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23rd April 2021

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Note -

- **The Newspaper clippings pasted in PDF are important from Mains point of view as it contains the fodder material for Mains Answer Writing.**
- **Also watch DND video lectures everyday @ 4 PM on Sleepy's YouTube channel in order to understand how to get the most out of everyday's Newspaper .**

Click here to watch the following topics on YouTube

1. Environment

1.1.U.S. will cut emissions by 52% by 2030'

- U.S. President Joe Biden announced that the **U.S. would cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 50%-52% by 2030 relative to 2005 levels,** in a clean break with the Trump administration policies on climate action.
- The President made the new target announcements at a **'Leaders Summit on Climate',** which he is hosting and in which 40 heads of state and government are invited — including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, President Xi Jinping of China and President Vladimir Putin of Russia.
- U.S. would double, by 2024, its annual financing commitments to developing countries, including a tripling of its adaptation finance by 2024.

Major Commitments

- **U.S. would cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 50%-52% by 2030 relative to 2005 levels,**
- U.S. would **double, by 2024, its annual financing commitments** to developing countries, including a tripling of its adaptation finance by 2024.
- Mr. Biden's financing announcements **are part of a $100 billion a year commitment** from developed countries to developing countries for the period 2020-25
- The emissions targets — part of the **Paris Agreement on climate — are non-binding** and the details of how they will be achieved are not available.

India

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that **India and the U.S. were launching an energy and climate partnership** during U.S. President Joe Biden's Leaders Summit on Climate.
- Its goal would be to **mobilise finance and speed clean energy deployment; demonstrate and scale innovative clean technologies** needed to decarbonise sectors, including industry, transportation, power, and buildings; and build capacity to measure, manage, and adapt to the risks of climate-related impacts
- The partnership will proceed along **two main tracks: the strategic clean energy partnership** and the **climate action and finance mobilisation dialogue,** which will build on and subsume a range of existing processes.

NDCs or Nationally Defined Contributions

- are **targets defined by each country** to help achieve the Paris Agreement's objective of keeping global warming to considerably below 2 degrees Celsius, preferably 1.5 degrees Celsius.

India's NDC

- India is targeting a 2030 GDP emissions intensity (i.e., **volume of emissions per unit of GDP) t**hat is **33%-35% below 2005 levels.**
- It also seeks to have **40% of power generated from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.**

Paris Climate Accord

- It is a **legally binding international** treaty on climate change.
- It was adopted by 196 countries at Conference of the Parties **COP 21 in Paris in December 2015.**
- Goal is to **limit global warming to well below 2° Celsius,** and **preferably limit it to 1.5° Celsius,** compared to pre-industrial levels

Paris agreement legally binding or not

- There is a common misconception that the agreement is not legally binding — that is simply not true.
- There is **no legally binding target**, but the **obligation to regularly set national targets is binding.**

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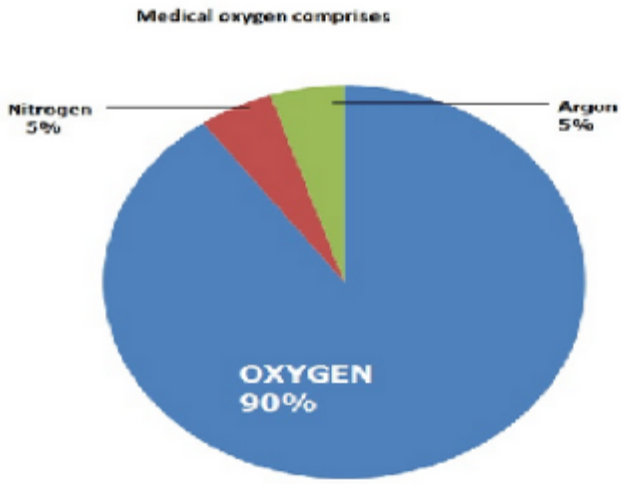
2. Science & Technology

2.1.Medical oxygen

- The Delhi High Court on Thursday **directed the Centre to immediately create a special** corridor for safe and swift passage of oxygen tankers from neighbouring States such as Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to the Capital.

Medical oxygen

- Medical oxygen comprises of minimum **90% oxygen with 5% nitrogen and 5% argon.**
- Mostly, oxygen concentrators or **oxygen plants** contain 90-95% O2 with traces of nitrogen and argon.



Methods

- There are different ways of making oxygen but all the techniques eliminate nitrogen, moisture, hydrocarbons and CO2 are removed leaving behind only oxygen.

Pressure swing method

- Pressurized air fed to a molecular sieve, which are then **pressurized to absorb nitrogen, moisture, hydrocarbon**s and CO2 allowing oxygen to flow through.

Cryogenic air separation

- Largely used in the **making of oxygen plants.**
- It functions by **liquefaction of the atmospheric air in the air separation unit of the plant.**
- Whatever technique is used it must meet the rules and regulations of Indian and European Pharmaceuticals standards.

How to maintain purity of Oxygen ?

- It is imperative that **purity and the recommended composition** of oxygen for medical oxygen must be maintained.
- It is therefore very necessary for compressors and molecular to be cleaned so that medical oxygen remains without impurities.
- **Oxygen tanks** used for storing oxygen for medical purposes must be **properly cleaned** to ensure there are no contaminants.
- And oxygen cylinders should also be **properly vacuumed** before filling them with oxygen.

Medical oxygen Vs Industrial Oxygen

Medical Oxygen

- Medical oxygen is **high purity oxygen** that is used for medical treatments and is developed for use in the human body.
- Medical oxygen cylinders contain a high purity of oxygen gas; **no other types of gases are allowed in the cylinder to prevent contamination.**
- There are additional requirements and rules for medical oxygen, including **requiring a person to have a prescription to order medical oxygen.**

Industrial Oxygen

- Industrial oxygen is focused on uses in industrial plants including **combustion, oxidation, cutting and chemical reactions.**
- The industrial oxygen **purity levels are not appropriate for human use** and there could be impurities from dirty equipment or industrial storage that could make people ill

Who controls the supply of medical grade oxygen?

Empowered group

- The supply of medical oxygen is currently being allocated **centrally and monitored by the empowered group, EG II,** headed by the **secretary** in the department for promotion of industry and internal trade **(DPIIT).**
- The EG II has **members nominated from all the states,** along with **representatives from all major oxygen manufactures,** All India Industrial Gases Manufacturers' Association **(AIIGMA),** Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation **(PESO),** the Ministry of **Road Transport,** and the **Indian Railways.**
- It was constituted in March 2020.

What is the capacity and demand of medical oxygen production in the country?

- Before Covid

  ✓ The national demand before COVID-19 outbreak last year was about **700 MT/day.**

- First wave

  ✓ This jumped to **2,800 MT/day** in the first spike of COVID-19 last year

- Second Wave

  ✓ Currently the demand is estimated at about **5500 MT/day** in the second wave.

Production

- As per government sources and EG II, India's **daily production capacity of medical oxygen is 7,287 MT** and there is an availability of a buffer stock of approximately 50,000 MT.
- The current consumption is less than 4,000 MT/day.
- In view of the increased demand for medical oxygen, 28 industrial oxygen plants located in the **steel manufacturing facilities,** of both public and private sectors, are **supplying about 1,500 MT of medical oxygen every day.**
- Similarly, Oil and Gas industries, both **public and private sectors, are also supplying oxygen supplies for medical use.**
- Safety stocks of these industrial establishments are also being diverted for medical use.

Issue

- Most large plants producing medical oxygen are concentrated in **Eastern and Western India.**
- The **densely populated areas of north and central India have limited capacities** and therefore **logistics becomes an issue** for supply of the commodity in some regions.
- States of **Bihar, UP, MP and Rajasthan**, despite their huge population, have very **limited medical oxygen producing capacities.**
- The Health Ministry has repeatedly **warned against oxygen wastage and unnecessary use.**
- Industrial experts have raised concerns over possible **leakages in hospital pipelines** that supply oxygen.
- Last year, an **expert committee under the Health Ministry** fixed oxygen supply to **40 litres in intensive care units and 15 litres in normal wards per patient per minute.**
- It has advised monitoring of patients on oxygen support daily, and that **only those with oxygen saturation levels below 94%** be put on oxygen support.

Who controls the pricing of such oxygen?

- Medical oxygen is **not a controlled commodity.**
- The **National Pharma Pricing Authority** has only **stepped in after the Covid-19 outbreak to control the prices** in view of the increased demand.
- In **normal times free interstate movement** is allowed for medical oxygen but **restrictions were put in place last year after the COVID-19 outbreak.**

Can industrial oxygen manufacturers switch to produce medical grade oxygen?

- Yes, this is possible and in last few weeks many industrial establishments from steel plants to Ethelyn Glycol manufacturers **using industrial grade oxygen have switched to producing medical grade oxygen.** It may be safe to assume that switching from industrial grade to medical grade is possible and can be implemented quickly as these units have shown.

2.2.UN drives campaign for youth as COVID-19 pandemic ups anxiety among 90%

- **United Nations agencies and youth organisations** have come together to launch a campaign unique campaign to **involve the youth of the world in building their lives impacted by the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.**

About Initiative

- **Global Youth Mobilization** has been launched for **youths in communities impacted by the Covid-19** pandemic.
- A **Global Youth Summit (GYS),** to be held virtually on 23rd-25th April 2021 aims **to offer young people aged 14-30 new insights, skills and contacts,** as well as a platform to engage with their peers, leaders and policy makers.
- It will helps to **address the negative impact of the pandemic** on young people and support them to build back better.
- It is **supported by the world's six largest youth organisations, World Health Organization (WHO),** and **United Nations (UN) Foundation.**
- **Covid-19 Solidarity Response Fund also provide funding**

Reasons

- Around 1.2 billion **young people impacted by the Covid-19** pandemic response measures.
- **Disruptions to education, employment, services** and social support have changed the future of an entire generation.

Covid-19 Solidarity Response Fund

- **Established by the WHO with the help of the UN Foundation** and the Swiss Philanthropy Foundation.

2.3.Fifth session of Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs

- Recently, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) inaugurated the **fifth session of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) established under Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC).**
- The 5th Session of CCSCH began on 20th April with a series of virtual sessions running till 29 April, 2021, with nearly 300 experts from 50 countries taking part in the deliberations

Reason

- The risk of unscrupulous and intentional **adulteration of spices t**hrough substitution due to their high economic value.
- This **economically motivated adulteration is a major malpractice** and we need to be extremely vigilant, particularly in the regulatory space to avoid such practices.

- It is **important that we have harmonized Codex standards** for spices products in global trade and this is a work that needs the highest **priority to ensure the safety and quality of the spices** and culinary herbs that are being traded across the world
- **At the present session**, the **committee will be considering the quality Standards for dried or dehydrated forms of Ginger, Cloves, Saffron and two culinary herbs, Oregano & Basil at step seven, besides Nutmeg and Chilli peppers & Paprika** at step four in the Codex procedure of elaboration of food standards.
- There are also **three proposals for new work, viz. Cardamom, Turmeric and prioritized group standard for spices** in the form of dried fruits and berries.

ABOUT CCSCH & CAC

- To develop and expand worldwide standards for spices and culinary herbs, and to consult with other international organisations in the standards development process **CCSCH was formed in 2013 with support of more than a hundred countries with India as the host country and Spices Board India as the Secretariat** for organising the sessions of the committee.
- Since its inception, the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs has been **successful in developing harmonised global Codex standards for spices and herbs.**
- In its past four sessions, the committee developed and finalized **standards for four spices, viz. dried or dehydrated forms of black/white/green pepper, cumin, thyme, and garlic.**

Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)

- Set up in 1963, the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) is an intergovernmental body established **jointly by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO),** within the framework of the Joint Food Standards Programme to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair practices in the food trade.
- The **Secretariat of the CAC** is hosted at **FAO headquarters in Rome**
- The **Codex Alimentarius is a collection of international food standards** that have been adopted by the CAC.
- Codex Standards **cover all the main foods**, whether **processed, semi-processed or raw.**
- The Agreement on Application of **Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS)of the World Trade Organization (WTO) recognizes Codex standards,** guidelines and recommendations as reference standards for international trade and trade dispute settlement

CODEX STANDARDS/TEXTS

- **Voluntary in nature,** Codex standards can **be general or specific and are recognised by WTO Agreements** as reference standards

General Standards, Guidelines and Codes of Practice

- These core Codex texts, typically **deal with hygienic practice, labelling, contaminants, additives, inspection & certification,** nutrition and **residues of veterinary drugs and pesticides** and apply horizontally to products and product categories.

Commodity standards

- Codex commodity standards refer to a **specific product** although increasingly Codex n**ow develops standards for food groups.**

Regional standards

- Standards developed by the **respective Regional Coordinating** Committees, applicable to the respective regions.
- The Codex, which is voluntary, is often **used as a basis for national food standards regulations, including food labels.**

National Codex Contact Point (NCCP)

FSSAI — India

"**Codex India**" the National Codex Contact Point (NCCP) India, was established in the year 1971. Earlier, the NCCP was located in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. However, with the formation of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) in 2008, FSSAI is now the National Codex Contact Point (NCCP) for maintaining contact with the CAC, exchange of information, responding to queries, participation in meetings etc.

The NCCP shall perform the following core functions:

- Act as a link between the Codex Secretariat, National Codex Committee and Shadow Committee;
- Coordinate all relevant Codex activities within India;
- Receive all Codex final texts (standards, codes of practice, guidelines and other advisory texts) and working documents of Codex Sessions and ensure that these are circulated to those concerned;
- Send comments on Codex documents or proposals to the CAC or its subsidiary bodies and /or the Codex Secretariat within the time frame;
- Work in close cooperation with the National Codex Committee and its Shadow Committees;
- Act as a channel for the exchange of information and coordination of activities with other Codex Members;
- Receive invitations to Codex Sessions and inform the relevant Chairpersons and the Codex Secretariat of the names of participants representing India;
- Maintain a library of Codex standards, Code of Practice, Guidelines and any other documents and publications on or related to Codex; and
- Promote Codex Activities throughout India
- Build capacity in country to effectively take up Codex work.

Adulteration

- Adulteration is the process of **adding unwanted substances** to the food, with **similar appearance/ colour** for making profits.
- Adulteration is very common today and the **most commonly adulterated food product is milk**

Milk

- Diluted **water, detergent, fat , urea , caustic soda and skimmed milk.**
- **Khoya** is adulterated with **paper, refined oil and skimmed milk powder.**

Tea/Coffee

- Tea leaves are usually adulterated with same **coloured leaves.**
- Coffee seeds, on the other hand are adulterated with **tamarind seeds, mustard seeds and also chicori.**

Wheat and other food grains

- **Ergot, a fungus** containing poisonous substances and is extremely injurious to health.

Vegetables

- Different coloured and textured vegetables are often **coloured with different dyes and substances.**
- These vegetables are mostly **adulterated with malachite green,** a chemical dye which is known to have carcinogenic.

- Common adulterants in fruits and vegetables are **oxytocin sachharin, wax, calcium carbide and copper sulphate.**

Sweets

- Do you get Indian sweets covered with a silver foil during Diwali? According to Indian regulations, **silver must be 99.9 per cent pure if it is used as a food ingredient.**
- However, with silver becoming expensive many sweet shop owners **use silver vark that could contain aluminium.**
- The most common ingredients in making these sweets are khoya and chenna and they're often **adulterated with starch.**

Test

- Boil a small sample in water, **cool it then add a few drops of iodine solution.**
- A **blue color indicates the presence of starch.** Also, sugar used in making these sweets might be adulterated with tar dye which only makes it worse.

Honey

- There are so many varieties of honey available in the market, but due to its steep price, honey is commonly a**dulterated with molasses sugar** to increase the bottle quantity.
- Most honey brands being sold in the country contain varying amounts of antibiotics and their consumption over time could induce resistance to **antibiotics,** lead to blood- related disorders and injury to the liver.

Dal

- The most **commonly adulterated dal is arhar dal** and is usually adulterated with **metanil yellow. Metanil yellow is a principal non-permitted food colour** used extensively in India.
- The effect of long-term consumption of metanil yellow on the **developing and adult brain** causes neurotoxicity.

Test

- Metanil yellow is used in dal as an adulterant for colouring.
- Its presence can be tested in dal by **adding a few drops of HCl** to a test sample, **if the solution turns pink in colour,** it indicates the presence of metanil yellow.

Spices

- Recently, a major Indian supplier was caught and had to destroy tons of turmeric for dangerous adulteration **using metanil yellow and red oxide of lead** - the later being highly carcinogenic.
- **Soap stone or other earthy material** and foreign resinare the common adulterant used in Asafoetida.
- **Papaya seeds, black berries** are the common adulterant **used in black pepper** as they are almost similar in size but tasteless (sometimes bitter).
- Red chilli powder is adulterated with **brick powder, salt powder or talc powder and artificial colours like Sudan Red.**

- The most expensive spice in the world. **Saffron is adulterated by coloured dried tendrils of maize cob.**

Butter and cream

- Butter can be **diluted with water or partially replaced with cheaper plant oils such as palm oil, sunflower oil and soybean oil.**
- This increases the profits derived from a given volume of milk.

Ice cream

- Most common adulterants in ice cream are **pepperoil, ethylacetate, butraldehyde, emil acetate, nitrate, washing powder** etc are not less than poison.
- **Pepperoil is used as a pesticide and ethyl acetate causes terribble diseases** affecting lungs, kidneys and heart.
- Ice cream is manufactured in extremely cold chamber where fat is hardened and several harmful substances are added.
- Also a kind of **gum is added which is sticky and slow melting.**
- This **gum is obtained by boiling animal parts like tail, the nose** etc.

Detect Adulteration With Rapid Test (DART)

- By FSSAI

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

- is an **statutory body** established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 (FSS Act).
- FSSAI is an autonomous body. The administrative ministry for FSSAI is the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.**
- FSSAI headquartered in New Delhi
- FSSAI is the **National Codex Contact Point of India (NCCP),** which maintains Codex Alimentarius Commission's (CAC) standard in India.

Functions

- **Scientific Committee –** To look into the matters related to food standards
- **Central advisory Committee** – To look into the matters related to **Compliance and Inspections**

Initiative of FSAAI

- **Food Safety Compliance System (FoSCoS)**

  ✓To **replace existing Food Licensing** and Registration System

- **RUCO (Repurpose Used Cooking Oil)**

  ✓Total Polar Compounds**(TPC) of Vegetable oil is limited to 25 percent. Beyond** which the vegetable oil shall be collected and converted into **Bio Diesel**

- **infoLnet (Indian Food Library Network)**

✓ It is a **network of Indian Food laboratories** connected to a centralised network for effective management.

- **Others**

  ✓ Eat Right India

  ✓ Save food Share food

Jaivik Bharat Portal

- It is the **regulatory portal on Organic Food in India.**
- It was jointly developed by **FSSAI, APEDA and PGS-India.**

3. Economic

3.1.Over 82% small businesses had negative Covid impact: Survey

- **Over 82% small businesses had negative Covid impact; lack of market access top challenge: Survey by Dun & Bradstreet**
- The surveyed businesses in seven major cities belonged to the **manufacturing and services sectors with annual revenue between Rs 100 crore and Rs 300 crore.**

Key findings

Covid impact on MSMEs

- Over 82 per cent of more than 250 small businesses in India said that they had a **negative Covid impact**
- 70 per cent believed their **pre-Covid level recovery to take nearly a year**
- **Lack of market access** (42 per cent), **overall productivity improvement** (37 per cent), and **access to more finance** (37 per cent) were the **top three challenges cited by MSMEs** in the survey titled Impact of COVID-19 on Small Businesses in India and the Way Ahead.
- **82% of surveyed Small Businesses have digitized their daily operations during this pandemic,** which helped them in **Reduction in Cost (54%) and Enhancing Competitiveness (51%)**

MSME in India

- India has a base of around **6.33 crore MSMEs** out of which **6.30 crore (over 99 per cent) are micro-enterprises,** according to the MSME Ministry's annual report 2020-21.
- **Small enterprises are 3.31 lakh and 0.05 lakh** are medium enterprises **accounting for 0.52 per cent and 0.01 per cent of total estimated MSMEs,** respectively.

3.2.M Narasimham- Father of banking reform

- Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor **M Narasimham passed away recently.**
- Considered as the father of banking reforms, Narasimham, who was battling a Covid-19 related illness, breathed his last in a Hyderabad hospital on Tuesday. He was 94.

First Narasimhan Committee Report – 1991

- Establishment of **4 tier hierarchy for banking structure** with 3 to 4 large banks (including SBI) at the top and at bottom rural banks engaged in agricultural activities.
- A phased **reduction in statutory liquidity ratio.**
- Phased achievement of **8% capital adequacy ratio.**
- It also introduced the **concept of rural-focused banks such as local area banks.**
- It introduced the **concept of capital adequacy ratio**

Narasimham Committee Report II – 1998

- known as the Banking Sector Committee.
- **Merger of strong banks** which will have 'multiplier effect' on the industry.
- It recommended **'Narrow Banking Concept'** where **weak banks will be allowed to place their funds only in the short term and risk-free assets.**
- **Freedom for banks** in its working and bank autonomy

The background of LAB scheme (Source RBI)

Objective

- In 1996 it was decided to allow **the establishment of local banks in the private sector.**
- These banks were **expected to bridge the gaps in credit availability and enhance the institutional credit framework in the rural and semi-urban areas** and provide efficient and competitive financial intermediation services in their area of operation.

Promoters

- The promoters of a LAB could be **individuals, corporate entities and societies.**
- The **number of NRI promoters was not to exceed 20%** of the total number of promoters.

Scope of activities

- LABs were required to **finance agriculture and allied activities, SSI, agro-industrial activities, trading activities and non-farm sector**.
- Their **lending to priority sector was to be at least 40%** of the net bank credit and lending to weaker section was to be at least 25% of their priority sector lending (10% of net bank credit)

Registration, licensing, scheduling:

- The bank would be **registered as a public limited company under the Companies Act, 1956.**
- It would be licensed under the **Banking Regulation Act, 1949 an**d would be e**ligible for inclusion in the Second Schedule** of the **Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.**

Status of LABs functioning

- Coastal Local Area Bank Ltd. (Andhra Pradesh)
- Krishna Bhima Samruddhi Local Area Bank (Krt & AnP)

4. Polity

4.1.Reward policy under NDPS Act

- Recently Punjab government has approved a **reward policy to encourage information and inputs** leading to recovery of drugs under **the Narcotic Drugs And Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.**
- **Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (PIT NDPS) Act, 1988**, a law under which **preventive detention for a period of one year without bail is possible.**

About Policy

- It will **recognise government servants-informers-sources for their role in providing inputs leading** to the recovery of substantial quantity of drugs and in successful implementation of various provisions of the NDPS Act, 1985 and PIT NDPS Act, 1988.
- The quantum of reward for successful investigation shall be decided on case-to-case basis.

Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985

- The Act is designed to fulfill India's treaty obligations under the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, **Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.**
- Under the Act, the **cultivation, production, manufacture, possession, sale, purchase, transportation,** warehousing, consumption, inter-State movement, transshipment and import and export of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances is **prohibited, except for medical or scientific purposes and in accordance** with the terms and conditions of any license, permit or authorization given by the Government.

Central government

- Empowered to **regulate the cultivation, production, manufacture,** import, export, sale, consumption, use etc of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.
- Empowered to **declare any substance, based on an assessment of its likely use in the manufacture of narcotics drugs** and psychotropic substances as a controlled substance.

State government

- State Governments are empowered **to permit and regulate possession and inter-State movement of opium, poppy straw,** the manufacture of medicinal opium and the cultivation of cannabis **excluding hashish.**

Central and State government

- Both the Central Government and State Governments are empowered to **appoint officers for the purposes of the Act**

Current affairs Worksheet (23rd April 2021)

Factual sheet for Quick revision

Topic	Description	Update
Environment	Paris agreement NDC	

SnT	Medical oxygen Vs Industrial oxygen Regulation for Medical oxygen Global Youth Summit Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs Codex Alimentarius Commission Adulteration Food Safety and Standards Authority of India Initiative of FSSAI	

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Economy	MSME Number in India (Order) Narasimhan Committee Local area bank	
Polity	Reward policy under NDPS Act NDPS Act (Union and state powers)	