



India to study marijuana-derived drugs

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India to study marijuana-derived drugs-Plan afoot to research its uses in treatment of breast cancer and sickle cell anaemia, among others

- Three major science administrators in India — the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Indian Council for Medical Research and the Department of Biotechnology — are getting together to promote research in herbal drugs, some of which involve deriving new drugs from marijuana.
- Among the first such studies likely to kick off is a joint investigation by the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM) and the Tata Memorial Centre (TMC), Mumbai.

Restricted cultivation

- Marijuana (or hemp), more formally parts of the cannabis super-family, is illegal for commercial cultivation though it grows as weed in several parts of the country.
- Uttarakhand, Jammu and — as of this month Uttar Pradesh — have allowed restricted cultivation of the plant for medical research.
- The studies into the therapeutic potential of marijuana is part of a larger governmental thrust to making new drugs derived from herbs and plants that find mention in Ayurvedic and other traditional-medicine knowledge systems.
- The U.S. FDA this year approved Epidiolex (cannabidiol) [CBD] oral solution for the treatment of seizures associated with two rare and severe forms of epilepsy, Lennox-Gastaut syndrome and Dravet syndrome.

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