

Drugs Law in Bangladesh

Drugs laws in Bangladesh are primarily governed by the Narcotics Control Act 2018, which repealed the Narcotics Control Act 1990, aiming to regulate the production, possession, sale, trafficking, and use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The Act aligns with international conventions like the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and the 1988 UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs. Administered by the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) under the Ministry of Home Affairs, it categorizes drugs into schedules (e.g., cannabis, heroin, cocaine) and imposes strict penalties to curb drug-related offenses, reflecting Bangladesh's zero-tolerance policy. Additional provisions from the Penal Code 1860 and the Code of Criminal Procedure 1898 apply to related crimes like abetment or conspiracy. Below is an overview of key drugs laws and their punishments for violations, presented in a clear, copyable format. For official texts, refer to bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd or dnc.gov.bd.

Key Drugs Laws and Punishments:

- **Possession of Narcotics (Section 36, Narcotics Control Act 2018):** Possessing small quantities (e.g., cannabis up to 2 kg, heroin up to 25g) for personal use carries 2-7 years' rigorous imprisonment, a fine up to 50,000 taka, or both. Larger quantities (e.g., cannabis over 2 kg, heroin over 25g) are presumed for trafficking, carrying life imprisonment or death, with a fine up to 1 lakh taka.
- **Trafficking or Sale of Narcotics (Section 36):** Selling, distributing, or transporting narcotics (e.g., cannabis over 2 kg, heroin over 25g, cocaine over 25g) is punishable by life imprisonment or death, with a fine up to 1 lakh taka. Smaller quantities (e.g., cannabis up to 2 kg) carry 2-7 years' imprisonment and a fine up to 50,000 taka.
- **Production or Manufacture of Narcotics (Section 36):** Illegally producing or manufacturing narcotics like opium, heroin, or methamphetamine carries life imprisonment or death, with a fine up to 1 lakh taka. Lesser involvement (e.g., small-scale production) may result in 2-7 years' imprisonment and a fine.
- **Import or Export of Narcotics (Section 36):** Importing or exporting narcotics without a permit is punishable by life imprisonment or death, with a fine up to 1 lakh taka. Smaller quantities carry 2-7 years' imprisonment and a fine up to 50,000 taka.
- **Possession of Equipment for Drug Production (Section 36):** Possessing tools or materials for manufacturing narcotics carries up to 7 years' imprisonment, a fine up to 50,000 taka, or both.
- **Consumption of Narcotics (Section 36):** Consuming or injecting illegal drugs (e.g., heroin, yaba) without medical prescription carries 6 months to 2 years' imprisonment, a fine up to 10,000 taka, or both. Rehabilitation may be ordered instead of imprisonment for first-time offenders.
- **Abetment or Conspiracy (Section 37, read with Penal Code 1860, Section 109):** Assisting, encouraging, or conspiring in drug-related offenses carries the same punishment as the principal offense, e.g., life imprisonment or death for trafficking-related abetment, with fines up to 1 lakh taka.

- **Cultivation of Narcotic Plants (Section 36):** Illegally cultivating cannabis, poppy, or coca plants carries 2-7 years' imprisonment, a fine up to 50,000 taka, or both; large-scale cultivation may lead to life imprisonment or death.
- **Smuggling Narcotics (Section 36):** Smuggling drugs across borders is punishable by life imprisonment or death, with a fine up to 1 lakh taka.
- **Possession of Psychotropic Substances (Section 36):** Possessing substances like yaba (methamphetamine) or LSD without authorization carries 2-7 years' imprisonment for small quantities (up to 25g), or life imprisonment/death for larger quantities, with fines up to 1 lakh taka.
- **Illegal Sale of Medicinal Drugs (Section 36):** Selling controlled medicinal drugs (e.g., codeine, pethidine) without a license carries up to 5 years' imprisonment, a fine up to 50,000 taka, or both.
- **Driving Under Influence of Drugs (Section 66, Road Transport Act 2018):** Operating a vehicle while under the influence of narcotics carries up to 3 months' imprisonment, a fine up to 10,000 taka, or both.
- **Money Laundering from Drug Proceeds (Money Laundering Prevention Act 2012):** Using drug-related proceeds for financial transactions carries 4-20 years' imprisonment, a fine twice the proceeds' value, or both, with property confiscation.
- **Failure to Report Drug Offenses (Section 38):** Not reporting known drug-related activities carries up to 2 years' imprisonment, a fine up to 10,000 taka, or both.

Implementation and Additional Notes:

The Narcotics Control Act 2018 classifies offenses based on drug type and quantity, with Schedules I-IV listing controlled substances (e.g., cannabis, heroin, yaba). Most offenses are non-bailable, especially trafficking or large-scale possession, leading to prolonged detention under the Code of Criminal Procedure 1898. The death penalty is reserved for severe cases like trafficking over 25g of heroin or cocaine, though courts rarely impose it, preferring life imprisonment. The DNC and Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) conduct raids, but extrajudicial killings during anti-drug operations (e.g., 466 deaths in 2018-2020) have drawn criticism from human rights groups. Rehabilitation programs exist under Section 41, but access is limited. The Act's strict penalties aim to deter drug abuse, with Bangladesh reporting 7 million drug users in 2020, primarily yaba and cannabis. Corruption and weak border control exacerbate smuggling, particularly of yaba from Myanmar. For updates, consult bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd or dnc.gov.bd.