

# Food Contamination

**Context:** Several countries announced investigation for possible contamination of spices sold by some Indian brands


## Background :

- Complaints sites presence of ethylene oxide.
- Chemical increases the shelf life of spices
- Excessive use- Ethylene Glycol

ETHYLENE OXIDE




### What is ethylene oxide?

Ethylene oxide is a flammable gas produced by industry. Ethylene oxide is used to make other chemicals and is used to sterilize medical supplies and food products like spices.



ATSDR Toxicological Profile for Ethylene Oxide

### Health effects of exposure

-  Cancer
-  Impacts on the nervous system
-  Impacts on kidney function


ATSDR Toxicological Profile for Ethylene Oxide

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### Ethylene oxide releases in TRI


The **chemical manufacturing** sector reports the most releases. Most ethylene oxide is released **to air**.

U.S. EPA TRI, Reporting Year: 2022



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### 144 facilities submitted TRI forms for ethylene oxide for 2022

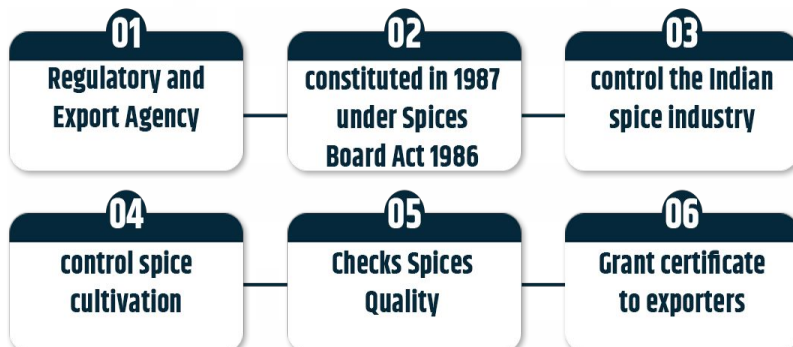
 Facilities initiated 50 source reduction activities for ethylene oxide in the past 5 years.

U.S. EPA TRI, Reporting Year: 2022

## Response from India :

- Spice board of India- mandatory testing of shipments to Singapore and Hong Kong
- Circular - for alternative use of EtO
- FSSAI directed for collection of samples.

## Spice Board



## Reasons for food contamination :

### Pre harvest factors:

- **Use of pesticides:** 70% food and vegetables tested found traces of pesticides- (CSE 2021)
- **Contaminated Irrigation Water :** 70% rivers contaminated (CPCB)

### Post harvest factors:

- **Lack of proper storage:** ideal condition for molds fungi etc.
- **Improper processing facilities:** 30% of SME FPI do lack proper hygiene and sanitation (FSSAI)
  - **Lack of proper testing labs:** at least 10 states do not have proper testing labs.
  - **Lack of proper implementation of regulations:** 2021 CAG report.
  - **Poor logistics**

## Way forward :

- **Promote sustainable farming practices:**
- **Infrastructure facilities~** testing labs
- **Public Private Partnerships**
- **Strict enforcement of regulations.**
- **Digital Traceability Systems:** blockchain technology



## Context: Highest GST collection in month of April 2024

### Background

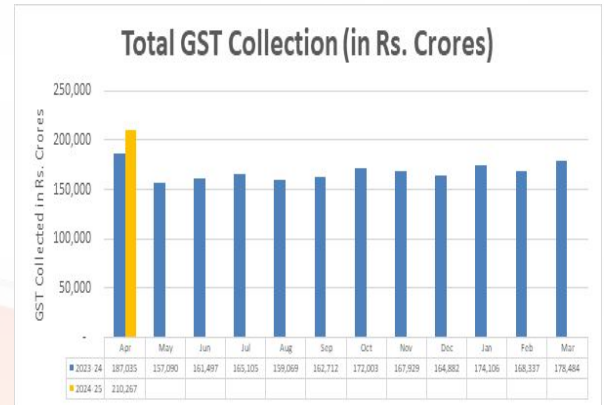
- GST Bill introduced in 2014
- The Constitution **(101st Amendment) Act, 2016.**
  - Central GST- Excise duty, Service tax etc,
  - State GST to cover VAT, luxury tax etc.
  - Integrated GST to cover inter-state trade.
- **GST Council**
  - Article 279A
  - Chairman - FM of India
  - Members- nominated by the state governments
  - Centre will have 1/3rd voting power, States have 2/3rd.
  - Decisions are taken by 3/4th majority.

### Features

- Applicable On supply side
- Destination based Taxation
- Input tax mechanism

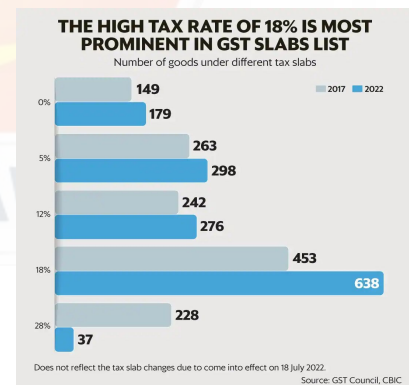
### Advantages:

- Increased Revenue
- Eliminates cascading effect
- Create common market
- Increased Ease of doing business
- Reduced corruption and leakages



### Issues

- **Multiple tax rates:**
- **Lack of Coverage:** petrol, diesel, ATF, etc.
- **Delay in disbursement of Compensation Cess**
- **Technical issues**



### Way forward

- **Rate rationalisation**
- **Better Revenue sharing with Panchayats and Municipalities**
- **System simplification:** use of technology
- **Rationalising exemptions**



# Menstrual Leaves

**Context:** Some political parties had included Menstrual leave as a poll promise in their election manifesto.

## Background

- Several Private member bills - sought menstrual leaves as a matter of right.
- Shailendra mani Tripathi vs Union Of India
- As per Kerala Sahitya Academy works- Cochin state- first to give period leaves in 1912.
- Bihar, 1992- allowed Gov. employee two days menstrual leaves.
- Kerala - In January 2023- Menstrual leaves for students above age of 18.
- Japan - first to legislate in 1947.
- 355 million -menstruating women in India, ~ **30 percent** population.
- 2014 report by the **NGO Dasra titled Spot On!** - **nearly 23 million girls dropout** of school annually due to lack of proper menstrual hygiene management facilities.

## Need

- **Improved Health and Well-being**
- **Increased Productivity**
- **Gender Equality**
- **Destigmatization of Periods**
- **Attracting Talent**

## Challenges

- **Potential for Abuse**
- **Administrative Burden:** additional cost for companies.
- **Openness and Privacy**
- **Stigma Reinforcement**
- **Exploitation by Employers** discrimination in hiring.
- **Impact on Small Businesses**

## Way forward

- Awareness generation
- Deliberation and discussions
- Open Communication between employee and employer
- Following best International practices



**Context:** NPCI International Payments Ltd. to develop UPI like system for Namibia

## About

- **Initiative of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Indian Banks' Association (IBA)**
- Set up under **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.**
- **Incorporated as a "Not for Profit" Company** under the provisions of Section 25 of the Companies Act 1956 (now Section 8 of the Companies Act 2013)
- **Services by NPCI:**
  - BBPS
  - NFS
  - IMPS
  - RuPay
  - UPI

Which one of the following links all the ATMs in India ?

- (a) Indian Banks' Association
- (b) National Securities Depository Limited
- (c) National Payments Corporation of India
- (d) Reserve Bank of India

79. Consider the following statements :

1. National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) helps in promoting the financial inclusion in the country.
2. NPCI has launched RuPay, a card payment scheme.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

## Seventh Schedule

**Context:** Supreme Court Bench categorically said that law and order is a state subject during hearing of West Bengal Compliant.

## Background

- Article 246
  - **Union List-** 100 Subjects
  - **State List-** 61 Subjects
- **42nd Constitutional Amendment :** shifted 5 subjects to concurrent list
  - ❖ Education
  - ❖ Forests
  - ❖ Protection of wild animals and birds
  - ❖ Weights and Measures
  - ❖ Administration of justice, constitution and organisation

❖ of all courts except the Supreme Court and the High Courts

## Exceptions

- Article 249-When Rajya Sabha passes resolution
- During a national emergency
- When two or more states pass a resolution requesting Parliament to legislate on subjects under State List.
- **Concurrent list- 52 Subjects:** Concept borrowed from Australia



## 1. Aravali Range

- Approximately **670 km (430 mi) in a south-west direction**
- **Highest peak is Guru Shikhar** at 1,722 metres (5,650 ft).
- **Rivers flowing from the Aravalli**
  - **Banas and Sahibi rivers**- tributaries of Yamuna,
  - **Luni River - flows into the Rann of Kutch.**
- **Rich in mineral resources** like copper, zinc, lead, and marble.
- **Two sections:**
  - Sambhar-Sirohi ranges, taller and including Guru Shikhar
  - Sambhar-Khetri ranges- consisting of three ridges, discontinuous.

## 2. Venture capitalist

- Venture capitalists people who invest in early-stage companies having promising futures
- Private equity funding - provided to start-ups and companies at the nascent stage
- Offered to firms that show significant growth,
- Investment is highly risky.

## 3.

## MPOX

A viral **zoonotic disease**

- **Symptoms**
  - similar to smallpox.
- **First discovered- 1958** following two outbreaks of a pox-like disease in colonies of monkeys, led to the name '**monkeypox**'.
- **Recent outbreak in DRC- new form**
- **Lower death rate- mostly transmission through sex.**

## 4. NGT

- **Established under- NGT ACT, 2010**
- Effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources.
- **Not bound by Code of Civil Procedure, 1908**, guided by **Principles of natural justice.**
- Mandated to dispose cases within 6 months of filing.
- **Composition-** Chairperson, Judicial members, expert members.
- **Tenure-** 5 years, not eligible for reappointment
- Chairperson appointment- by Central Government, consultation with CJI.

