Hyderabad's Drug Trafficking Problem

What is the issue?

There is worry that Hyderabad is possibly emerging as the primary conduit for drug trafficking in India.

What is the case with respect to Hyderabad drug trafficking?

- The Hyderabad police conducted a raid at a place where the kin of prominent filmstars, bureaucrats, politicians and rich businessmen were partying.
- The police suspect that many high-end pubs and star hotels have become hubs for narcotic drugs, despite strict surveillance.
- Over half-a-dozen foreign national drug carriers, mostly Tanzanian nationals were arrested and huge quantities of heroin and cocaine were seized.
- The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) and Customs officials believe that the drug smuggled from African countries was meant to be supplied to peddlers and abusers in major cities in north India, but not to Hyderabad.
- This once again led to discussions that the capital of Telangana was possibly emerging as a primary conduit for drug trafficking in the country.

What is the reason for rise in drug cases?

> *NCB officials estimate that there are around 10 crore drug users in India. More than 70% of the drugs are smuggled into the country through international sea routes, while 20% comes through roadways and the rest by air.*

- **Internet**- Internet-based end-to-end encrypted messaging mobile applications have provided a secure communications network for the drug cartels, middlemen and the abusers.
- **Easy visas**- With a growing number of expats, visas are being issued easily nowadays.
- **Low surveillance**- The city airport is being used as a safe transit point by the drug cartels in Africa as the surveillance is low when compared to other international airports in the country.

What efforts were taken to curb the menace?

- **Constitutional efforts**- Article 47 of the DPSP directs state to bring about prohibition of the consumption of intoxicating drinks & drugs which are injurious to health.
- **UN Conventions**- India is also a party to the three United Nations drug conventions
    1. Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)
    2. Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971)
    3. Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988)
- **Legal measures**- To tackle the problem of illegal drugs, the Parliament passed Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act of 1985 and Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic

Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1988.

- **Enforcement agencies**- Government has adopted a multi pronged strategy to deal with drugs control through NCB, Narcotics Control Division, Department of Central excise & customs, revenue intelligence & para-military and armed forces.
- **Area mapping**- The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) under the Ministry of Home Affairs had identified the districts highly prone to drug trafficking.
- **Fund allocation**- The Centre has allotted Rs 35 crore to the National Institute of Social Defence to run drug-free campaigns.
- **Specialized wings**- The Hyderabad Narcotics Enforcement Wing (H-NEW) and Narcotics Investigation Supervision Wing (NISW) have been formed.

What lies ahead?

- Coordination among agencies which work against drug smuggling, including Customs, the Enforcement Directorate, the DRI, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), the Central Industrial Security Force and the Intelligence Bureau is the need of the hour.
- Apart from law enforcement agencies, it is high time civil society and youth organisations also play a role in controlling this problem by educating people about drug abuse.

References

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