

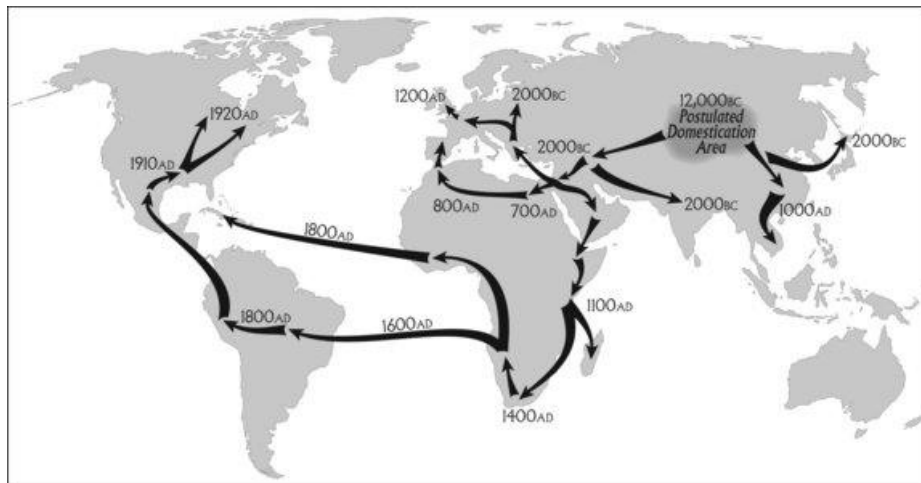
To,

Shri Narendra Modiji,
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India
South Block,
Raisina Hill,
New Delhi – 110011

Dear Respected Sir,

This is not a plead to legalize cannabis, it is an epiphany, even if you have never used cannabis or understand it completely, I request you to read this till the end and make your judgment. All I seek is a logical answer to my problem as I explain it deeply.

Cannabis use can be dated thousands of years back and has always been used for its spiritual and medicinal properties. In most of its history, cannabis has been legal, it is only most recently considered as an illegal drug and said to be bad and evil. In a recent report by Barney Warf, a professor of geography at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, he describes how cannabis use originated thousands of years ago in Asia, and has since found its way to many regions of the world, eventually spreading to the Americas and the United States.



This map shows how marijuana spread throughout the world, from its origins on the steppes of Central Asia, Mount Kailas

"For the most part, it was widely used for medicine and spiritual purposes," during pre-modern times, said Warf. For example, the Vikings and medieval Germans used cannabis for relieving pain during childbirth and for toothaches, he said.

"The idea that this is an evil drug is a very recent construction," and the fact that it is illegal is a "historical anomaly," Warf said. Marijuana has been legal in many regions of the world for most of its history.

It is important to distinguish between the two familiar subspecies of the cannabis plant, Warf said. *Cannabis sativa*, known as marijuana, has psychoactive properties. The other plant is *Cannabis sativa* L. (The L was included in the name in honor of the botanist Carl Linnaeus.) This subspecies is known as hemp; it is a non psychoactive form of cannabis, and is used in manufacturing products such as oil, cloth and fuel.

A second psychoactive species of the plant, *Cannabis indica*, was identified by the French naturalist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, and a third, uncommon one, *Cannabis ruderalis*, was named in 1924 by Russian botanist D.E. Janischevsky.

Cannabis plants are believed to have evolved on the steppes of Central Asia, specifically in the regions that are now Mongolia and southern Siberia, according to Warf. The history of cannabis use goes back as far as 12,000 years, which places the plant among humanity's oldest cultivated crops, according to information in the book "Marihuana: The First Twelve Thousand Years" (Springer, 1980).

"It likely flourished in the nutrient-rich dump sites of prehistoric hunters and gatherers," Warf wrote in his study.

Burned cannabis seeds have also been found in kurgan burial mounds in Siberia dating back to 3,000 B.C., and some of the tombs of noble people buried in Xinjiang region of China and Siberia around 2500 B.C. have included large quantities of mummified psychoactive marijuana.

Both hemp and psychoactive marijuana were used widely in ancient China, Warf wrote. The first record of the drug's medicinal use dates to 4000 B.C. The herb was used, for instance, as an anesthetic during surgery, and stories say it was even used by the Chinese Emperor Shen Nung in 2737 B.C. (However, whether Shen Nung was a real or a mythical figure has been debated, as the first emperor of a unified China was born much later than the supposed Shen Nung.)

From China, coastal farmers brought pot to Korea about 2000 B.C. or earlier, according to the book "The Archeology of Korea" (Cambridge University Press, 1993). Cannabis came to the South Asian subcontinent between 2000 B.C. and 1000 B.C., when the region was invaded by the Aryans — a group that spoke an archaic Indo-European language. The drug became widely used in India, where it was celebrated as one of "five kingdoms of herbs ... which release us from anxiety" in one of the ancient Sanskrit Vedic poems whose name translate into "Science of Charms." Originated from mount Kailas, the abode of the allmighty beyond birth and death, Shiva. It is said that cannabis helped him save the universe from darkness and ignorance and is many times depicted as smoking a chillum pipe.

Cannabis came to the Middle East between 2000 B.C. and 1400 B.C., and it was probably used there by the Scythians, a nomadic Indo-European group. The Scythians also likely carried the drug into southeast Russia and Ukraine, as they occupied both territories for years, according to Warf's report. Germanic

tribes brought the drug into Germany, and marijuana went from there to Britain during the 5th century with the Anglo-Saxon invasions.

"Cannabis seeds have also been found in the remains of Viking ships dating to the mid-ninth century," Warf wrote in the study.

Over the next centuries, cannabis migrated to various regions of the world, traveling through Africa, reaching South America in the 19th century and being carried north afterwards, eventually reaching North America.

After this really long "trip" throughout the pre-modern and modern worlds, cannabis finally came to the United States at the beginning of the 20th century. It arrived in the southwest United States from Mexico, with immigrants fleeing that country during the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1911.

"Many early prejudices against marijuana were thinly veiled racist fears of its smokers, often promulgated by reactionary newspapers," Warf wrote in his report. "Mexicans were frequently blamed for smoking marijuana, property crimes, seducing children and engaging in murderous sprees."

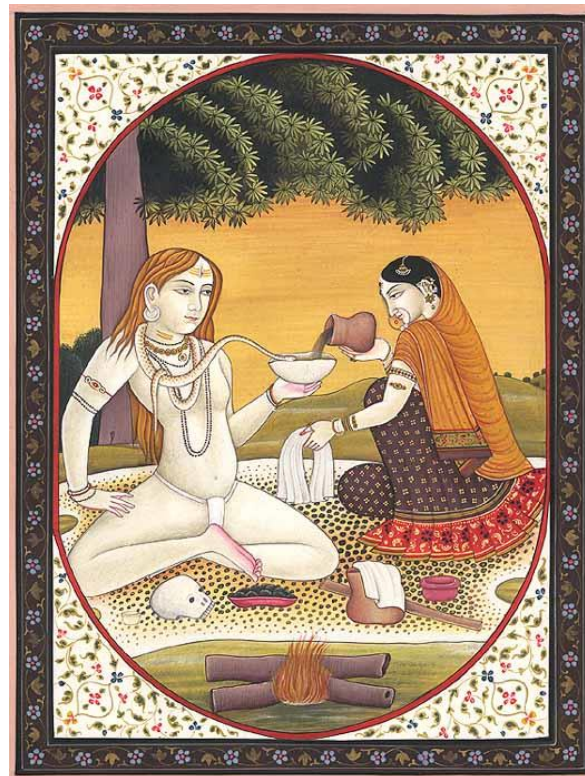
Americans laws never recognized the difference between Cannabis sativa L. and Cannabis sativa. The plant was first outlawed in Utah in 1915, and by 1931 it was illegal in 29 states, according to the report.

In 1930, Harry Aslinger became the first commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics (FBN) and undertook multiple efforts to make marijuana illegal in all states. In 1937, the Marijuana Tax Act put cannabis under the regulation of the Drug Enforcement Agency, criminalizing possession of the plant throughout the country, California being one of the first states to ban cannabis.

Cannabis has a long history in India, veiled in legends and religion. The earliest mention of cannabis has been found in The Vedas, or sacred Hindu texts. These writings may have been compiled as early as 2000 to 1400 B.C. According to The Vedas, cannabis was one of five sacred plants and a guardian angel lived in its leaves. The Vedas call cannabis a source of happiness, joy-giver, liberator that was compassionately given to humans to help us attain delight and lose fear (Abel, 1980). It releases us from anxiety. The god, Shiva is frequently associated with cannabis, called bhang in India. According to legend, Shiva wandered off into the fields after an angry discourse with his family. Drained from the family conflict and the hot sun, he fell asleep under a leafy plant. When he awoke, his curiosity led him to sample the leaves of the plant. Instantly rejuvenated, Shiva made the plant his favorite food and he became known as the Lord of Bhang.

During the Middle Ages, soldiers often took a drink of bhang before entering battle, just as Westerners took a swig of whiskey. One story tells of the Sikh leader, Gobind Singh's soldiers being scared by an attacking elephant with a sword in his trunk. Terrified, the men nearly mutinied until Singh gave one courageous man a mixture of bhang.. The herbs gave him the strength and agility to slip under the elephant from below and kill him without endangering himself. This act of courage led Singh's men to victory over the enemy.

Cannabis has been popular in India since the beginning of recorded history and is often taken as a drink. Nuts and spices, like almonds, pistachios, poppy seeds, pepper, ginger and sugar are combined with cannabis and boiled with milk. Yogurt is also used instead of milk. Bhang is also rolled and eaten in small balls. Bhang is about the strength of Western marijuana. Because milk contains fat, mixing cannabis with milk is an effective means of extracting THC but ingesting marijuana takes longer to feel the effects and is less consistent. Other preparations of cannabis in India include ganja and charas. Stronger than bhang, ganja is made from the flowers and upper leaves of the female plant. Charas is the strongest preparation and is made from blooming flowers. Similar in strength to hashish, charas contains a lot of resin. Both are smoked in an earthenware pipe called a chillum. The pipe is usually shared among 2 to 5 people, making smoking a communal activity.



Parvati offering bhang to Shiva.

The British found the use of cannabis so extensive in colonial India, that they commissioned a large scale study in the late 1890s (Iverson, 2008). They were concerned that the abuse of cannabis was endangering the health of the native people and driving them insane. The British government asked the government of India to appoint a commission to look into the cultivation of the hemp plant, preparation of drugs from it, trade in those drugs, the social and moral impact of its consumption, and possible prohibition. Over 1,000 standardized interviews were conducted throughout India by eminent British and Indian medical experts. The commission was systematic and thorough. It sampled a large and diverse group of people in a range of situations, from farmers to hospital psychiatrists. After years of detailed work, The Indian Hemp Drugs Commission Report produced six volumes of data and conclusions. Commissioners were particularly concerned with whether or not cannabis caused psychoses. After years of thorough and well conducted research, The Commission concluded that

suppressing the use of herbal cannabis (bhang) would be totally unjustifiable. They concluded that its use is very ancient, has some religious sanction among Hindus, and is harmless in moderation. In fact, more harm was done by alcohol. Furthermore, prohibition would be difficult to enforce, encourage outcries by religious clerics, and possibly lead to the use of more dangerous narcotics. These findings of The Indian Hemp Drugs Commission Report of 1894, conducted over 100 years ago, are surprisingly relevant today. Even after this extensive research that was conducted over years, which proved that the cannabis plant was not harmful for man and that there is no justifiable reason to ban it, India still had to give in to the western pressure and criminalize something natural. The sacred plant is what brings happiness to man in sadness and bring good into the most evil beings, it is a plant of the gods, and for a country which follows and understands its religion with great devotion, it is unbelievable that it would ban a plant that they pray to. On auspicious festivals like Mahashivratri and Holi, people celebrate, dance and have the time of their lives by consuming bhaang, which is nothing but cannabis in an edible form. People do this because they are celebrating the day when almighty Shiva saved the universe from darkness and ignorance with the help of cannabis, it is considered to be his favorite plant. It is literally a gift from the gods to mankind to help them and keep them going in every situation.

Even after such a colorful history of the plant with the country, and all the years of research and withstanding the pressure, India finally had to give in. A recent article on TOI (The Times of India) gave the exact history of NDPS and marijuana illegalisation, The 1961 "single convention on narcotic drugs" was the first ever international treaty to have clubbed cannabis (or marijuana) with hard drugs and imposed a blanket ban on their production and supply except for medicinal and research purposes. During the negotiations for the UN treaty signed in New York, a group of cannabis and opium producing countries, led by India, opposed its intolerance to the socio cultural use of organic drugs. They were however overwhelmed by the US and other western countries which espoused tight controls on the production of organic raw material and on illicit trafficking.

The sharp divergences between the caucuses led by India and the US emanated from their contrasting domestic policies, particularly on cannabis. While most of the states in the US had banned all narcotic drugs by the '40s, India had a more pragmatic approach since its colonial days: its restrictions were focused on harder substances like opium. The Indian hemp drug commission appointed in 1893, far from finding it addictive, hailed cannabis for the "mild euphoria" and "pleasant relaxation" caused by it. In deference to the scale of traditional consumption in India, the 1961 treaty also gave it a reprieve of 25 years to clamp down on recreational drugs derived from the tops. It was towards the end of this exemption period that the Rajiv Gandhi government came up with a law in 1985 conforming to the 1961 treaty: the narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances Act (NDPS). Accordingly, NDPS replicated the loophole provided in the treaty's definition of cannabis, whereby its leaves and seeds have been spared the stigma of contraband. Besides, NDPS specified that cannabis meant charas (the resin extracted from the plant), ganja (the flowering or fruiting tops of the plant) and any mixture or drink prepared from either of the two permitted forms of marijuana. Thus, NDPS allows people to smoke pot or drink bhang so long as they can prove that they had consumed only the leaves and seeds of the cannabis plant.

For 25 years since 1961, it has withstood American pressure to keep marijuana legal. Since 1961, the US has been campaigning for a global law against all drugs, both hard and soft. Given that ganja, charas and

bhang were a way of life in India, we opposed the drastic measure. But by the early '80s, American society was grappling with some drug problems and opinion had grown against the "excesses" of the hippie generation. In 1985, the Rajiv Gandhi government buckled under the pressure and enacted a law called the Narcotic Drugs & Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. It was a poor law that clubbed marijuana, hashish and bhang with hard drugs like smack, heroin, cocaine and crack, and banned them all. The minimum punishment for violation of the NDPS Act was 10 years of jail (it has since been relaxed and the crackdown on marijuana has eased somewhat). What happened as a result of this law was that almost overnight the entire trade shifted from peddling grass or charas to smack or worse. This was because while the risk was the same, profits from the hard-killer drugs were ten times higher. And suddenly, there was a drugs problem in India. In cities like Delhi, for instance, smack addiction grew. The addicts were mostly poor people - those who had earlier smoked grass were now 'chasing' smack. The poorly thought-out NDPS Act had actually created a drugs problem where there was none. In all fairness to Rajiv Gandhi, he passed this law under tremendous pressure from the western countries.

What we lack is education about the plant, people of India need to know the truth, and can no longer be kept thinking that cannabis is an evil drug and it should be classified with dangerous drugs like cocaine and heroin. Given that studies across the world show that moderate consumption of marijuana is far less harmful than tobacco or alcohol, it makes little sense to uphold the ban on its recreational use. Marijuana also has medical benefits which include its analgesic and pleasant mood altering effects that it has. Marijuana on itself is not addictive but smoking marijuana mixed with tobacco is addictive and harmful because of the nicotine. The biggest mistake one makes is thinking that cannabis can only be consumed by smoking, which is completely false, cannabis can be consumed in many non harmful ways like vaporizing and edibles. Cannabis legal countries have evolved cannabis in many ways, and today cannabis is available in a range of potency, taste and effects, and also the ways cannabis can be consumed. People who have never smoked in their life or people who do not like smoke can vaporize it like how we vaporize other herbs, or can consume it in edibles like cakes, cookies, oil etc. which completely eliminates the harmful effects of smoking and make cannabis extremely beneficial and harmless to man.

Today many countries are considering legalizing marijuana and gain from the hundreds of benefits it has. One of them being the United States. After years of pressurizing other nations, they now themselves realize the good of the plant and agree to it that they were wrong. When the United States banned cannabis, California was one of the first states to criminalize it, seeing that other states followed. Ironically, California is the first state to realize their mistake and have decriminalized cannabis to make use of the good it has, other states are following seeing the benefits and potential of the plant. Soon every country is going to realize this and change the \$500 billion illegal cannabis trade market into a legal and growing multi billion dollar industry. The plant has endless benefits and not one justifiable answer to why it should be banned. Today cannabis is used as a natural alternative to lethal drugs that have dangerous side effects and do more harm than good. A recent case from Colorado recorded a 2-month old girl given low THC CBD cannabis oil to cure a rare form of epilepsy. The girl has a rare form of epilepsy and has been suffering from seizures since she was born in December. After weeks of drug

therapy in an intensive care unit, her parents, Ernie and Nicole Nunez of Albuquerque, started looking for alternative treatments that would be easier on their daughter's small body, as the drug medication was hard on her liver. They used a low THC high CBD cannabis oil to cure their daughters seizures and have been successful.



hair staining
strokes
nicotine addiction / withdrawal
altered brain chemistry
stinging eyes
macular degeneration
cataract damage
decreased sense of smell
grave disease
thyroid disease
skin wrinkling
premature aging
teeth discolouring
increased plaque
loss of teeth
gum disease
lip - mouth cancer
throat cancer
cancer of the esophagus
sore throat
reduced sense of taste
less blood circulation
peripheral vascular disease
stained fingers
lung cancer
chronic bronchitis
emphysema
smokers' cough
breathing problems
colds and flu
pneumonia
asthma
complicates tuberculosis
damages heart arteries
heart attacks
liver cancer
stomach ulcer
stomach cancer
pancreas cancer
colon cancer
aortic aneurysm
kidney cancer
bladder cancer
osteoporosis
fracture to spine and hips
degenerative disc disease
reduced and deformed sperm
infertility
impotence
period pains
early menopause
cervix cancer
leukemia
gangrene
beurger disease
weakened immune system



impaired brain development
wernicke-korsakoff
vision damage
ataxia
reduced memory
sleep disorders
delusions
hallucinations
panic
anxiety
psychosis
anti-sociality
cravings
irritability
mouth cancer
anemia
alcoholic cardiomyopathy
liver disease
cirrhosis
hepatitis
chronic gastritis
pancreatitis
increased risk of diabetes type 2
hangovers
vomiting
skin discolouring
delirium tremens
depression
alcohol poisoning
seizures
heart attacks
complicates irritable bowel syndrome
thrombosis
enlargement of heart
cysts
weight gain
self-harm
drunkorexia
drink driving
breast cancer
rosacea
facial disfigurement
changes in red blood cells
high blood pressure
liver swelling
testicle shrinking
impotence
damaged sperm
damaged to unborn baby
brain injury
inflamed stomach lining
inflamed intestines
intestine ulcers
muscle weakness
loss of muscle tissue
increase skin bruising
increased sweating

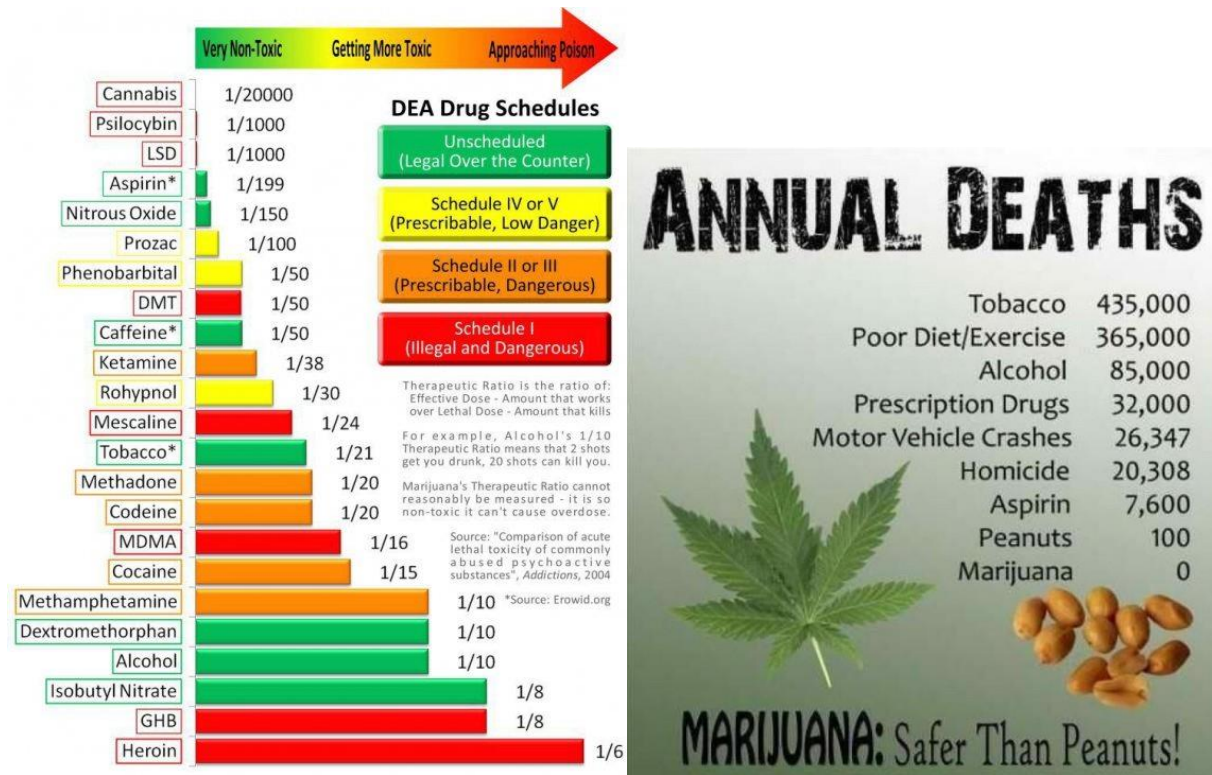


temporary paranoia
temporary confusion
decreased concentration
drug-driving
schizophrenia

Sorry, which one is illegal again?

If the banning of cannabis is because of the health of the user, then why are pharmaceuticals so openly manufactured and available which are way more lethal than marijuana and can kill the user. Is there a justifiable answer to that? Why are we given the freedom of choice in Alcohol and Tobacco? Studies have proven that consumption of alcohol and tobacco extremely harmful, whereas cannabis has proven to have medicinal properties and is not harmful if consumed on its own in a different form than smoking. Marijuana has 0 recorded deaths and is practically impossible to overdose on where as tobacco and alcohol have increasing deaths every year and have way more harmful properties, yet we are given the freedom to choose to smoke and drink. Under the influence of alcohol, the user becomes violent and

abusive, doesn't realize who they talk to, lose their senses and commit crimes like murder, rape, domestic violence and many more whereas all cannabis does is makes a person happy and relaxed, and can still control themselves and their senses even on high doses. Also because of the lack of knowledge about the plant, local growers grow plants that lack quality and potency, they are not grown in proper conditions, not given proper water, light and nutrients, and not harvested or dried properly which deteriorates the quality, so the local grower feel the need to dip or spray their cannabis with opium to make it effective, but ultimately making it harmful and having no medicinal properties close to the real medical marijuana. So banning marijuana because of health concerns, has erupted a greater health and addiction problem in the country. After it being illegal, the quality of herb was brought down, this is because growing the crop hidden was very difficult which would lead to an irregular crop and could have different quality every time. The hashish sold locally is usually mixed with harmful substances like shoe polish and sealants, which is nothing but harmful to the user.



Toxicity rating for different substances

Cannabis has endless medical properties and has helped endless patients across the world in curing diseases which pharmaceuticals were not able to cure or did more harm than good. A 1999 a U.S. Government sponsored study by the Institute of Medicine uncovered the beneficial properties of marijuana in certain medical conditions such as nausea caused by chemotherapy, and wasting caused by AIDS. Since 1999, a number of studies have been done to show that smoked marijuana has pain reducing effects. In 1996, California became the first state to legalize the use of marijuana for medical objectives, and about 24 of the states now have some sort of medical marijuana legislation. These are a few of the limitless medical properties cannabis has:

1. Marijuana slows and stops cancer cells from spreading.

It was found in the study, published in the journal *Molecular Cancer Therapeutics*, that Cannabidiol has the ability to stop cancer by turning off a gene called Id-1. In 2007, researchers at California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco, reported that CBD may prevent cancer from spreading. The researchers experimented on breast cancer cells in the lab that had high level of Id-1, and treated them with cannabidiol. The outcome was rather positive, the cells had decreased Id-1 expression, and were less aggressive spreaders. In fact, the American Association for Cancer Research has found that marijuana actually works to slow down tumor growth in brain, breast, and lungs considerably.

2. Prevents Alzheimer's.

THC, the active ingredient present in marijuana slows the progression of Alzheimer's disease, a 2006 study led by Kim Janda of the Scripps Research Institute found out. THC slows the formation of amyloid plaques by blocking the enzyme in the brain that makes them. These plaques kill the brain cells, and potentially lead to Alzheimer's disease.

3. Treats Glaucoma.

Weed can be used to treat glaucoma, which increases the pressure in the eyeball, injuring the optic nerve and causing loss of vision. According to National Eye Institute, marijuana lowers the pressure inside the eye, "Studies in the early 1970s showed that marijuana, when smoked, lowered intraocular pressure (IOP) in people with normal pressure and those with glaucoma."

These effects of the drug can prevent blindness.

4. Relieves Arthritis.

In 2011, researchers reported that cannabis reduces pain and inflammation, and promotes sleep, which may help relieve pain and discomfort for people with rheumatoid arthritis.

Researchers of the rheumatology units at several hospitals gave their patients Sativex, a cannabinoid-based pain-relieving medicine. After two weeks, patients on Sativex had a significant reduction in pain, and improved better sleep quality compared to placebo users.

5. Controls Epileptic seizure.

A 2003 study showed that marijuana use can control epileptic seizure.

Robert J. DeLorenzo, of Virginia Commonwealth University, gave marijuana extract and synthetic marijuana to epileptic rats. The drugs stopped the seizures in about 10 hours. It is found out that the THC controlled the seizures by binding the brain cells responsible for controlling excitability and regulating relaxation. The results were published in the *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics*.

6. Eases the pain of multiple sclerosis.

Weed works to stop the negative neurological effects and muscle spasms caused by multiple sclerosis. A study published in the Canadian Medical Association suggests that marijuana may ease painful symptoms of multiple sclerosis.

Jody Cory Bloom studied 30 multiple sclerosis patients with painful contractions in their muscles. These patients didn't respond to other medications, but after smoking marijuana for few days, they reported that they were in less pain. The THC in the pot binds the receptors in the nerves and muscles to relieve pain.

7. Soothes tremors for people with Parkinson's disease.

Recent studies from Israel shows that smoking marijuana remarkably reduces pains and tremors and improves sleep for Parkinson's disease patients. What was impressive about the research was the improvement of the fine motor skills among patients.

Israel has made medical marijuana legal, and a lot of research into the medical uses of weed is done there, supported by the Israeli Government.

8. Helps with Crohn's disease.

Cannabis can cure Crohn's disease. Crohn's disease is an inflammatory bowel disorder that causes pain, vomiting, diarrhea, weight loss, and more. But a recent study in Israel showed that smoking a joint considerably reduced Crohn's disease symptoms in 10 out of 11 patients, and caused a complete cancellation of the disease in five of those patients.

Of course, this is a small study, but other researches have shown similar results. The cannabinoids from cannabis seem to help the gut control bacteria and intestinal function.

9. Decreases the symptoms of Dravet's Syndrome.

Dravet Syndrome causes seizures and severe developmental delays. Dr. Sanjay Gupta, renowned chief medical correspondent for CNN, is treating a five years old girl, Charlotte Figi, who has Dravet's Syndrome, with medical marijuana strain high in cannabidiol and low in THC.

During the research for his documentary "WEED", Gupta interviewed the Figi family, and according to the film, the drug decreased her seizures from 300 a week to just one every seven days. Forty other children are using the same medication, and it has helped them too. The doctors who are recommending this medication say that the cannabidiol in the plant interacts with the brain cells to quiet the excessive activities in the brain that causes the seizures.

10. Lessens side effects from treating Hepatitis C, and increases treatment effectiveness.

Treating Hepatitis C infection has severe side effects, so severe that many people are unable to continue their treatment. Side effects range from fatigue, nausea, muscle pains, loss of appetite, and depression- and they last for months.

But, pot to the rescue: A 2006 study in the European Journal of Gastroenterology and Hepatology discovered that 86% of patients using marijuana successfully finished their therapies, while only 29% of the non-smokers completed their treatments, maybe because marijuana helps to lessen the treatments' side effects. Cannabis also helps to improve the treatment's effectiveness. 54% of the Hep C patients smoking marijuana got their viral levels low, and kept them low, compared to the only 8% of the non-smokers.

11. Decreases anxiety.

In 2010, researchers at Harvard University suggested that some of the drug's benefits may actually be reduced anxiety, which would improve the smoker's mood and act as a sedative in low doses.

Beware, though, higher doses may increase anxiety and make you paranoid.

12. Helps reverse the carcinogenic effects of tobacco, and improve lung health.

In January 2012, a study published in Journal of the American Medical Association showed that marijuana improved lung functions, and even increased lung capacity. Researchers looking for risks factors of heart disease, tested on 5,115 young adults, over the period of 20 years, and found out that only pot users showed an increase in lung capacity, compared to the tobacco smokers who lost lung function over time.

It is believed that the increased lung capacity is due to the deep breaths taken while inhaling the drug, and not from a therapeutic chemical in the drug.

13. Reduces severe pain, and nausea from chemo, and stimulates appetite.

One of the most common uses of medical marijuana is for people going through chemotherapy. Cancer patients going through chemo suffer from severe pains, painful nausea, vomiting, and loss of appetite. This can lead to further health complications.

Marijuana can help reduce these side effects, reducing pain, decreasing nausea, and stirring up the appetite. Also, there are other FDA approved cannabinoid drugs that use THC, for the same purposes.

14. Improves symptoms of Lupus, an autoimmune disorder.

Medical marijuana is used to treat the autoimmune disorder called Systemic Lupus Erythematosus, which is when the body starts attacking itself for unknown reasons.

It is believed that some chemicals present in cannabis is responsible to calm the immune system, which maybe the reason to help deal with symptoms of Lupus. The rest of the positive impact of the marijuana is probably from the effects of the pain and nausea.

15. Protects brain after a stroke.

Research (done on rats, mice, and monkeys) from University of Nottingham shows that cannabis may help protect the brain from damage caused by a stroke by reducing the size of the area affected by the stroke.

This isn't the only research that has shown neuroprotective effects from cannabis. Some research shows that the plant may help protect the brain after other traumatic events like concussions.

16. Helps veterans suffering from PTSD

Marijuana is approved to treat PTSD in some states in America. In New Mexico, PTSD is the number one reason for people to get a license for medical marijuana, but this is the first time U.S. Government's The Department of Health and Human Services has approved a proposal that incorporates smoked or vaporised marijuana.

Naturally occurring cannabinoids, similar to THC, help control the system that causes fear and anxiety in the body and brain.

17. Controls other types of muscle spasms.

Other types of muscle spasms respond to marijuana too. Another of Dr. Gupta's patient, Chaz, has a condition called myoclonus diaphragmatic flutter (also known as Leeuwenhoek's Disease). This causes non stop spasming in the abdominal muscles which are not only painful, but interfere with breathing and speaking. Chaz has been using medical marijuana to treat this disease because other very strong medications were unable to treat him properly.

Smoking marijuana is able to calm the attacks almost immediately, relaxing the muscles of the diaphragm also.

18. Treats inflammatory bowel diseases.

Just like Crohn's disease, patients with other inflammatory bowel diseases like ulcerative colitis could benefit from marijuana use, studies suggest.

In 2010, University of Nottingham researchers have found that chemicals in marijuana, including THC, and cannabidiol, interact with cells in the body that play an important role in gut function, and immune system. THC like chemicals made by the body increase the permeability of the intestines, allowing bacteria in. The plant-derived cannabinoids in marijuana block these body-cannabinoids, stopping this permeability, and making the intestinal bond tighter together.

19. Helps eliminate nightmares.

This is a bit complicated because it involves both positive and negative effects. Marijuana disturbs the sleep cycle by interrupting the later stages of REM sleep.

However, people who suffer from serious nightmares, especially patients with PTSD, this can be helpful. Nightmares and other dreams occur during those same stages of sleep. By interrupting REM sleep, many

of those dreams may not occur. Research using a synthetic cannabinoid, like THC, showed a decrease in the number of nightmares in patients with PTSD. Marijuana maybe a better sleep aid than some other medications or even alcohol because the latter two may potentially have worse effects on sleep, though more research is needed on the topic.

20. Protects the brain from concussion, and trauma.

A recent study in the journal *Cerebral Cortex* showed possibilities that marijuana can help heal the brain after a concussion, or other traumatic injury. In the journal it was said that the experiments were done on mice, and that marijuana lessened the bruising of the brain, and helped with healing mechanisms after a traumatic injury.

Harvard professor emeritus of psychiatry and marijuana advocate Lester Grinspoon recently wrote an open letter to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodall, saying that NFL should stop testing players for marijuana, and instead should fund for research on marijuana plant's ability to protect the brain. In the open letter, he writes, "Already many doctors and researchers believe that marijuana has incredibly powerful neuroprotective properties, an understanding based on both laboratory, and clinical data."

In response, Goodall recently mentioned that he'd consider permitting athletes to use marijuana if medical research shows that it's an effective neuroprotective agent.

Many doctors also support marijuana, it is because they understand the benefits and potential of the plant. Dr. Sanjay Gupta, CNN's chief medical correspondent, recently changed his opinion on medical marijuana. Previously saying no to medical marijuana now Dr Gupta says he was wrong to ignore marijuana's medical potential when he wrote an opinion piece in 2009 called "Why I would Vote No on Pot."

Gupta filmed a documentary that aired on CNN on Sunday, August 11, and earlier this week wrote an editorial on CNN.com in which he admitted that the research for the movie changed his mind about the drug and its medicinal effects.

After traveling the world, meeting with medical experts and medical marijuana patients, Gupta concludes "we have been terribly and systematically misled for nearly 70 years in the United States, and I apologize for my own role in that."

Here are Gupta's reasons for his change of stance:

Marijuana laws are not based on science. Gupta wrote: "Not because of sound science, but because of its absence, marijuana was classified as a schedule 1 substance" at the urging of Assistant Secretary of Health, Roger Egeberg in 1970.

Gupta notes that marijuana doesn't have a "high potential for abuse" and it doesn't lead people to use other drugs. "We now know that while estimates vary, marijuana leads to dependence in around 9 to 10% of its adult users." Cocaine, classified as a (less addictive) schedule 2 substance, hooks 20% of those who use it. Around 25% of heroin users and 30% of tobacco users become addicted.

In some medical cases, marijuana is "the only thing that works." Gupta met with one woman in Colorado who used marijuana to cut the number of seizures she had from 300-per-week to two or three per month.

It's safer than a lot of prescription drugs: Someone dies from a prescription drug overdose every 19 minutes in the United States, but Gupta could not find a single person who died from a marijuana overdose.

Other doctors believe in it: Seventy-six percent of physicians surveyed would prescribe marijuana to ease the pain of women suffering from breast cancer.

While quitting marijuana can produce some withdrawal symptoms, like insomnia, anxiety and nausea, it is still nowhere near as bad at drugs like heroin or cocaine, or even booze. "I have seen the withdrawal from alcohol, and it can be life threatening," Gupta said. Not so with marijuana.

Medicinal plants (including marijuana specifically) aren't a new idea: The medical and scientific communities have been studying medical marijuana since the 19th Century, and marijuana was actually used to treat neuropathic pain until 1943.

Only 6% of research on marijuana published in the last year analyzed benefits. The other 93% are designed primarily to investigate harm. "That imbalance paints a highly distorted picture," Gupta said.

The system is biased against research into medical marijuana's benefits. First, you have to get the marijuana for your study from one government-approved farm, and you have to get approval from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, which is tasked with studying and preventing drug abuse, not the medical benefits of drugs.

In general, Gupta says he listened a bit too closely to medical marijuana opponents and skeptics, and he "didn't look hard enough, until now. I didn't look far enough. I didn't review papers from smaller labs in other countries doing some remarkable research, and I was too dismissive of the loud chorus of legitimate patients whose symptoms improved on cannabis."

These are a few of the medical properties of cannabis, but legalizing cannabis also comes with many non medical properties. Legalizing cannabis will open up a completely new industry. Which subsequently opens new business opportunities and employment. India is in need of these opportunities at the moment, with new opportunities in agriculture field, we could solve our farmer problem. Legalizing cannabis industry opens newly regulated industry that has provided 200,000 new jobs in 2015 in the United States. These jobs include everything from construction on new facilities to retail, agriculture, laboratory testing, manufacturing positions, media work, and all of the people it takes to makes these businesses happen. And, unlike what is happening in the general workforce, young people are getting these jobs, because they like the risk and they know the product. That's 200,000 people, who, given their demographic, would likely be unemployed or underemployed if it were not for the cannabis industry. That's 200,000 people who don't have to avoid big life decisions like buying a home or paying off loans because of job dissatisfaction and unemployment. But let's take it a step further. We could

benefit from the same, if India legalizes cannabis in a state, it would help cut down our unemployment rate and could also solve our problem of underemployment. I call on the newly emerging legal cannabis industry to be mindful of the backs on which you stand, and to conduct employment searches that first dip into the pool of applicants who have a wealth of cannabis retail, manufacturing and cultivation experience and the criminal record to prove it. The emerging cannabis industry is much more than a vehicle for financial success, it is an opportunity to lift up and empower groups that have long been under-appreciated and dishonored in our society like farmers, and India needs to realize the potential of this emerging industry.

The Government could also make millions in taxes yearly which could be used fighting issues of greater concern like education and the development of the state and country. Government also saves million law enforcements costs for cannabis. On top of opening job and business opportunities and making crores of rupees for the govt, cannabis has also proven to decrease crime rates drastically. For example, Washington state alone has generated and saved taxes of over \$15 million. Colorado saw these changes in merely 8 months of legalizing cannabis:

- According to Uniform Crime Reporting data for Denver, there has been a 10.1% decrease in overall crime from this time last year and a 5.2% drop in violent crime.
- The state has garnered over 10 million in taxes from retail sales in the first 4 months. The first 40 million of this tax revenue is earmarked for public schools and infrastructure, as well as for youth educational campaigns about substance use.
- There are renewed efforts to study the medical efficacy of marijuana within the state, making Colorado an epicenter for marijuana research.
- The marijuana industry has developed quickly, generating thousands of new jobs. It is estimated there are currently about 10,000 people directly involved with this industry, with 1,000 to 2,000 gaining employment in the past few months alone.
- Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper, who opposed Amendment 64, recently compared Colorado's economy since legalization to that of other states by noting, "While the rest of the country's economy is slowly picking back up, we're thriving here in Colorado." For example, the demand for commercial real estate has increased drastically, with houses in the state appreciating up to 8.7 percent in the past year alone.
- The voters of Colorado retain an overall positive view of the regulated marijuana market, with 54% of Colorado voters still supporting marijuana legalization and regulation, according to a recent Quinnipiac poll.
- By removing criminal penalties for certain marijuana-related offenses, thousands of individuals will avoid the collateral consequences associated with a criminal record. The state is estimated to potentially save \$12-40 million over the span of a year simply by ending arrests for marijuana possession.

Colorado reached over \$50 million dollars in recreational cannabis sales in June, breaking the state's previous record, according to Ricardo Baca, a staff writer for Denver Post's The Cannabist. In addition,

medical sales reached \$25 million. Based on the state's various taxes on marijuana sales, Baca reports that the state has earned over \$60 million dollars in marijuana tax revenue so far this year.

Along with legalization, Colorado voters approved a 15 percent excise tax on wholesale marijuana sales that is only to be used for school construction. According to another recent report from Baca, Colorado schools have earned \$13.6 million in just the first five months of 2015, a sharp increase over 2014, when the tax generated a total of \$13.3 million for the whole year. Putting that figure in perspective, Baca quoted a local Colorado school superintendent, who said that \$40 million would fund the construction of "two well-equipped elementary schools, or one well-equipped middle school with an athletic field." Tax revenues for Colorado schools and infrastructure are not the only benefit of legalization for the state. A study released in January by the Drug Policy Alliance showed that legalization has led to a decrease in crime. In January, Laura McCauley, a staff writer for Common Dreams, summarized the study's findings: "According to statistics compiled by the DPA, in the first 11 months of 2014, the rate of violent crime fell 2.2 percent compared with the same period in 2013. In the same time frame, burglaries in Colorado's capital, Denver, decreased by 9.5 percent and overall property crime decreased by 8.9 percent. Further, arrests for marijuana possession have continually dropped since 2010 and are now down roughly 84 percent."

By legalizing or decriminalizing cannabis in a state like Gujarat, India could gain these benefits, being one of the top producers of agricultural products, Gujarat has the perfect workforce for the cannabis industry. Gujarat has also been known for having high number of cannabis users of all ages. Gujarat is untouched by the 'green' revolution and its derivatives, particularly hashish (charas), but its market in the state has plummeted over the years. A moderate estimate by Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Ahmedabad Zonal Unit states that drugs worth Rs 50 crore is being sold in Gujarat every year, much lower than five years ago. This decrease is because of the high prices for lowest quality pot. Zonal director of NCB, Hari Om Gandhi, says that skyrocketing prices of the drug in the international markets has dented business of the state-based drug dealers and suppliers, who are not able to fish out such huge amounts to acquire drugs from the major nodes spread across the country.

"A few years ago, 1kg hashish cost about Rs 10000 in India. A local dealer would buy 40-50kg from the supplier. Now, the prices are at Rs2.50 lakh," said Gandhi. "Thus, if a Gujarat dealer has to shell out as much as Rs 10 lakh for a 4-kg consignment. This is impossible for the local drug dealer. No major consignment, as a result, has been dumped in the city in the recent past," he added.

Hashish in India originates from Kashmir, thus it's colloquially called 'kashmiri hashish'. Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) police has come down heavily on the plantations, which in turn has drastically reduced supply to Gujarat. "J&K police have taken stringent steps to curb illegal cultivation of cannabis, from which hashish is derived, in their state. A reduction in supply thus has led to skyrocketing prices," said Gandhi, who is currently busy in events for 'International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking' on June 26.

According to NCB-Ahmedabad figures, cops had seized 168kg of hashish in 2011-12 and had arrested 12 drug peddlers from different parts of the state. The much-cheaper marijuana (or weed), however, forms

the bulk of the 'trade' here, which is brought to Gujarat from the north-eastern states, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. Hashish is smuggled in from J&K, Rajasthan and Bihar.

"Hashish becomes more expensive as it changes hands. Thus, a local dealer might have to pay almost Rs4 lakh/kg for the consignment," informed Gandhi. Which subsequently leads peddlers and dealers to increase prices and mix/cut the product with other harmful substances to increase weight or potency.

Cannabis has been used in India for a long time and putting bans on it or criminalizing it hasn't stopped the users from finding their way around. Cannabis grows wildly in many states in India, it is said that 60,000 kgs of hash and 40,000 kgs of opium is produced in Himachal Pradesh. Out of that, only 500 kgs is seized annually. As per reports, "more than 1,600 hectares of cultivable farmland and an additional 500 hectares of illicitly felled public forests are currently under cannabis cultivation". The rate is only increasing. Moreover, these days, it is pretty easy to buy marijuana in India and its consumption is widespread among the youth. So it is fair to say that prohibition has failed to curb the 'problem'. People are going to use it legal or illegal, this is why Netherlands has legal cannabis, the Dutch drug policy is directed by an idea that every human being may decide about the matters of its own health. The Dutch consider this rule as fundamental, accepting for example the possibility of the controlled suicide (euthanasia), for terminally ill patients. Although this is also possible in Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland and some parts of the US. Another idea which guides Dutch laws in their drug policy is a conviction that hiding social negative phenomena does not make them to disappear - on the contrary makes them worse, because when concealed, they become far more difficult to influence and control.

Applying these ideas to their drug laws the Dutch try as much as possible to decriminalize the use of drugs, making it a private matter of each individual, and not a matter for the enforcement apparatus. Production, trading and stocking drugs remain a criminal offence, as in any other country.

The Dutch see the use of drugs as a health matter, similar to the use of tobacco and alcohol, and in fact not very distant from problems of obesity, alcoholism and tobacco smoking. They also point to the fact that prohibition of alcohol in the US in the years 1919-1933 brought more negative effects of increased criminality, than the positive social changes and had to be withdrawn. We have experienced this with Gujarat too, even though being a dry state, Gujarat has once been the highest consumer of alcohol.

| Let's look at the facts: | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Alcohol | Cannabis |
| Addictive & Health-Damaging | NON-Addictive & Healing |
| Depressant | ANTI-Depressant |
| Causes Cancer | CURES Cancer |
| 1,000,000+ Annual Deaths | ZERO Deaths. <i>EVER!</i> |
| Costs (Wastes) BILLIONS | SAVES BILLIONS! Wastes NOTHING! |
| Deaths due to Overdose DAILY. | Overdose is PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE! |
| Destroys brain, liver & other cells | Protects, grows & repairs cells! |
| Accidentally flammable | Intentionally Combustible |
| Toxic | Reparative |
| Hangover & Pain | Restful sleep |
| Vomiting and Nausea | Laughter and "The Munchies" |
| Causes Domestic/Public Violence | Causes DVD rentals/Pizza Orders |
| Prohibition didn't work in the past | Prohibition doesn't work today |
| LEGAL | ILLEGAL |
| How can you NOT see anything horribly wrong with this? | |
| Overgrow The World! | |
| Maybe it's just time we do <i>the RIGHT thing</i> for a change? | |

So why not make it legal and make and save crores of rupees which are currently going to criminal and terrorist organizations, this money can be used in making the country better and putting an end to the same criminal and terrorist organizations. Also legalizing will allow the growers to provide quality medicinal marijuana to the users and stop the current low quality opium laced cannabis from ruining people's health. People finding refuge in alcohol from depression and stress, could use cannabis and be much more successful in doing it. Legalizing or decriminalizing will revolutionize Gujarat and will benefit the country and its people with its endless list of rewards, and Gujarat, being a dry state deserves all of these recreational, taxation, business and employment opportunities. Cannabis should be regulated same as alcohol and tobacco, with standard laws followed for them. And most of all, the citizens need to be educated about this sacred plant and enlighten them from the dark made up story of cannabis being bad and evil. Learn, understand, educate, legalize, medicate. India has always supported cannabis, it is the mother of cannabis, even under western pressure we withstood for 25 years then gave in, so now when the western world is legalizing and benefiting from something that is practically ours, why shouldn't India? If you don't agree, I request you to give us a justifiable answer to why not. Do you still want to support the old western racist thinking? Or are you the wise thinkers of the modern age? Remember, ignorance is the greatest sin. India needed a leader to understand the people and do what is right for us and for the country, and now we do and so we trust him to do the right thing and save us from the darkness and ignorance of the sacred plant.

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