

## **Press Note**

In one of the biggest seizure of Narcotic Drugs & Psychotropic Substances, the officers of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), apex counter-smuggling agency of the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC), have seized about **23.5 metric tonnes** of Mandrax Tablets (Methaqualone), a banned psychotropic substance under Schedule I of NDPS Rules, 1985. Active assistance of officials of Border Security Force at Udaipur has been taken by the officers of DRI for the operation.

Information was received that huge quantities of Mandrax Tablets have been concealed in a premises at Udaipur (Rajasthan) by one Mumbai-based mastermind. On 28<sup>th</sup> October 2016, a team of officers of DRI raided the premises of M/s Marudhar Drinks, Bhamasha Industrial Area, Kaladwas, Udaipur.

During the search, DRI officers detected a hidden room filled with cartons of Mandrax tablets. The total number of tablets are estimated to be about 2 crore in numbers with a weight of about 23.5 metric tonnes (23500 kgs). The international market value of seized tablets is estimated to be over Rs. 3000 crores. This is one of the largest seizures of Methaqualone not only in India but also in the world. The mastermind of the syndicate has been arrested by DRI and follow-up operation is underway to nab others involved with the drug syndicate.

The major raw material for Mandrax is acetic anhydride which was manufactured by the syndicate at Shreenath Industries, Rajsamand. The other raw materials for Methaqualone, apart from acetic anhydride (manufactured at Shreenath Industries) are Anthranillic Acid (which was imported from Indonesia

from Kandla Port by misdeclaring it as Mallic Anhydride), ortho toloudiene, phosporous trichloride, caustic soda (procured locally).

Methaqualone is a depressant, overdose of which can lead to coma and death. It is used as a recreational drug in Africa and Asia. It is commonly known as Mandrax, M-pills, buttons, or smarties and is usually smoked mixed with cannabis.

Relentless efforts put in by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence has resulted in neutralizing 10 other factories across several States in the recent past manufacturing various types of synthetic drugs like Mephedrone, Ketamine, Alprazolam and precursor chemical like Ephedrine.

In last five years, DRI has seized more than **540 kgs** of Heroin, and **7400 kgs of** ephedrine along with other narcotics and psychotropic substances under NDPS Act 1985. DRI has been in active liaison with international enforcement agencies for combating the menace of drug abuse.