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*C – Chennai; B – Bengaluru; D – Delhi; T – Thiruvananthapuram
SC refers Oxytocin ban to larger bench

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday referred to a larger bench a batch of petitions challenging a government notification banning private companies from manufacturing Oxytocin, a first line drug administered to save the lives of young mothers suffering from excessive bleeding immediately after childbirth.

At the centre of the controversy is an April 2018 notification issued by the Centre under Section 26A of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 restricting the manufacture of Oxytocin for domestic use. Only public sector undertakings could manufacture the drug, the notification said.

Extracting milk
The trigger for the notification was a 21-year-old problem: clandestine manufacture of the drug and its misuse by dairy owners on milk animals to artificially extract milk.

However, the Delhi High Court, in a decision on December 14 last year, quashed the notification as arbitrary and unreasonable. The High Court said Oxytocin was an essential drug and the “Central government did not adequately weigh the danger to the lives of the users of Oxytocin, i.e., pregnant women and young mothers, nor did it consider the deleterious effect to the public generally and women particularly, of the possible restricted supply of a lifesaving drug, if the manufacture is confined to one single public sector enterprise.”

The Bench of Justices A.M. Sathre and Indu Malhotra, in a 45-page judgment, concluded that the case raises substantial questions of law to be answered by a three-judge bench.

Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I - (200 marks)

- Current events of national and international importance.
- Indian Polity and Governance-Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues, etc.

Part B—Main Examination

PAPER-III

General Studies-II: Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice and International relations.

- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.
- Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

News:

- Regarding the ban in oxytocin
- April 2018 notification by Central Govt.
- Section 26A of Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940
  - Central Govt has the power to regulate, restrict or prohibit the manufacture, sale or distribution of drug and cosmetics, in public interest
  - Use of any drug or cosmetic is likely to involve any risk to human beings or animals
  - Drug does not have the therapeutic value claimed or purported to be claimed for it
  - Drug contains any ingredients and in such quantity for which there is no therapeutic justification

April 2018 notification:

- Central Govt has restricted the manufacture of oxytocin for domestic use to only to Public Sector Undertakings.

Oxytocin:

- Natural hormone secreted by the Pituitary glands of the humans & also some mammals
- Plays an important role in women during childbirth and lactation
- Artificially manufactured and given as a prescription drug
- Used to start birth contractions
- Injected to Milch animals → For more milk
- Included in National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM)
Cases related to Oxytocin:
- A 21 year old issue → Clandestine manufacture of Oxytocin drug and its misuse by dairy owners
- March 2016 - High Court of Himachal Pradesh
  ⟷ Check for the feasibility of restricting the Oxytocin manufacture only in PSU
  ⟷ Considered by Drugs Technical Advisory Board (Under CDSCO)

Based on the recommendations of DTAB,
April 2018 notification issued by Centre

Poultry breeders push for import of GM maize
They will otherwise have to wait till mid-October for delivery of non-GM maize, and pay a steep price

Activists oppose move

A high court of the state of Himachal Pradesh has recently evoked a controversy over the import of GM maize. Poultry farmers and breeders, who are preparing for the upcoming season, have welcomed the move and made it clear that the non-GM maize may not meet their needs. The import of GM maize has been opposed by various groups, including the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) and the National Animal Rights Organisation (NARO).

April 2018 notification

- Centre restricted Oxytocin imports
- Restricted manufacturing to Karnataka Antibiotics & Pharmaceuticals Limited (PSU)

News:

- Supreme Court has referred all the petitions challenging the April 2018 Notification to a three-judge bench.

Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I - (200 marks)

Current events of national and international importance.

Part B—Main Examination

PAPER-IV


- Science and Technology- developments and their applications and effects in everyday life.
- Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.
Poultry farmers and breeders in Karnataka:
- Facing shortage of indigenously grown maize to feed broiler chickens
- Import GM maize
- Delay in import of non-GM maize - \( \uparrow \) price

Maize: chief source of feed for broilers
- \( \uparrow \) price → due to less availability + more demand - \( \downarrow \) profit
- Scarcity of indigenously grown maize - pest attack and drought
- Off season for maize in some countries

Abundance of GM Maize \( \{ \) attractive cheaper price \( \} \)

Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT):

Final decision on import of GM food
- Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) under MoEFCC

2018: India allowed import of chicken from US
- US chicken fed on GM maize and soya (argument of farmers)

Residue from GM cottonseed oil → feed for chicken, cattle and fish

Facts on DGFT:
- Under Ministry of Commerce - Since 1991
- Facilitator of exports or imports
- Regulation and promotion of foreign trade in line with liberalization and globalization
- Known as Chief Controller of Imports and Exports till 1991
Belt and roadblocks
Given mounting criticism of BRI, will China incorporate best practices in the project?

Recent news
China’s trade war with the U.S., mounting criticism of its Belt and Road Initiative, and increasing hostility in its Xinjiang and Tibet regions have cast doubt on China’s ability to achieve its Belt and Road Initiative goals. The project’s success has been questioned due to its focus on infrastructure development and lack of environmental safeguards. Critics argue that the project is failing due to several reasons.

China’s trade war with the U.S. has led to increased costs and disruptions for many companies involved in the initiative. The project has also faced criticism for its focus on infrastructure development, which many argue is unnecessary and potentially detrimental to the environment. Critics argue that the project is failing due to several reasons.

Part A — Preliminary Examination

A current events paper could go into detail about the Belt and Road Initiative, its goals, and its impact on the global economy.

Part B — Main Examination

PAPER III

General Studies II: Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice and International relations.

- Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India’s interests.
- Effect of policies and political developments in developing countries on India’s interests, Indian diaspora.

BRI — announced in 2013 — Two parts

I. Rail routes, highways, oil and gas pipelines, etc.
   - Xian — Central Asia — Russia — West Asia — Europe
   - CPEC — a branch

II. Network of ports + Coastal Infra
   - Eastern China — SE Asia — South Asia — Gulf
   - East Africa — Europe

China’s BRI projects have been met with resistance and opposition from many countries. The initiative has been criticized for its lack of transparency and accountability, as well as its potential impact on the environment and the global economy.

China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a massive infrastructure project that aims to connect China with the rest of the world. The initiative has been criticized for its lack of transparency and accountability, as well as its potential impact on the environment and the global economy.
BRI did not succeed - full utilization of overcapacity

- no open tendering
- no competitive bidding
- no environmental impact studies

1/3 of projects failed

Local issues:
- Lack of resources
- Protest on land procurement
- Corruption
- Financial viability
- Unsustainable debt
- Low investment return
- High interest rate

Chinese President - April 2019 - 2nd BRI Forum

- To fine-tune BRI; to bring more transparency, clean governance and green projects

BRI - now a Chinese scheme - need to incorporate best practices to succeed

Russia launches rocket with humanoid robot into space

Fedor will be trained to assist astronauts on the ISS

Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I - 200 marks

- Current events of national and international importance.
- General Science.

Pg: 18 → C, T

Pg: 22 → D
News:
- Russia has launched an unmanned rocket to International Space Station (ISS) carrying a life-size humanoid robot - by Roscosmos
- will assist astronauts in ISS
- FEDOR - Final Experimental Demonstration Object Research - Skybot F850
- First robot sent to space to Russia
- Put in MS-14 spacecraft launched from Russia’s cosmodrome, Baikonur, Kazakhstan

Other robots in space:
- Robonaut 2 - NASA
- CIMON - Crew Interactive Mobile Companion
  - Airbus on behalf of German Space Agency, DLR
- Kirobo, JAXA
- SPHERES & Astrobot - NASA

International Space Station (ISS)
- Joint project between 5 space agencies
  - NASA - USA
  - Roscosmos - Russia
  - JAXA - Japan
  - ESA - Europe
  - CSA - Canada
- Scientific research conducted in space to learn more about living and working in space

India:
- June 2019 - Announcement by ISRO - To build a new space station in another 5 to 7 years

Microplastics in drinking water not a health risk for now: WHO

The UN body has called for more research into potential future threats.

Microplastics: Plastics fibers are ubiquitous in the environment and have been found in drinking water. The organization has also urged a crackdown on plastic pollution to benefit the environment and reduce human exposure to microplastics. The report said that in-depth research into the impact on human health is needed.

Page 18 → Bengaluru Edition
Page 22 → Delhi Edition

Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I—(200 marks)
- Current events of national and international importance.

Part B—Main Examination

PAPER-III
General Studies- II: Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice and International relations.
- Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Part IV
General Studies-III: Technology, Economic Development, Biodiversity, Environment, Security and Disaster Management
- Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.
• WHO: First report on effects of microplastics on human health
  ➔ Microplastics - length less than 5 mm
  ➔ Level of microplastics in drinking water - not yet dangerous
  ➔ Need for more research

• Limited number of researches in this field - difficult to analyze impacts

• WHO: Crackdown on plastic pollution
  ➔ Benefit environment
  ➔ ↓ Exposure of human to microplastics
  ➔ Role of policymakers on plastic management

Need:
• A robust health risk assessment of microplastics - address data gaps
  ➔ Better understanding - occurrence and detection - microplastics and nanoplastics in water
  ➔ Research on adverse health impacts
  ➔ Research on capacity of microplastics to transport pathogenic bacteria
Practice Question – Prelims

Q1. Which among the following hormones has recently been in news, for its rampant misuse in milch animals?
   a) Insulin
   b) Adrenaline
   c) Oxytocin
   d) Dopamine

Q2. Consider the following statements.
   1. Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) is under the Ministry of External Affairs.
   2. It regulates and promotes foreign trade in line with the principles of liberalization and globalization.
   3. It is responsible for implementing Foreign Trade policy of India.

   Which of the above statements is/are correct?
   a) 1 only
   b) 1 and 2
   c) 2 and 3
   d) 1, 2 and 3

Practice Question – Prelims

Q3. International Space Station is a joint project of the space agencies of which of the following countries?
   1. USA
   2. Russia
   3. India
   4. Japan
   5. China

   Choose the correct answer/s from the options given below.
   a) 1, 2 and 4 only
   b) 1, 3 and 5 only
   c) 1, 2 and 3 only
   d) 3, 4 and 5 only

Practice Question – Prelims

Q4. Consider the following pairs.
   Space Robots in International Space Station - Space Agencies
   1. FEDOR - Roscosmos
   2. Robonaut2 - NASA
   3. Vikram - ISRO

   Choose the incorrect pair/s from the options given below.
   a) 1 and 2 only
   b) 3 only
   c) 2 and 3 only
   d) 1 and 3 only
Q1. Option ‘c’ – Oxytocin
Q2. Option ‘c’ – 2 and 3
Q3. Option ‘a’ – 1, 2 and 4 only
Q4. Option ‘b’ - 3 only