

UN says Asia's demand drives global meth seizures

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The United Nations says Asia's robust economy and strong demand for drugs drove global production and trafficking of methamphetamine to record levels last year, with Japan targeted as one of the most lucrative markets.

The U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime released a report Tuesday saying Asia is the world's largest market for stimulants, and seizures of methamphetamine pills and crystal meth have tripled to 36 tons over the last five years.

The report says the trends reflect Asia's growing [economic power](#) and demand for new synthetic drugs.

China serves as a major production hub of methamphetamine, addictive stimulant that affects the central nervous system. According to the report, organized crime groups, including those in Japan, help traffic meth from Mexico, the Middle East and the rest of Asia.

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