

I. INTERDICTIONS OF ILLICIT DRUGS AND FIREARMS SMUGGLING IN 2003

1. Number of Interdictions

(1) Summary

A total of 554 cases of interdiction (123% of the previous year's figure) of illicit drugs were recorded in 2003. The volume of seizure came to 1,104 kg (120% of the previous year) and a total of 385,000 tablets of MDMA or other tablet-type drugs were seized (165% of the previous year). The total weight of the seized drugs of all forms exceeded 1 ton for the first time in the last two years. No sign of a halt to the large-scale total seizure is seen.

9 smuggling cases of firearms (113% of the previous year) were interdicted with a seizure of 12 pieces (92% of the previous year). 7 smuggling cases of firearm parts were interdicted, in which a total of 13 pieces were confiscated.

Smuggling cases in 2003 are characterized as follows:

- ① The seizure of cannabis resin and MDMA was a record high in volume.
- ② The interdiction of smuggling cases of illicit drugs increased considerably (the second highest in number).
- ③ The interdiction of smuggling cases of stimulants was a record high in number.
- ④ Stimulants coming from Canada and Malaysia were interdicted in succession. That suggests a diversification of smuggling routes for stimulants.

(2) Interdiction of Major Illicit Drugs and Firearms

Category		Year					Compared to 2002
		1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	
Stimulants	Cases	39	57	42	20	76	380.0%
	kg	1,450	886	202	408	327	80.1%
Cannabis	Cases	255	303	214	276	355	128.6%
	kg	723	485	797	476	766	161.1%
	(Herbal cannabis) Cases	155	217	166	191	233	122.0%
	kg	529	343	744	261	436	167.3%
(Cannabis resin)	Cases	100	86	48	85	122	143.5%
	kg	193	143	53	215	330	153.6%
Heroin	Cases	13	14	11	15	9	60.0%
	kg	1	6	5	19	5	26.4%
Cocaine	Cases	10	12	7	12	11	91.7%
	kg	4	7	18	14	0	0.8%
Opium	Cases	8	5	2	3	2	66.7%
	kg	7	5	8	2	4	220.5%
MDMA	Cases	26	36	44	35	43	122.9%
	1000 Tablets	18	85	118	172	368	213.6%
Psychotropics	Cases	167	89	96	89	58	65.2%
	1000 Tablets	141	62	90	60	16	27.4%
Total	Cases	518	516	416	450	554	123.1%
	kg	2,186	1,389	1,030	918	1,104	120.2%
	1000 Tablets	159	147	208	233	385	165.3%
Reference	1000 times	5,178	3,261	1,007	1,884	1,597	84.8%
Firearms	Cases	13	9	2	8	9	112.5%
	Quantity	40	123	21	13	12	92.3%
Firearms parts	Cases	2	0	2	3	7	233.3%
	Quantity	2	0	12	4	13	325.0%

Notes:

1. The figures, which are on a detection basis, include quantities seized not only in smuggling cases detected by Customs but also in smuggling cases detected by the police and other law enforcement agencies in collaboration with Customs.
2. "Stimulants" includes its raw material.
3. "MDMA" includes MDA.
4. The number of psychotropics tablets seized in 2001 includes 2,031 tablets in an export case.
5. A conversion was made for the "Number of uses" based on an average dose of abusers (stimulant: 0.03 g; herbal cannabis: 0.5 g; cannabis resin: 0.1 g; heroin: 0.01 g; cocaine: 0.03 g; opium: 0.3g; MDMA and psychotropic: 1 tablet).

2. Trends in Illicit Drug Smuggling

(1) Stimulants

- T The interdiction of smuggling cases of stimulants was a record high in number.
- T Large-scale smuggling cases through routes via Canada, Malaysia and the Philippines were interdicted in succession.
- T Smuggling cases using air cargoes, such as express consignments, rapidly increased in number.

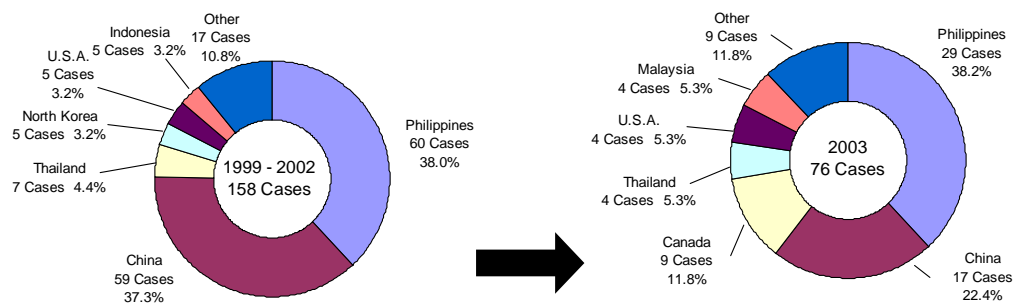
Japan is said to be in the third period of stimulant drug abuse. In 2003, 85% of the criminals involved in offenses related to any illicit drug were arrested for an offense related to stimulants (National Police Agency's data). Stimulants are the category of illicit drug which is most abused in Japan.

In 2003, 76 cases of stimulant smuggling (380% of the previous year) were interdicted. Despite the unprecedented number of the cases interdicted, the seized quantity totals 327 kg (80% of the previous year) and falls below that of the previous year.

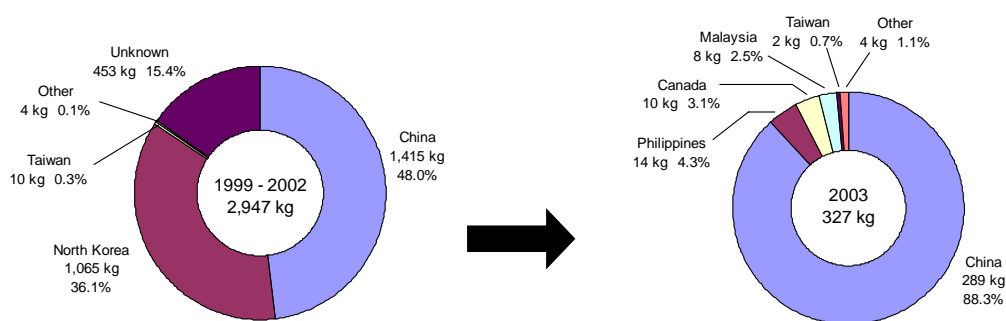
China and North Korea are two major sourcing countries for stimulants in the last five years. What should be noted for the year 2003 is the fact that several stimulant smuggling cases involving Canada and Malaysia, of which neither had been recorded as sourcing countries for large-scale smuggling offenses, and the Philippines, which had not recently been recorded as a sourcing country for large-scale smuggling offenses, were detected (See Charts 1 and 2).

The smuggling cases interdicted in 2003 often resorted to invented or very sophisticated tricks: a large amount of stimulants shrewdly concealed in the wooden pedestals of porcelain ornaments which were transported as a maritime container cargo, water solution of stimulants camouflaged as high-grade foreign liquor, and stimulants camouflaged as chocolate-based confectionery.

[Chart 1: Stimulant-related Cases by Sourcing Countries/Territories]



[Chart 2: Stimulants Seizure by Sourcing Countries/Territories]



(2) Cannabis

- T The interdiction of smuggling cases of cannabis was a record high in number.
- T The amount of cannabis resin seized in 2003 was a record high.
- T Cases of large-scale smuggling continued.

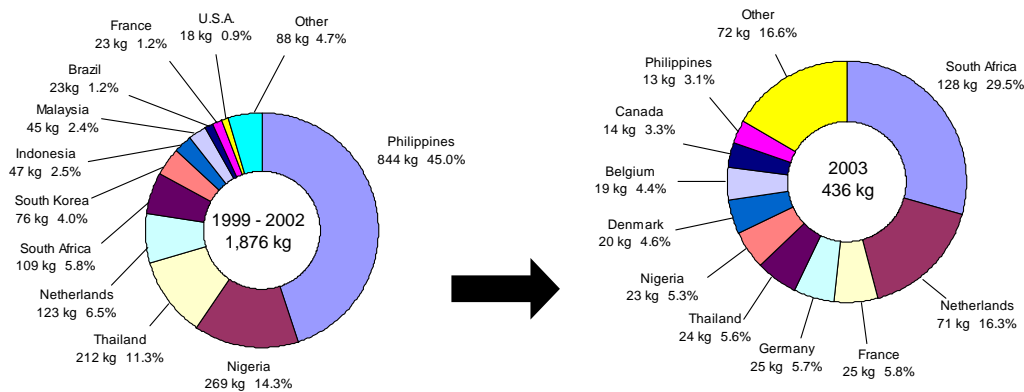
Cannabis is said to be the world's most abused illicit drug. Also in Japan, among the illicit drugs seized in the past five years, cannabis is second largest in seized volume after the stimulants.

In 2003, 355 cases (129% of the previous year) of smuggling of cannabis were interdicted, which was a record high in number of cases. A total of 766 kg (161% of the previous year) of cannabis was seized. That amount took second highest record. The seizure of cannabis resin, in particular, accounted for 330 kg (154% of the previous year) increase above that recorded as highest in the previous year.

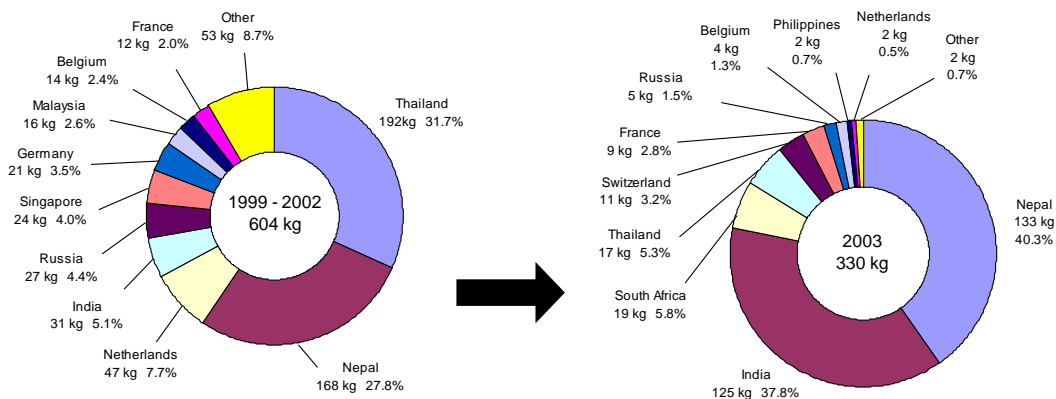
The major routes for smuggling of herbal cannabis are the African route involving South Africa, Nigeria, etc., the European route involving the Netherlands, France, etc. and the Southeast Asian route involving Thailand, the Philippines, etc. The major routes for smuggling of cannabis resin are the South Asian route involving India and Nepal, the Southeast Asian route involving Thailand, Singapore, etc. and the European route involving the Netherlands, France, etc. What should be noted for the year 2003 is the fact that many large-scale smuggling cases, whose sourcing countries were India and Nepal were detected in succession, representing approximately 80% of the total amount seized (See Charts 3 and 4).

The modus operandi which was most used in smuggling in 2003 was concealment inside baggage carried by an entry passenger or concealment around his/her body. In one case, a passenger attempted to smuggle approximately 20 kg of herbal cannabis concealed in his suitcase. Such large-scale cases were detected in succession.

[Chart 3: Herbal Cannabis Seizure by Sourcing Countries/Territories]



[Chart 4: Cannabis Resin Seizure by Sourcing Countries/Territories]



(3) Tablet-type Illicit Drugs (MDMA and Psychotropics)

T MDMA (MDA included) smuggling sharply increased in volume, exceeding vastly the previous record.

T A series of large-scale smuggling cases were committed successively via the European route.

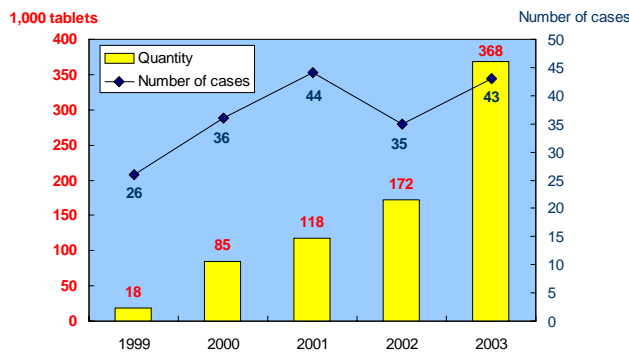
- a. Smuggling of MDMA (commonly known as Ecstasy. MDA included. This applies hereafter.), synthetic tablet-type drugs having the same pharmacological effects as those of stimulants, has been on a rapid increase in recent years. Accordingly, the number of arrested persons and the total amount of MDMA seized both showed a tendency to rise. There is the strong concern that these drugs will be abused by young people in their twenties.

In 2003, a total of 368,000 tablets (214% of the previous year) of MDMA were seized in 43 cases of smuggling (123% of the previous year). The quantity seized exceeded vastly the amount recorded in 2002 as the highest, approximately 170,000 tablets (See Chart 5).

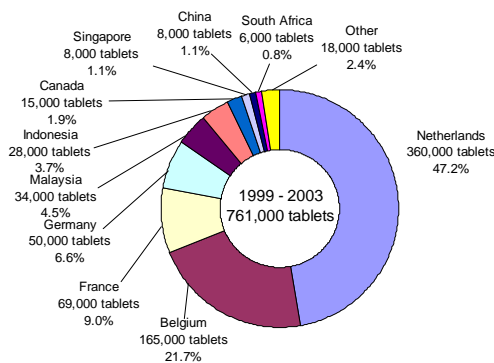
The major routes for smuggling of MDMA are the European route involving the Netherlands, Belgium, etc., and Southeast Asian route involving Malaysia, Indonesia, etc. (See Chart 6). As for modus operandi, concealment inside baggage carried by an entry passenger or inside international mail accounted for most of MDMA smuggling cases.

- b. Psychotropics is a generic name for substances that have tranquilizing, exciting and/or hallucinating effects on the central nervous system. The number of cases of smuggling interdicted in 2003 totaled 58 (65% of the previous year) with a seizure of 16,000 tablets (27% of the previous year), a continuous decrease from the preceding several years. Thailand, China and the Philippines are the major smuggling routes (enumerated in descending order). Smuggling from these countries accounted for 90% of the total amount of psychotropics seized (See Chart 7). International mail was used in most cases of smuggling of psychotropics.

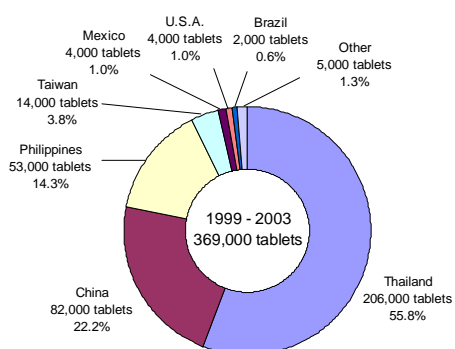
[Chart 5: Trend of MDMA Smuggling Interdicted]



[Chart 6: MDMA Seizure by Sourcing Countries/Territories]



[Chart 7: Psychotropics Seizure by Sourcing Countries/Territories]



(4) Other Illicit Drugs

T Large-scale smuggling of opium by ship crews from Russia was intercepted.

- a. The Golden Triangle, which spreads over Thailand, Laos and Myanmar, and the Golden Crescent, encompassing Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran, are believed to be the major areas which are producing heroin. The Golden Triangle and its neighboring areas have been the main source of the heroin smuggled into Japan (See Chart 8).

In 2003, 9 cases (60% of the previous year) of smuggling of heroin were interdicted with a seizure of 5 kg (26% of the previous year) of heroin.

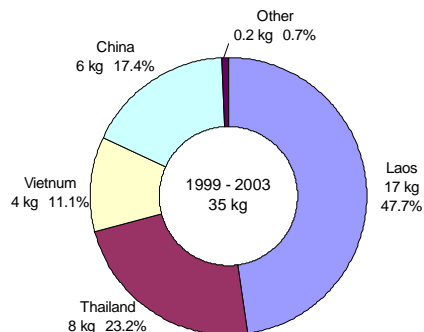
- b. These two areas are also regarded as the main sources of opium. In the last five years, smuggling of opium from Far Eastern Russia by ship crews were intercepted successively (See Chart 9).

In 2003, 2 cases (67% of the previous year) of smuggling of opium were interdicted with a seizure of 4 kg (220% of the previous year) of opium.

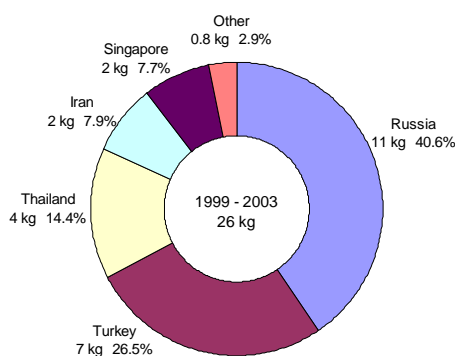
- c. In recent years, approximately 50 persons have annually been arrested in Japan for offenses related to cocaine (58 persons in 2003 according to the National Police Agency). However, smuggling into and abuse in Japan is a source of anxiety because cocaine has similar pharmacological effects as those of stimulants. The routes used for these cases of smuggling of cocaine include Brazil, Columbia and other South American countries (See Chart 10).

In 2003, 11 cases (92% of the previous year) of smuggling of cocaine were interdicted with a seizure of 0.1 kg (1% of the previous year) of cocaine.

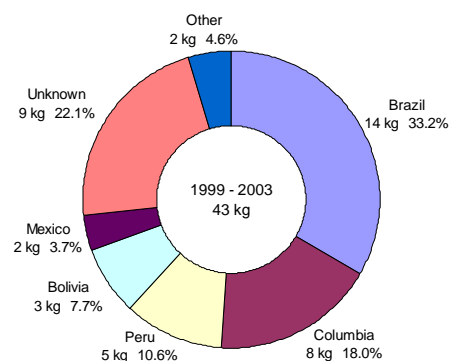
[Chart 8: Heroin Seizure by Sourcing Countries/Territories]



[Chart 9: Opium Seizure by Sourcing Countries/Territories]



[Chart 10: Cocaine Seizure by Sourcing Countries/Territories]



3. Trends in Firearms Smuggling

Firearms

- T The smuggling of several firearms concealed in a secondhand motorboat imported from the U.S.A. was interdicted.
- T Ship crew members smuggling handguns were arrested.

Statistical data provided by the National Police Agency show that authentic handguns (including those illicitly produced) represent more than 80% of those seized in Japan. Most of these seized handguns are made in the U.S.A. or the Philippines, etc. Therefore, almost all of these handguns are believed to have been smuggled in some way from abroad. In contrast to the year 2000 in which large-quantity smuggling cases were interdicted, the number of cases of smuggling and the quantity of items seized have been at low levels in the recent years.

In 2003, 9 cases (113% of the previous year) of smuggling of firearms were interdicted with a seizure of 12 pieces (92% of the previous year). (See Chart 11.)

Major smuggling cases interdicted in 2003 include the smuggling a large quantity of firearms concealed in a steel box camouflaged as a ballast tank in a secondhand motorboat from the U.S.A. and the case in which handguns were transported by a crew member onboard a container vessel which arrived in the Port of Yokohama from the U.S.A.

[Chart 11: Firearms Seizure by Year and by Sourcing Countries/Territories]

