

## **Australia**

### **[Why deaths won't stop the party: Drug test kits gain popularity as festival overdoses soar](#)**

*News (15/02)*

Australia now has the world's highest number of ecstasy and MDMA users per capita, and the number of emergency admissions for so-called "party drugs" to NSW hospitals has doubled in five years. Drug policy experts say it's time to follow in the steps of the Netherlands and introduce free drug testing facilities, so festival-goers can see exactly what they are consuming.

### **[Labour MP calls for drug decriminalisation](#)**

*The Northern Star (16/02)*

In a speech at the Labour state conference, Sydney MP Jo Haylen said the government's campaign to eradicate drug use and distribution had failed, urging fellow MPs to look at policies that avoid unnecessary risks and penalties for drug users. Haylan suggested the use of amnesty bins, pill testing, the retirement of sniffer dogs and decriminalising drug use as necessary policy innovations. Ms Haylan implored labour to be "at the vanguard again", a nod to when the party oversaw the construction of Kings Cross's first legal heroin injection room.

### **[We can't eradicate drugs, but we can stop people dying from them](#)**

*The Conversation (16/02)*

A recent Four Corners focused on party drugs and the policies Australia is implementing to combat their use. Not only is what we're doing not working, we're falling behind the rest of the world and what evidence says is best to ensure we have fewer deaths from illicit drugs.

### **[Greens propose decriminalisation of ice, other drugs](#)**

*Courier Mail (19/02)*

THE use of ice should be decriminalised and party pills tested so revellers can get high without dying, the Greens have said, with a Queensland senator claiming the move would "keep our kids safe". Greens leader Richard Di Natale and Queensland Senator Larissa Waters will tell a national drug summit next month that drug addicts should be able to use without fear of being charged. They also want law enforcement resources diverted to rehab services.

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## **China**

### **[Drug seizures soar in China, most suspects are farmers and unemployed](#)**

*Los Angeles Times (18/02)*

Seizures of drugs have jumped nearly 50% according to the Chinese authorities, with a staggering 78.9% of those arrested either farmers or unemployed people. A majority were using amphetamine type stimulants produced within the country including meth, speed, ecstasy and crystal meth.

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## Malaysia

### [Govt should consider decriminalising ganja, says Youth Parliament rep](#)

*The Star* (17/02)

Youth Parliament leader Muhamad Ridhwan Muhamad Rosli, has told the Malaysian government that many young people at the grassroots of his organisation do not consider marijuana to be a dangerous drug. Speaking at a meeting discussing the nations drug laws in Kuala Lumpur, Rosli also pointed out that decriminalising drug users and supervise its use would not violate Malaysia's commitments in the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, as signatories like the US and Australia have recently liberalised drug laws. Deputy youth and sports minister Datuk M. Saravanan shot down the suggestion, saying it should remain classified under the law as a dangerous drug.

### [Putrajaya won't legalise ganja use, deputy minister says](#)

*Malaymail* (18/02)

Deputy Youth and Sports Minister Datuk M. Saravanan today shot down the suggestion by a Youth Parliament leader to decriminalise the use of marijuana, saying it will remain classified under the law as a dangerous drug. Saravanan also said that Malaysia should not be compared to other nations where marijuana is legal in some areas, like in the United States. "We have our own stand on the matter, and this (legalising ganja) is not in line with our culture," he said.

### [Malaysians want end to mandatory death penalty, online poll shows](#)

*Malaymail* (18/02)

More than half of Malaysians surveyed in an online poll said they wanted to scrap mandatory death sentences. The poll follows reports that the government intends to end mandatory death penalty for drug offenses, which also apply to murder, kidnapping with ransom and waging war against the king.

### [Narcotics Criminal Investigation Department \(NCID\) director: "Drug idiots, we are coming to get you"](#)

*Nation* (21/02)

CRIME buster Comm Datuk Seri Mohd Mokhtar Mohd Shariff is well known for his uncompromising approach in battling criminals and ensuring that justice is served. Now as the Bukit Aman Narcotics Criminal Investigation Department (NCID) director, Comm Mohd Mokhtar shares some of his thoughts in his first exclusive interview since becoming the director in April last year.

### [On death row for possession of 622 grams of cannabis](#)

*The Star* (22/02)

In 2003, Shahrul Izani, then 19, was arrested during a routine roadblock after being found in possession of 622gm of cannabis. In December 2009, he was convicted by the Shah Alam High Court for drug trafficking, an offence that carries the mandatory death penalty. Having exhausted his appeals before the Court of Appeal and Federal Court, Shahrul's only chance to escape the noose is by way of a pardon. Amnesty International is collecting signatures to appeal to the Selangor state pardons board, urging it to commute the death sentence. According to 2014 statistics, 70% of the 992 people on death row in Malaysia were convicted for drug trafficking.

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## Myanmar

### [Drug-fighting vigilantes set to resume campaign](#)

*Myanmar Times* (16/02)

Protest group Pat Ja San aim to eradicate thousands of acres of poppy fields in Kachin State, in an effort to save communities from the scourge of heroin in the north of the county. The group, who have refused to register their organisation and are thus not liable for government security during their campaigns, face a backlash of violence from armed militias protecting the cultivation zones. Myanmar continues to be the top producer of opium, second only to Afghanistan.

### [Myanmar vigilante opium stand-off continues](#)

*BBC News* (21/02)

A stand-off is continuing in Myanmar between police and Christian anti-drug vigilantes, who want to destroy poppy fields in the northern state of Kachin. Police have stopped members of the Pat Jasan Christian group - some wearing military-style uniforms - outside the town of Waingmaw. Farmers says they will fight back if the campaigners are let through. Myanmar is Southeast Asia's top opium producer - and the world's second largest after Afghanistan.

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## New Zealand

### [NZ POLITICS DAILY: The Battle over medical marijuana](#)

*NBR* (19/02)

Former CTU president Helen Kelly has mounted a campaign that seeks to reform the government's procedures over medicinal cannabis. Kelly has blogged about her predicament and campaign. Associate Minister of Health Peter Dunne has responded to such criticism saying "The application has been deferred, not declined, by the ministry, until it receives the information it had requested. The delay in resolving this case, rests, for whatever reason, with the oncologist's ongoing lack of response".

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## Philippines

### [PDEA: 'What narco-politics?'](#)

*The Manila times* (02/14)

Despite claims that local politicians have financed their campaigns using the proceeds of illegal drugs, the Philippine Drug enforcement Agency (PDEA) have said there is no reliable data to back up the allegations. This is despite claims that narco-politics has been threatening the political environment of the country, following the arrest of 69 low-level government officials.

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## Samoa

### [Samoa launches new alcohol and drug court](#)

*Radio New Zealand* (02/15)

Samoa has announced plans to launch an Alcohol and Drugs court with the hope of reducing associated crimes, headed by Supreme Court Judge, Justice Mata Tuatagaloa. The move was announced by Chief Justice Patu Faledatu Sapolu, who claimed that in 2012, 43% of offences brought before the Supreme Court were committed under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

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