

Official: US, NATO Now in Control of Narcotic Trade in Afghanistan

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TEHRAN: A senior Iranian judiciary official blasted the West's performance in fighting drugs in Afghanistan, and stressed that the western states, particularly the US, are now in control of the drug trade in the war-torn country.

"Today, Afghans have no special influence in the issue of narcotics but the NATO and western states control drug production and dealings and are busy in this fields," First Deputy Head of the Judiciary Ebrahim Raeesi said at a conference of the anti-drug police chiefs here in Tehran on Tuesday.

"Today, the drug movements and networks are controlled by the Americans and the hegemonic system and Afghans are acting as their agents," Raeesi noted.

He blamed the western countries for Afghanistan's deteriorating drug problems, and added, "They can prevent drug plantation and production through their capabilities in the short run but we are witnessing no action by these countries and drug production has rather found a new form due to their presence."

The official blasted the western countries for the aggravating drug problem in Afghanistan, and described the huge increase in the production of narcotics in the war-torn country as "a crime against humanity".

Earlier, an Afghan lawmaker had disclosed that the foreign forces deployed in Afghanistan are involved in the production and trafficking of illicit drugs in the country, adding that the British troops have even trained a number of experts for opium cultivation.

"As long as foreign forces are present in Afghanistan, the cultivation, production and trafficking of drugs will continue in the country," Nasimeh Niazi told FNA in April.

Heroin-production labs in Helmand, which did not exist before the US-led war in Afghanistan, are now plentiful and work overtly, she added.

Eastern Iran borders Afghanistan, which is the world's number one opium and drug producer. Iran's geographical position has made the country a favorite transit corridor for drug traffickers who intend to smuggle their cargoes from Afghanistan to drug dealers in Europe.

Iran spends billions of dollars and has lost thousands of its police troops in the war against traffickers. Owing to its rigid efforts, Iran makes 85 percent of the world's total opium seizures and has turned into the leading country in drug campaign.

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