

Made-in-India 'legal highs' hit Europe

EU Monitoring 450 Cathinones, Says Report

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London: India has been named the main 'birthplace' for new psychoactive substances or 'legal highs' that are flooding European cities.

The Europe Drug Report 2015, released on Friday, says synthetic cathinones such as mephedrone, pentedrone and MDPV — available as powders or tablets that are not controlled under drug laws — have become a fixture in the illicit drug market in European countries.

"Production of cathinones appears to take place primarily in India," the report says. "The drugs are then imported into Europe, where



The Europe Drug Report 2015 says new psychoactive substances were detected in the EU last year at the rate of around two per week. Britain's home office had earlier made similar claims about India being the birthplace 'of some dangerous new legal highs being introduced on a weekly basis to be sold on the streets of Britain'

they are packaged and marketed as 'legal highs' or sold in the illicit market." Legal highs are chemicals designed to replicate the effects of illegal substances.

The EU Early Warning System has identified more than 70 new cathinones in Europe. In 2013, over 10,000 seizures of synthetic cathinones were reported to it.

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highs" which killed 68 people last year in the UK. "We're in a race against the chemists of new substances being produced almost on a weekly basis in places like China and India," Baker had said. "They then come in here and are inaccurately and unhelpfully called legal highs — some of them are actually illegal and unsafe."

The International Narcotics Control Board says almost 700 websites are selling and advertising such substances (legal highs) to users in the EU, including 140 sites hosted on servers in Britain.

Over 80 million adults, or almost a quarter of the adult population in the EU, are estimated to have tried illicit drugs at some point in their lives. The most commonly used drug is cannabis (78.9 million), with lower estimates reported for the lifetime use of cocaine (15.6 million), amphetamines (12.0 million) and MDMA (12.3 million).

Regulation