GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AYUSH

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION No. 175
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.08.2025

Launch of traditional knowledge digital library for integration of AI

175 # **Shri Harsh Mahajan:**

Will the Minister of ***Ayush*** be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government has launched a 'Traditional Knowledge Digital Library' for integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in traditional medicine and AYUSH systems;

(b) if so, the key features and operational framework of this digital library; and

(c) whether this initiative has been recognised by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a global health innovation standard, and whether there are any proposals for collaboration with other countries?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF AYUSH
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) & (b) Based on the information received from the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) under the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) of Ministry of Science & Technology (MoS&T); The Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) is a prior art database of Indian traditional knowledge established in 2001, jointly by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the then Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy (now Ministry of Ayush). The TKDL was established to prevent misappropriation of Indian traditional knowledge (TK) by way of intellectual property rights.

The TKDL currently contains information from ancient texts related to Indian Systems of Medicine (ISM) such as Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa and Yoga along with relevant medicinal plant related information. The information from ancient texts existing in local languages such as Sanskrit, Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Bhoti, etc., have been transcribed into five international languages, namely English, French, German, Spanish and Japanese. The digitization in the form of formulations/ practices is done using traditional knowledge resource classification (TKRC). The digitized TK information is value added by correlating the ancient terminologies such the ingredients, measurements, etc., into their modern equivalents. The TKDL thus serves as a robust prior art database of Indian TK information therewith offering the information in languages and format understandable by patent examiners at Patent Offices worldwide. The access to this database is given to patent offices worldwide that have signed non-disclosure Access Agreements with the CSIR, for the purposes of search and examination in the context of patent applications filed. The TKDL prior art database is currently available to 17 patent offices - including the Controller General of Patents, Designs & Trade Marks (India), European Patent Office, US Patent & Trademark Office, Japanese Patent Office, German Patent & Trade Mark Office, Canadian Intellectual Property Office, INAPI (Chile), IP Australia, Intellectual Property Office (UK), Intellectual Property Corporation of Malaysia, Rospatent (Russia), INDECOPI (Peru), Spanish Patent & Trademark Office, Danish Patent and Trademark Office, National Industrial Property Institute (INPI, France), Eurasian Patent Organization, and Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines. This defensive protection through TKDL has been effective in safeguarding Indian traditional knowledge from misappropriation, and is considered a global benchmark.

(c) The World Health Organization (WHO), International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) have brought out a Technical Brief entitled “Mapping the application of artificial intelligence in traditional medicine” in July 2025. In the context of the TKDL, the brief states that “the digital library has set international specifications and standards for setting up traditional knowledge databases based on TKDL specifications.” The brief also states that “this data is critical for research and development and can also be useful for algorithm training and model shaping of AI.”

******