

WADA to review banned status of cannabis for athletes

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In news- The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) said that it would initiate a scientific review of the cannabis ban for athletes. It reviews its list of prohibited substances every year and the new review will suggest whether a drug should remain on the list after 2022.

More information-

- In July, 2021, **American sprinter Sha'Carri Richardson** had tested positive for cannabis during the US selection trials for the Tokyo Olympics.
- As a consequence, the US Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) banned her for a month, and did not include her in the American team.
- Her disqualification reignited the debate over the cannabis ban in Olympic sports, given that **cannabis is legal in many American states.**
- In 2013, Uruguay became the first country to make buying and selling of marijuana for recreational use legal.
- Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, Spain and South Africa and several countries have decriminalised it to a certain degree.
- **India has not legalised it.**
- WADA, according to its code, **prohibits substances that meet two of three criteria-**
 - It enhances, or could potentially enhance an athlete's performance;
 - It poses a health risk to athletes;
 - It violates 'the spirit of sport';

However, it does not specifically say which criteria are

violated because of the consumption of marijuana.

About World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)-

- It is a non-profit foundation **initiated by the International Olympic Committee (IOC)** to promote, coordinate, and monitor the fight against drugs in sports.
- It was set up on **10 November 1999** in Lausanne, Switzerland, as a result of the “**Declaration of Lausanne**“, to promote, coordinate and monitor the fight against drugs in sports.
- Since 2002, the **organization’s headquarters have been located in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.**
- WADA is responsible for the **World Anti-Doping Code**, adopted by more than 650 sports organizations, including international sports federations, national anti-doping organizations, the IOC, and the International Paralympic Committee.
- As of 2021, its president is Witold Banka.
- Initially funded by the IOC, WADA receives half of its budgetary requirements from them, with the other half coming from various national governments.
- Its governing bodies are also composed in equal parts by representatives from the sporting movement (including athletes) and governments of the world.

The **highest decision-making authority is the 38-member foundation board**, which is composed equally of IOC representatives and representatives of national governments.