

## **1. Drug Trafficking**

### **Why in News?**

- Recently, The global drug trade is a major problem that has put security and law enforcement agencies on high alert worldwide, including in India.

### **Highlights**

- Traditionally India has been seen as sandwiched between the Death (Golden) Crescent and Death (Golden) Triangle and is being flooded with drugs, especially heroin and methamphetamine, from these two regions by drug lords indirectly supported by intelligence setups.
- It is a social problem that harms youth and families and the money it generates is diverted for disruptive activities that have bearings on national security.
- Criminal networks traffic a range of drugs including cannabis, cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine.
- Methamphetamine (meth) is an addictive drug and can cause considerable health adversities that can sometimes result in death.
- Recently, USA has witnessed a new zombie drug (fentanyl) gripping its population.
- This drug can cause raw wounds on the user's skin that can spread rapidly with repeated exposure.
- It starts with ulcers, hardens to dead skin called eschar, and if left untreated can result in amputation.
- Drug trafficking is often associated with other forms of crime, such as terrorism, money laundering or corruption.
- Trafficking routes can also be used by criminal networks to transport other illicit products.
- To stop drugs from entering the country, measures must be taken such as controlling cross-border trafficking and improving drug enforcement.
- However, to fully address the problem, India must also work on reducing the demand for drugs through measures such as imposing harsher punishments under NDPS Act, 1985.
- Awareness must be spread among the people to lower down the drug addiction through campaigns and NGOs.
- The stigma associated with drug taking needs to be reduced. Society needs to understand that drug-addicts are victims and not criminals.

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- 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.
  - Concerted and coordinated efforts of all the agencies will be required to tackle this growing threat.
  - Creating more employment opportunities would solve the problem to some extent as Quick, and more, money attracts unemployed youth towards such activities.

