Enforcement agencies in TN unable to seize even one gram of synthetic drug: Guv

TENKASI: Expressing concern over the drug menace, Governor R N Ravi on Sunday flayed the Tamil Nadu police, alleging that the state sleuths were unable to seize even one gram of synthetic drug, whereas their counterparts in Central agencies were recovering hundreds of kilograms in the

Terming the prevalence of drugs among youngsters as a "serious problem", Ravi said the government alone cannot eradicate it, but only through a mass movement it can be

"Our country is celebrating the festival of Navratri, and normally I do not move out of Chennai during these nine days to ensure that I attend the pooja in the evening at Raj Bhavan. However, when I was invited to this event, I decided I must not miss it. The issue of drugs is close to my heart. Because I have seen prosperous and happy families getting destroyed, society getting destroyed because of this drug," he said at an event here.

Tenkasi is located about 650 kms south of Chennai.

Citing some examples of the use of drugs, he said there are some states in the North East which suffer enormously because of it.

"Even, we have a case in Punjab. Remember, till about 40 years back, it was the most advanced and frontranking state in the country.

Within three decades, drugs destroyed it and today it (Punjab) is struggling to come out of it (drug culture). There are many areas in our country which are affected by drugs. We must fight to finish it," he said, after inaugurating the 'Rally for a Drug-Free Tenkasi', organised by the Voice of Tenkasi Foundation.

The use of drugs in Tamil Nadu is also "very serious" and the synthetic drug is referred to as ganja here, but in Kerala or Karnataka it is called heroin, hashish or meth crystals, he said.

Describing synthetic drugs as a "bigger threat", the Governor said opium, heroin, hashish and various kinds of synthetic drugs are highly addictive, and the victims are mostly young people, school and college students.

"What $\bar{\mathbf{I}}$ am worried about our state is Central agencies have seized hundreds and hundreds of kilograms of synthetic and chemical drugs from different parts of our state. From the land, from the sea, from the airport, large amount of drugs, chemical and synthetic drugs are seized.

"Three years down the line, I have come across seizures of ganja, tons and tons of ganja seized but no synthetic nor chemical drug. How come Central agencies are able to seize hundreds of kilograms of these synthetic and chemical drugs, whereas our state enforcement agencies are not able to seize even one gram,"

Soon after he assumed office in Tamil Nadu, the Governor said he invited the then Police chief and requested him to pay attention to the prevalence of drugs in the state. "This is a serious problem, because I have seen it with my own eyes. How a prosperous family, prosperous society completely gets destroyed. We must act

tough," he said. Observing that the drugs comprise two aspects -demand and supply -- he said that there are some countries which sustain themselves on money by supplying the drugs.

"We have the case of Afganisthan. They grow heroin, they grow opium and make heroin and other variants of it and push it in the international market. We know our western neighbours and their forces have been supplying drugs and getting money to run terrorism, which is called 'narco terrorism' involving billions and billions of dollars," he said.

With supply side pressure from the international market, the drugs are getting pushed into India as a transit route by the drug cartels, he

"Initially they (drug cartels) said that India is only a transit route because it goes to Sri Lanka and other international countries. But, I think they have fooled us for long. While transiting into India, I think the whole amount of drugs

becoming a drug consuming society," he claimed.

"Friends, it is a very serious problem. We have to create a mass movement like our

cessful because of mass participation. It cannot be done by the government alone. It has to have a mass participation (in eradication of Prime Minister Narendra drugs)," he said.

Latur polytechnic food poisoning: All 50 students discharged from hospital post treatment

STATE TIMES NEWS

LATUR: Fifty female students of a government college who were hospitalised for suspected food poisoning after having dinner at hostel their Maharashtra's Latur city were discharged on Sunday evening, a senior health official said.

The hostel, part of the Puranmal Lahoti Government Polytechnic, has 324 female students.

"At around 7 pm on Saturday, the students had dinner, consisting of rice, chapattis, 'okra' curry and lentil soup. By 8.30 pm, several of them felt nauseous and some of the students started vomiting. The affected students were immediately taken to Vilasrao Deshmukh Government Medical College and Hospital," an

official said. "Nearly 50 students were admitted to the hospital for treatment by midnight. Treatment started immediately and they were administered saline. Twenty of them were discharged by 3

am and the rest by Sunday evening," GMCH Dean Dr Uday Mohite said.

The polytechnic's principal VD Nitnawre said Shivajinagar police was informed about the incident and they have collected food samples and other items as part of their probe.

"The contract for the college mess has been given to one Manisha Dobgave and police are inquiring with her in connection with this inci-

dent," he added. The principal said photographs of lizards and insects in meals doing the rounds of social media, which are being linked to the incident at the polytechnic, are false.

"The reports related to the food samples will be available by Monday or Tuesday," said Resident said Resident Deputy Collector Keshav Netke. Latur Lok Sabha MP Shivaji Kalge visited the hospital late Saturday night and asked Collector Varsha Thakur-Ghuge to ensure the affected girls are given relief and advanced

acher Theken UTHALA

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Smt. Neelam Bamba

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Sh Suneel Bamba (AE,PDD) and Smt Geeta Bamba

Daughter and Son-in-law

Smt Binu Chopra and Sh Vishal Chopra

Devar & Devrani

Sh Vijay Bamba and Smt Primla Bamba

Sister-in-Law

Smt Usha Sehgal w/o Lt Sh Dinesh Sehgal Brothers and Sisters-in-law

Lt Sh. Ayodhya Nath Gandotra & Smt Vinod Gandotra

Sh Vijay Kumar Gandotra & Smt Rashmi Gandotra

Sh Pawan Gandotra & Smt Sudha Gandotra

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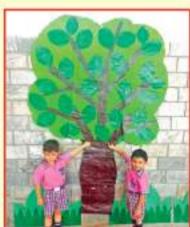
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