



Darkathon-2022

For Prelims: Darknet, Darkathon.

For Mains: Darknet and related Concerns.

Why in News?

The **Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB)** launched a '**Darkathon**' for cyber experts to **find effective solutions to unravel the anonymity of markets** in the dark web.

- The role of NCB as the nodal agency on the matter of drug law enforcement in India has gained prominence in recent times.

What is Darkathon-2022?

- The competitors will have **to provide a “solution” based on crawling of darkweb to identify and catalog darknet markets selling drugs** with a mechanism to automatically add new markets and drop inactive ones, identify drug traffickers based in India and the drugs on sale and digital footprinting of active drug traffickers.
- The **number of drug seizures from parcel or courier consignments increased by almost 250% in India after the outbreak of the pandemic** and a good number of them are linked to drug trafficking through darknet markets.

What is Darknet and Concerns?

- **About: Internet consists of three layers:**
 - The **first layer is public**, consisting of sites that one uses frequently such as Facebook, Twitter, Amazon and LinkedIn. This layer makes up only 4% of the entire internet.
 - The **second layer, the deep web**, is a network where data is stored in inaccessible databases (i.e. cannot be accessed through traditional search engines like Google). It is used to provide access to a specific group of people.
 - The data is generally sensitive and private (government private data, bank data, cloud data etc), so kept out of reach.
 - The **third layer is the darknet** which is also known as a part of the 'Deep Web'. It is a network built over the internet which is encrypted.
 - It is basically a layer of the Internet accessible only by using special software like TOR (The Onion Router), or I2P, which stands for Invisible Internet Project.
 - Anything present on the dark web will not be pulled up in internet searches, thereby offering a high degree of anonymity.
- **Concerns over Darknet:**
 - In February 2016, in a study titled 'Cryptopolitik and the Darknet', researchers analysed content over the TOR network.
 - Of the 2,723 websites they could classify by content, 1,547 - 57 % - hosted illicit material ranging from drugs (423 sites), illegitimate pornography (122) and hacking

(96), among others.

- There were also reports of log-in details of streaming sites like Netflix being sold on the dark web marketplaces for cheap rates.
- The network is also used by several activists especially those living under oppressive regimes to communicate without any government censorship.
- The TOR network was used by activists during the [Arab Spring](#).

▪ **Darknet and India:**

- The Information Technology Act, 2000 deals with cybercrime and comes under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. There are only six sections in the law that deal with cybercrime.
- With the changing times, India needs a code of criminal procedures dealing with cybercrime that would come under the Ministry of Home Affairs, which deals with policing issues.
- Also, there is a need for police, trained in changing cyber trends who are dedicated only to cybercrime and not transferred to other police units.

[Source: ET](#)

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