Categories of new psychoactive substances sold in the market

**Synthetic cannabinoids**
These are cannabinoid receptor agonists which produce effects similar to those of delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the principal psychoactive component in cannabis. Synthetic cannabinoids are often laced onto herbal products and sold as spice, K2, Kronic, etc.

**Synthetic cathinones**
These are analogues/derivatives of the internationally controlled substance cathinone, one of the active components of the khat plant. They generally have stimulant effects and include frequently reported NPS such as methcathinone and MDPV.

**Plant-based substances**
- Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa* Korth), a plant indigenous to South-East Asia that contains the alkaloid mitragyne; a stimulant at low doses and sedative at high doses.
- *Salvia divinorum*, a plant indigenous to forest areas in Oaxaca, Mexico, which contains the active ingredient salvinorin A, a hallucinogenic substance.
- *Khat* (*Catha edulis*), a plant native to the horn of Africa and the Arabian peninsula. The leaves of the plant are chewed, resulting in the release of the stimulants cathinone and cathine.

**Other substances**
- Piperazines
- Phencyclidine-type substances (hallucinogens) and tryptamines (hallucinogens).
- Phenethylamines
- Aminodanes (stimulants)
- Tryptamines (hallucinogens)
- Ketamine
- A human and veterinary anaesthetic which acts as a stimulant at low doses and a hallucinogen at high doses. It is one of the most widespread NPS in Asia.

**Other substances**
- These substances are frequently sold as ‘herbs’ due to their central nervous system stimulant properties. The most commonly reported members of this group are benzo-2-oxepine (BZP) and mCPP (1-(3-chlorophenyl) piperazine)

**Photos:** University Medical Center Freiburg, Germany; Central Narcotics Bureau, Singapore; DEA; UNODC; Shutterstock. Please note that some of the products (Ketamine, Piperazines) shown in the photos are simulated.

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