'Operation Monsoon Thunder': Amit Shah congratulates NCB and US DEA

Topics: Defence & Security · UPSC Prelims · TNPSC · SSC · Current Affairs



News

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on 21 November 2026 congratulated India's Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) on the success of 'Operation Monsoon Thunder', their joint operation against cross-border drug trafficking. Reports say raids were carried out between 4 and 13 November at Hyderabad, Delhi, Kolkata and Lucknow, and six people were arrested. Since June 2022 the network had been shipping psychoactive substances and opioid medicines as tablets by post to US addresses – about 3,000 parcels with about 5 lakh tablets. Orders came through messaging apps such as WhatsApp and Skype; live consignments with over 1,500 tablets were traced in transit, two of which the DEA intercepted. A customer database of over 59,000 US subjects was also recovered. 'Under the leadership of PM Modi, we will not allow a single gram of narcotics to enter India or leave India,' Shah said.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Operation	Operation Monsoon Thunder – joint NCB–US DEA operation
Raids	4–13 November 2026
Places	Hyderabad, Delhi, Kolkata, Lucknow

Point	Details
Arrests	6 persons
Drugs	Psychoactive substances, opioid medicine tablets
Scale	~3,000 parcels, ~5 lakh tablets since June 2022 (reported)
Modus operandi	Orders via messaging apps (WhatsApp, Skype); postal and drop-shipping
Lauded by	Union Home Minister Amit Shah (21 Nov 2026)

Background

- The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985 is India's main anti-drug law. The NCB was constituted under its Section 4(3) on 17 March 1986 and works under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs. Article 47 of the Constitution directs the State to endeavour to prohibit drugs injurious to health.
- Internationally, the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs is the cornerstone. Under it the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), Vienna, began work in 1968; its forerunner, the Permanent Central Opium Board, worked under the 1925 Geneva Opium Convention. In 1987 the UN General Assembly declared 26 June the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.
- Geographically, India lies between the world's two great opium belts: the 'Golden Crescent' (Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan) to the west and the 'Golden Triangle' (Myanmar, Laos, Thailand) to the east, which exposes it to use as a transit route.
- The US DEA is the drug-law enforcement agency under the US Department of Justice. As trafficking now moves through messaging apps and postal services, intelligence-sharing and joint operations between countries have become essential.

Tamil Nadu link: In August 2026 the Tamil Nadu government sanctioned ₹264.14 crore for a State-wide Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF): 65 units – 37 district units and 28 in nine city commissionerates – headed by an ADGP-rank officer. This news item has no direct Tamil Nadu link.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on 21 November 2026 congratulated India's Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) on the success of 'Operation Monsoon Thunder', their joint operation against cross-border drug trafficking.

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Operation: Operation Monsoon Thunder – joint NCB–US DEA operation; Raids: 4–13 November 2026; Places: Hyderabad, Delhi, Kolkata, Lucknow; Arrests: 6 persons.

What is the background to this news?

The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985 is India's main anti-drug law. The NCB was constituted under its Section 4(3) on 17 March 1986 and works under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Under which law was the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) constituted in March 1986?

A) Customs Act, 1962

B) PMLA, 2002

C) NDPS Act, 1985

D) UAPA, 1967

Answer: C – Explanation: NDPS Act, 1985 – the NCB was formed on 17 March 1986 under the Home Ministry. PMLA covers money laundering; UAPA, terrorism.

2. The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), Vienna, was set up under which UN treaty?

A) Palermo Convention, 2000

B) UNCAC, 2003

C) Geneva Opium Conv., 1925

D) Single Convention, 1961

Answer: D – Explanation: The 1961 Single Convention – the INCB began work in 1968. The 1925 convention created its forerunner, the Permanent Central Opium Board.

3. Besides Afghanistan and Pakistan, which country forms the 'Golden Crescent' opium belt to India's west?

A) Turkmenistan

B) Tajikistan

C) Iraq

D) Iran

Answer: D – Explanation: Iran. The 'Golden Triangle' to the east is Myanmar, Laos and Thailand; India lies between the two.

4. When is the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking observed?

A) 26 June

B) 31 May

C) 1 December

D) 7 April

Answer: A – Explanation: 26 June – declared by the UN General Assembly in 1987. 31 May is World No Tobacco Day; 1 Dec, World AIDS Day; 7 April, World Health Day.

5. The US DEA, NCB's partner in this operation, works under which US government department?

A) Homeland Security

B) Justice

C) Treasury

D) State

Answer: B – Explanation: The Department of Justice – which also houses the FBI. In Monsoon Thunder the DEA intercepted two of the consignments.

Sources: PIB – Ministry of Home Affairs, 21 Nov 2026; The Pioneer, 21 Nov 2026; The Shillong Times / Kashmir Images (ANI/IANS, 21–22 Nov 2026); NCB formation notification (narcoticsindia.nic.in); INCB – incb.org (mandate and functions); UNODC World Drug Report (Golden Crescent, Golden Triangle); UNODC (26 June resolution); DT Next, 11 Aug 2026. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.