

Barabanki, Lucknow hotspots of narco pharma seizures

KISHOR DWIVEDI
LUCKNOW

UTTAR Pradesh has witnessed a spurt in seizures of psychotropic substances over the past two years, with state capital Lucknow and its neighbouring Barabanki emerging as the epicentres of the crackdown, official data shows.

From consignments of Alprazolam running into lakhs of tablets to recoveries of Tramadol, Buprenorphine, Codeine and even raw powder used for tablet-making, officials of the Central Bureau of Narcotics (CBN) said the seizures point to an or-

ganised illicit pharmaceutical network that has spread in parts of UP.

Such drugs are seized as illegal trade can cause dependency and addiction in some, and in worst cases overdose and death.

Alprazolam, Tramadol, Buprenorphine and Codeine are controlled under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, which empowers agencies like the CBN to intercept, seize, and prosecute offenders involved in their diversion, trafficking, or illicit manufacturing.

According to official data accessed by PTI, Barabanki

has repeatedly turned up as a major hub. In 2024 alone, multiple raids led to the seizure of huge stocks of Alprazolam and NRx medicines, often in the range of 60,000 to 3.2 lakh tablets at a time.

The trend continued into 2025, with the district also recording recoveries of Alprazolam powder, indicating its use in clandestine processing and tablet manufacturing.

Lucknow, meanwhile, has emerged as the centrepiece of the state's drug seizures in 2025. A single raid on July 16 led to the recovery of over 18.47 lakh Alprazolam tablets, along with 2.19 lakh

Tramadol tablets, 13,175 ampules of Buprenorphine injections, 700 Pentazocine ampules and 5,355 Codeine bottles, in the biggest such haul by the CBN in the capital yet.

"The seizures reflect the growing scale of diversion of pharmaceutical drugs and the need for continuous monitoring and crackdown, as seen in recent times," a senior officer aware of the matter told PTI.

Enforcement records also show that the problem is no longer confined to a few pockets.

In 2024, seizures were logged from Barabanki (Jan-

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uary, April and May), and once each in Bijnor (September) and Varanasi (December).

However, the number of seizures have more than doubled till August this year only with successful raids reported twice from Barabanki (January, August), thrice from Lucknow (May, two times in July), and once each in Bareilly (February), Var-

nasi (June), Agra (June).

Tramadol tablets and Codeine bottles were seized from Varanasi and 1 kg of Alprazolam powder was recovered from Bareilly, suggesting a pipeline of raw material feeding into the illegal trade.

Officials point out that the nature of the seizures has also diversified. While 2024 was dominated by tablets, mostly Alprazolam and



NRx, the following year saw consignments that included powders, injections and syrups.

"The variety of substances being trafficked indicates both growing demand among users and adaptability by suppliers to plug into multiple markets," the official said.

In the latest breakthrough following intelligence inputs from Madhya Pradesh, CBN's regional team nabbed a suspect from UP-Bihar border after an overnight operation on September 11-12, busting a Ketamine supplying racket allegedly linked to the poll-bound state.

Bodies of 14 monkeys found in UP, poisoning suspected

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BARABANKI

THE bodies of 14 monkeys suspected to have been poisoned were recovered from a village in Barabanki district of Uttar Pradesh, officials said on Sunday.

People in Amserua village said the monkeys did not appear to be from the area, and officials suspect that they may have been brought from another place and given poisonous substances.

The forest inspector has lodged an FIR against unknown persons at the Kothi police station under the Wildlife Protection Act.

Harakh Range's regional forest inspector, Sachin Kumar Patel, said that he was on patrol duty around 7 pm on Friday evening, when villagers informed him about two dead monkeys.

The forest inspector found the monkeys near the water tank between Amserua and Deha Rahimpur. He found seven more monkeys lying dead at some distance in a paddy field. The



department's team returned after dark. The next day, villagers found five more dead monkeys, while one monkey was writhing in pain. The forest department team reached the spot and sent the monkey that was found alive in critical condition to a veterinary hospital for treatment, and took the rest of the bodies into their custody.

Villagers said that there are no monkeys in the Amserua area. Forest department officers also expressed surprise as to how so many monkeys came to the area.

Forest inspector Patel said eight male and six female monkeys have been found dead.

A post-mortem examination will be conducted by a panel of three doctors at the veterinary hospital in Siddaur.

Court orders registration of FIR against SHO, others

Woman alleges inaction on her assault complaint; 'the victim was not medically examined indicates that the police and the hospital administration have not performed their role properly'

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BALLIA

A court in Ballia has directed the registration of an FIR against six people, including the then SHO of Phephana police station here, after a woman alleged that police did not take appropriate action on her assault complaint at the behest of the accused, the prosecution said on Sunday. Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) Shailesh Pandey passed the order on the application by Somari Devi of Bairiya village who had alleged that on June 11, 2024, her 'pattidar' (agriculture partner) Rinku Devi of the same village and her family members entered her house and abused and assaulted her over a land dispute, Special Public Prosecutor Vimal



Kumar Rai said.

The victim also claimed that she was stabbed in her left hand. Rai said that the court observed that it is clear from the police station report that Somari Devi was not medically examined "under the influence of the opposition" party to the dispute.

The fact that the victim was not medically examined indicates that the police and the hospital

administration have not performed their role properly. In such a situation, it seems appropriate to get the case investigated by the police, the court said.

The court ordered the registration of a case against the then Station House Officer (SHO) and the accused and directed that a copy of the FIR be submitted to it within three days, besides the progress report after investigation.

Main accused in lecturer Neetu murder case held after 7 years

HANS NEWS SERVICE
JAIPUR

RAJASTHAN Police has arrested the main accused in the 2018 murder case of lecturer Neetu Gurjar in Andhra Pradesh, officials said.

The accused, Santosh Gurjar (32), a resident of Jagdishpura, carried a reward of Rs 50,000 on his head, Karauli Superintendent of Police Lokesh Sonwal said on Saturday.

To evade arrest, Santosh frequently changed his location and worked as a labourer in Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh under fake identities, the police said. Acting on a tip-off, a special team tracked him to Thulluru

village near Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh.

"As soon as the police team reached the village, Santosh tried to flee towards the forest. He was chased for about a kilometre before being overpowered," Sonwal said.

He added that the accused will be handed over to Todabhim police for further investigation.

On November 14, 2018, Neetu Gurjar and her brother Lokesh were travelling on a motorcycle when an SUV rammed into them, leaving both seriously injured. Neetu later succumbed to her injuries. Police investigations later revealed that the incident was not an accident but a premeditated murder.



Power lines across Pb to undergo upgrade

HANS NEWS SERVICE
LUDHIANA

POWER lines across Punjab will undergo a comprehensive upgrade in an effort to improve public safety, reduce power outages, and enhance the aesthetics of urban areas.

Punjab Power Minister Sanjeev Arora said on Saturday that during various election meetings, the primary demand from the public was an improvement in power infrastructure.

The Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) has launched a special initiative to upgrade power lines in 13 major municipal corporations, covering a total of 87 subdivisions.

This effort aims to improve public safety, reduce power outages, and enhance the aesthetics of urban areas. A key component of this project involves removing non-electric wires from PSPCL electric poles.

"All dish cables, internet fibre and other non-PSPCL wiring will be cleared from PSPCL poles to enhance public safety and enable faster, more accurate visual inspection and fault detec-



tion," Arora explained. Electric lines will be raised to safe heights to prevent accidents, particularly those involving large vehicles, the minister mentioned. Additionally, metre boxes will be securely closed and sealed to protect against weather damage and tampering, thereby enhancing overall public safety.

A pilot project is set to begin in the City West Ludhiana Subdivision, covering 25 feeders. The PSPCL will pro-

vide all necessary materials, while the labour component for the pilot, estimated at approximately Rs 1.2 crore, will be outsourced to ensure quick execution.

The project is scheduled for completion within two months. Based on lessons learned from the pilot project, the programme will be implemented in the next phase across all 87 subdivisions, with a target completion date set for June 2026.

Singer Chhannulal admitted to BHU hospital for heart issues

HANS NEWS SERVICE
MIRZAPUR/VARANASI

SINGER Chhannulal Mishra, who was being treated for a lack of haemoglobin and bed sores, was shifted to the Sir Sunderlal Hospital in Varanasi after he suffered a heart-related issue, people aware of his health said.

Mishra (89), a Padma Vibhushan awardee, was admitted to the ICU of a hospital affiliated with the Banaras Hindu University (BHU), where doctors said that his condition is stable.

Dr Rajesh Bind, the personal assistant to the principal of Maa Vindhyavasini Medical College (Mirzapur), late Saturday night said that while there was no major concern, yet as a precautionary measure, he has been shifted to the hospital. There is nothing to worry about, he said.

Earlier on Saturday, Mishra, a famous Hindustani classical and semi-classical vocalist, was admitted to Ramkrishna



Mission Hospital in Mirzapur for treatment. He needed treatment due to a lack of haemoglobin and bed sores.

A team of specialist doctors led by Dr Sanjeev Kumar, principal of Maa Vindhyavasini Medical College, was taking care of Mishra's health.

Mishra's daughter, Namrata Mishra, told PTI that her father was suffering from bed sores and that his health suddenly deteriorated a few days ago. When Mishra's blood and urine were tested, haemoglobin was found to be low.

After this, he was admitted to the Ramakrishna Mission Hospital near his residence. Later, he was moved to Sir Sunderlal Hospital for treatment.

Cong slammed over row on installation of cameras in Rajasthan Assembly

HANS NEWS SERVICE
JAIPUR

RAJASTHAN Education Minister Madan Dilawar launched a sharp attack on the Congress amid the row over additional cameras installed in the state Assembly, accusing the opposition leaders of making baseless allegations.

He also questioned the "character" of Congress leaders.

Addressing a press conference here, Dilawar said those alleging that the cameras were meant to invade women's privacy were "shameless and characterless". "Such cameras are also in the Congress office. I believe these people's character is questionable," he said.

Taking a dig at Congress president Govind Singh Datasra, Dilawar remarked, that people see things the way they themselves are.

"Dotasra should look into his own party leaders and his own life to see what they have done," he said



and referred to the Bhanwari Devi case to claim that more name would be exposed if everything comes to light.

He also took a dig at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi saying, "Rahul Gandhi once said that people who go to temples do so to harass girls. Does that mean when he goes to temples, he goes to harass

girls?" "What can be more characterless than this? During his yatra, he is seen putting his hand on the shoulders of girls and frolicking them", is that not characterlessness?"

The opposition Congress has accused the government of installing additional cameras in the Assembly to snoop on legislators, a charge the BJP has rejected.

BJP govt staging 'drama' over 27 pc OBC quota: Kamal Nath

In 2019, the then Congress government led by Nath raised OBC quota from 14 per cent to 27 per cent by an ordinance, but his move could not be implemented due to litigations

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHOPAL

SENIOR Congress leader Kamal Nath on Sunday accused the BJP government in Madhya Pradesh of staging a "drama" in the name of 27 per cent reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and alleged the ruling party was working to deprive the community of its rights.

In 2019, the then Congress government led by Nath raised OBC quota from 14 per cent to 27 per cent by

an ordinance, but his move could not be implemented due to litigation.

In a post on X, Nath claimed the Mohan Yadav government was repeatedly citing court procedures and legal advice to shield itself.

The OBC quota matter is pending before the Supreme Court, which will hear it daily from September 23.

Incidentally, Yadav held a meeting with OBC Mahasabha on Saturday, while state advocate general Prashant Singh discussed

the issue with lawyers and stakeholders. Last month, Chief Minister Yadav had convened an all-party meeting on the quota issue and said all political parties in the state were unanimous in supporting 27 per cent reservation for OBCs. Yadav had asserted the legislature and executive would make collective efforts to ensure its implementation.

Hitting out at the BJP, Nath said, "The drama being played out in the name of a 'grand strategy' on 27



per cent OBC reservation in MP is nothing short of a conspiracy to deprive the community of its rights."

Nath further asked why participants were not allowed to carry mobile phones during Saturday's meeting chaired by the CM.

"Was this part of a conspiracy? Did the government not want the real picture and details of the discussion to reach the public?" Nath asked. The Congress government had increased OBC quota to 27 per cent, but the

BJP never accepted it and created hurdles in the courts, Nath further alleged.

"The present government considers the OBC community only as a vote bank and resorts to excuses and conspiracies when it came to implementing the quota. If the Congress government could implement 27 per cent reservation, why can't the BJP government? Under whose pressure is the BJP denying OBCs their rights?" the Congress leader questioned.

Nath said the OBC community must now realise who their true ally was.

"The Congress had delivered rights to them while the BJP was trying to take them away," he claimed.

OBCs comprise around 51.8 per cent of Madhya Pradesh's population, according to an estimate. Since 2003, all BJP chief ministers, namely Uma Bharti, Babulal Gaur, Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Mohan Yadav, have been from the OBC segment.