

LEGAL STATUS OF CANNABIS IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

An analysis of current developments in cannabis (or marijuana) use on the local scene in Malta is both perplexing and alarming. The policies governing the use of cannabis for recreational purposes have failed. The major issue brought about by this historically constrictive viewpoint was the fact that users were repeatedly detained, charged with crimes, and even imprisoned, losing their right to maintain a spotless criminal record as a result. We have not seen a lot of evidence of significant harm or long-term negative impacts from its recreational use, and it is obvious that many have broken the law and used it illegally without seeing consequences for a long time. Effectively, the enormous quantities of marijuana that are being smuggled into the islands illegally, primarily by ship or smaller boats—estimated by the large amounts that are being arrested locally—indicate that there are significant economic forces involved in its exploitation and exporting.

Keywords: Cannabis, Marijuana, Sampling, Decriminalize, Hemp, Offence, Seizure.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

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As we know before 1985, cannabis was legal in India and was consumed customarily but after 1985 cannabis was made illegal to consume except for medicinal or recreational purposes under NDPS ACT, 1985. In the current scenario, Cannabis continues to be the most consumed, trafficked, and frequently confiscated illegal narcotics in India despite the legal bans. India is renowned for having some of the lowest cannabis retail costs worldwide.

Henceforth, it affects the Indian economy in a churlish manner. In such a diverse country, it is laborious to decriminalize the use of cannabis. However, decriminalising cannabis will give a trump card to India. For example- Farmers can easily start cultivation of cannabis as cannabis is easy to grow and minimal care is required but sold at a high price that will eventually lead to profit for them. India's economy is insufficient to feed its people a healthy meal. Because of this, it will take India 10–15 years to adopt a cannabis culture similar to that of developed

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nations. Boosted tax receipts, job expansion, and investment prospects are all potent inducements to promote legalisation. In November 2022, consumer use of marijuana was legal in 21 states, while medical use was permitted in 37. With new scientific approaches in genetic engineering and environmental manipulation, our agricultural revolution in fact has taken millennia to unfold and is still moving forward.

INTRODUCTION

Cannabis, a psychoactive substance derived from the cannabis plant, is also referred to as marijuana and other names. The cannabis plant, which is native to Central or South Asia, has been used for thousands of years in traditional remedies as well as a narcotic for entheogenic and recreational purposes. Although it can be used for spiritual objectives, cannabis is most frequently utilised for therapeutic purposes. The primary psychoactive component of cannabis is tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), one of the 483 known plant chemicals. This number includes at least 65 other cannabinoids, including cannabidiol (CBD). Cannabis can be used orally, vaporised, ingested, or utilised as an extract. According to The Indian Hemp Drug Commission Report alcohol is more dangerous than cannabis.

HISTORY

Third millennium BCE: Although evidence suggests that cannabis was being smoked for psychotropic effects in the Pamir Mountains, Asia, at least 2,500 years ago, cannabis plants have been grown since at least the third millennium BCE.

Vedas: Cannabis was one of five sacred plants, and one of its guardian angels resided in its leaves, according to The Vedas. The Vedas refer to cannabis as a source of joy, a liberator, and a joy-giver that was kindly given to people to let us experience joy and let go of fear (Abel, 1980). It relieves us from anxiety.

14th Century: law has prohibited Cannabis since the 14th century.

Similar to how Westerners would sip a shot of whisky before going into battle, warriors would frequently consume bhang in the middle Ages. According to one legend, an elephant carrying a blade in his trunk charged at the Sikh commander Gobind Singh's warriors, scaring them. The people were so terrified that they were on the verge of revolt until Singh handed one brave man a dose of bhang and opium. The herbs gave him the power and dexterity he needed to kill

the elephant without putting himself in danger. The bravery displayed by Singh's men enabled them to defeat the enemy.

20th Century: Since the 20th century, the majority of nations have outlawed the possession, use, and cultivation of cannabis. The first nation to legalise cannabis for recreational use was Uruguay in 2013. Additionally, Canada, Georgia, Malta, Mexico, South Africa, and Thailand have done so. In the United States, 21 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia have legalised cannabis for recreational use, even though the drug is still illegal at the federal level. Only the Australian Capital Territory has authorised it throughout the country.

Before 1985: There were no laws in India that regulated narcotics in India till 1985 when the NDPS Act was passed. Smoking of cannabis is mentioned in the Atharva Veda and the recreational use of cannabis was common and acceptable in Indian society. So, until 1985 cannabis and its derivatives like marijuana, bhang etc were sold legally on a very wide scale in India which was harmful to society at large.

PRESSURE FROM US GOVERNMENT

All cannabis derivatives, including marijuana, hash (charas), and bhang, may be bought and sold legally in India up until 1985. Given that ganja, charas, and bhang were a way of life in India, India also withstood American pressure to keep marijuana lawful when the US later began to advocate for global legislation against all hard and soft drugs after the passage of ¹the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs in 1961. Thoughts and attitudes had hardened by the early 1980s as American society struggled with drug issues.

After resisting American pressure for 25 years, India ultimately caved down in 1986 and passed the Narcotic Substances and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, which criminalised marijuana and combined it with other hard drugs. The utilization of marijuana has, in fact, long been a part of Indian culture. The Indian government only outlawed all narcotics including marijuana, in the 1980s as a result of American pressure. However, the US itself has recently had a change of heart. A bill to decriminalise marijuana and erase non-violent convictions for marijuana-related offences was just passed by the House of Representatives. In actuality,

¹ Mattha busby,
<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/jan/05/legalisation-cannabis-transform-mexico-economy>

medical marijuana is permitted in 35 American states, ²while at least 15 of those states have legalised cannabis for recreational use. Cannabis use must be legalised in India as well. A BJP administration should be more likely to defend what has long been an Indian tradition.

INDIAN SCENARIO CANNABIS

India prohibits cannabis use. Nonetheless, its ubiquity remains remarkable in India's religious and social milieu. Ascetics and mendicants, in fact, especially enjoy it, and at festivities, a version called "bhang" is frequently served. India and the herb known as cannabis have a long and established association. It has been included in legends about gods and warriors for ages, and it is still present in religious rites and street sellers today.

IMPORTANT ASPECTS IN INDIAN SCENARIO

1. REVERSE BURDEN OF PROOF UNDER NDPS Act, 1985 (U/S 35 and 54): The presumption of innocence is a fundamental principle of criminal jurisprudence. It states that an accused person is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. However, if an individual is charged with an offence under the NDPS Act, the burden of proof is on the accused person to demonstrate that he has not committed the offence in question. This means that an accused person under the NDPS Act must refute the presumption against him and bear the burden of proof to demonstrate that he has not committed the act that constitutes the offence.

2. SAMPLING: In a significant verdict, the Supreme Court on Wednesday held that the quantity of neutral substances in a mixture containing narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances must be taken into account along with the actual weight of the offending drug while determining 'small or commercial quantity' under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985.

On this view, a three-judge bench overruled the 2008 decision *E. Michael Raj v. Intelligence Officer, Narcotic Control Bureau*, which had held that only the actual weight of the drug in a

² Dev , why india is not ready to decriminalise cannabis just yet

<https://www.legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-871-why-india-is-not-ready-to-decriminalize-cannabis-just-yet.html>

Notification issued under Heera Singh case

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://indiankanoon.org/doc/128615827/&ved=2ahUKEwi5lsKXx_v8AhUGt2MGHbJYD04QFnoECA8QAQ&usq=AOvVaw0YYeCdZqQbiKmhBoefP3GJ

Grand view reaserch,

<https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/legal-marijuana-market>

Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940

mixture will matter under the NDPS Act and that the weight of the neutral substances can be excluded. As stated under:- The Opium Act, 1857 (XIII), the Opium Act, 1878 (I) and the Dangerous Drugs Act, 1930 (II):- There was no statutory control over drugs and narcotics in India before the introduction of the NDPS Act, hence, the control was essentially exercised through these three Central Government acts.

GREAT LEGALISATION MOVEMENT IN INDIA

Anyone who grows possesses, sells, purchases, or uses narcotic or psychotropic substances is prohibited by statute. A fine or even jail time could be imposed for disobeying the legislation, depending on how much of the forbidden substance was consumed. The law has been criticized across the country, especially because certain US states have legalized marijuana. While GLM and many other similar movements throughout the world advocate for the medical advantages of cannabis, Indian doctors are not allowed to use the medication since it does not have official approval. According to Dr. Shyam Aggarwal, an oncologist and senior consultant at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in Delhi, "marijuana is utilised as a pain relief for cancer patients." Additionally, it is utilised to treat various psychiatric conditions like schizophrenia and anxiety. Numerous pre-clinical investigations have confirmed the anti-cancer effects of cannabis oil. However, the results of these investigations are only applicable to laboratory and pre-clinical mouse trial models. Although there have not yet been any clinical trials to examine marijuana's effectiveness in treating cancer in humans, pre-clinical research is currently available.

PUNISHMENT FOR CARRYING CANNABIS IN INDIA

Currently, drug offences are punishable by the NDPS with severe consequences. Consequently, in India, the NDPS Act, of 1985, which regulates the legality or illegality of cannabis consumption, forbids the ingestion of the plant's fruits, flowers, or resins. Depending on how serious the offence was, several penalties are applied. There is information on modest and commercial volumes for every medication.

Definition of cannabis under Section 2(3) NDPS Act, 1985

Cannabis as defined under section 2(3) of the NDPS Act, 1985 - "cannabis (hemp)" is categorized into three categories:-³

³ Data Bridge Market Research,

(a) **CHARAS**: that is the separated resin that gives culminating elements named hashish oil or liquid hashish

(b) **GANJA**: Flowers or fruits of the cannabis plant, by whatever name they may be known or designated; and

(c) **ANY MIXTURE**: with or without any neutral material or any of the above forms of cannabis or any drink prepared therefrom

"cannabis plant" means any plant of the genus Cannabis;

Punishment under NDPS Act, 1985 (U/S 20)

The NDPS Act treats drug offences severely and imposes severe punishments. Depending on the offence, different sentences and fines are imposed. The punishment varies depending on the amount of narcotics used, whether it is a tiny amount, more than a small amount but less it should be less than a commercial quantity. For each medicine, small and commercial quantities are informed.

The main factor in prescribing punishment under the NDPS Act is the quantity of seized drugs. A lesser punishment may be imposed if the drug is just for personal use but if the recovered contraband is more than commercial quantity then stringent punishment shall be imposed as it will amount to an offence against society.

Commercial quantity is defined in Section 2(vii) NDPS Act -“commercial quantity”, about narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, means any quantity greater than the quantity specified by the Central Government by notification in the Official Gazette.”

The NDPS Act, 1985 has categorised quantity as follows-

Small Quantity -any quantity lesser than the quantity specified by the Central Government
Less than Commercial Quantity -any quantity lesser than commercial quantity but greater than a small quantity, Commercial quantity greater than the quantity specified by the Central Government. The quantity for different drugs and its category is not uniform, it is different for

Cannabis Market Size, Share, Trends, Report, & Global Analysis By 2029

The Cannabis Market growth at a CAGR of 9% & expected USD 168.58 billion by 2029. It is analyzed by type, usage, crop variety and distribution channel by forecast to 2029.,

<https://www.databridgemarketresearch.com/reports/global-cannabis-market#:~:text=Data%20Bridge%20Market%20Research%20analyses,period%20of%202022%20to%202029.>

different drugs as specified by the Central Government. For example- a small quantity of charas is 100 g and its commercial quantity is 1 kg whereas a small quantity of ganja is 1kg and its commercial quantity is 20kg.

- **For cultivation of cannabis plant** - rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine which may extend to one lakh rupees;
- **For production, manufacture, possession, sale, purchase, transport, import inter-State, export inter-state or use –**
- **For Small Quantity-** Rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with a fine which may extend to ten thousand rupees, or with both.
- **For quantity lesser than commercial quantity but greater than small quantity** imprisonment for a term which may extend to ten years, and with a fine which may extend to one lakh rupees
- **For Commercial Quantity-** Rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years but which may extend to twenty years and shall also be liable to a fine which shall not be less than one lakh rupees but which may extend to two lakh rupees provided that the court may, for reasons to be recorded in the judgment, impose a fine exceeding two lakh rupees.

GLOBAL SCENARIO OF CANNABIS

Cannabis is the most frequently used psychoactive substance globally, cannabis is the term used to denote the several psychoactive preparations of the plant **Cannabis sativa**. The major psychoactive constituent in cannabis is **tetrahydrocannabinol** also known as THC. Substances that are structurally similar to THC are known as cannabinoids. In many countries, cannabis leaves or other crude plant material is most commonly known as “*marijuana*” which is a Mexican term. The unpollinated female plants are known as “*hashish*”.

Facts & Data

Cannabis is the most cultivated, trafficked and abused illicit drug, about 147 million people which is 2.5% of the world population, cannabis abuse has grown more rapidly than cocaine and opiate abuse. The most rapid growth of cannabis abuse since the 1960s has been in developed countries like North America, Western Europe and Australia. Half of all drug seizures worldwide are cannabis seizures.

The basic difference between *Cannabis indica* and *Cannabis sativa*

These are the two types of cannabis species that are proposed to cause different effects. Indica plants typically contain higher amounts of CBD (**Cannabidiol**) than THC (**Tetrahydrocannabinol**), while Sativa plants generally have higher amounts of THC than CBD. Indica is known to cause more of a calming or relaxing effect, while Sativa is known to cause an uplifting feeling.

Cannabis ruderalis is the third type of cannabis, it doesn't typically grow over 2 feet and it is unbranched. sativa and indica plants are photoperiodic and they normally need around 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness to flower whereas, cannabis ruderalis are known to be auto-flowering, which means they can flower under any type of light unlike sativa and indica species.⁴

UN Conventions ratified by India

The Indian government has signed and ratified the UN Single Convention on Narcotics Drugs 1961, the UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances(1971), and the UN Convention on Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances(1988) all of which suggest various measures to achieve objectives of limiting the use of narcotic and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes and preventing their abuse.

Reverse Burden Of Proof

This term was interpreted within the sections of the NDPS Act 1985

Section 35: Presumption of culpable mental state. (1) In any prosecution for an offence under this Act which requires a culpable mental state of the accused, the Court shall presume the existence of such mental state but it shall be a defence for the accused to prove the fact that he had no such mental state with respect to the act charged is an offence in that prosecution.

Explanation: In this section "culpable mental state" includes intention motive knowledge of a fact and belief-in or reason to believe, a fact. (2) For the purpose of this section, a fact is said

⁴ Naveed Saleh, MD, MS, Indigo V/S Sativa what's the difference , <https://www.verywellhealth.com/indica-vs-sativa>

Sarthak Awasthi, legal angle, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/legalangle/a-detailed-overview-of-narcotic-drugs-and-psychotropic-substances-act1985-45878/>

to be proved only when the court believes it to exist beyond a reasonable doubt and not merely when its existence is established by a preponderance of probability. The presumption of the culpable mental state of the accused arises only after the evidence proved beyond reasonable doubt that the accused had the knowledge that the vehicle owned by him was being used for transporting narcotics; **Bhola Singh v. State of Punjab**, (2011) 11 SCC 653; JT 2011 (3) SC 392; (2011) 3 SCALE 495; 2011 Cr LJ 2296.

Section 54: Presumption from possession of illicit articles.-In trials under this Act, it may be presumed, unless and until the contrary is proved, that the accused has committed an offence under this Act in respect of - (a) any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance or controlled substance; (b) any opium poppy, cannabis plant or coca plant growing on any land which he has cultivated; (c) any apparatus specially designed or any group of utensils specially adapted for the manufacture of any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance or controlled substance: or (d) any materials which have undergone any process towards the manufacture of a narcotic drug or psychotropic substance or controlled substance, or any residue left of the materials from which any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance or controlled substance has been manufactured, for the possession of which he fails to account satisfactorily.

In the case of *Bhola Singh* (supra), the Hon'ble Supreme Court held as follows:- "While dealing with the question of possession in terms of [Section 54](#) of the Act and the presumption raised under [Section 35](#), this Court in *Noor Aga -Vrs.- State of Punjab and Anr.* (2008)16 Supreme Court Cases 417 while upholding the constitutional validity of [Section 35](#) observed that as this Section imposed a heavy **reverse burden** on an accused, the condition for the applicability of this and other related sections would have to be spelled out on facts and it was only after the prosecution had discharged the initial **burden** to prove the foundational facts that [Section 35](#) would come into play. Applying the facts of the present case to the cited one, it is apparent that the initial **burden** to prove that the appellant knew that the vehicle he owned was being used for transporting narcotics still lay on the prosecution, as would be clear from the word "knowingly", and it was only after the evidence proved beyond reasonable doubt that he knew would the presumption under [Section 35](#) arise. [Section 35](#) also presupposes that the culpable mental state of an accused has to be proved as a fact beyond reasonable doubt and not merely when its existence is established by a preponderance of probabilities. We are of the opinion that in the absence of any evidence about the mental state of the appellant, no presumption under [Section 35](#) can be drawn.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of **Hanif Khan -Vrs.- Central Bureau of Narcotics reported in 2019 SCC OnLine SC 1810** held as follows: The prosecution under the [N.D.P.S. Act](#) carries a **reverse burden** of proof with a culpable mental state of the accused. He is presumed to be guilty consequent to recovery of contraband from him and it is for the accused to establish his innocence unlike the normal rule of criminal jurisprudence that an accused is presumed to be innocent unless proved guilty. But that does not absolve the prosecution from establishing a prima facie case only whereafter the **burden** shifts to the accused. In *Noor Aga v The state of Punjab* reported in (2008)16 Supreme Court Cases 417, it was observed as follows: Because there is a **reverse burden** of proof, the prosecution shall be put to a stricter test for compliance with statutory provisions. If at any stage, the accused is able to create a reasonable doubt, as a part of his defence, to rebut the presumption of his guilt, the benefit will naturally have to go to him."

The Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of *Mohan Lal Vs. The State of Punjab* reported in 2018 (II) Orissa Law Reviews 485 held as follows: Unlike the general principle of criminal jurisprudence that an accused is presumed innocent unless proven guilty, the [N.D.P.S. Act](#) carries a **reverse burden** of proof under [Sections 35](#) and [54](#). But that cannot be understood to mean that the moment an allegation is made and the F.I.R. recites compliance with statutory procedures leading to recovery, the **burden** of proof from the very inception of the prosecution shifts to the accused, without the prosecution having to establish or prove anything more. The presumption is rebuttable. [Section 35\(2\)](#) provides that a fact can be said to have been proved if it is established beyond reasonable doubt and not on preponderance of probability. The stringent provisions of the [N.D.P.S. Act](#), such as [Section 37](#), the minimum sentence of ten years, absence of any provision for remission, do not dispense with the requirement of the prosecution to establish a prima facie case beyond reasonable doubt after investigation, only after which the **burden** of proof shall shift to the accused. The case of the prosecution cannot be allowed to rest on a preponderance of probabilities."

Madan Lal and Ors. v. State of Himachal Pradesh [(2003): It was held by the Honourable Supreme Court that once possession of narcotic or psychotropic substances is established then it would be presumed that the possession is conscious possession and the defence has to prove that it was unconscious possession. Sections 35 & 54 of the NDPS Act provide statutory recognition to this position.

Dehal Singh v. State of Himachal Pradesh(2010): The Honourable Supreme Court held, that Section 35 of the Act recognized that once possession was established, the Court could presume that the accused had a culpable mental state, meaning thereby conscious possession – Presumption of conscious possession was available under Section 54 of Act, which provided that accused might be presumed to have committed the offense.

Gian Chand and Ors. Vs. State of Haryana(2013)-The Honourable Supreme Court held – “Once possession of contraband articles is established burden shifts on the Accused to establish that he had no knowledge of the same.”

CRITICAL ANALYSIS GLOBALLY

Countries Where Cannabis is Legal: Across the Atlantic, Canada, Uruguay, and many of the US states including California have changed their laws in the past decade to allow people to light up. However, Uruguay was the first country to legalize cannabis, the most recent country to legalize cannabis is Germany.⁵⁶ Germany in the month of October 2022 joined the cannabis legalisation revolution, announcing plans to permit the recreational use of the drug, as well as its production.

Here is an overview of the countries across the globe:

EUROPE: Journal of Legal Research and Juridical Sciences

MALTA: In December 2021, Malta became the first EU member to legalise recreational cannabis, allowing adults to carry up to 7 (seven) grams and grow up to four plants at home. Consumers are barred from lighting up a joint (Rolled marijuana for consumption) in public however or in front of a minor.

LUXEMBOURG: Luxembourg's government in June 2022 announced proposals to allow cannabis users to grow up to four plants at home and decriminalise public pot- (marijuana, charas, and ganja) smoking and possession; however, it was subject for the users to face on-the-spot fines rather than charges.

⁵ Mark A. Prince, Bradley T. Conner, and Matthew R. Pearson, Quantifying Cannabis: A Field Study of Marijuana Quantity Estimation <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6013381/>

⁶ <https://dor.gov.in/narcoticdrugspychotropic/punishment-offences>

NETHERLANDS: The Netherlands in general, and Amsterdam in particular, have tolerated the sale and use of cannabis in their iconic coffee shops since 1976, but cultivating the plant remains illegal.

SPAIN: Users in Spain are allowed to grow pot for private use at home but selling the drug or smoking it in public is banned.

PORTUGAL: Portugal took the bold step of decriminalising the consumption and possession of all drugs in 2001 but users nonetheless face fines, unless they agree to be treated for addiction.

NORTH AMERICA

UNITED STATES: The sale and Use of Cannabis was prohibited by Federal US law. But 18 states, including California, and the national capital Washington DC have legalised cannabis for recreational use in a legislative shift over the past decade. In October 2022 President Joe Biden pardoned thousands of Americans convicted of cannabis possession.

CANADA: In 2018 Canada became the second country in the world after Uruguay and allowed the recreational use of cannabis. The legislation limits personal possession to 30 grams and up to four plants for households

LATIN AMERICA

URUGUAY: Uruguay was the first country to legalize cannabis along with the production, distribution and consumption of cannabis in 2013. Residents can buy up to 40 grams of weed a month from pharmacies, grow it themselves or join cannabis clubs where members tend the plants together.

MEXICO: Mexico's Supreme Court decriminalised recreational cannabis use in June 2021

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA: In 2018, South Africa's apex court ruled that private, personal cannabis use by adults was legal.

CONCLUSION

Cannabis has played a profound role on the stage of human history. Cannabis is a highly valued crop not just because of its medical and recreational purpose but also for its varying qualities such as highly durable hemp fibres, cellulose pulp used in paper production, etc. Cannabis is the most commonly used illegal drug in India. Currently, an increasing number of criminal cases has been an issue in India as the punishment for consumption as well as possession (conscious possession is another debatable subject) is so severe it may extend up to life imprisonment along with the fine accordingly, According to NDPS Act, 1985 and the notifications issued by the hon'ble court through various judgements, it is given that the burden of proof is on the person who is arrested with possession of any of the substances covered under NDPS Act (reverse burden of proof) no matter whether the possession was in conscious or not. In the case of juveniles, there are no specific laws that protect them from the same punishment as many of them are pushed into such activities in which they don't know about the repercussions. One of the few plants that has the ability to influence human consciousness is cannabis. Many spiritual healers have used cannabis for their work since ancient times. They are a part of a varied range of cultures. Cannabis has a number of spiritual applications, including calming the mind for meditation, which relaxes the body, diagnosing and treating illnesses of the body, mind, and spirit, and overcoming delusions and shifting perceptions to achieve transcendence, unification, and spiritual happiness. Despite the radicals' vehement opposition to the cannabis debate, the majority of the country's governments reach some unexpected conclusions about cannabis use. Therefore, the legalisation of cannabis comes with manifold advantages for India in terms of the nation as a whole or at the individual level.