

# **The Indian-South African Bilateral Sphere: Of Mainstream Relations, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Peoples' Movements**

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## **Abstract**

The bilateral ties between India and South Africa have traversed through a myriad of interesting connotations. Iterating from uncomfortable, colonial socio-economic dynamics to formally embittered relations during apartheid, the bilateral public sphere between the two countries now stands transitioned into a boisterous neo-liberal globalized diplomacy. This paper is a reflection upon how the actions, abilities and even the disabilities of privileged stakeholders in the forefront of this 'Mainstream Bilateral Sphere' (MBS) impact the day to day world of those who form the ordinary 'People's Bilateral Sphere' (PBS) between India and South Africa. By interpreting the struggles, ideas and practices of a set of Indian South Africans involved in an anti-substance abuse politics led by micro social action groups such as the Anti- Drug Forum (ADF), I study how various kinds of bilateral spaces may take shape and impact upon one other. Second, I analyse the significance of common knowledge of community stakeholders in the building up of such multi-layered spaces and politics. A simple question that arises and is answered during the course of this paper is what information do individuals with drug-use histories and social activists hold for the enhancing the mutual bilateral between India and South Africa? By taking up examples of illicit drug trafficking between the two countries specifically from the 1970s onward, I show how due to lapses or inadequacies in the mutual MBS, a 'Clandestine Bilateral Sphere' (CBS) complete with innovative and exploitative drug trafficking mechanisms began to exist and came to the fore between the two countries. Replete with mafia dons and street drug mules,

this clandestine political layer not only came into existence but placed itself and drew sustenance from within the grey areas that reside between the mainstream bilateral on the one hand and the peoples' bilateral on the other. I speak of the alternate global and its narratives through a worm's eye perspective by sharing ethnographic visions from ordinary men and women in the people's bilateral who witness, imagine and calibrate this global from within their local. This paper discusses how the PBS can counter hegemonise the international social reality by inserting its articulations and discourses onto the privileged mainstream bilateral, even, as it challenges the processes that emanate from the clandestine bilateral spheres between India and South Africa. This paper draws critically upon the world of people's memory, imagination and social action, besides the politics of the MBS and the CBS between India and South Africa.

**Keywords:** Mainstream Bilateral, Clandestine Bilateral and People's Bilateral; Mandrax and illicit drug trade between India and South Africa; Anti-Drug Forum in Durban

## **Part I Introduction: Themes, Framework and Methodology**

From amidst the qualitative data that I collected on a social movement against substance abuse among Indian South Africans (ISAs) in Durban, emerged a peoples' narrative on clandestine international spaces between India and South Africa. I interacted with a broad range of people- from formal actors such as local political elects, court officials, police, diplomats and informal ones such as community activists, local voices, journalists, de-addiction specialists and youth with addiction histories. Especially significant for me were results emanating from interactions with actors caught at the tail end of drug addiction such as youth, school children, former addicts, petty criminals-their parents/ grand-parents and neighbours. Besides this, another important finding was that all actor groups view drugs, substance abuse and narcotics differently from one another. For instance, the tail end users are viewed by and large, as 'consumers' in the parlance of the majority of the formal set of actors. On the contrary, the activists, social workers, community leaders and other volunteers of the anti-substance abuse movement viewed the tail end users as caught between contexts of victimhood and those of

perpetration. Drug users for the former were actors in their own right, armed with/guilty of the proverbial ‘choice’ to select what they would smoke, when and how. In the interpretation of the latter, the dark, noir world of the users revealed the full extent of their suffering and swagger between cycles of substance abuse and ‘being clean’ or of crime and innocence.

What caught my attention as an ethnographer was none of these two extremes. Rather, I decided to focus on the middle ground where the tail end actors and their empathizers donned the mantle of thinkers and offered an alternative analysis of the ‘narcotics bilateral’<sup>1</sup> among nations. Exploring and collating the thinking of these informal actors, I arrived at inductive categories to describe my data. Whether it was the periods of immersion in the field or distance from it, my data stayed with me and lingered on. There was just no escape from the hard hitting analysis of drug users and issues around them that the budding anti-substance abuse politics (elaborated in sections below) wants to solve. It is in such a frame of mind that I share my data here, a point that Spradley (1970; 1980) calls ‘the ethnographic cycle’. In such research there is no rigid separation of analysis from data collection but rather a constant feedback in which interpretations are developed from observed behaviour and then ploughed back into the research process to investigate their explanatory power and to guide the collection of further data. Any theory or epistemology which arises from the research is thus ‘grounded’ in the collected data (Glaser & Strauss 1967). Ethnographic analysis is iterative and reflexive, that is, it builds on ideas formulated throughout a study and research problems are transformed, adapted and revised throughout the research process<sup>2</sup>.

Through continual reflection, interpretation and interaction in a circular fashion, I coded the data qualitatively into categories such as accounts of practices, experiences, special narratives, life histories and emotions shared by addicts and activists. My motive was to articulate colloquial responses, conjectures, themes and thesis into a grounded epistemology. I discerned that there are three kinds of bilateral spheres that the narcotics trade between India and South Africa is built-up and becomes

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<sup>1</sup> For more on, how illicit drug routes and relations build bridges among various kinds of international borders and spaces, see Shah: 1998; World Drug report: 2010.

indicative of. From the time of Mandrax trafficking successfully carried across land, sea and air routes, starting from mid-to late 1970s, the bilateral sphere has never been a single reducible category, as I explain in the succeeding sections. It is of relevance to state here, that the narcotics trade in the two countries is often explained keeping in view external reasons. In an article on organized crime (such as narco-trafficking) in South Africa, it is stated:

The US, Italian and Russian mafias, the Colombians and the Triads are alert to the opportunities. They have all initiated moves to exploit South Africa's weakening criminal justice system. Criminals from many parts of the world have set up operations in the country, and are using Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban as staging-posts for international drugs traffic and money-laundering (Africa Analysis, 25 August 1995, p.16).

Similarly in the Indian case, the Golden Crescent and the Golden Triangle are the dominantly portrayed as catalysts for the movement of drugs in and out of India (Das 2012; NCB, Annual Report 2012). Nonetheless, it is clear that, while no such narco- manoeuvres or illicit trade -exchanges can be possible without a set of locally established factors and actors, state politics is such that usually the issue that usurps more attention is the case of internal and external security (See Baynham 1994; Grové 1994). Problems that become actually implied in peoples' everyday life are usually put on the back shelves of international diplomacy. For the purposes of this study, I see the trade and its related structures and institutions as an overlapping, inter-connected and cyclical space that networks over and under the proverbial sovereign states and produces not just internal but also external repercussions.

I ground the bilateral trade relations between the two countries in two categories, instead of one dominantly understood sovereignty based notion of it: the formal, governed by states, treaties, MNCs and the exigencies of international diplomacy as opposed to the informal which develops between people, groups, cultural organizations or even suspicious entities as smugglers, traffickers and criminals. Meaning thereby that, at all times, two kinds of interactive possibilities may form between nations through two distinct kinds of routes- the certified and the non-certified or the conspicuous and the subtle. However, whether hailing from formal or informal

backgrounds, many of my local (middle-aged to older) informants', reminisced vividly on the use of Mandrax among the Indian South Africans. Adding succinct anecdotes and examples of the confidently thriving illicit drug trade between Mumbai, Cape Town and Durban, my informants spoke from memory. They talked about the 'heady, hippy decades' of the 1970s and 1980s. They quoted examples of the connections and networks that existed between the people of the countries despite the apartheid sanctions. Owing to such informal bilateral ties that many objects defied the international embargoes imposed in the formal, bilateral sphere and moved across the sea, air and land routes clandestinely. Evidently, authoritative decision making space (where the formal bilateral is enacted and which becomes visibly comprehensible by their various mutual treaties and accords or their lack/absence) between the two countries is not sufficient to understand every aspect of other kinds of lived spaces, especially where the informal bilateral relations between the two come to life. Therefore, this paper brings spaces such as the illicit bilateral sphere between India and South Africa, into the debate. Alongside these two, the conspicuous mainstream and the clandestine bilateral, has arisen, what I refer as, the people's bilateral of India and South Africa.

Qualitative data collection from stakeholders was definitely challenging because in many instances the illicit and the licit worlds merge, overlap and transition into each other. Interviewees and informants prefer to be extremely discreet. When substantial information was divulged, many requested that the intimate parts of it should not be shared in print or written in ways that reveal who the actor-respondent might have been<sup>3</sup>. So instead of focusing on names and routes involved in illicit trafficking of drugs, I attempted to develop an ethnographic understanding of the situation, which opened a world of vast information for me. For the sake of a nuanced clarity and epistemological convenience, I delineated this world into three kinds of spaces: mainstream spaces where inter-state policies can be made (diplomacy, state officials), clandestine spaces where inter-state policies can be challenged or countered/flouted (drug lords, dons, traffickers and runners)

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<sup>3</sup> In the drug and alcohol field, ethnography as a research method is still underutilized, though a handful of important ethnographic contributions (Moore, 1993: Pp.11-25) remain path breaking.

and lastly people's spaces where the individual and collective impact of both these kinds of spaces is felt and lived in quotidian contexts. It is also in these people's bilateral that struggles and analysis, memories and social experiences can effectively counter hegemonize the narratives and discourses of the mainstream as well as the clandestine bilateral. The multi-layered and multi-contextual sphere between India and South Africa thus can be seen to constitute many kinds of spaces and times that contain vital information for one another.

## **Part II The Indian-South African Mainstream Bilateral Sphere (MBS)**

While the word, 'bilateral' may acquire various connotations in different contexts, I will bring into discussion its meaning associated with diplomacy and international relations. Simply defined, bilateral implies having two sides or affecting reciprocally two nations or parties such as a bilateral treaty or a bilateral trade agreement<sup>4</sup>. This global connotation of bilateral has evolved and changed according to the changing world view, politics and international relations between sovereign nation states. From being understood negatively during the two World Wars, when the insight emerged that the bilateral treaties and agreements provoke war and economic downturn such as that during the great depression of the 1920's to being disfavored in comparison to the role of high profile multilateral entities such as the United Nations and World Bank during the height of the cold war- the bilateral process has come a long way and survived its stance as the fact remains that that diplomacy continues to be carried out between the informative and intimate bilateral spaces between two nations. So from trade agreements, bilateral treaties to secret policies the bilateral sphere remains a vital functioning ground between nations, (Thompson 2013).

Historically, India's links with the struggle for freedom and justice in South Africa date back to the period during which Mahatma Gandhi started his Satyagraha movement in South Africa over a century ago in 1913. Later, India occupied the forefront to provide the international community its

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<sup>4</sup> For details, see, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bilateral>  
Accessed on April 20, 2014.

support for the anti-apartheid movement. It was the first country to sever trade relations with the apartheid Government (in 1946) and subsequently imposed a complete -- diplomatic, commercial, cultural and sports -- embargo on South Africa. India worked consistently to put the issue of apartheid on the agenda of the UN, NAM and other multilateral organizations and for the imposition of comprehensive international sanctions against South Africa. The ANC maintained a representative office in New Delhi from the 1960s onwards. Following talks between the then South African Government and the ANC, India's relations with South Africa were restored after a gap of over four decades with the opening of a Cultural Centre in Johannesburg in May 1993. Formal diplomatic and consular relations with South Africa were restored in November 1993 during the visit to India of the then South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha, (Indian High Commission: Pretoria).

In the new global era, just like the frontiers of relations between sovereign states are expanding and contracting owing to various flows of networks and communication, at the same time, so is a re-definition of the bilateral now possible- as many kinds of new and relevant associations and forums strive to expand their bilateral into a multilateral while continuing to strongly build up their mutual relations with each other as is visible in the India and South Africa bilateral: Not only have they signed mutual accords and agreements w.r.t to the many challenges connected to the present era of globalization including crime and drugs but they have also extended their diplomatic sphere to engage in multilateral trade agreements in a bid to enjoy the due benefits of globalization.

The India Brazil South Africa (IBSA)<sup>5</sup> dialogue forum and the association of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS)<sup>6</sup> are

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<sup>5</sup> The IBSA Dialogue Forum brings together three large pluralistic, multicultural and multiracial societies from three continents as a purely South-South grouping of like-minded countries, committed to inclusive sustainable development, in pursuit of the well-being for their peoples and those of the developing world. IBSA was formalized and launched through the adoption of the Brasilia Declaration on 6 June 2003. Its creation recognized the necessity of a process of dialogue among developing nations and countries of the South to counter their marginalization. The principles, norms and values underpinning the IBSA Dialogue Forum are participatory democracy, respect for human rights, the Rule of Law and the strengthening

two relevant examples of this growing and expanding sphere of relations at the global international and bilateral level. Mbeki, Da Silva and Vajpayee officially presented IBSA to the international community at the 58th session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2003. Basically, the purpose of this forum is to share views on relevant regional and international issues of mutual interest as well as promote cooperation in the areas of defense, multilateral diplomacy, international trade, technology, social development, environmental issues and other areas of interest at a macro level. This activism on the part of three middle-income developing countries, in particular South Africa, Brazil and India, which has resulted in the creation of a trilateral diplomatic partnership is in itself a reflection of broader transformations across the developing world in the wake of globalization.

Against the background of India's consistent support to the democratic South Africa, there has been a steady consolidation of its close and friendly ties with South Africa, both bilaterally and through the trilateral IBSA Dialogue Forum. A number of bilateral agreements have been concluded between the two countries since the assumption of diplomatic relations in 1993 in diverse areas ranging from economic and commercial cooperation, defense, culture, health, human settlements, public administration, science and technology and education. Aside from the existence of this formal bilateral (which now incorporates new mutual multilateral concerns over trade and commerce as well) India and South Africa exhibit a concern over burgeoning problems such as increase in international terrorism, religious extremism, trans-border organized crime and illicit trafficking in arms and drugs. They view this upsurge as a serious threat to sovereign states, international peace, development, security and stability<sup>7</sup>.

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of multilateralism. see: <http://www.ibsa-trilateral.org/about-ibsa/background>. Retrieved May, 14, 2014.

<sup>6</sup> BRICS members are all developing or newly industrialized countries, but they are distinguished by their large, fast-growing economies and significant influence on regional and global affairs; all five are G-20 members. For more, see (Alden, Chris & Marco Antonio Vieira 2005).

<sup>7</sup> In this context, India-South Africa stress the importance of strict, full and unconditional implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution on the fight against terrorism and reiterate in particular their commitment to the UN

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In doing so, both the countries show an enthusiastic posture similar to important international organizations and think tanks such as the UN: As of now both countries stress their concern for creating a concerted effort at tackling the various challenges that hold their attention and are identifiable in the various bilateral treaties and MOUs (Memorandums of Understanding). However out of the approximately forty bilateral agreements they have between them post-Apartheid, only a handful explicitly pertain to cooperation in fields of criminal assistance; medicine and health; Science and technology; and Customs<sup>8</sup>. Hence surely this is one area where plenty of work needs to be still done in the India-South Africa bilateral sphere. Both the countries have in one way or the other contributed to prolific substance abuse as well as illicit drug trafficking between them, as the following section will elaborate.

My paper argues that perhaps time is ripe to make an ameliorative pause at both ends and re-consider on how to damage control. Investing in mutual partnerships and projects to support humanitarian and legal initiatives in the area of substance abuse would be a good step forward. Prioritizing mutual exchange of information, ethnographic and technical know-how can go a long way in traversing the many mysterious and suspicious sites of globalism hidden in the seemingly homogenous layers of international relations. Somebody somewhere down the official line has to take responsibility of acts of commission or omission in the drug trafficking chain. Community stakeholders as well as state officials in India and South Africa, admitted during informal interviews that habitual drug traffickers and authorities do have a very precise information bank on each other's activities. My research points out that the social onus as well as the dilemmas of illicit drug trafficking, obviously reside in the authorities as well as those on ground (who continue to face the sociopathy around substance abuse) more than they do with the traffickers<sup>9</sup>.

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Security Council Resolution 1373. See, <http://www.indiainsouthafrica.com/fact-file/keydocuments1.html>. Accessed June 12, 2014.

<sup>8</sup> A complete list of mutual accords, declarations and treaties signed by South Africa post 1994 is available online See Bilateral agreements signed by South Africa between 01. 01. 1994 until 15 04 2011. <http://www.dfa.gov.za/foreign/bilateral0415.rtf>. Accessed 10.06. 2014.

<sup>9</sup> In the section on the people's bilateral sphere, below, I elaborate this point by examples from our field work.

### **Part III Emergence of a Clandestine Bilateral Sphere (CBS) between India and South Africa and its expanding networks**

India has always been a conduit and producer of drugs. Large quantities of the chemicals (used in Pharmaceutical industry) have been diverted to produce illegal drugs such as Mandrax and Methamphetamine, which has emerged as a major problem in countries such as South Africa (and the United States). Further, ample opportunities exist for drug syndicates to ply their trade in not only India, but also in countries such as Pakistan and Nepal in South Asia. The drug trafficking connection between South Africa and India dates back to the period when India banned the production of Mandrax in early 1970s. Mandrax used to be produced legally in India until it was recognized that the drug had a high potential of being abused. South Africa was then and still is the largest market for smuggled Mandrax, where reportedly 80% of the illegal drug's consumers reside. While other synthetic drugs such as amphetamines and the hallucinogen LSD, were mainly produced and consumed in Europe and North America, methaqualone, however, was exported from India which was its main production hub.

Methaqualone is a depressant used in combination with diphenhydramine (or, alternatively, diazepam) in the manufacture of Mandrax. Methaqualone is not typically abused in India. It is illicitly produced in India and exported for consumption (both oral and smoked in combination with cannabis as 'white pipe') in South Africa, with which India has had not only strong, historical, cultural but also trading links. The drug gained a huge market in South Africa which seemed to have a craving for the strong tranquillizer which was often crushed with marijuana and smoked (Baynham 1995; and Griffith 1991). Initially, manufacturing of this drug was limited mainly to Maharashtra and Gujarat in India. Gauging its illicit demand potential, pharmaceutical establishments in Hyderabad, South Gujarat, Rajasthan and Eastern Uttar Pradesh started producing it as well. In some cases it was observed that these illicit operations had been financed and controlled by non-residents based outside India. Till mid-1990s South Africa, reportedly remained the principal destination for the end product (Baynham 1995).

Many studies take the view that the movement and demand for illicit drugs and substance abuse is a result of its porous borders after the end of the apartheid regime. This led to an increase in availability and use of drugs post

1994 (Cilliers 1994; *Business Day* 1994; Legett 2004). Open borders does seem to be part of the explanation on drugs such as heroin used during present times. However, to assume a connection so simple between borders in the New South Africa and drug (ab)use fails to explain the demand and use of synthetic drugs such as Mandrax among the Indian South Africans during the decades preceding democracy<sup>10</sup>. Drugs have had, as this study re-iterates, a longer history and opportunity to navigate through South Africa's ports, roads and by air, than the onslaught witnessed post 1994. My fieldwork findings indicate that despite apartheid controls Mandrax was one such drug that made its way into South Africa since late 1970s. In many respects, this expanding extent and trend of the illicit consumption of Mandrax in South Africa is seen as being unique in the world. Anecdotal evidence from the law enforcement and treatment communities within the country indicates that South Africa is by far the world's leading consumer of the drug. Some estimates suggest that as much as 80% of worldwide clandestine production of Mandrax may have been destined for the South African market (Venter 1998) alone. In 1998, the South African Association of Retail Pharmacists claimed that South Africa consumed between 70-90 per cent of the world's production of Mandrax (CIIR 1998).

My argument is based, not only upon ethnographic findings but also on the literature that shows that clandestine Mandrax laboratories arose in India, Pakistan, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Swaziland, Mozambique and later also in the South Africa itself and then expanded to the far East, (Peltzer Karl, Shandir Ramlagan & Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya 2010; Mashaba 2006). Additionally, globalization has further facilitated the introduction of potent addictive drugs such as heroin, cocaine and ecstasy in South Africa. Prior to 1994, cocaine and heroin were not readily available in the society, (Legett 2004). South Africa's re-integration<sup>11</sup> into the world-wide community in the

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<sup>10</sup> Drugs such as dagga (marijuana) and heroin are derived from plants. Others drugs such as ecstasy and Mandrax are and man-made, (See, Peltzer Karl, Shandir Ramlagan and Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya 2010).

<sup>11</sup> As South Africa formed new trade links with other countries, and international flights reached more destinations, (Cilliers 1994), it became a larger target for drug syndicates. In August 1994, the then White House national drug control policy director Dr Lee Brown, observed, '*A few months*

1990s made it possible to (mis)use its developed transportation, communications systems, and advanced banking structure for illicit trafficking of many commodities, including drugs (UNODC 2002; 2003; 2006). In President Jacob Zuma's (2014), twenty year report for the nation, it is admitted that with respect to drug trafficking much needs to be invested, especially in terms of intelligence in order to address the problem.

To return to Mandrax, it was originally known as a safe and non-dependent drug. Subsequently once its potential for abuse was discovered, it was formally pulled off the markets, thus making its manufacture illegal in India where it was first produced. But the banning of Mandrax did not signify an end to its illicit journey. It caused crime syndicates to use the opportunity and continue producing it by means of expanding clandestine laboratories. The market was already established before the ban and the South African demand for the drug coupled with state lapses on both sides made smuggling it a profitable business to venture in, after the ban. Even as late as 2002, though Cannabis and heroin based cocktails were gaining first preference, Mandrax still remained the second most commonly-used illicit drug in South Africa (UNODC 2002: Country Profile, South Africa).

With the motive of extracting social estimates on the prevalence of drugs as clandestine spheres of business and use between India and South Africa, I share some vignettes from my field work which was conducted in Durban during January and February 2014. The Snowball Sampling method was used to collect qualitative data on peoples' memories and anecdotal experiences. Out of a total of 48 individuals who shared their ideas, experiences and struggles against substance abuse for this research, thirteen came from a mixed background ranging from coloured, black and white. Thirty five stakeholders were from the Indian South African community. Thirteen belonged to the colored, the black and the white communities. Thirty from the whole sample were above forty. In hindsight, my older interviewees could clearly recall the Mandrax phase but refused to divulge names. Clearly fearful of the incredibly magnificent and dangerous reach of the drug mafia, some evaded even naming the known culprits of that era. While others felt obliged to caution and warn me over the impossibility to fix blame squarely on one set of actors as they said that it is all a part a macro

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*ago South Africa did not appear on the radar screen - but recently that has changed.' Business Day, 29 August 1994.*

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movement of illicit drugs and not really a country specific problem. Hence, a grassroots oriented qualitative research on drugs has many hindrances and can prove tricky. But at the same time, the diversity of independent voices therein can contribute to alternative ways of looking at dominant or one-sided discourses.

It is true that the easy availability, networks and diversity of illicit drugs thriving in South Africa is unprecedented and makes chasing criminals a herculean task. Yet if social analysis is to be done taking into account peoples' narratives, the roots of this process are said to be set in the period of apartheid. The apathetic administrative attitude of the South African government towards the blacks (that referred to native Africans, coloureds, Indians from the late 1960's onwards) and their segregated living made it easier for traffickers to reach out to them for smuggling of illicit drugs into the society and economy. An overwhelming majority of the people from who associated their goals, actively or passively in the anti-drug politics being waged among the Indian community in Durban remarked that the politics of the apartheid regime played an important role in feeding drugs into the Indian areas. As one works on people's accounts and narratives by leaving aside unverifiable information, there appear precise historical memories and anecdotes which bring to light the emergence and expansion of real life underworld nexus between India and South Africa. These shared experiences point to the general comprehension on the issue and reveal a storehouse of peoples' everyday knowledge on how mafia and authorities at both sides were able to penetrate through apartheid control and isolation. Although there can be eloquent debates on whether these were acts of commission or omission, yet the quotidian actors have their own power and reach to not only reflect upon the state but also the society of which they themselves are parts of. According to Rashid Khan (name changed) who worked as a journalist during the 1970 to 2000 for a Durban Indian Newspaper<sup>12</sup>,

When Apartheid was at it heights, the Indians, just like other discriminated races, were still coming to terms with the traumatic spatial segregation<sup>13</sup> imposed on them by being shifted into special

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<sup>12</sup> Interview conducted by author in Durban, February 13, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> From 1960 to 1983, 3.5 million non-white South Africans were removed from their homes, and forced into segregated neighbourhoods, in one of the

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racial zones. But it is also true that other winds of change were blowing across social life from within, owing to changing family structures and codes in Indian community. A first generation of 'double income' families was coming into being throwing challenges to parenting styles and supervision- the youth were ideologically inspired by changes in political consciousness and wanted to be freer. I remember having witnessed a change in social attitudes as a young teenager. So many of us wanted to be –modern- and underwent the increasing craving for Indian things. We wanted to reach out and feel India which we felt was modernizing by whatever little we saw or heard of it. Many of us were smitten by the younger lot of Bollywood screen idols who appeared to be so jazzy with their free lifestyles. We dreamt of having the access to those cultural fantasies and social freedoms that the Indian movies signified for us. My peers and desired to have glamorous girlfriends to go dancing and drinking with<sup>14</sup>.

Similarly Abdul Wahed<sup>15</sup>, from an anti-drugs vigilante group in Durban, while remembering the rapidly changing social times of the two decades in question, chips in,

Many were also getting pulled into Night- clubbing. It was the age of our own 'flower children' - ( as the people engulfed by the impact of powerful youth movements in the decade of late 60s and 70s in America-were referred to in the local Durban slang) as well. It was

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largest mass removals in modern history. See, South Africa\_Forced Removals. AODL. African Studies Centre. Michigan University. <http://www.overcomingapartheid.msu.edu/multimedia.php?id=65-259-6>. Retrieved 01.06.2014.

<sup>14</sup> In the 1960s, often referred to as the 'silent decade,' a new sense of resistance had been brewing. In 1969, black students, led by Steve Biko (among others), formed the South African Student' Organisation (SASO) Stressing black pride, self-reliance, and psychological liberation, the Black Consciousness Movement in the 1970s became an influential force in the townships, including Soweto (Bonner, P. L. 1960).

<sup>15</sup> Interview conducted by the author on January 23, 2014.

like a musical rock and roll and a kind of sexual revolution setting in-whereby demand for drugs either got inbuilt stealthily or quickly carved a niche for itself permissively. Whether it was the result of the changes taking place or whether it was the change in people's attitude that prompted substance abuse or whether it was the successful plans of a drug Mafia to cater to the Mandrax demand in Durban and ensure perpetual supply from the Indian shores or both it is not clear. But many were in that social space and the mood was right.

Aside from this direct ethnographic evidence, there are studies that maintain that ironically the rising scale of police and law enforcement resources that were employed almost exclusively to maintain controls over the Blacks, black on black on crimes and illegal drug use/sale among them were rarely investigated nor prosecuted by the apartheid officials. Although South Africa followed international treaties and instituted statutes that made the use of heroin, cocaine, and cannabis criminal offenses, enforcement of such laws remained irregular. In the chapter 7 of the report, 'The 20 year Review: South Africa 1994-2014', it is acknowledged that the democratic state of the New South Africa inherited an authoritarian and biased police system from before. The additional handicap was that there were no records nor procedural evidences and precedents available for black on black crimes till almost the mid-1990s as attention was laid on fighting crime only in the white areas. (Zuma 2014: Chapter 7). In the 1960s and 1970s, when the widespread abuse of psychotropic substances emerged in South Africa, the synthetic drugs Mandrax emerged as one of the most widely used among the Indian South Africans<sup>16</sup>.

What will always be veiled in official amnesia is the silence of criminal records and crime in black on black contexts owing to the fact that the South African Apartheid state had done precious little in terms of research or policy on illicit drugs and substance abuse (Rocha-Silva 1992). At the end

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<sup>16</sup> This could also be related to its cheaper prices which led it to acquire ethnic preferences among groups such as the Indian South Africans. It is a well-documented fact that even now, although increasing social ethnic integration is evident, the drug consumption markets of South Africa remain ethnically differentiated in general (UNODC, 2002).

of the apartheid era South African research relating to the nature and extent of use of drugs other than alcohol and tobacco among the general adult population in South Africa was virtually non-existent. In South Africa alcohol and drug abuse was signaled by former President Nelson Mandela in his opening address to Parliament in 1994 as a problem among social pathologies that needed to be combated. By February 1999, the South African Drug Advisory Board showed an unacceptable increase in substance abuse and its associated problems. This problem has been identified by the National Drug Master Plan, as a fuel for crime, poverty, reduced productivity, unemployment, dysfunctional family life, political instability the escalation of chronic diseases, such as AIDS and TB, injury and premature death, (Also see: Drug Advisory Board, 1999).

However, alternative sources such as people's accounts and journalistic coverage of the drug hauls and drug use in newspapers being published from Indian areas can offer a wonderful substitute to re-visit the moment of the emergence of the use of synthetic drugs. Out of the many factors that emerged as being significant in the PIO context, it remains difficult to understand the extent to which they could have separately influenced the availability and use of illicit substances among the ISAs. What we gain from the involved actors' narratives and dusty old examples is an insight, rather a close hindsight into the conditions facilitating the arrival of smuggled drugs in Durban- that the illicit drug trade was prominently feeding into as well as taking advantage of the widespread social revolution of sorts which was unfolding among the Durban Indians (Hansen 2013). It strengthens the idea of the interlinked and overlapping world of mainstream, clandestine and the peoples' bilateral between nations.

Given that the two countries depict a flurry of activity in the MBS, the question therefore arises how effective or how urgent are their efforts to solve the mysteries around the undeterred existence of the clandestine bilateral between them? Drug trafficking and illegal drug abuse has been taking place through their clandestine bilateral since long. India and South Africa are lucrative points of trafficking too. Both countries enjoy a strategic position regionally - having active ports of entry and production as well as lack of an efficient enforcement of the rule of law. Added to this both enjoy the unenviable credibility of providing easily corruptible environments for crime to flourish. There are drug cartels and/or networks comfortably operating from and between cities such as Mumbai and Durban.



Ensnared in the grey zones between de-jure and de-facto authority the underworld has developed significant links with each other, proving that these cartels have little to fear. Obviously they not only operate through clandestine networks that pass as well as trespass through the India – South Africa bilateral but they also derive their power and strategy internationally by virtue of their access to unbridled wealth, technocratic advancement in illicit trafficking modes and massive advantages over the power and reach of states or governments, whose *modus operandi* and *givens* may ‘fade away’ (Naim 2003) in comparison to those of the drug cartels. Naim points out that illegal trade in drugs, arms, intellectual property, people and money is booming. In as far as drugs are concerned, approximately 8% of the world trade revolves around their illicit supply chain<sup>17</sup>.

Anxiously, one scours the newspapers and official records/reports to see how much of the illicit bilateral was made to face law or became subject of bilateral justice-one sure shot way to understand this is through news on drug hauls. The pattern of seizures during the late 1990s with information on organized criminal groups involved in its production, suggested that there was a need to review earlier assessments that the illicit production of Methaqualone in India had been eliminated. There were clear indications of a revival of illicit production particularly in the vicinity of Mumbai, where clandestine manufacture of Methaqualone was directly related to the closure of a number of small-scale pharmaceutical units. Some former employees of these units who possessed the necessary expertise reportedly started lending their technical skills to illicit Methaqualone manufacturers. In some cases it was found that these illicit operations were financed and controlled by non-residents based outside India, particularly the United Arab Emirates, which brings into picture some highly successful Mumbai dons who enjoyed close links with Dubai. The drug was banned, incidentally, when the era of Mumbai smugglers was at its height. It was a

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<sup>17</sup> Like the war on terrorism, the fight to control these illicit markets pits governments against agile, stateless and resourceful networks empowered by globalization. Governments will continue to lose these wars until they adopt newer strategies to deal with this larger, unprecedented struggle that shapes the world as much as confrontations between nation-states once did (Naim, Moisés 2003; and Mashaba 2006).

matter of time when trafficking it was immediately spotted as highly lucrative (Zaidi 2012).

The profitability of the venture captured the imagination of the Mumbai Mafia giving a further boost to its illicit production and trafficking. Between the year 2000-2005, out of seizures made in all parts of the country most were concentrated in Mumbai where the trend indicated that Mandrax trafficking was going strong. In 2002 (11,130 kg) and 2001 (1,984 kg) seizures of Methaqualone had increased sharply over the quantity seized in 2000 (1,095 kg). But in comparison to the previous two years, seizures of Methaqualone declined considerably during 2003 to 593 kg. While drug hauls, at least, signify that something is being done formally, the fact remains that many of these drug hauls at ports and airports are just the tip of the iceberg at best and a cover up at worst. There is a general notion that these camouflage tip-offs cleverly originate from the traffickers themselves (Mashaba 2006).

In most occasions the informants are never identified. The quantities seized, while they may be significant, pale in comparison to the drugs that end up in the market. Therefore, drug traffickers may be using diversion tactics to get law enforcement agencies to focus on lesser consignments while they are busy moving the heavy loads around. As a matter of fact, it is quite difficult to detect drugs moving through ports and harbours where capacity is seriously lacking. This is a universal phenomenon. The goods traffic is just too large to allow law enforcement agents to detect all suspect consignments. India is one of the few countries of the world where drugs and precursors are manufactured, sold in a large domestic market and also, smuggled in and out of the country through various routes and channels, (UNODC, 2005/2010: 20-66).

These patterns provide considerable business opportunities for the underworld. Most gangs have a specialized department dealing with drug manufacture and trafficking expansion. Drug trafficking and organized crime have not expanded in India but also increasingly grown in South Africa since the mid-1990s. Drawing on factors like the country's porous borders, increase in immigrants and international trade links, the underworld created innovative strategies for financing illicit substances across borders. An example was the exchange of hijacked cars across South Africa's land borders in return for illicit drugs. Drug trafficking was an extremely profitable enterprise for the over 200 organized crime syndicates in South Africa. There were links

between the drug trafficking activities of organized crime groups and other criminal acts, ranging from car hijackings and robberies to the smuggling of firearms, stolen cars, endangered species and precious metals, the report said, (Health Systems Trust: 2015).

For India too, the challenge has been steadily rising (for details, see, UNODC, 2005/2010: pp-40-66) and official steps to manage this onslaught of what can be termed as, narco-globalization, have been steadily updated too. Besides its NDPS (Regulation of Controlled Substances) Act 1985 and the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1988, in India, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is responsible for implementing the drug demand reduction programme in the country, mainly through support of certified NGOs. Prior to these acts and preventive detention laws, India did not have an exclusive apex structure/authority to check illicit drug abuse and trafficking problems directly. In case of illegal movement of Mandrax per se, these acts seemingly proved as effective deterrents.

However, for any significant comparative insights and answers to emerge, one cannot sum up the situation from the Indian side without considering the other side of the story. Although gradually, Mandrax trafficking registered a decrease between the two countries, it was not entirely a good news. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, heroin was on its way to becoming the drug of choice in South Africa, slowly but steadily (see, Mungai 2015). Thus, the first generation 'Mandrax bilateral' paved the way for second generation 'Heroin bilateral' between India and South Africa. The main destination for the illicit drug from the Indian shores is not South Africa or (South Africa alone) anymore, nonetheless, consignments travel to many western countries as well as west Africa from there. Heroin is brought in from Asia's notorious Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle regions. A proportion of the Heroin traditionally distributed abroad through the cities of Karachi, Peshawar and Quetta began to be shipped through Mumbai and New Delhi as long back as mid-1980s.

Traffickers still smuggle southwest Asian heroin into India along the Indo-Pakistan border and transport it over land to the Indian cities. Similarly southeast Asian heroin is brought into Mumbai and Kolkata by sea and overland routes. Mumbai, Calcutta and New Delhi have steadily emerged as a conduit for heroin (and other illegal drugs, like cocaine) because they are well placed geographically. Being located on the sea trading route to

destinations such as South America, Asia, Australia, Europe and the Middle East (President's Commission on Organized Crime Report: 1986), the cities remain coveted targets for the mafia networks. Besides, this also explains increasing illicit trafficking links between India and South Africa. Additionally top infrastructural development, the high traffic in people and goods serve to make South Africa a perfect conduit for illegal smuggling activities. From South west to southeast Asia to West Africa (Mashaba 2006; Mungai 2015), and Europe, drug traffickers know how to work out ways to taken advantage of the vulnerabilities as well as feasibilities. Both India and South Africa have thus been emerging as crucially favoured destinations for drug trafficking owing to their strategic locations and conducive environments.

Thus the clandestine bilateral sphere of India and South Africa is not static or limited. From the times of apartheid isolation to diplomacy amidst democracy it has traversed alongside the two nations' combined tryst with neo-liberalization and globalization. The CBS knows how to recreate and re-invent itself. The discussion in this section further shows how it calculates it's potential and grows on. If it emanates from beyond mainstream processes, it also functions to cater to destinations apart from either country, while simultaneously serving as a mutual base from within the two.

#### **Part IV The People's Bilateral Sphere (PBS): Of Public Memory, Analysis and Collective Action**

The preceding analysis leads us to conclude that clandestine bilateral is undoubtedly a powerful self-selling, self-perpetuating and self-expanding creature. What is equally interesting is that the peoples' bilateral is not far behind. It may not figure in mainstream bilateral studies or in inter-governmental mutual concerns. Yet if the anti-drug abuse and anti-drug trafficking movements on ground are a relevant indication, ironically it is from the PBS that multifarious community efforts are arising bottoms up to engage in damage control locally. Given the fact that the clandestine bilateral sphere between India and South Africa came into being during the apartheid sanctions and the absence of a mainstream political relation between the Indian and the South African state, a search for answers becomes a compelling intrigue. Even though it seems relatively simple to imagine the,

‘why or how’ of the problem, assuming as many of us would do or hear, ‘obviously there must have been a demand that the clandestine bilateral was catering to’, yet this ‘demand’ needs to be embedded in the social context. Complex social changes amid which the Indian South Africans were placed, for instance, hold many answers for the period and processes in question. In this section therefore I analyze the circular role that the clandestine bilateral seemed to have performed between India and South Africa. It shows how the CBS got embroiled in the twin function of not only catering to but also creating the demand for Mandrax among the Durban Indians. Arvindum Moodley<sup>18</sup>, a restaurant owner from Durban with close links to Mumbai and South India,

I worked in the Indian shipping industry during the late 1980s. My wife and I were dating each other then. She would travel from South Africa and I would travel from India all the way to be with each other. During those days one often heard of increasing Mandrax trafficking between India and South Africa. Besides other networks and connections, the Mumbai underworld also seemed to have discovered, exploited and enjoyed an easy reach among the Indian-South Africans, especially those who travelled from Durban to Mumbai and other parts of India. Some (men, women alike) got actually recruited and used as drug mules to keep up the trafficking even if it were for personal or small scale levels. For bigger purposes, Mandrax entered South Africa in all imaginable and unimaginable ways: from being ‘hidden inside hollow musical instruments such as Tablas to being securely tucked inside the entire five meter length of Sari falls. After 1994, we got married and I decided to shift base to Durban. At that point my information network and updates from the Indian side came to an end!

Imparting a closer look at the changes and processes that influenced the appearance of a people’s bilateral space to challenge as well as tackle the menace of drug abuse and trafficking is therefore a relevant need. It helps to know the motives and inspiration in which micro social movements such as community based self-help politics conducted by local organizations draw

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<sup>18</sup> Interview, February 10, 2014. Florida Street, Durban.

qualitative interchange of knowledge and know-how in the people's bilateral. We interacted and conducted participant observation with an organization called the Anti-Drug Forum (ADF). Over the drug abuse scenario and the emerging role of ADF among 'users' among Durban Indians, some recent studies give helpful details about the situation in Durban now and embed the predicament in its local contextual realities. Understanding the current context of addiction at a personal level, Pattundeen (2008: 61-71) explains how the current drug addiction centers around bulked up forms of Heroin.

In local slang the bulked up Heroin variations are called 'Sugars'. Singh, having undertaken case studies with Chatsworth families affected by substance abuse explained that how despite the break down in the system of co-habitation of extended families (due to various social and political reasons including spatial segregation during apartheid), the basic Indian ethic of elders and relatives coming forward to help and positively intervene in time of trauma continues to function. Atom families facing situations of drug abuse do not have to go through it alone (for details see, Singh 2013: 208). During our own field work with the ADF and interactions with rehabilitation patients/ walk-in cases of drug users and their families, it became clear that Indian families value and derive solace from a family oriented, personalized care provided by community-based approaches. The ADF has been able to recognize the need for such one to one, individualized approaches for catering to those who seek help from it. It remains flexible to undertake unconventional methods of rehabilitation paying the necessary heed to local social preferences, when the need be. The organization actively dialogues with the local and national media and political actors.

ADF's team aims to meaningfully ameliorate the growing scourge alongside its vision of trying out innovative rehabilitation ideas and services. This initiative against substance abuse which has vociferously emanated from the thresholds of the Indian South Africans proves that the peoples' bilateral is not a passive recipient of globalization and international networks. Inspired by the socio-politically competitive visions of the local community, the ADF<sup>19</sup> came into being in 2005. It is a multi-tasking effort and space to cater

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<sup>19</sup> For a review of ADF work, challenges and activism, refer to, 'Global Perspectives. Chatsworth, A Chance for Change', at BBC.com, see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00qdrpz> first Broadcast on 05.05.2012; Accessed on April 14, 2014.

to those whose needs are not entirely fulfilled by governmental and non-governmental organizations. The ADF devotes time to victims of drug abuse and their families, conducts awareness drives and workshops with schools in Durban, arranges de-addiction programmes and Art of Living classes at Chatsworth Youth Centre. Its specific birth context was the impulse to counter the growing menace of ‘sugars’, among the South African Youth. Pillay<sup>20</sup>, who defines his ongoing community work on behalf of the ADF, as a ‘self-help based, micro social action’, remarks that over the years the ADF has evolved as an organization to understand and cater to the needs of people from all religions and communities.

Arising from Indian South African background it has incorporated the needs to gain the trust among Indians and people of other communities living in Chatsworth and its vicinities. This has been an extremely important step given that the social profile of Chatsworth (where ADF is based) is steadily changing post-Apartheid (BBC Broadcast, May, 5, 2012) and it is no longer an exclusive Indian township (Luthra Sinha 2015)<sup>21</sup>. There are others who may require the same attention and helping hand besides Indians, just as much as they can chip in and come forward to collaborate with and give ADF the support it needs locally, from people of diverse backgrounds.

Indian South Africans, like many other communities in the transitioning South Africa became a vulnerable ground for social degeneration which included rising cases of domestic abuse, alcoholism, and drugs and disillusioned, escapist behavior. Such problems have not completely ended with the end of Apartheid. Newer challenges have arisen such as the new phase of proliferating substance abuse among the Indians in Durban, (Luthra Sinha 2014). ADF endeavours to help the communities in Chatsworth and areas around it especially with respect to the current as well as the, ‘hand-me-down’ drug problems inherited from the past. ADF goals and strategies are different from other self-help based social organizations who engage in similar community action on the problem of drugs. The

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<sup>20</sup> Interview conducted by the author: February, 7, 2013.

<sup>21</sup>. Of these, Mandrax (ab)use was definitely one, which the communities struggled dominantly with just when the epidemic of ‘Sugars’ was all set to unfold in the opening years of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Durban. (Also see, Luthra Sinha and Chetty, 2014, pp. 382-, 383 ).

Refocus and Upliftment Foundation (RA-UF)<sup>22</sup> also works among the ISAs and is favoured by the Muslim families of Indian-Asian origin. RA-UF caters exclusively to de-addiction and re-habilitation needs among the affected youth. We found that the RA-UF center had affected youth from all kinds of background and communities including coloured, black, white and Indians<sup>23</sup>.

There are other action groups such as the Cape Town initiated organization, 'People against Gangsterism and Drugs' (Pagad) that arose from an Indian- Asian Muslim background. Its actions have been likened to vigilantes as it shot into prominence owing to its policy of confronting the drug lords directly. Pagad began with the best of intentions, as a Cape Town citizens' bid to battle against crime. Elements within Muslim community predominantly in the Western Cape launched Pagad out of frustration at the ineffectiveness of the police in dealing with the problems of crime, violence and drug abuse in many townships (Peltzer, Shandir, Johnson and Phaswana-Mafuya 2014). The organization which also has a chapter in Durban now finds itself accused of criminal activity. Vigilantism began peacefully in Cape Town, as residents patrolled neighborhoods to discourage drug dealers, many of whom appeared to enjoy impunity from a corrupt and under-funded police (BBC World Africa 2000)<sup>24</sup>.

Rafiq and Suleiman, my informants from the Pagad chapter in Durban explained that their organization has a widespread community base

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<sup>22</sup> See, <http://www.iqraatrust.org/index.php/projects/representative-selection-of-projects-iqraa-trust-projects/healthcare/222-refocus-and-upliftment-foundation-rauf-durban>. Accessed June 5, 2014.

<sup>23</sup> This information is based on my interactions with youth undergoing rehabilitation during a visit to the main centre of RA-UF. Observations on RA-UF are derived from my participation in group discussions and workshops in Durban coordinated by the organization's staff, volunteers and families interested in the de-addiction awareness drives. I found that though the youth came from multiple backgrounds and communities, they were all boys. RA-UF chief coordinator, Ibrahim Dawood showed me a new centre which was still under construction and was being built specially keeping the needs of women rehab patients in mind, (January 21-24, 2014).

<sup>24</sup> Pagad: Vigilantes or terrorists? Wednesday, 13 September, 2000, BBC World Africa. UK. Online: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/923701.stm>. Accessed 9.6.2014



too. Many Muslim parents in Durban call the activists at home so that their errant children can be given information and lectures on de-addiction. At the time of its origin in Cape Town, it was a culmination of similar social fears and apprehensions. People as parents, leaders and youth were aware of the reach of drug dealers. Drug dealers usually owed allegiance to one or a number of criminal gangs, who would also control activities such as gun running and prostitution in many of the townships surrounding Cape Town. A close sense of community and a shared moral stance, many times stemming from religious convictions against drugs, meant that the Pagad neighborhood watch groups were strongest in predominantly Muslim areas. Pagad is still strongly associated with Islamic fundamentalism. Our informants, however, denied the label and projected a secular attitude. Maintaining that Pagad has social validity for those who call upon it, they elucidated how the organization is also involved in community upliftment efforts, social dialogue, besides charity such as free provision of food, clothes and medicines among victims of substance abuse<sup>25</sup>.

Hence we see that many kinds of community efforts have arisen to cement the efficiency –void between states, governments on the one hand and people on the other. The bureaucratic states that are running behind in techniques or in the willingness to perform, are running behind not only in comparison to the ever efficient and ever-growing powerful body of drug traffickers but also lag behind in social action, the kind that becomes visible through various organizations. Though all kinds of people's action is not accepted as correct or endorsed wholeheartedly by the society, yet the deafening silence of governments is at least broken by peoples' movements such as the ADF and / or other groups when they show their grit to stay awake in a challenging arena.

On the one hand smuggling is widely tolerated, law enforcement is fitful and inefficient, and politicians are easily bribed or are even involved in the drug trade themselves. On the other hand many officials between India and South Africa region are deeply concerned by the effects of the drug trade, but are often confronted by people and networks more powerful than they – not to undermine how other factors like the regional emergence of a sophisticated financial infrastructure in countries such as Ghana and Nigeria

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<sup>25</sup> Author's interaction and interviews with the PAGAD members in Durban during the period of January 20, 2014 to February 10, 2014.

further enhances the involvement of newer global demand chains. It draws home the point made by Bayart one and a half decade ago, namely, that expertise in smuggling, the weakness of law enforcement agencies, and the official tolerance of, or even participation in, certain types of crime, constitute a form of social and political capital that accumulates over time (Ellis 2009; Bayart, Ellis & Hibou 1999).

Yet at the same time, what is refreshing, but perhaps low scale and often not visible is the people's bilateral space where a struggle to break the codes of this hegemony of networks is tirelessly being waged by the sheer grit of local leaders and collective community effort. Pillay incorporates innovative techniques from India such as the course on, 'Art of Living' as part of the rehabilitation programmes at his workshops. Sam Pillay (Interview, January 15, 2013) from the ADF comments,

The ADF firmly believes that it is essential to deal with the psychological aspects of addiction since this makes up to 95% of the rehabilitation process. Most addictions prey on the mind of the individual and thus it is essential to redirect the mind-set of the person in rehabilitation. This is why the Art of Living Foundation 'Upliftment Program' was adopted as a mandatory and crucial aspect of the rehabilitation process. We have felt that the community responds positively to innovative mind training strategies to keep the victims or even perpetrators of substance abuse sociopathy off it. For our purposes, Art of Living is one such contemporarily relevant technique for inner peace and healing. Besides that it is accepted by youth and other age groups all over the world. What's more- it has an Indian touch too.

This above statement points to the fact that despite the impasse in the political relations between India and South Africa, it was not only the clandestine bilateral that became powerful but also over the years the cultural and symbolic inter-connections between Indian South Africans and their country of origin continuously lead to the evolution of a creative people's bilateral.

In fact, prevalence of diverse community movements among the Indian South Africans is not a new phenomenon. They have been note worthily catering to socio-political needs of the community in local and

national contexts. Though Indian South Africans have always been acutely aware of their Indian roots and derive inspiration from their culture and customs, they have been first and foremost been dedicated to performing their share in the political and social struggles for bringing on and building up of a new South Africa. The Indian South Africans continue to see themselves as proudly South African, while at the same time projecting their symbolic ties with their remote homeland, in a specific South Africanised way, (Luthra Sinha 2014). They continue to keep their efforts on as is clear from the anti-substance abuse politics that clearly enriches the PBS between India and South Africa with its dynamic and diverse approaches to the drug scourge. The use of Art of Living by the ADF is one such innovatively connective example wherein the people of India and South Africa skillfully utilize their human and cultural resources to solve substance abuse dilemmas.

During the course of fieldwork, I attempted to delineate the world of people's memory, imagination and social action arising from the various kinds of bilateral spaces between India and South Africa. Besides the insight into anti-substance abuse social and community based movements enfolding in Durban among the Indian Diaspora, this focus also throw a critical look at how do India and South Africa prioritize their bilateral affairs ? Can a juxtaposition of the dominant discourse with the people's counter-discourse help in searching for that qualitative pause, for that ameliorative public voice that lies submerged in the seemingly homogenous bilateral global space and time between India and South Africa? How does one give meaning to their shared, entangled and contextual memories amid evolving debates and joint insights for a broader perspective worrisome trends such as drug trafficking and the ensuing socio-economic political scourge in their common bilateral? Looking at the emerging competitive as much as collaborative economic and political aspirations of India and South Africa, one only needs to gently remind that their bilateral needs and duties do extend beyond considerations of market and supermarket diplomacy. Investment in social welfare, for example cannot stay at the bottom rack of mainstream globalization. Somewhere a beginning has to be made to rise to the occasion mutually. To this end the people's bilateral, by investing in socially profitable ventures, shows one positive way to cement the India-South Africa ties further.

## **Part V Concluding Interpretations and Suggestions**

This paper was inspired by the world of people's discourses', day to day memory and analysis that opened up for me during the field work and participant observation among actors from the ADF. Later, in search of more grounded knowledge on the issue, I expanded my fieldwork to cover opinions and actions of other stakeholders such as victims, vigilantes and state actors (such as Police), NGOs and CBOs. Subsequently, the one question that plagued my reflections was, 'Is the India-South Africa bilateral sphere only that which constitutes formal treaties and signed declarations between two countries? If yes, then how do we explain those who constitute the bilateral space that becomes alive during activities such as illicit drug trafficking between the two countries? Clearly there is a parallel bilateral sphere in operation between the two countries (specifically w.r.t illicit drug trafficking) which I have then referred as the Clandestine Bilateral Sphere (CBS). What invites attention is that this CBS has been in place at a time when the two nations had embittered relations in the mainstream bilateral and India's anti-Apartheid policies and sanctions were at their height. The CBS constantly gained momentum even during the following two decades. Subsequently, by the end of 1970s, the narco-trafficking between the two countries became all set to rise even further. It is safe to deduce that proceedings and announcements in the formal bilateral sphere or the MBS sometime do not suffice to understand activities and possibilities carried out in the parallel bilateral that extends between two countries.

Hence it is important to understand, analyze, and contextualize the illicit trafficking of drugs such as Mandrax, with new and varied insights. One way of looking at the Mandrax phase between India and South Africa is that it provided an initiative and an impetus to the evolution of a CBS between India and South Africa. Since this study envisaged a qualitative focus on peoples' action, imagination and practices vis-à-vis the origin of the use of synthetic drugs among the Indian South Africans, a need arose to incorporate the concern of a third layer of reality that surrounds these bilateral spheres. This reality pertains to the informal bilateral space which I term as the People's Bilateral Sphere (PBS). The PBS occupies the informal operating space between the two countries and many times bears the brunt of or internalizes the gaps between the formal and the clandestine bilateral by leading the thinking and damage control processes at the tail end of the

problem- where forgotten characters such as street drug runners and impoverished drug mules as well as vulnerable youth caught up variously in cycles of substance abuse between India and South Africa abound.

The peoples' bilateral, that lies ensconced between two kinds of spaces- the mainstream and the clandestine, is a space full of tough but enriching and eye-opening accounts, memories and lived experiences of the common stakeholders. Hence it is difficult to separate one from the other but certainly it can be said that for the sake of epistemological clarity, it helps to speak of the separate layers involved in the bargain i.e. the state with all its treaties and declarations cum agencies and bureaus; the powerful non-state drug networks and cartels; and the common stakeholders bearing the brunt of the illicit trafficking, it is the latter's quandary that is the most vulnerable. From the point of view of a bottom's up concern, many practical ideas can be derived from hearing the involved actors on ground.

By utilizing the accumulated knowledge and experience of the many social activists and people's organizations involved in curbing the menace, one hopes to utilize visions emanating from the tail end of the issue- which also happens to be the demand end of the illicit cycle. Usually, the dominating global discourses on comprehending illicit drug production, use and trafficking are driven substantially, if not exclusively, by economic criterion. Understanding the scale of the finances involved can be of great use to those working in the related fields<sup>26</sup>. Though some studies (see UNDOC: 2005, World Drug Report) take one step further step towards providing policy relevant answers to such questions, my paper proposes a worm's eye view take of the situation to make in order to build on a compassionate globalization.

The CBS between India and South Africa continues to exist in stubborn juxtaposition to their new millennium mainstream diplomacy and globalized neo-liberal interactions. How much the two bilateral spheres support, enhance, oppose, intermesh or promote each other is beyond the purview of this paper. But what is interesting to note is that although they

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<sup>26</sup> Who earns the most in the global illicit drug business? How does the size of this market compare with legitimate enterprises? Which substances and markets are the most profitable? How are the monetary incentives changing over time? Which sectors of the market are most vulnerable to economic sanctions?

exist in parallel worlds, both forces are perpetually engaged in negotiating common socio-economic and political zones of control, networking and operation. The CBS does not exist in a vacuum. It makes use of networks and facilities which are under the close scrutiny of the state in many instances. The MBS in India and South Africa, therefore has much to answer and account for especially to the people who continue to suffer for policy lapses on prevention of illicit drug trafficking and substance abuse.

Simply by maintaining that illicit drug zones and networks between the two countries are dangerously powerful, lethally extravagant, brutally organized and challengingly global does not take away the onus from the Indian and South African State to perform: Admitting nonchalantly that the MBS lags behind and falls shamefully short of officers, resources, know-how and attitude, is a brutal political excuse, a blatant deception of the trust their common law abiding citizen's place upon them; if not a criminal neglect of common public welfare. For the many problems that are spawned off due to this lapse are lived in excruciating detail by the stakeholders: those who witness deteriorating socio-economic, criminal situations alongside physical-psychological aspects of substance abuse.

It is, hence, not only the economic, supermarket diplomacy that has gone bilateral, multilateral and global but it also the illicit drug trafficking that has been steadily tracing its path between and beyond the two countries. Economically, drug trafficking leads to an inter-mingling of the legitimate with the illicit capital (ECOSOC Report 1996), businesses and networks, compounding the possibility of delineating and exposing such crimes<sup>27</sup>. At the same time, it is essential to recognize the deep social roots of the international drug problem and the need for cooperation on a much broader

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<sup>27</sup> The link between crime and drugs is increasingly affecting societies. Trafficking begets other criminal activity, such as violence between groups competing for market share at the wholesale and retail levels. At the same time, the sums involved give criminals substantial resources with which to organise themselves efficiently, with little or no regard for the fiscal regulatory and legal constraints on normal businesses. Their capital resources are increasingly being used to finance diversification into legitimate business activity. Such intermingling of illicit and legitimate activities poses a serious threat to tackling the drugs problem. For details see, Report to the ECOSOC, 1996: p. 5.

basis than simple enforcement. The drug trade is dependent on demand and only by developing preventative strategies that strike at the underlying factors that lead people to use drugs in the first place can we curb drug abuse and trafficking (Leduc, Diane & James Lee 1996). These factors, or root causes, such as sexual abuse, broken homes, illiteracy, physical abuse, and lack of parental guidance are more social in nature than they are problems of crime. It is therefore a generally proposed notion considering the status quo that nations must take an integrated approach to fighting the international drug problem. This would involve law enforcement, education, treatment and economic development (Brown 1994) efforts from the mainstream bilaterals.

Hence an intensified cooperation between the two states making their mutually signed policy documents more meaningful would be a helpful way forward. India with its vast credibility as well as expertise in the IT sector can chip in effectively in this war on drugs. Further, knowledge derived from the lived experiences of ordinary actors affected by sociopathy around drug addiction provides a platform to understand the ways in which runners and traffickers empower themselves. It is with this ethnographic knowledge that social movements rising among the Indian Diaspora aspire to reduce the impact of traffickers. Needless to say, if such a role is difficult to perform for states and governments with all their economic, technical and administrative resources, it is more challenging and dangerous to enact by the common stakeholders: Yet the people's sphere and the people's bilateral has not shied away. The Globalizing states need to discover and pay attention to these alternative voices.

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