

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF AYUSH

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3452

TO BE ANSWERED ON 13th MARCH 2026

Traditional Medicinal Knowledge

3452. Shri Janardan Singh Sigrwal:

Will the Minister of AYUSH

be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has undertaken any initiatives to identify, document and digitise Traditional Medicinal Knowledge relevant to the AYUSH system of medicine including Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa and Homoeopathy and if so, the details thereof, stream-wise;
- (b) whether any mechanisms are in place to protect Traditional Medicinal Knowledge from biopiracy, misappropriation or misuse including through intellectual property safeguards and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Traditional Medicinal Knowledge has been integrated into education, research and clinical practice within AYUSH institutions and hospitals and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether financial assistance, research grants or capacity-building support is being provided to traditional practitioners, vaidyas and community knowledge holders associated with AYUSH systems and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government has undertaken any national or international collaborations, databases or knowledge-sharing initiatives to promote, validate and ensure equitable benefit-sharing of Traditional Medicinal Knowledge in the AYUSH system of medicine and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF AYUSH

(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)

- (a) Yes, 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

Homeopathy (now Ministry of Ayush). The TKDL currently contains information from ancient texts related to Indian Systems of Medicine such as Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa and Yoga. The information existing in local languages such as Sanskrit, Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Bhoti, etc., has been transcribed into five international languages, namely English, French, German, Spanish and Japanese in the TKDL database. A total of 519978 formulations/techniques from the Indian Systems of Medicine and Yoga practices have been transcribed in the TKDL database so far. This includes 148846 formulations/ techniques in Ayurveda, 265496 in Unani, 89403 in Siddha and 9097 in Sowa Rigpa, and 7136 in Yoga practices. This includes 2935 surgical methods, devices/ tools, therapies and dietary interventions from Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Sowa Rigpa.

Further, the Ministry of Ayush has launched Ayusoft portal that transforms classical Ayurvedic texts into an authentic knowledge repository, offering tools like:

- i. AayurVidnyaana (Ayurvedic encyclopedia),
- ii. ShabdaNidhi (glossary of Ayurvedic terms),
- iii. e-Samhita (e-Books portal)

North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda & Folk Medicine Research, Pasighat is actively engaged in the documentation of Local Health Tradition research in the field of folk medicine such as Documentation and Validation of Healing Practices and Folk Medicinal Claims among Ao tribes of Mokokchung District, Nagaland, Tai Phake Tribe in North East India, Traditional Bone Setters (TBS) practices of Khasi, Garo and Jayantiya tribes of Meghalaya.

National Institute of Ayurveda (Deemed to be University), Jaipur under the aegis of Ministry of Ayush is functioning as a national nodal centre (since Dec 2020) for survey, identification, preservation, cataloguing and digitization of traditional medicinal knowledge and Ayurveda manuscripts, in libraries, private collections, temples and traditional Vaidya families. Rare Ayurvedic manuscripts written on palm leaf, handmade paper, other traditional materials and old rare ayurveda books are being digitally preserved and archived for academic and research purposes. As of today, 560 ayurveda manuscripts and 356 rare ayurveda books are digitized.

Central Council for Research in Aurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) has developed APTA (Authoritative Principal Textbooks of Ayurveda) Digital Library (Ayurveda Grantha Samuccaya), Ayush Manuscripts Advanced Repository (AMAR), Showcase of Ayurvedic Historical Imprints (SAHI) & E- Medical Heritage Accession (E-Medha).

Central Council for Research in Siddha (CCRS) has undertaken research pertaining to conservation, preservation and digitization of traditional Palm leaf manuscripts & Paper manuscripts including old books containing Siddha through Mission P2P Mode (Palm to Paper).

The Central library of Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA), Jamnagar has digitalized many manuscripts and various PG-PhD research work carried out since 1956.

National Institute of Sowa Rigpa, Leh has digitised around 70 Sowa- Rigpa medical literatures regarding formulations and ancient medical manuscripts and running a project on Sowa- Rigpa Traditional Knowledge of Digital Library in collaboration with CSIR-TKDL Unit, New Delhi.

- (b) The TKDL was established to prevent misappropriation of Indian traditional knowledge by way of intellectual property rights. The access to this prior art database is given to 18 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. In addition to the use of TKDL database by patent offices for examination of patent applications, the CSIR-TKDL Unit also files third party observations and pre-grant oppositions on patent applications related to Indian traditional knowledge, based on the TKDL evidence. Since 2009, 375 patent applications have been either refused, withdrawn/deemed withdrawn or amended or set aside based on TKDL evidence, thus protecting Indian traditional knowledge.

Guidelines for Examination of Ayush- Related Inventions have been issued by the Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks (CGPDTM) in consultation with the Ministry of Ayush. These guidelines provide a clear framework for the filing and examination of patent applications related to Ayush systems. The guidelines instruct that patents are granted only to inventions that meet the criteria of novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability, while preventing patenting of existing traditional knowledge through databases such as the TKDL.

Further, provisions under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 regulate access to biological resources and associated traditional knowledge and ensure fair and equitable benefit sharing through the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA).

- (c) Research Councils under Ministry of Ayush for Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Homoeopathy, Yoga & Naturopathy are conducting research on this line through their peripheral Institutes spread across the country. Further, an Ayush Research Portal has been developed by the Ministry for promotion and propagation of Ayush where 43,614 evidence-based research articles are listed. Further, National Commission for Homoeopathy (NCH) has introduced Research Methodology and research-oriented electives in the curriculum to encourage documentation, analysis and academic study of traditional knowledge.

- (d) Ministry of Ayush is implementing a Central Sector Scheme (CSS) namely Ayurgyan since 2021-22 with the aim to support Research & Innovation in Ayush by providing Extra Mural Research activities and education by providing academic activities, training, Capacity Building etc. The Scheme has 03 components viz.

- (i) Capacity Building & Continuing Medical Education (CME) in Ayush

- (ii) Research & Innovation in Ayush
- (iii) Ayurveda Biology Integrated Health Research has also been added under the scheme from F.Y. 2023-24 as a 3rd component.

Under the above scheme, financial assistance is provided to the eligible organizations/institutions across the country, in accordance with the provisions contained in the scheme guidelines.

CCRAS is implementing CCRAS Ayurveda Gyan Naipunya Initiative (CCRAS-AGNI) initiative with an intent to mainstream the pragmatic Ayurveda practices through scientific validation and evidence-based appraisal. The details of this initiative may be accessed from the link: <https://ccras.nic.in/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/CCRAS-AGNI-2.0.pdf>. One of the objectives of this initiative is to provide capacity building to Ayurveda practitioners through training in research methods and good clinical practices.

Further, the financial assistance was provided for the certification process of Traditional Healers by the Quality Council of India, Govt. of India, during the FY 2024-25.

- (e) Ministry of Ayush is implementing the central sector scheme for Promotion of International Cooperation for Ayush (IC Scheme). Under this scheme the Ministry provides support to Indian Ayush drug Manufacturers/ Ayush Service providers to give boost to the export of Ayush products and services; facilitates the International promotion, development and recognition of Ayush systems of medicine; foster interaction of stakeholders and market development of Ayush at international level; promote academics and research through the establishment of Ayush Academic Chairs in foreign countries and holding training workshop/symposiums for promoting and strengthening awareness and interest about Ayush Systems of Medicine at international level. Under the CSS IC Scheme, 27 Country to Country Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs), 16 Ayush Chair MoUs and 54 Institute to Institute level MoUs have been signed.
