

International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking

26th June is recognized as the International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on 7th December 1987, decided that 26th June of every year will be recognized as the **International Drug Day** (another name for International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking.) **The theme for 2021 International Drug Day which was observed on 26th June 2021 was, 'Share Facts On Drugs, Save Lives.'**

Read on to know more important facts of this day for the IAS Exam.

Similarly, other important national and international days that are important from the civil services examination perspectives have been mentioned in the linked article.

Background of International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking

As a global problem, drug trade has always been a debatable scenario. The first international conference on narcotic drugs was held in Shanghai in 1909. Gradually, a multilateral system to control production, trafficking, and abuse of drugs was developed.

Three drug control conventions were adopted under the auspices of the United Nations (in 1961, 1971 and 1988).

Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961 - The aim of the convention was to combat drug abuse by international action that was well coordinated. Intervention and control that work together and have two forms. First, it seeks to limit the possession, use, trade-in, distribution, import, export, manufacture and production of drugs exclusively to medical and scientific purposes. Second, it combats drug trafficking through international cooperation to deter and discourage drug traffickers.

Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971 - An international control system for psychotropic substances was established. It responded to the diversification and expansion of the spectrum of drugs of abuse and introduced controls over a number of synthetic drugs according to their abuse potential on the one hand and their therapeutic value on the other.

United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988 - This Convention provides comprehensive measures against drug trafficking, including provisions against money laundering and the diversion of precursor chemicals. It provides for international cooperation through, for example, extradition of drug traffickers controlled deliveries and transfer of proceedings.

- The United Nations General Assembly first decided to observe the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking by a resolution moved on 7th December 1987.
- This day is marked to embolden action and cooperation to secure the goal of an international society free of drug abuse.

Significance of International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking

- The UN fights against the menace of drug abuse through various bodies.
- The UNODC or the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime leads the fight against illicit drugs, as well as an international crime.
- The UNODC was formed in 1997 and has field offices all over the globe.
- The UN observes international days to raise public awareness about issues, get support from governments and international bodies, as well as engage individuals and communities in combating severe problems and concerns.
- A special session on drugs was held in the year 2016 by the General Assembly.
- The international day is marked to recognize the severe impact drug abuse and addiction is having on people's lives, and also on societal peace, development, and growth.
- Every year, almost 2 lakh people deal with illicit trafficking.

International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking 2020

The International Drug Day 2020 was observed on 26th June 2020. The theme was 'Better Knowledge for Better Care.' The salient points of this day are:

1. The underlying intention to decide the theme of this year was to promote a better understanding of the drug abuse problem.
2. A better understanding is expected to bring better international cooperation to fight the drug abuse issue.
3. Health, governance, and security are the sectors that are majorly hit with the illicit trafficking of drugs and its abuse, hence with a better understanding of the issue, greater international cooperation is needed.

International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking Themes (Year-Wise)

The table below mentions the Year-Wise World Drug Day along with their respective themes:

World Drug Report

World Drug Report is published annually by the United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime. The World Drug Report 2021 has been presented in six separate booklets:

1. **Booklet 1** - The salient points mentioned in this booklet are:
 - Cannabis is more potent but fewer young people see it as harmful
 - Combat misinformation about the potential impact of the increased strength of cannabis.

- Prioritise public health over private business through a comprehensive ban on advertising.
 - Increase investment in research both into the harm cannabis use poses to health and the possible medical uses of the drug.
 - Monitor the cannabis markets and the perception of risks associated with cannabis use
2. **Booklet 2** - This booklet mentions an overview of the global demand for and supply of drugs. Its key takeaways are as follows:
- Population most at risk of using drugs, young people aged 15–34, is projected to grow in the next decade, in particular in low-income countries
 - Differences between men and women in the extent of drug use may play a critical role in changes in the projected number of people who use drugs in developing countries, including in Africa.
 - As a result of its projected population growth and relatively young population, Africa is likely to be particularly vulnerable to an increase in the number of people who use drugs by 2030.
 - Some 36 million people suffer from drug use disorders
3. **Booklet 3** - It is an analysis of the global market for cannabis, starting with a review of cannabis supply, including trends in the cultivation of and trafficking in cannabis herb and cannabis resin at the global level and in the various regions. Its key takeaways are as follows
- Decline in quantities of cannabis herb seized in North America may be partly linked to the legalization of some cannabis markets in that subregion
 - Trafficking in cannabis resin continues to be more geographically concentrated than trafficking in cannabis herb
 - Cannabis use is increasing among the adult population but remains stable among secondary school students in Western and Central Europe
4. **Booklet 4** - This booklet contains an analysis of the global market for cocaine, starting with a review of cocaine supply, including trends in the cultivation of coca bush and in the manufacture of and trafficking in cocaine at the global level and in the various regions. The salient points mentioned in this book are:
- Quantities of cocaine seized increased in all sub- regions in the Americas, including North America, the world's largest cocaine market
 - Sharp increase in the quantity of cocaine seized in Europe, with Western and Central Europe remaining the second largest destination market for cocaine worldwide
5. **Booklet 5** - This book of World Drug Report 2021 contains an early assessment of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on drug markets, as the situation continues to evolve and more data become available. Its key takeaways are as follows:
- Overall, drug supply and trafficking proved to be resilient to COVID-19-related changes.
 - After initial disruptions, global drug production was largely unaffected by COVID-19 throughout 2020
 - Drug trafficking may have slowed significantly during initial lockdown periods but resumed at the same or even increased levels soon after restrictions were lifted.

Frequently Asked Questions on International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking

Q 1. What was the theme for International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking 2021?

Ans. "The theme for 2021 International Drug Day which was observed on 26th June 2021 was, 'Share Facts On Drugs, Save Lives. The motive was to combat misinformation by sharing real facts on drugs — from health risks and solutions for the world drug problem to evidence-based prevention, treatment, and care.

Q 2. When was the first International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking observed?

Ans. The first-ever International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was observed on 7th December 1987.

Q 3. What is the World Drug Campaign?

Ans. The World Drug Campaign is a global campaign led by the United National Office on Drug and Crime to spread awareness regarding drug abuse across the world. The main objective of the initiative is to inspire people to not consume drugs and act against its use.

Q 4. Why is drug education important?

Ans. Drug Education can help young students and youth who are the future of the world to understand the ill effects of consuming drugs and to spread awareness about illicit trafficking and drug abuse.