Harm of Tobacco Consumption

Why in news?

Large corporate enterprises themselves are making efforts to reduce the harm of tobacco consumption.

What are the impacts of tobacco consumption?

> *India, the world's second largest producer of tobacco, produces about 800 million kg annually.*

- **Human health**- The second Global Adult Tobacco Survey estimated that 28.6% of all adults in India used tobacco in 2016-2017, second only to China.
- In 2021, smoking killed about 8 million people.
- **Environment-** According to the WHO, 600 million trees are chopped down annually to make cigarettes, 84 million tonnes of CO_2 emissions are released into the atmosphere, and 22 billion litres of water are used to make cigarettes.
- Cigarette butts, packaging, plastic pouches of smokeless tobacco and batteries associated with e-cigarettes pollute our environment.
- **Employment**- As per Central Tobacco Research Institute, about 6 million farmers and 20 million farm labourers work in tobacco farming across 15 States.
- Although farming of tobacco only contributes to 1% of GDP as, the direct health expenditure on treating tobacco-related diseases alone accounts for 5.3% of total health spending in India in a year.

What efforts have been taken to tackle the ill effects of the tobacco?

- **Awareness campaigns**- Most efforts to counter the tobacco epidemic have been directed at creating awareness about the ill-effects of tobacco.
- In 1987, the World Health Organization (WHO) marked 'World No Tobacco Day' to bring attention to the ill-effects of tobacco.
- Poisoning our planet is the theme this year, in an effort to highlight the ill-effects of tobacco on the environment.
- **Carbon credits**- The forestry community has devised solutions and instruments to incentivise the reduction of deforestation through the use of carbon credits.
- With the surge in new commitments to zero carbon, companies are putting pressure on their supply chains to transition to sustainable practices and reduce deforestation.
- **Efforts of companies**- Companies like Unilever, Amazon, Nestlé, Alibaba, and Mahindra Group are are poised to invest an estimated $50 billion in nature-based solutions such as carbon sinks.
- There is a rise in environmental, social, and governance (ESG) managers.

- By transitioning to safer nicotine delivery systems, and moving away from tobacco, cigarette companies are potentially lowering the risk of their customers dying from cancer.
- Educating potential consumers to not consume tobacco, supporting consumers in their journey to quit, and incentivising industry to help consumers is the need of the hour.

References

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