



Mains Practice Question

Q. Assess the impact of drug trafficking on India's internal security, with special reference to the Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle routes. What measures can be taken to combat this threat? **(250 words)**

04 Sep, 2024 GS Paper 3 Internal Security

Approach

- Introduce the answer by highlighting the menace of drug trafficking
- Delve into the impact of drug trafficking on India's internal security
- Give impact of Golden Crescent Route on India
- Highlight the impact of Golden Triangle Route on India
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

Drug trafficking poses a significant threat to India's internal security due to its far-reaching consequences. The **Golden Crescent** and **Golden Triangle regions**, located on India's western and eastern borders, respectively, serve as major hubs for the production and trafficking of illicit drugs.

Body

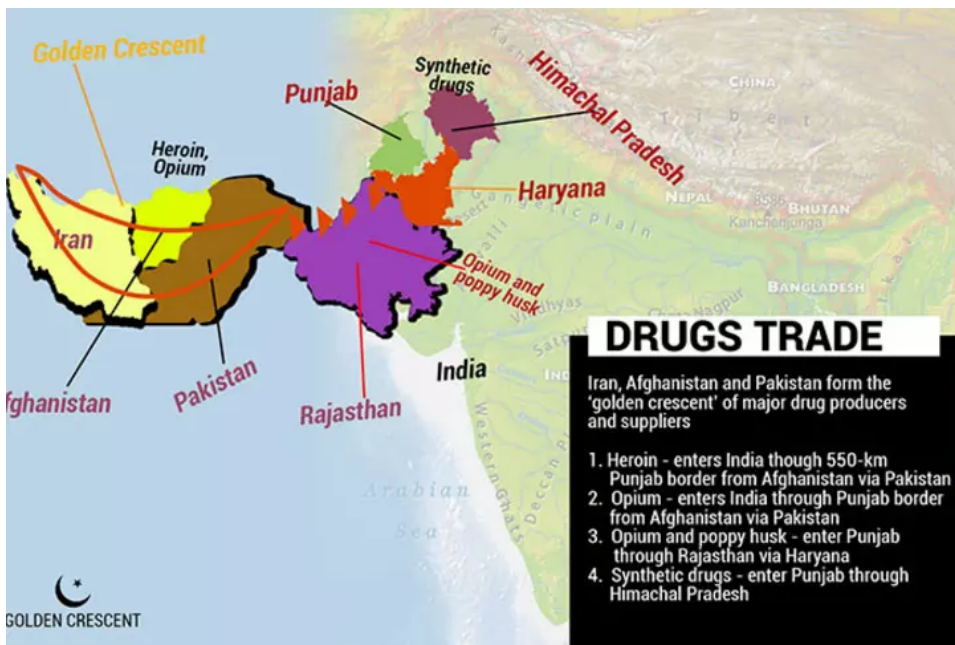
Impact of Drug Trafficking on India's Internal Security:

- **Funding of Terrorism and Insurgency:** In **2023**, the NIA seized property in Amritsar linked to a **narco-terror case** involving a module accused of smuggling drugs from Pakistan under the guise of rock salt exports.
- **Rise in Organized Crime:** The emergence of powerful drug cartels in major cities like **Mumbai and Delhi**, often with international connections.
- **Corruption of Law Enforcement:** The **2013 Punjab drug scandal**, where several politicians and police officers were implicated in a multi-crore drug trafficking network.
- **Economic Impact through Money Laundering:** Recently, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) busted an international drug smuggling network in **Chengalpet near Chennai**.

Golden Crescent Route:

- It refers to the opium-producing area encompassing Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan.

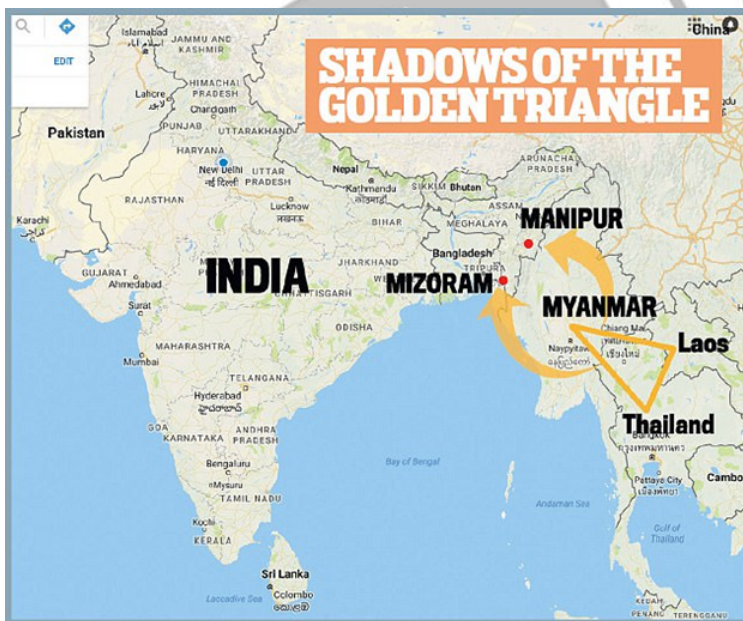
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Impact on India:

- **Proximity to major Opium-producing Regions:** Afghanistan produces over **80%** of the world's opium, much of which transits through Pakistan to reach India.
- **Exploitation of porous borders:** Recently, Uda Rajasthan, has replaced Punjab as the main entry point for narcotics supplied by **Pakistani gangs**, who use **drones to send consignments across the border.**

Golden Triangle Route



- The Golden Triangle encompasses **Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand**, known for opium and methamphetamine production.

Impact on India:

- **Vulnerability of the Northeast Region:** Recently, a joint team of Assam Rifles, Manipur Police and Narcotics Control Bureau seized drugs worth **Rs 165 crores** during raids at two locations in the Indo-Myanmar border town of **Moreh.**

- **Emergence of New Synthetic Drugs:** Increased seizures of **methamphetamine ('Yaba' tablets)** in states like Mizoram and Manipur.

Measures to Combat the

Threat:

- **Strengthening Border Security:** Deployment of advanced surveillance systems like ground sensors and drones along the **India-Pakistan and India-Myanmar borders.**
- **International Collaboration:** India's participation in the **BRICS Drug Working Group to share intelligence** and best practices with partner countries is a significant step.
- **Addressing Demand Reduction:** Implementation of the **National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (2018-2025)** focusing on prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation is a good step.
- **Tackling Money Laundering:** Strengthening the **Enforcement Directorate's capabilities** to investigate and prosecute drug-related money laundering cases.
- **Alternative Livelihood Programs in Vulnerable Areas:** The Manipur government's initiative to promote large **cardamom cultivation** as an alternative to opium poppy farming.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment's "**Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan**" launched in 2020 across **272 vulnerable districts** can be further enhanced.

Conclusion

Drug trafficking poses a serious threat to India's internal security. By implementing a comprehensive approach that combines **border security measures, effective law enforcement, community-based initiatives, international cooperation,** and addressing underlying issues, India can effectively combat this menace and **protect its national interests.**

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