

Drug Related Information Monthly Report - March 2019 Fact Sheet



Research Division
National Dangerous Drugs Control Board

Introduction

Currently, drug prevalence, drug related offences and drug related offenders who were arrested by Sri Lankan law enforcement agencies are increasing. Studying about reported drug related arrests and treatment data is very helpful to identify the current trends and patterns on drug abuse. Therefore, the research division has introduced the Drug Abuse Monitoring System (DAMS). DAMS is a computerized information system, which collects information on persons arrested for drug related offences and persons seeking treatment for drug use. This report is prepared by using recorded data of DAMS in February in 2019 and March in 2019 and it can be used to get basic information on persons arrested for drug offences.

Objectives

The objectives are to document current trends and patterns on drug related arrests and treatment for policy making and to disseminate knowledge on current trends to the NDDCB staff and other related agencies for drug control, planning of prevention, treatment and outreach programmes.

Results and Findings

According to the recorded figures, 5299 persons were arrested for drug related offences during February in 2019 and March in 2019. Among these arrestees, 2477 persons were arrested in February and 2822 persons were arrested in March. It was 14% increase in March with compare to February in 2019.

District

By considering the arrested data in March, the highest number of persons, 905, was reported from Colombo district. Gampaha, Puttalam, Anuradhapura and Kurunegala districts were recorded as the next highest number of drug related arrestees respectively. 11 districts were highlighted with decreased number of arrested persons in March with compared to February and highest decreasing percentage, 67%, was reported from Batticaloa district. 14 districts showed an increase in March with compared to February in 2019 and highest increasing percentage was indicated in Mullativu district. However, considerable numbers of arrests were reported in every district during the considered period and it was indicated the progress of supply and demand of drugs in Sri Lanka.

Gender

The majority, 98%, of the arrested persons in March was males and rest was females. By comparing the data in February and March, the majority of them were male and it has increased by 2% in March.

Age

59% of arrested persons in March belonged to 20-34 age category. However there was an arrestee who was less than 15 years old. There were significant numbers of arrested persons in all other age categories. By comparing age categories of arrested persons in February with March, it can be clearly identified that there were only small variations within the proportions of each categories.

Marital Status

52.62% of the arrested persons in March were married and 46.81% were unmarried. Rest of the arrested persons in March was divorced, separated and widowed. By considering the arrested persons in February, 49.66% of them were unmarried and 50.10% were married while rest of them were divorced and widowed. Therefore it can be concluded that the percentage of unmarried arrested persons in March was less than the percentage of married persons and it was same in February.

Education

Although 3.4% of arrested persons in March never been to school, there were 39.1% of the arrested persons who had been obtained Ordinary Level education qualification. Also, 7% of the arrested persons in March had completed advanced level and there were some graduates. By considering the arrested persons in February, it can be clearly identified that there were significant numbers of persons for each educational category except category of professional qualification.

Ethnicity and Religion

75.6% of the arrested persons in March were Sinhalese, 11.1% were Tamils, 10.9% were Moors and rest of the persons belonged to Malay, Burgher and other ethnicity categories. By comparing the ethnicities of arrested persons in February and March, the majorities of the arrested persons in each of these two months were Sinhalese but considerable number of arrested persons from other ethnicities such as Tamils and Moors were also recorded. These data showed that the percentage of Tamils was less than the percentage of Moors in February and it was vice versa in March.

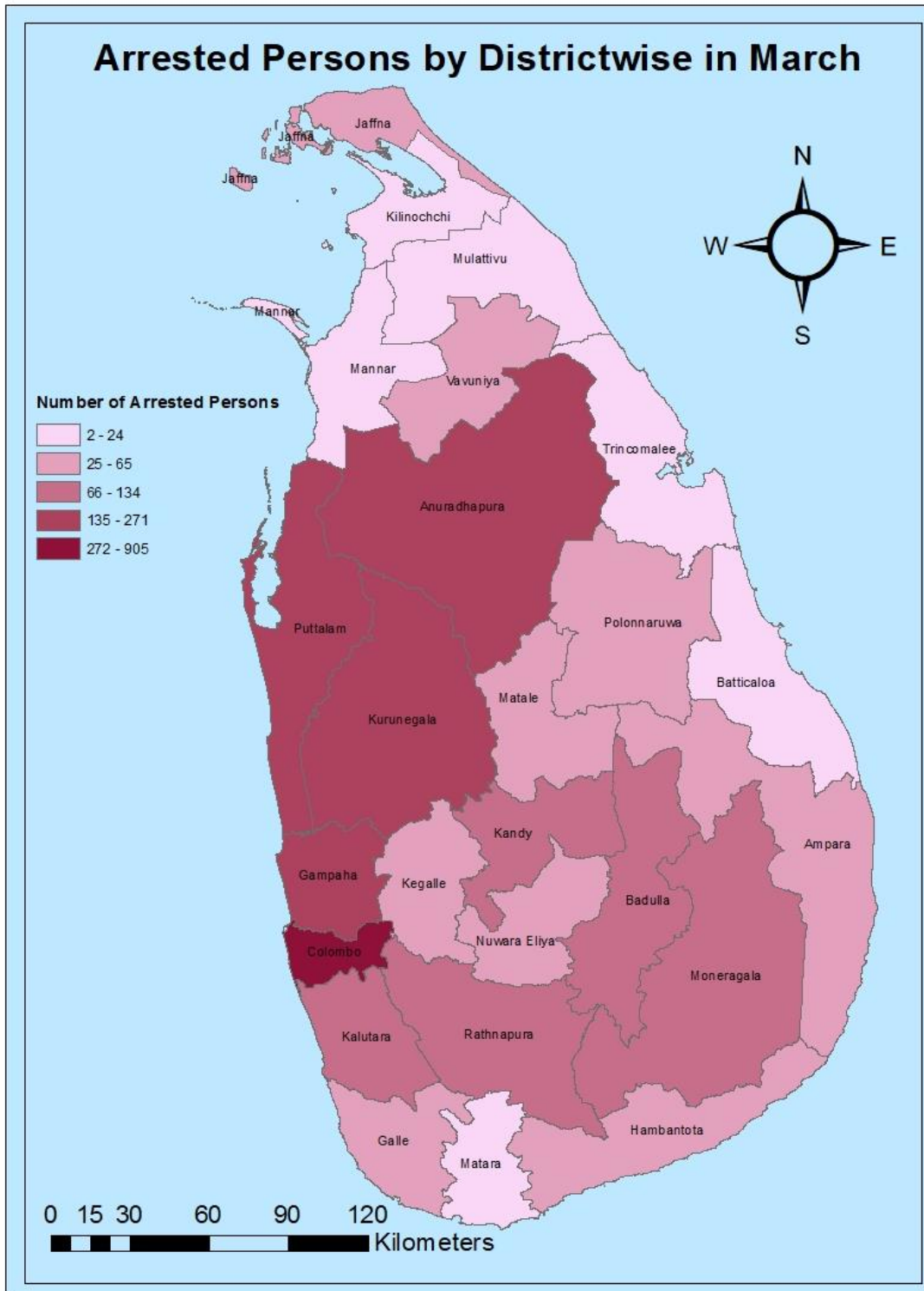
71.65% of the arrested persons in March were Buddhists, 12.65% were Islam, 9.85% were Hindus and 5.74% were Christians. By comparing the religions of arrestees in February with March, it can be identified that distributions of religions of arrestees in February and March were significantly similar and the majority of the arrested persons was Buddhists but there were arrested persons belonged to other religions as well. Therefore, it indicated that religion and ethnicity were not significant factors for engaging the drug related offences.

Occupation

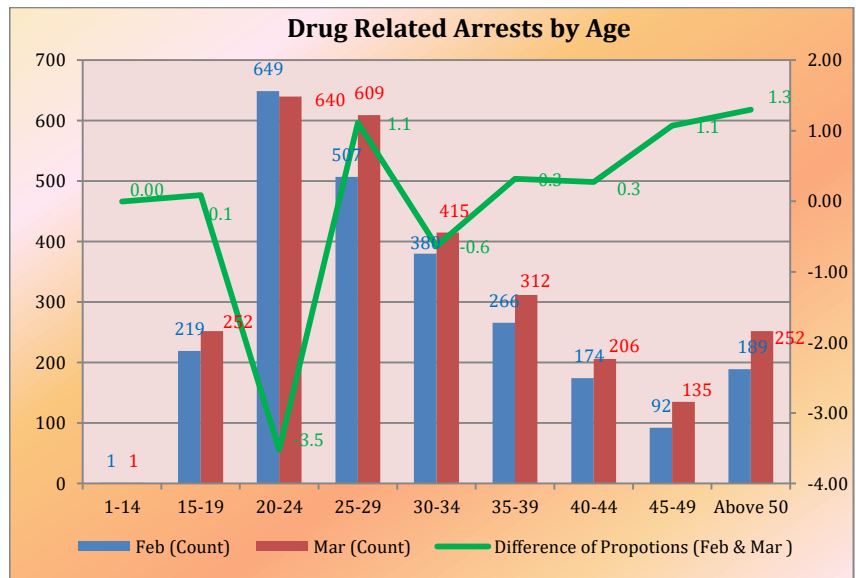
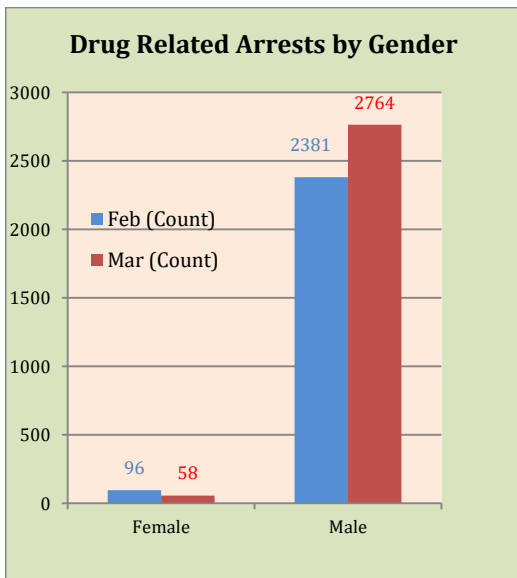
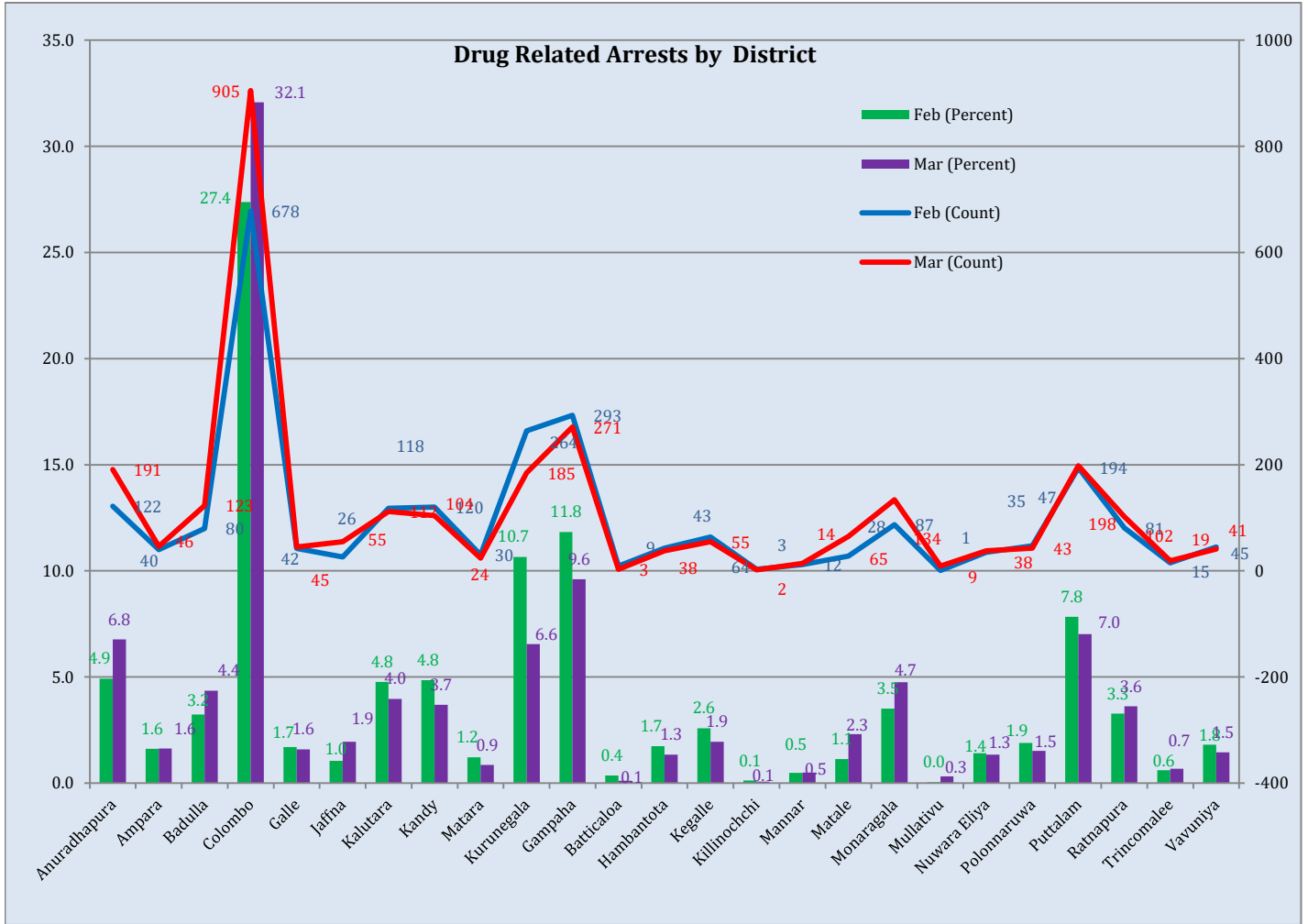
From the related data in March, 34% of arrestees were labourers, 10.7% were farmers, 11.1% were unemployed, 5.8% were self-employed, 0.7% was students and 2.6% were professionals. By comparing the distributions of occupation of arrestees between February and March, it can be clearly identified that ratio of labourers was the highest from ratios of each occupation category which were engaging by arrestees in each of both months and some of the arrestees were working as drivers, fishermen, businessmen etc. However, there were small fluctuations in ratios of every occupation which were being engaged by arrestees in March with compared to February.

Type of Drugs

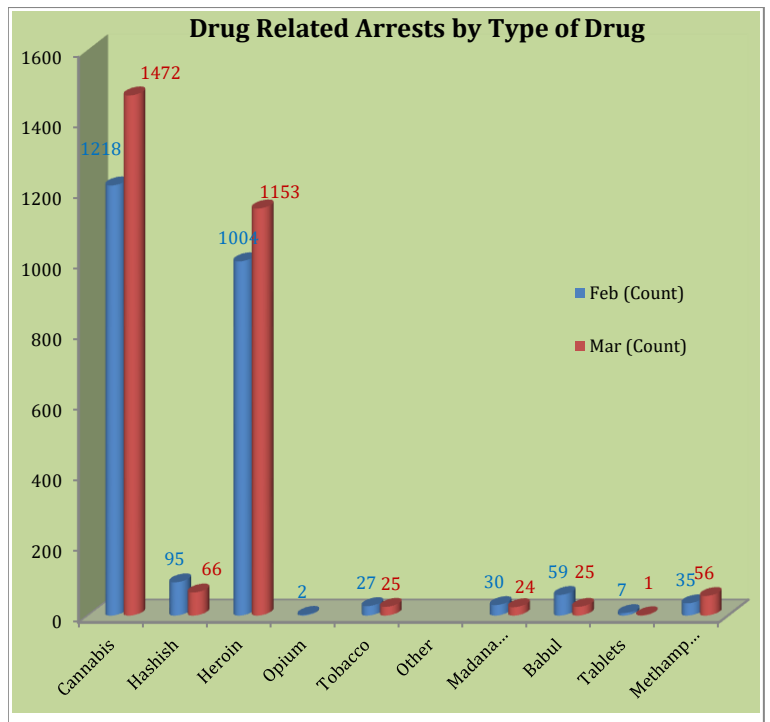
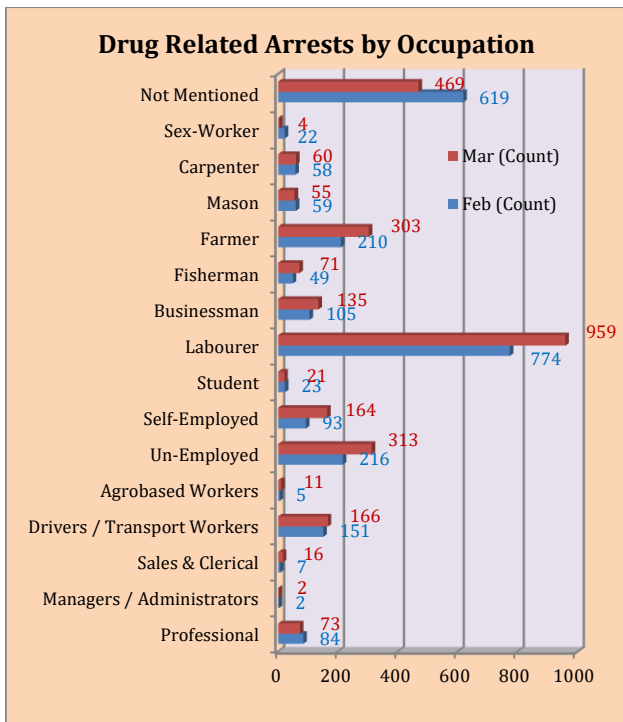
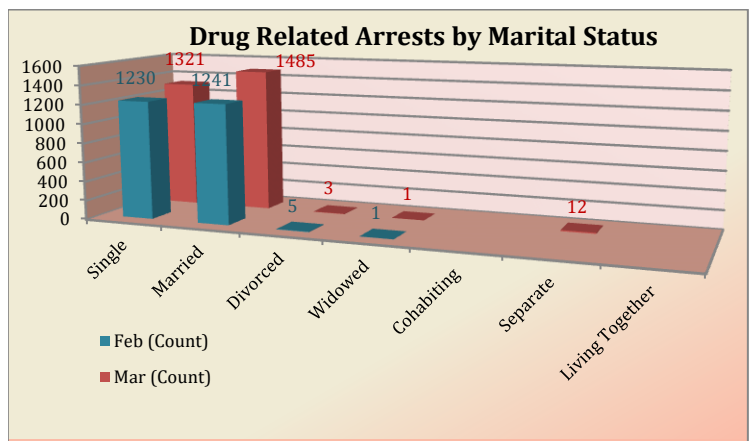
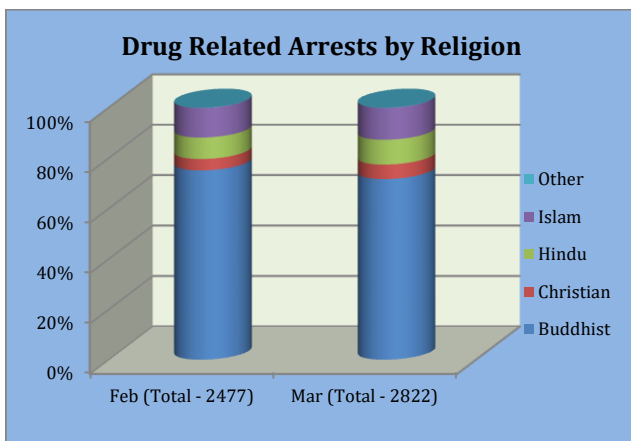
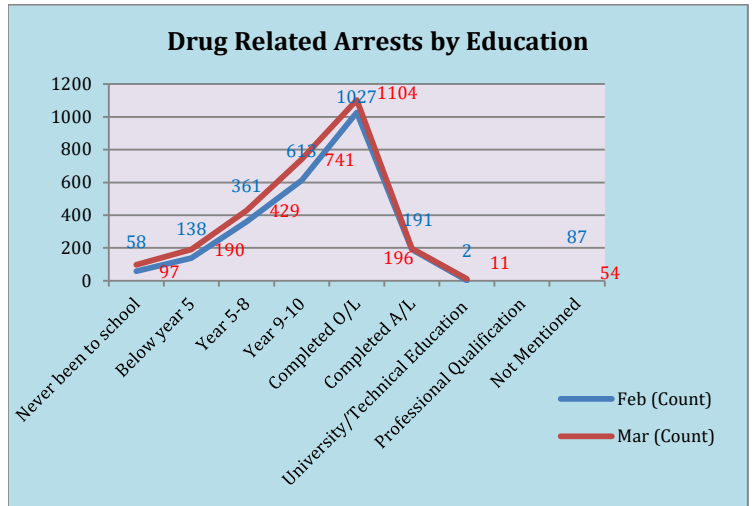
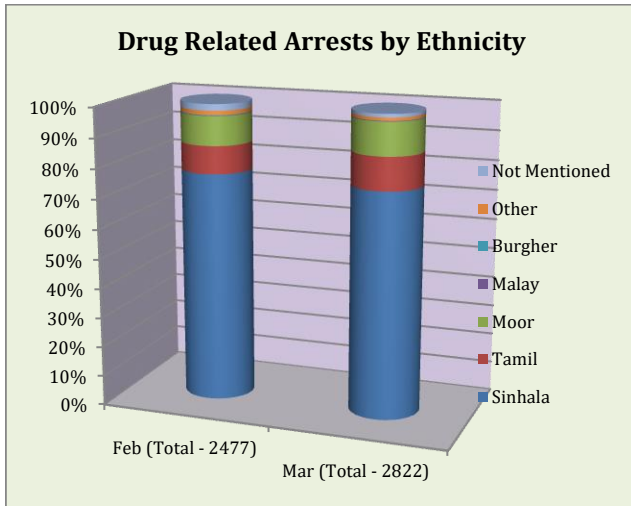
Cannabis was the most reported drug, which was involved in drug related offences in February as well as March, but the cannabis related offences had been increased from 49.17% to 52.16% in March with compared to February. Heroin was the next highest abused drug. 40.53% and 40.86% of arrestees in February and March were engaging in heroin related offence respectively. Hashish, babul, madanamodaka, tobacco, opium, methamphetamine (Ice) and tablets were the rest of the drugs which were involved in drug related offences.



(Source - Drug Abuse Monitoring System in February - March 2019)



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