

# Cannabis decriminalised by Thailand

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**In news**— Recently, Thailand has become the first Asian nation to make marijuana legal for medical and industrial use.

## **Key updates-**

- Under decriminalisation, growing and trading marijuana and hemp products or using parts of the plant to treat illnesses is not a crime.
- Cafes and restaurants can also serve cannabis-infused food and drinks, but the products should only contain less than 0.2 per cent tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the plant's main psychoactive compound.
- Harsh penalties, up to three months imprisonment and an \$800 fine for smoking cannabis in public, will remain in place under the Public Health Act.
- But it is not following the examples of **Uruguay and Canada, the only two countries so far that have legalised recreational marijuana on a national basis.**

## **What is Cannabis?**

- **Cannabis, also known as marijuana among other names, is a psychoactive drug from the Cannabis plant.**
- **Native to Central and South Asia, the cannabis plant has been used as a drug for both recreational and entheogenic purposes** and in various traditional medicines for centuries.
- Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the main psychoactive component of cannabis.
- It can be used by smoking, vaporizing, within food, or as an extract.
- It has various mental and physical effects, which include euphoria, altered states of mind and sense of time, difficulty concentrating, impaired short-term

memory, impaired body movement, relaxation, and an increase in appetite.

### **Regulation of its usage-**

- The legality of cannabis for medical and recreational use varies by country, in terms of its possession, distribution, and cultivation, and how it can be consumed and what medical conditions it can be used for.
- These policies in most countries are regulated by three United Nations treaties: the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and the 1988 Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.