

Informative Note on Indian Traditional Systems of Medicine(AYUSH)

India is one of the countries that have developed services of traditional medicine through the official planning process of the health service system. The Government of India has established a separate Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) to cater the needs of the traditional medicine. The development of traditional medical system in India was envisaged through various policy pronouncements. The Ministry of AYUSH was originally set up as a separate Department of Indian Systems of Medicine & Homoeopathy (ISM&H) in 1995 with the mandate, *inter alia* to formulate policies for development of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH), their propagation and promotion within and outside the country. The Department of ISM&H was renamed as Department of AYUSH in 2003. In November, 2014, the Department of AYUSH was elevated as a separate full-fledged Ministry of AYUSH.

National Policy on Indian Systems of Medicine & Homoeopathy, 2002 and National Health Policy, 2017 envisages access to AYUSH remedies through co-location of AYUSH facilities in public health care facilities and establish a robust and effective quality control mechanism for AYUSH drugs. Policy also recognizes the need to nurture AYUSH system of medicine, through development of infrastructural facilities of teaching institutions, improving quality control of drugs, capacity building of institutions and professionals.

The Ministry of AYUSH through various legislations is looking after the issues of medical education, registration of practitioners, drugs and practice of the systems pertaining to Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha & Sowa Rigpa and Homoeopathy. The matters related to education and practices are regulated through the regulators like Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM) and Central Council of Homoeopathy (CCH), which are the statutory bodies established under the provisions of the legislations.

Republic of India has 799879 institutionally qualified registered practitioners (Ayurveda-443704, Naturopathy- 2485, Unani-51110, Siddha-9125 and Homoeopathy-293455) of AYUSH. The education in these systems of medicine is being imparted only through the recognized colleges. There are about 702 colleges in India which are conducting 5^{1/2} years degree courses. Out of these institutions 203 colleges conduct 3 years Post Graduation courses. These courses are conducted as per the relevant regulations.

Government of India established 11 National Institutes with the objective to develop them as state-of-the-art centers of education, health care and research, which in turn could be models to be followed. Further, extension of the existing National Institutes of Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, & Unani and new institute of Ayurveda and Yoga is under pipeline.

Regulation of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathic (ASU&H) medicines in India is governed under the provisions of Drugs & Cosmetics Act 1940 and the Rules thereunder. There is a separate chapter in the Act dedicated to regulatory provisions for ASU medicines, whereas the provisions for homoeopathic medicines are almost the same as for allopathic drugs. Compliance to Good Manufacturing Practices is mandatory for obtaining manufacturing license.

Pharmacopoeial standardization of drugs is an important mile-stone in the enforcement of quality control of ASU&H drugs as per Drugs & Cosmetics Act. Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy has been established as an umbrella organization for Pharmacopoeia committees in Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy. The Pharmacopoeia Commission inter-alia is mandated for publication and revision of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy Pharmacopoeia, and Formularies of India. Quality standards of identity, purity and strength of drugs and permissible limits of heavy metals, pesticide residue, and microbial load as prescribed in the Pharmacopoeia are mandatory to follow.

The mandate of Research & Development in literary, clinical and drug areas; survey, validation and documentation of tribal and folk-lore practices & remedies and other scientific activities related to respective systems is assigned to central research councils. A huge network of research institutes, units and centers is available throughout the country under the Research Councils for Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani Medicine, Yoga & Naturopathy and Homoeopathy.

Apart from intramural research by central research councils, project based extramural research activities are encouraged by the Government through scientific and medical institutions. With these measures, Government of India is focusing on improving the efficiency of traditional medicine sector.

With an increase in lifestyle-related disorders there is a worldwide resurgence of interest in holistic systems of health care, particularly with respect to the prevention and management of chronic, non-communicable, and systemic

diseases. It is increasingly understood that no single health care system can provide satisfactory answers to all the health needs of modern society. Evidently there is a need for a new inclusive and integrated health care regime that should guide health policies and programmes in future. India has an advantage in this global resurgence of interest in holistic therapies as it has a rich heritage of indigenous medical knowledge coupled with strong infrastructure and skilled manpower in modern medicine. Medical pluralism is here to stay and the AYUSH sector has a critical role to play in the new and emerging situation. The Ministry of AYUSH promotes and propagates Indian systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy, and is committed to infuse the wisdom of traditional medicine with the methodologies of modern science, scientifically validating the systems and presenting them in the scientific idiom, relating their efficacy to modern life styles.

Yoga is an ancient physical, mental and spiritual practice that originated in India. The word 'yoga' derives from Sanskrit and means to join or to unite, symbolizing the union of body and consciousness. Today it is practiced in various forms around the world and continues to grow in popularity. Recognizing its universal appeal, on 11 December 2014, the United Nations proclaimed 21 June as the International Day of Yoga by [resolution 69/131](#). The International Day of Yoga aims to raise awareness worldwide of the many benefits of practicing yoga.

International Cooperation-

Growing global popularity of traditional medicine has given boost to its demand in international arena. As a result, there is growing interest for exchange of AYUSH-related authentic information. Government of India has been receiving requests from several countries for députation of AYUSH experts to take up teaching, clinical work and for technical assistance in framing regulations & standards of practice and education. Invitations are frequently received for participation of Indian experts and entrepreneurs in international conferences, workshops, exhibitions, trade fairs etc. India is on the threshold of an opportunity for assuming role of leadership in extending assistance to various countries for promotion of AYUSH Systems of Medicine. Further, the recent initiatives of the Government in promoting India as a leading nation in diverse spheres of activities including showcasing of its heritage in the international arena, has necessitated fine-tuning the provisions of the existing Scheme providing incentives to various stakeholders- be it the experts, educational organizations, credible NGOs AYUSH industry etc. .

The International Cooperation (IC) Scheme was implemented during the IX, X and XI Plan. In view of contemporary developments and emerging needs, the scheme has been amended by effecting changes in the existing provisions

and adding new ones to widen its scope so that promotion of AYUSH could be facilitated across the globe and international commitments & demands are fulfilled in an effective manner. The detailed can be seen on www.ayush@gov.in

Objectives of IC Scheme-

The scheme is meant for achieving the following objectives:

- a) To promote and strengthen awareness and interest about AYUSH Systems of Medicine.
- b) To facilitate International promotion, development and recognition of Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa and Homoeopathy;
- c) To foster interaction of stakeholders and market development of AYUSH at international level;
- d) To support international exchange of experts and information for the cause of AYUSH systems.
- e) To give boost to AYUSH Products in International Market.
- f) To establish AYUSH Academic Chairs in foreign countries.

Ministry of AYUSH has signed 21 Federal level MoUs with WHO, Nepal, Bangladesh, Hungary, Trinidad & Tobago, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mongolia, Turkmenistan, Myanmar, Germany, Iran, Sao Tome & Principe, Equatorial Guinea, Cuba, Colombia, Japan, Bolivia, Gambia, Guinea & China for cooperation in the field of traditional medicine. Signing of Federal MoU with Brazil and Suriname is in final stage. 13 institute to institute MoUs has been signed with Hungary, Russia, Latvia, Trinidad & Tobago, South Africa, Thailand, Indonesia, Slovenia, Armenia, Argentina Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Mauritius for establishment of AYUSH Academic Chair.

This Ministry has set up 31 AYUSH Information Cells in 28 Countries under the aegis of Indian Embassies/ Missions and Cultural Centers set up by ICCR or at a venue suggested by the Indian Mission to take up awareness building about AYUSH abroad and to disseminate authentic information about AYUSH systems of medicine.