

THE STATESMAN

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# re imperfect: Thanga's the man, but not the one in the photo!

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im up as cartel seeks, to

that they had been looking for the "wrong man" all the while!

In the sense, the man in the photograph purported to be that of Mr San Niang Thanga, to whom the former CBI additional director, Mr Upen Biswas, had let out the ground floor of his house in Kolkata, is actually someone else.

The photograph of Mr Thanga, which was circulated to all investigating agencies, both foreign or otherwise, was taken from a driving

licence seized from Mr Biswas's Salt Lake house. "But, we came to know that his driving licence was forged and it was the photograph of a different person pasted on it," an NCB official said. Saying that they came to know about it just last week, a senior senior NCB officer admitted: "We



Thanga, this isn't the photo of the alleged drug czar released by the NCB to the press... and Interpol

asked if the US President

asked if he introduced it several other

the

Drug haul in city, Kolkata Plus 1

we were running after the wrong man all this time. Now, we have asked for his accurate sketch from the Myanmar and Chinese law enforcing agencies."

Officials said that a fresh hunt would begin once a recent photograph arrived from the North-East investigating agencies. "We have informed the Interpol and other international invest-

ating agencies asked to trace him, about the new development," an NCB officer said. Investigations proved that Mr San Niang Thanga, who had identified himself as a Mizo to Mr Biswas while renting a portion of his house, was a Myanmar after all. He allegedly helped the Chinese drug mafia to start operations in India.



26 MAY 2003

THE STATESMAN

# ectors spill beans on heroin trade

The North Korean government has admitted that it is producing or trafficking of either heroin or methamphetamine in North Korea. Mr Herbert Schape, secretary of the International Narcotics Control Board, said. "It makes me sad that this kind of thing always seems to come out when political tension is rising and when it is politically convenient."

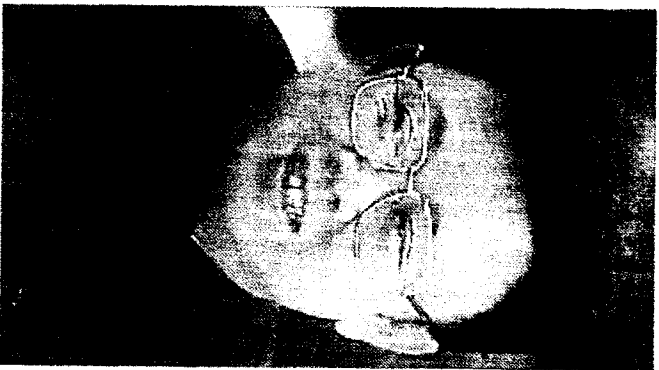
North Korea has long been accused of profiting from organised crime, including counterfeiting and illegal weapons sales, as well as drug-running. But rarely has the claim been made in such detail. The evidence of the two detectors, one in the Senate and one in a Japanese newspaper, describe poppy cultivation, drug manufacture and trafficking carried out by the government on the orders of its highest leaders.

According to one of the former officials, who gave evidence on Tuesday with a hood over his face to conceal his identity, opium plants were established in the late 1970s on the orders of the late Kim Il Sung, North Korea's founding President.

"Kim Il Sung needed cash," he told the Senate Governmental Affairs Sub-committee on Financial Management, Budget and International Security.

The raw opium was refined into heroin at pharmaceutical plants which also made methamphetamine, the stimulant drug. The drugs were sold by North Korean diplomats and transferred on the high seas, sometimes from North Korean naval vessels.

The second defector told Japanese reporters: "In the 1970s there was a unit in North Korea that planned and executed all the kidnappings of Koreans living in Japan as well as Japanese. Now they are in charge of developing the drug market and contacting people underground to sell drugs."



Mr Kim Jong Il

## Cat-astrophe!

NEW YORK, May 25. — It could have been a "cat-astrophe", but Meow Mix cat food chief executive officer Mr Richard Thompson is recovering — with his sense of humour intact — after being bitten by a Rottweiler.

The encounter happened just as Thompson was about to launch *Meow TV*, a half-hour, feline-friendly comedy on cable's Oxygen network that features cat yoga, cat haiku and sporadic video of squirrels and fish. Mr Thompson said he was walking on the Upper East Side about a week ago when the dog bit him on his backside. His wound was bandaged at a hospital, and he was still finding it difficult to sit comfortably.

"He was hungry," Mr Thompson joked in an interview. "I'm still convinced the dog knew who I was — Top Cat of the Meow Mix Co. — and he didn't get invited to the *Meow TV* opening," he said. "I think the dogs had a conspiracy against me."

Mr Thompson said he filed a police report about the dog, which was on a leash and with its owner, but he expects nothing will come of it. — AP

# Exporters spill beans on heroin trade

Production of trafficking of either heroin or methamphetamine in North Korea, Mr Herbert Schape, secretary of the International Narcotics Control Board, said. "It makes me sad that this kind of thing always seems to come out when political tension is rising and when it is politically convenient."

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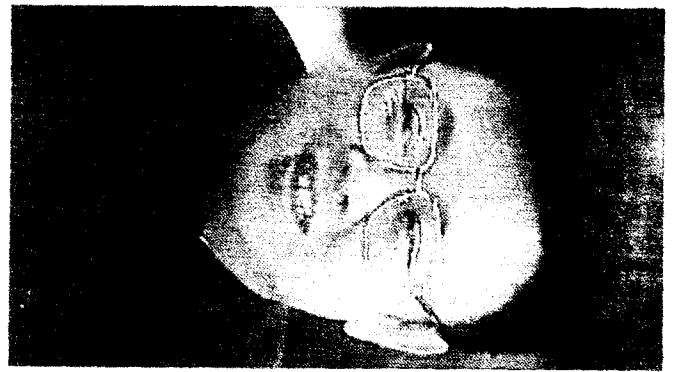
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The encounter happened just after Thompson was about to launch *Megaw Mith Oxygen* network that features cat, dog, and fish. Mr Thompson said he was walking on the Upper East Side about a week ago when the dog bit him on his backside. His wound was bandaged at a hospital, and he was still finding it difficult to sit comfortably. "He was hungry," Mr Thompson said in an interview. "I'm still convinced that I knew who I was — Top Cat of the *Megaw Mith Co.* — and he didn't get invited to the *Megaw Mith TV* opening," he said. "I think the conspiracy against me."



Mr Kim Jong Il

# Biswas a suspect: NCB

Statesman News Service

KOLKATA, May 23. — The Narcotics Control Bureau today declared Mr Upen Biswas, former CBI additional director, as a suspect in the banned drugs racket that was busted in his Salt Lake home last week.

The declaration came after NCB officials interrogated Mr Biswas for over five hours at his home today. "There is still no solid evidence against him. But we plan to interrogate him again to unearth the entire scam," the NCB assistant director, Mr NC Patra, said. "He fully cooperated with us during interrogation." Mr Biswas was also questioned about his son's alleged involvement in the racket.

The NCB also brought the woman who was detained from Mizoram House on Wednesday to Mr Biswas's home. "Mr Biswas identified her and said she had recommended Mr Thanga to him," an NCB official said.

The NCB deputy director, Mr Sandip Ku-

mar, is scheduled to come to Kolkata for further investigations and will study the tape-recorded interrogation of Mr Biswas.

The interrogation followed the arrest of a casual employee of Mizoram House in the city who gave his name as a reference to Mr N Thanga, the absconding tenant at the ground-floor of Mr Biswas's Salt Lake house.

NCB officials have also seized a post card addressed to Mr Thanga, which arrived at Mr Biswas's Salt Lake house. They have learnt that Mr Thanga had gone to Aizwal from Shillong on 10 May and that "he was trying to migrate to the USA".

In another development, DIG (CID) Mr Banibrata Basu said that the SDJM court's at Barasat has been moved for permission to interrogate the five arrested who are currently in judicial custody till 2 June. Mr Basu would hold a parallel inquiry into the case.

**Heroin seized:** Three persons were arrested and 30 g of heroin seized from them in Baisakhii in Salt Lake Sector 2 this morning.

24 MAY 2003

THE STATESMAN

# CHINESE DRUG LORD VISITED CITY TO SET UP LABORATORY

## Thanga's kin detained in Shillong

Anirban Roy & HTC  
Shillong/Kolkata, May 22

AS CUSTOMS officials raided the house of Upen Biswas' tenant N. Thanga and detained his wife and brother in Shillong, it has come to light that Chinese drug lord Wang had come to Kolkata in February for a day to set up shop here.

Wang stayed at a plush city hotel and was accompanied by his lieutenant Ah Hua, who has been running the show since Wang's arrest by the US Drug Law Enforcement Agency. The two held several meetings with local operators, discussing the mechanism of setting up the lab to manufacture Amphetamine-type stimulants at Biswas' house.

This is the first time that the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has hit upon the presence of the Chinese drug lord in the city. The revelation bears out a perception that the city has turned into a hunting ground for inter-



N. Thanga

### SHADOWY FIGURE

- Date of birth in driving licence: January 15, 1973
- Nationality: Seized papers indicate Myanmarese citizenship
- Antecedents: Trip to Sri Lanka in 2002
- Travel plans: Trip to US

national drug racketeers.

NCB officials stumbled upon the lead following the interrogation of Lalawi Zauva, the man who wrote the introducto-

ry letter for Thanga, and Lal Than Puii, the woman who accompanied Thanga to Biswas' residence. A Burmese by birth, Thanga had introduced himself to the two members of Mizoram House as a Mizo.

Thanga, who still eludes the police, was Hua's Indian counterpart. NCB officers said they were in regular contact.

The customs raid on Thanga's house at Nongthymmai Lumbasuk threw up some incriminating documents. His wife Gloria Lalremi and brother Zoliana were interrogated at the headquarters of the commissioner of customs.

Gloria, who is from the Falam village in Myanmar, reportedly claimed she had no knowledge of Thanga's whereabouts. Sleuths say Thanga had visited Sri Lanka last year. Among the documents recovered, officials have found a migration form that suggests he was planning a trip to the US with his wife.

# Drug sleuths net big catch from super cop's house

Kolkata  
19 MAY

**I**N a major haul, Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has seized 24 kgs of ephedrine hydrochloride, a controlled psychotropic substance used for making heroin, from five foreigners residing as tenants in a house owned by former CBI additional director (East) U.N. Biswas here. The seizure was made from the ground floor flat of the house located at Salt Lake area on Saturday on a tip off from the US Drug Enforcement Agency, NCB assistant director (east) N.C. Patra told newsmen on Monday.

Five foreigners — three Myanmar and two Chinese — who were tenants of the flat, were arrested by NCB sleuths and produced before the sub-divisional judicial magistrate's court at Barasat.

During interrogation by the NCB officials, Mr Biswas, who was in the limelight in connection with the investigation of the multi-crore fodder scam case against former Bihar chief minister Laloo Prasad Yadav, had pleaded ignorance about the activities of his tenants.

He, however, said he had given his flat on rent to a Mizo who

had later introduced the five arrested persons to him in March last but had not mentioned anything about their possible involvement with psychotropic substances. Patra said the five arrested were identified as Baiktha Kima, Laltan Puta and Lalsanga (all Myanmar), be-

sides Chen Fulun and Wen delong (Chinese).

The arrested possessed fake licence, fake passports and a huge quantity of foreign currency and a mobile phone, the NCB assistant director said.

The seized material was valued at Rs 5 crore in the international market.

To a question, Mr Patra said ephedrine hydrochloride, a chemical, was required for producing amphetamine type stimulant (ATS), a drug stimulant like heroin, which was being stored by the five persons in the ground floor of Biswas' house.

"These five persons were gathering materials and raw materials for producing ATS. Initial stocking was being made at the ground floor of the house, though it is yet to be ascertained where they set up the laboratory required for the purpose," he said. NCB, he said, was in touch with the Union home ministry.

Mr Patra said this was the third major haul of ephedrine hydrochlorine at the international level in this year. Five kgs of the substance was seized in the US in January last, followed by a similar seizure in China. Now this controlled psychotropic substance had been found here, he said. — PTI



## Biswas senses foul play

FORMER CBI additional director (East), U.N. Biswas on Monday, denied having seen any of the five foreigners arrested from his ground floor apartment in Salt Lake and said he did not rule out a conspiracy in the matter. "I know none of these five persons nor do I have any inkling what has been going on in the ground floor of my house", Biswas said over telephone. — PTI