



Drug Menace

For Prelims: Drug Menace, Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan/Drugs-Free India Campaign, World Drug Report 2022

For Mains: Problem of drug abuse and related Initiatives, World Drug Report 2022.

Why in News?

Kerala is using sports to tackle drug menace, for which its Excise department has created clubs **near college campuses and hostels in Kerala.**

- Apart from making students motivated to participate in sports, awareness classes are conducted and information on substance abuse is shared.

What is the Status of Drug Menace in India?

- The menace of drug addiction has spread fast among the youth of India.
 - India is sandwiched between two largest Opium producing regions of the world that is **the Golden triangle on one side and the Golden crescent on other.**
 - The golden triangle area comprises **Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam and Laos.**
 - The golden crescent area includes Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran.
- India is one of the **world's single largest opiate markets in terms of users and would likely be vulnerable** to increased supply.
 - This is because of the intensification of **trafficking in opiates originating in Afghanistan may be taking place eastwards**, in addition to southwards and westwards along the traditional **Balkan route.**
- According to **World Drug Report 2022**, India has the **fourth largest quantity of opium seized in 2020** at 5.2 tons and the third-highest amount of morphine was also seized in the same year at 0.7 tons.
- According to the **World Drug Report 2021**, prescription drugs and their ingredients or 'precursors' are being increasingly diverted for recreational use in India--the largest manufacturer of generic drugs in the world.
 - India is also linked to shipment of drugs sold on the 19 major **darknet markets analysed over 2011-2020.**

What are the Initiatives to Cope with Drug Menace?

- **Indian:**
 - **Narco-Coordination Centre:** The **Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD)** was constituted in November, 2016 and the scheme of "Financial Assistance to States for Narcotics Control" was revived.
 - **Seizure Information Management System (SIMS):** SIMS is a e-portal created by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) to create a complete online database of drug offences and offenders.

- **National Drug Abuse Survey:** The government is also conducting a National Drug Abuse Survey to measure trends of drug abuse in India through the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment with the help of National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre of AIIMS.
- **Project Sunrise:** It was launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 2016, to tackle the [rising HIV prevalence](#) in north-eastern states in India, especially among people injecting drugs.
- **NDPS Act:** It prohibits a person from producing, possessing, selling, purchasing, transporting, storing, and/or consuming any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance.
 - The NDPS Act has since been amended thrice - in 1988, 2001 and 2014.
 - The Act extends to the whole of India and it applies also to all Indian citizens outside India and to all persons on ships and aircraft registered in India.
- **Nasha Mukh Bharat:** Government has also announced the launch of the '[Nasha Mukh Bharat](#)', or [Drug-Free India Campaign](#) which focuses on community outreach programs.
- **International Treaties and Conventions to Combat Drug Menace:**
 - India is signatory of the following international treaties and conventions to combat the menace of Drug Abuse:
 - [United Nations \(UN\) Convention on Narcotic Drugs](#) (1961)
 - UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971).
 - [UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances \(1988\)](#)
 - UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) 2000.

Way Forward

- While steps must be taken **to stop supply by tamping down on cross-border trafficking**, imposing harsher penalties under the NDPS Act, or improving drug enforcement, India must also address the problem on the demand side.
- Addiction should not be seen as a character flaw, but as an ailment that any other person could be struggling with. Therefore, the **stigma associated with drug taking needs to be reduced**. Society needs to understand that drug-addicts are victims and not criminals.
- Certain crop drugs which have more than 50% alcohol and opioids need to be contained. **Strict action is required from police officers and the excise and narcotics department** to curb the problem of drug menace in the country.
- **Education curriculum** should include chapters on drug addiction, its impact and also on de-addiction. Proper Counselling is another alternative.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. India's proximity to the two of the world's biggest illicit opium-growing states has enhanced her internal security concerns. Explain the linkages between drug trafficking and other illicit activities such as gunrunning, money laundering and human trafficking. What counter-measures should be taken to prevent the same? **(2018)**

[Source: TH](#)