

1. State Consultation meeting on the extent & pattern of substance use in India at Agartala, Tripura.

Date : 18th October, 2017 (3:30 pm)
Venue : Directorate of Social Welfare & Social Education, Agartala; Tripura

The meeting started with a brief information and introduction by Mr. D. Darlong, IAS, Director (SWD & SE) which was followed by a brief session of self-introduction by the members present.

Ms. Angela Saidingliani Hauhna, RPC, gave a brief go-through about the survey and how it is going to be conducted. She also stressed that this survey is not only a state Survey but a Nationwide Survey. The survey will be conducted throughout the states and UTs of India. She also gave a short presentation explaining how the Survey will be conducted. She also mentioned that in the latest UNODC Report, any data or Report regarding India is nil which clearly shows the gaps that our country has to fill. The records and data to be displayed not only in the UNODC database, but also to assess the present situation and position of India in this regard is thus a major concern for the Government of India and the initiatives and funds for the Survey are undertaken and will be borne by the GOI, ie. the Survey will be conducted by the Government of India in collaboration with AIIMS. She also said that the survey will be held in 2 sections, ie. HHS (Household Survey) & RDS (Respondent Driven Sampling).

In the HHS, the Survey will be done by interviewing PSUs House to house, whereas in the RDS, the Survey will be done by interviewing the addicts at one spot.

She also mentioned that this survey will provide the state with a better picture of the problems related to Drugs confronting it. This will then enable it to get more help and initiate better and more precise projects in the future.

After the presentation, the Director opened a moment for discussions:-

- 1) Dr SK Chakma (Addl. Director) was the first to speak and he mentioned the various problems related to drugs that are coming-up in the district.

- 2) Dr Ashoke Roy, PD, TSACS then mentioned the scenario of illegal drugs coming in the district and also in the south.
- 3) Dr. Santam Ghosh also mentioned that the effect of the drugs may be minimal in this area as of now, but if it is not considered by the Government, it will be a problem soon. He also mentioned the importance of the survey for the state.
- 4) Dr. Ashoke Roy, PD, TSACS also reiterated what Dr. Santam had said. He also mentioned that the problem is much more acute in the North region. He said that “The problem what we see in the West are only the tips of the iceberg”.

The discussion also raised a question regarding the method of data collection and how the Tablet provided by the Ministry is to function and so on. These queries were then promptly addressed by the ROM and RPC.

There was also a query on the way the districts were selected, and it was made clear that it was selected by the AIIMS and selected randomly.

The discussion session also raised a concern on how to make awareness about survey, and it was suggested that such information would be disseminated through newspapers and pamphlets.

It was also mentioned that the HHS Surveyors may include any person with a history of using illegal drugs and tobacco products provided that he/she person has abstained such drugs for a period not less than 1 year. Such a person will be eligible to conduct the RDS.

After a long and fruitful discussion regarding the methods and ways to implement the survey in Tripura, the Director (SWD&SE) closed the meeting with a vote of thanks.

Mr. Achintam Kilikdar, Nodal Officer thanked all the members who attended the state consultative meeting and requested them to give their support for the survey