

## **Australia**

### **[Australia rolls out national “dob in a dealer” campaign](#)**

*Shanghai Daily (22/02)*

The Australian government has begun a campaign to encourage communities to blow the whistle on anyone suspected of manufacturing or trafficking illegal drugs. Launched in an effort to fight a scourge of methamphetamine abuse in the country, the campaign was supported by former prime minister Tony Abbott, who claims the initiative leads to “100 percent to 400 percent” rise in community assisted drug intelligence. The initiative runs counter to a special taskforce report, which recently concluded that demand reduction was the most effective way to tackle the drug problem.

### **[Drug forum aims to tackle Ice epidemic](#)**

*Northern Star (23/02)*

A joint initiative by the New South Wales Government and the Australian Drug Foundation will host a number of forums in “high need areas”, as part of a broader strategy to create “strong, informed and united communities” that can tackle the Ice scourge in the country.

### **[Ditching the war on drugs won't be the silver bullet, but it's an essential new pathway](#)**

*The Guardian (24/02)*

Antony Loewenstein praises Australia’s Green Party Leader Richard Di Natale for his recent call to decriminalise drug use in the country, and the recent decision to legalise marijuana for medical use. Lowenstein points out that it is the western nations that provide key markets for the illicit drug trade, and thus all should be committed to finding more humane and sensible solutions to the world drug problem.

### **[Australia legalises medical marijuana](#)**

*International Business Times (24/02)*

Australia’s Parliament passed a measure Wednesday legalizing medical marijuana, [CNN](#) reported. Amendments to the Narcotic Drugs Act will now allow cannabis to be grown legally for medical and scientific purposes.

### **[Pill testing trial to begin at Sydney music festivals, vows drug expert Alex Wodak](#)**

*Sydney Morning Herald (28/02)*

The Australian drug expert who pioneered the nation's first legal injecting centre has put himself on a collision course with the Baird government and NSW Police by vowing to break the law and roll out pill testing at Sydney's forthcoming music festivals.

### **[Greens leader Richard di Natale to host global experts at drug reform summit](#)**

*Sydney Morning Herald (29/02)*

The former GP believes individual drug use is a health, not a criminal, problem. To some extent, he is talking about decriminalising drugs. But the question of whether to remove criminal sanctions for all drug use, whether to include some of the supply chain, and where to direct police action, are difficult problems, politically and practically. In a bid to spark

change, he is planning a series of events across the country culminating in a summit, drawing experts from across the globe, to be held at Parliament early in the 2016 election year.

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## **Cambodia**

### **[Drug busts up in 2015: Interior Ministry](#)**

*The Phnom Penh Post (25/02)*

The Cambodian Interior Ministry called for Beijing's cooperation in tackling a ring of Chinese methamphetamine traffickers operating in Cambodia. The call follows the arrest of a number of Chinese nationals found distributing drugs in the country, as a targeted crackdown on drugs orchestrated by the National Authority for Combatting Drugs (NACD) led to an increase in drug busts. The national Police Chief Neth Savoeun has admitted that few of the 'bigger dealers' have been caught, and the NACD Presidents complained earlier this month that some of the nation's prisons have become 'headquarters' from which drug trafficking crimes are orchestrated.

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## **Taiwan**

### **[Nearly 85 per cent don't trust judges](#)**

*Asia one (23/02)*

A recent poll conducted in Taipei found that an overwhelming majority of citizens do not trust the judges and prosecutors in the country, despite 78% seeing no need for penal reforms. The survey still showed continued support for capital penalties, with over half of respondents believing that drug addicts should receive punitive penalties, rather than public health assistance.

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## **India**

### **[Drug trafficking rampant in Bareilly & Dehradun, experts say](#)**

*The Times of India (23/02)*

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and local police have claimed that drug abuse is rising among young people in Dehradun, as trafficking flourishes in the area. A senior CBSE official said greater cooperation was needed between police units in Dehradun and those in Bareilly, where many of the drugs are thought to have originated.

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## **Indonesia**

### **[Joko underlines need for tougher measures in Indonesia's war against drugs](#)**

*Jakarta Globe (24/02)*

President Joko Widodo has reiterated the importance of Indonesia's war against drugs in a cabinet meeting on Wednesday (24/02), following a national police report that showed drug trafficking had increased 13.6% last year. Joko instructed ministries and law enforcement institutions to take more assertive actions against drug trafficking violations, calling the

effort the government's number one priority. The president also instructed police to monitor and search for drug-smuggling activities in every inch of the country, including in prisons.

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## **Malaysia**

### **[US is proof that legalising marijuana won't solve drug abuse, deputy home minister says](#)**

*Malaymail (22/02)*

Responding to a recent suggestion by Youth Parliament representative Muhamad Ridhwan that the government should consider decriminalising Marijuana, the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Datuk Nur Jazlan Mohammad said that any 'liberal' drug laws would serve to worsen drug abuse. Referring to laws recently passed in some US states that have led to the emergence of regulated markets for marijuana, he said the US is struggling to manage the many drug abuse issues that have occurred as a result of the legalisation.

### **[Legalise marijuana in Malaysia? No way](#)**

**New Straits Times (24/02)**

Inspector general of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar recently shot down a proposal to decriminalise marijuana in the country, claiming that the drug serves as a 'gateway drug' for young Malaysians, leading them onto abuse of stronger substances.

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## **Myanmar**

### **[Myanmar clamps down on growing illegal drug trade](#)**

*Channel News Asia (23/02)*

Port authorities in Yangon, Myanmar are initiating a clampdown on transnational crime, following the introduction of a scheme from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) that will see a \$600,000 inspection training programme implemented, the first of its kind in the country. The move comes after UNODC regional officials identified shipping containers as a potential means by which drugs can be stored and trafficked into the country.

### **[Myanmar anti-drug group targets opium crop as standoff ends](#)**

*Mail Online (23/02)*

The leaders of the anti-drug vigilante group Pat Jasan, who have vowed to destroy opium poppy fields in Northern Myanmar, have ended their standoff with government forces. The group have been granted permission to continue the crusade, this time with the protection of government security personnel they had previously been denied. The group have been criticized in the past for their methods to deter heroin use, including beatings and public humiliation of drug users.

### **[Grassroots anti-drug activists attacked in Myanmar, 14 hurt](#)**

*NZ Herald (26/02)*

A grassroots anti-drug organization whose members are on a march through northern Myanmar to destroy opium poppies in farmers' fields say 14 of their members were wounded when they were attacked with automatic weapons and hand grenades.

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## **New Zealand**

### **[Peter Dunne: Value in new drug addiction approach](#)**

*NZ Herald (24/02)*

An "inspiring" Auckland rehabilitation centre shows why a recent shift to treat the abuse of drugs and alcohol as a health issue is warranted, Associate Health Minister Peter Dunne says.

### **[Has the war on drugs failed?](#)**

*NZ Radio (24/02)*

The war on drugs has led to "near record-level" failure, according to a visiting drug policy expert Sanho Tree - the director of the Drug Policy Project for the Institute of Policy Studies in Washington DC - who says imprisoning users is like "curing clinical depression with a baseball bat".

### **[Helen Kelly and the campaign to legalise medical marijuana](#)**

*NZ Radio (24/02)*

A debate around medical marijuana has sprung into view after Helen Kelly, a high-profile former union leader, revealed her request for a cannabis product as pain relief for terminal cancer had not been approved.

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## **Philippines**

### **[Escudero reiterates opposition to re-imposition of death penalty](#)**

*Northbound Phillipines (23/02)*

Vice Presidential frontrunner, Senator Francis 'Chiz' Escudero, has again voiced his opposition to the death penalty following calls to have it re-imposed. He said capital penalties for drug offenders target the poor, and that no rich criminal or drug lords receive the punishment. Mr Escudero also cited Pope Francis' to suspend capital punishments for one year to mark the Holy Year of Mercy.

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## **Thailand**

### **[ASEAN unites in narcotics prevention workshop](#)**

*Thai Visa News (25/02)*

Thailand's Narcotics Control Board Deputy Secretary-General, Naramon Chuangrungsi, has presided over a drug-monitoring workshop in Bangkok, for member states from ASEAN. The workshop, designed as an exchange platform on narcotic suppression, included exchange of information on the location of dealers, smuggling hotspots and border control tactics in an effort to reduce drug trafficking.

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