjum, Iffat. "The Crux of Transnational Yaba- Trafficking Nexus in Bangladesh: Explaining the Reasons and Advocating Counter- Strategies." *Research and Scientific Innovation Society (RSIS International)*, Feb. 2020, www.rsisinternational.org/journals/ijrsi/digital-library/volume-7-issue-2/13-20.pdf.

²¹ Anjum, Iffat. "The Crux of Transnational Yaba- Trafficking Nexus in Bangladesh: Explaining the Reasons and Advocating Counter- Strategies." *Research and Scientific Innovation Society (RSIS International)*, Feb. 2020, www.rsisinternational.org/journals/ijrsi/digital-library/volume-7-issue-2/13-20.pdf.

2017	40,000,000
2018	53,000,000

Table 2: Number of Yaba tablets that were seized in each year ²²

Results for the country

The "Drug Wars" of the 1990s in Bangladesh had mixed outcomes. The campaign led to the arrest of several individuals, including a number of high-profile drug traffickers, which impeded the drug trade.

However, the campaign harmed the country. The crackdown resulted in extrajudicial killings and arbitrary arrests, tarnishing the reputation of the government and law enforcement agencies. The program failed to address the social and economic reasons that encourage drug use, such as poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy, hence drug addiction remained.

As the government did not abolish the sector entirely, drug traffickers developed a black market by smuggling illegal substances into the country.

In recent years, the government has prioritized prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation. This involves expanding drug treatment and education initiatives and collaborating with neighboring nations to combat transnational drug trafficking.²³⁺²⁴⁺²⁵

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

Golden Crescent Countries

The Golden Crescent, which comprises Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan, does not directly generate Yaba, a methamphetamine-caffeine mixture, but its opium, heroin, and other illicit drug manufacturing and trafficking are related to the Yaba epidemic in Bangladesh. Yaba is transported through opium and heroin networks from the Golden Crescent to Europe and other regions. It is trafficked into India and Bangladesh from Pakistan. Drug trafficking in the Golden Crescent is also tied to

²² Anjum, Iffat. "The Crux of Transnational Yaba- Trafficking Nexus in Bangladesh: Explaining the Reasons and Advocating Counter- Strategies." *Research and Scientific Innovation Society (RSIS International)*, Feb. 2020, www.rsisinternational.org/journals/ijrsi/digital-library/volume-7-issue-2/13-20.pdf.

²³ "Bangladesh's War on Drugs, Far from over." *The Hindu : Breaking News, India News, Sports News and Live Updates*, 23 Feb. 2019, www.thehindu.com/news/international/bangladeshs-war-on-drugs-far-from-over/article26352447.ece.

²⁴ Pokharel, Swati G. "Bangladesh Defends War on Drugs As Body Count Mounts." *CNN*, 8 June 2018, edition.cnn.com/2018/06/08/asia/bangladesh-drug-war-intl/index.html.

²⁵ Olphen, Tim V., and DER SPIEGEL. "Fighting the Yaba Pill: The Death Toll Mounts in Bangladesh's Drug War." *403 Access Denied*, 6 Aug. 2020, www.spiegel.de/international/world/fighting-the-yaba-pill-the-death-toll-mounts-in-bangladesh-s-drug-war-a-4ebfe7b8-aa24-4957-a0e4-054088b42fa4.

organized crime and rebel groups in the three nations' border regions. These gangs transport drugs across international boundaries to fund their activities.

Golden Triangle Countries

The majority of Bangladesh's Yaba originates from Burma, Laos, and Thailand, which comprise the Golden Triangle. From laboratories in the Golden Triangle, organized criminal networks transport Yaba tablets into Bangladesh. The porous Myanmar-Bangladesh border is used by traffickers for that purpose. The majority of Yaba tablets, according to Bangladeshi authorities, originate from the Golden Triangle.

India

India is an important transit location for Southeast Asian narcotics, particularly from Myanmar. Yaba is often trafficked through the India-Bangladesh border into Bangladesh. Moreover, Yaba is popular throughout India, particularly in the northeast. This demand leads Yaba traffickers to India, exacerbating the situation in Bangladesh. In India and Bangladesh, the illicit drug trade has tight ties to organized crime and terrorist organizations along the border. For these populations, drug trafficking and border crossings are commonplace.

Myanmar

Myanmar is one of the world's major producers of Yaba, excluding quantities smuggled into Southeast Asian countries such as Bangladesh. The narcotic is mostly manufactured in Myanmar's Shan and Kachin states, which are well-known for large-scale opium cultivation and methamphetamine synthesis. These areas have historically been under-governed and have been embroiled in violent conflicts for decades, making them ideal for the rise of the illegal drug trade. Yaba is imported into Bangladesh from Myanmar, frequently by organized criminal networks involved in other illegal operations such as human trafficking and the weapons trade.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

The Vienna-based UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), established in 1997, collaborates with the government of Bangladesh and other international organizations to tackle the Yaba drug epidemic. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) aids in the development and implementation of drug trafficking and use policies and initiatives and strengthens law enforcement's response. The UNODC also investigates the drug trade in Bangladesh to devise effective solutions. UNODC and Bangladesh collaborate on alternative development projects to assist victims of drug trafficking to live independently.

National Drug Control Law Enforcement Agency (NDCLEA)

Bangladesh's National Drug Control Law Enforcement Body (NDCLEA), established in 1990, enforces drug trafficking and abuse laws. Abdul Wahab Bhuiyan is the director of this organization. To combat the outbreak, the government investigates and jails Yaba makers, distributors, and dealers. They confiscate narcotics and the assets of drug traffickers. To prevent drug usage and addiction, the NDCLEA also increases public awareness and educates the public about drug use. They collaborate with government institutions, foreign organizations, and NGOs to combat the drug epidemic in Yaba, Bangladesh.

BLOCS EXPECTED

Bloc 1

This bloc should include countries whose economies are heavily reliant on illegal drug trafficking, members of organizations such as the Golden Triangle and the Golden Crescent, as well as nations such as India, Mexico, and Colombia.

Bloc 2

This bloc should consist of countries with economies that are not based on illegal drug trafficking. These countries might be from both the western and eastern worlds. More and less economically developed countries might suggest approaches with the purpose of putting an end to the situation. The United States, Finland, Canada, Australia, Singapore, Japan, Germany, South Korea, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Ghana, and Rwanda are examples of such nations.²⁶

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of event
1946	The Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) was established by Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution 9(I)
7 December 1987	The Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) was established by Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) according to resolution 9(I)
1988	The UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances was created

²⁶ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, www.unodc.org/pdf/technical_series_1998-01-01_1.pdf.

1990s	The beginning of the Bangladeshi Drug Wars
November 1997	First meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters
2013	Yaba started becoming a significant issue in the country of Bangladesh
2014	Department of Narcotic Control's (DNC) annual report showed the most common age of drug abusers for the first time
2009-2018	The UN office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Global Action Plan on Drug Policy
2016	The United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on the World Drug Problem was conducted
18 August 2017	The Youth Voices on Substance Abuse, UNODC program
30 January 2019	Panel discussion Leaving No One Behind: the Drug Epidemic as a Global Health Challenge, by UNODC June as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

RELEVANT UN RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

The United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on the World Drug Problem (2016)

In 2016, the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem assessed global drug control strategy progress and highlighted new and growing challenges.

The UNGASS on the Global Drug Problem assessed the worldwide drug problem and recognized new and developing drug usage and trafficking concerns, such as the Yaba drug epidemic in Bangladesh. It supported international cooperation and coordination in tackling the worldwide drug problem and assisted Member States, particularly Bangladesh, in combating drug addiction and trafficking, as well as the Yaba drug epidemic. Bangladesh and other afflicted nations used the United Nations General Assembly to raise awareness of the Yaba drug epidemic and urge international collaboration and coordination to battle it. The UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Crisis served as a forum for political commitments and the development of a comprehensive and integrated strategy to address the global drug issue, including the Bangladesh Yaba epidemic.

The UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drug and Psychotropic Substances (1988)²⁷

The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 combats illicit drug trafficking. The Convention encourages international cooperation to identify, control, and decrease drug trafficking and use while maintaining the sovereignty of nations and the rights of individuals.

The Convention establishes a foundation for international collaboration against the Yaba drug epidemic in Bangladesh. It urges member nations to prohibit and regulate the illegal drug trade, as well as to cooperate with others. This involves the exchange of information, legal assistance, and coordinated investigations and actions.

By ratifying the Convention, Bangladesh vowed to address the Yaba drug scourge. The Agreement provides a framework for international collaboration and aid in combating drug abuse and trafficking, and it underlines the necessity for an all-encompassing strategy.

Significantly, the Yaba drug epidemic is complex and calls for a multifaceted response, including law enforcement, interdiction, demand reduction, treatment and rehabilitation, economic development, and alternative lifestyles. By fostering international collaboration and coordination, the UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances may support these efforts.

The UN office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Global Action Plan on Drug Policy (2009-2018)²⁸

The UNODC Global Action Plan on Drug Policy (2009-2018) fosters global collaboration and coordination regarding drug policy. The Plan was developed by UNODC to offer international organizations with a comprehensive and integrated approach to combating drug abuse and trafficking.

The Global Action Plan on Drug Policy fosters international collaboration and relief for the Yaba drug epidemic in Bangladesh. The Plan acknowledges the need for a comprehensive strategy for combating drug misuse and trafficking that decreases supply and demand. The Plan also asks for more international cooperation, the sharing of information, and law enforcement capabilities.

Implementing the Global Action Plan on Drug Policy might assist Bangladesh in combating the drug epidemic in Yaba. The Plan underlines the necessity for a

²⁷ Ivan.restrepo. (n.d.). *1988 convention*. INCB. <https://www.incb.org/incb/en/precursors/1988-convention.html>

²⁸ UNODC. (n.d.). *Policy on drugs*. United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime.

https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/Mandate_Functions/policy-on-drugs.html

multifaceted strategy that tackles drug supply and demand, to address drug crises internationally.

The Ministerial Segment of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) ²⁹

The Ministerial Segment of the CND is an annual high-level meeting, established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In the Ministerial Segment, ministers and other high-ranking officials from Member States debate drug concerns and make key policy decisions.

The Ministerial Segment of the CND reviews and passes resolutions on drug abuse and trafficking, particularly the Yaba drug epidemic in Bangladesh. In the Ministerial Segment, Bangladesh and other affected nations should increase awareness of the Yaba drug epidemic and propose measures for combating it.

By attending the CND Ministerial Segment, Bangladesh will get greater international aid in its fight against Yaba. The Ministerial Segment is a forum for sharing knowledge and best practices, as well as discussing international collaboration and coordination to address the issue.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters, which was first conducted in November 1997, is a regional forum that brings together the ministers responsible for drug control and associated concerns in the ten ASEAN member states. The primary purpose of the summit is to foster collaboration and coordination amongst ASEAN nations in tackling drug-related problems, such as drug misuse and trafficking.

The ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters is relevant to the Yaba drug epidemic in Bangladesh in that it offers a forum for regional collaboration and coordination in tackling drug-related concerns, such as the Yaba drug epidemic.

Bangladesh and other afflicted nations in the area may discuss with their ASEAN colleagues how to combat the Yaba drug epidemic and other drug-related concerns during the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters. The gathering allows

²⁹ *The Commission on narcotic drugs.* (n.d.). United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/index.html>

for the sharing of knowledge and best practices, as well as the establishment of regional cooperation and coordination efforts to address drug-related concerns.

In addition, the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters serves as a forum for the creation of regional drug control strategies and policies and the execution of regional drug control initiatives, such as those designed to combat the Yaba drug epidemic in Bangladesh. It promotes regional collaboration and coordination in tackling drug-related concerns.³⁰

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The Yaba drug epidemic in Bangladesh is a complex problem that requires a multifaceted approach to address. Some potential strategies that could be considered in an effort to solve the problem include the following.

Strengthening law enforcement

Increasing law enforcement operations to disrupt Yaba manufacturing and distribution might include targeting organized criminal groups participating in the trade, as well as cracking down on the manufacture of precursor chemicals and other inputs required to make Yaba.

Targeting organized criminal groups participating in the Yaba trade can assist to limit the drug's overall supply and make it harder for these groups to function. A number of measures, including monitoring, information collection, and coordinated raids, are available to law enforcement authorities for disrupting the operations of these groups and dismantling their networks.

Restricting the production of precursor chemicals and other inputs required to produce Yaba can further reduce the drug's availability. By making it more difficult to get the chemicals required for Yaba manufacture, law enforcement can interrupt the production process and lower the drug's overall availability. In addition, by focusing on the suppliers of these components, law enforcement may contribute to a more difficult environment for drug producers and dealers.

The ultimate objective of these law enforcement actions would be to minimize the manufacture and distribution of Yaba, therefore improving public health and mitigating the harmful consequences of drug consumption in impacted areas.

Enhancement of the Justice System

Improving the criminal justice system's ability to investigate, prosecute, and punish Yaba trade participants is a crucial step to alleviate the Yaba drug epidemic. This might be accomplished in a variety of ways. One example is more thorough and targeted education for law students in Bangladesh so as to ensure that the justice system is more unbiased and transparent and the individuals in charge can make more informed decisions when it comes to dealing with human lives in relation to drugs.

³⁰ "ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD)." ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS, asean.org/tag/asean-ministerial-meeting-on-drug-matters/.

The education of law students can contribute to the improvement of the judicial system's general fairness and guarantee that those participating in the Yaba trade are treated accordingly. When it comes to managing cases involving persons participating in the Yaba trade, law students who get instruction in areas such as human rights, evidence-based decision-making, and ethical concerns will be better prepared to make informed conclusions.

In addition, enhancing the criminal justice system's capacity to investigate and prosecute participants in the Yaba trade helps minimize the total harm caused by drug consumption. By ensuring that individuals participating in the trade are held accountable for their activities, law enforcement may assist in lowering the total supply of Yaba and establish a safer and more secure environment for the rehabilitation of drug-abusing populations.

Rehabilitation

Expanding access to addiction treatment services, including inpatient and outpatient programs, as well as offering support for recovery and reintegration into society could enhance public health and decrease the harmful effects of drug misuse in impacted areas while guaranteeing the necessary assistance to people affected by the drug issue.

It is possible to increase access to addiction treatment services in a variety of ways, including by expanding the number of available treatment facilities, boosting financing for current programs, and providing recovery support services. This may be accomplished by the government, non-profit groups, or optimally the collaboration of the two.

These efforts might be funded from a number of sources, such as government grants and private donations. As part of a bigger plan to counteract the detrimental effects of drug misuse, the government might also provide greater financing for addiction treatment programs. In addition, private groups and charities might assist the creation and extension of addiction treatment programs through financing.

Development programs

Another possible solution is implementing economic development programs and alternative livelihood efforts in regions where Yaba production is common in order to give people alternative methods to make a living and to lessen the incentives for Yaba trade participation.

Said economic development projects may include measures to create new employment and enhance access to resources and services in impacted communities. For instance, the government or private groups might assist individuals in launching their own businesses by providing training and tools.

Individuals in afflicted regions may be assisted in the development of new skills and means of subsistence through alternative livelihood initiatives. This might include

vocational training programs and activities supporting the development of new farming or fishing techniques, staggering industries in the country.

These measures would aim to minimize the motives for individuals to engage in the Yaba trade and provide them with alternate options for work. By doing so, communities impacted by the manufacturing and sale of Yaba will be more secure, and the negative consequences of drug misuse will be mitigated.

These projects might be supported by a combination of UN and government funding as well as private contributions. As part of a bigger plan to counteract the harmful effects of drug misuse, the government might also devote greater funds to economic development and alternative livelihood initiatives. Government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and commercial corporations may assist in the establishment of healthy, sustainable communities and diminish the Yaba drug trade, use, and addiction by collaborating.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Oxford Languages and Google - English | Oxford Languages." *Oxford Languages | The Home of Language Data*, 20 May 2020, languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/.

"NCI Dictionary of Cancer Terms." *National Cancer Institute*, www.cancer.gov/publications/dictionaries/cancer-terms/def/psychotropic-substance.

"Yaba Fast Facts." *Yaba Fast Facts*, www.justice.gov/archive/ndic/pubs5/5048/index.htm.

Recovery, Landmark. "What Is Yaba? Panic Over Drug in Bangladesh." *Landmark Recovery*, 10 June 2019, <https://landmarkrecovery.com/what-is-yaba-panic-over-drug-bangladesh/>.

Precursor Chemicals, www.hpra.ie/homepage/controlled-substances/precursor-chemicals.

"SEIZURE (noun) Definition and Synonyms." *Macmillan Dictionary | Free English Dictionary and Thesaurus*, www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/seizure.

Farooq, Syeda Ayesha, et al. "Opium Trade and the Spread of HIV in the Golden Crescent - Harm Reduction Journal." *BioMed Central*, BioMed Central, 21 July 2017, harmreductionjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12954-017-0170-1.

Author(s) S Sen. "Heroin Trafficking in the Golden Triangle." *Heroin Trafficking in the Golden Triangle | Office of Justice Programs*, www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/heroin-trafficking-golden-triangle.

Hassan, Ahmadul. "Three Yaba Factories Found Along Indian Border." *Prothomalo*, 13 Nov. 2021, en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/three-yaba-factories-found-along-indian-border.

Anjum, Iffat. "The Crux of Transnational Yaba- Trafficking Nexus in Bangladesh: Explaining the Reasons and Advocating Counter- Strategies." *Research and Scientific Innovation Society (RSIS International)*, Feb. 2020, www.rsisinternational.org/journals/ijrsi/digital-library/volume-7-issue-2/13-20.pdf.

"BANGLADESH." *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, www.unodc.org/pdf/india/publications/south_Asia_Regional_Profile_Sept_2005/08_bangladesh.pdf.

KHAN, MOHAMMAD J., and MOHAMMAD A. JINNAT. "Crazy Pills Spill Via New Routes in Bangladesh | #AsiaNewsNetwork." *Eleven Media Group Co., Ltd*, 5 Apr. 2019, elevenmyanmar.com/news/crazy-pills-spill-via-new-routes-in-bangladesh-asianewsnetwork

Thompson, Nathan A. "Yaba Addiction: The Dark Side of Bangladesh's Increasing Affluence." *CNN*, 6 Aug. 2017, edition.cnn.com/2017/08/05/asia/methamphetamine-yaba-bangladesh/index.html.

Siamrehab. "Yaba Addiction - Physical and Psychological Effects - Thailand's Non-12 Step, Fitness Based Drug and Alcohol Rehab." *Thailand's Non-12 Step, Fitness Based Drug and Alcohol Rehab*, 20 Aug. 2020, siamrehab.com/yaba-addiction/.

"What Is Yaba? Dangers Of Caffeine-Laced Meth." *Bedrock*, 1 Nov. 2022, bedrockrecoverycenter.com/articles/what-is-yaba/.

"Yaba: The Cheap Synthetic Drug Convulsing a Nation." *BBC News*, 24 Apr. 2019, www.bbc.com/news/stories-48041414.

"THE NARCOTICS CONTROL ACT,1990." *Justice Audit Bangladesh – Justice Audit Bangladesh*, bangladesh.justiceaudit.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Narcotics-Act-1990.pdf.

Pokharel, Swati G. "Bangladesh Defends War on Drugs As Body Count Mounts." *CNN*, 8 June 2018, edition.cnn.com/2018/06/08/asia/bangladesh-drug-war-intl/index.html.

"Bangladesh's War on Drugs, Far from over." *The Hindu : Breaking News, India News, Sports News and Live Updates*, 23 Feb. 2019,

www.thehindu.com/news/international/bangladeshs-war-on-drugs-far-from-over/article26352447.ece.

Olphen, Tim V., and DER SPIEGEL. "Fighting the Yaba Pill: The Death Toll Mounts in Bangladesh's Drug War." *403 Access Denied*, 6 Aug. 2020, www.spiegel.de/international/world/fighting-the-yaba-pill-the-death-toll-mounts-in-bangladesh-s-drug-war-a-4ebfe7b8-aa24-4957-a0e4-054088b42fa4.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, www.unodc.org/pdf/technical_series_1998-01-01_1.pdf.

United Nations. "'Addiction is a Disease, Not a Choice', UNODC Event Highlights Role of Education in Fighting Stigma Around Drug Use." *United Nations*, www.un.org/en/academic-impact/addiction-disease-not-choice-unodc-event-highlights-role-education-fighting-stigma.

United Nations. "Background - World Drug Day | United Nations." *United Nations*, www.un.org/en/observances/end-drug-abuse-day/background.

Ivan.restrepo. (n.d.). *1988 convention*. INCB. <https://www.incb.org/incb/en/precursors/1988-convention.html>

UNODC. (n.d.). *Policy on drugs*. United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime. https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/Mandate_Functions/policy-on-drugs.html

The Commission on narcotic drugs. (n.d.). United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/index.html>

"ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD)." *ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS*, asean.org/tag/asean-ministerial-meeting-on-drug-matters/.