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Yoga shlokas to be translated for patent protection

New Delhi, PTI:

Taking a strong view of grant of patents to yoga asanas in the US, the government has already asked its mission in Washington to take up the matter with American authorities.

The government is embarking on an ambitious project to translate ancient Sanskrit scriptures in five foreign languages and send them to patent offices globally to prevent blatant commercial misuse of traditional Indian knowledge such as yoga in the US and other countries.

The Department of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) has engaged top institutes such as Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga and Kewal Dham of Pune to translate Sanskrit shlokas describing yogic asanas in English, French and German among other languages.

"Traditional Knowledge Resource Classification (TKRC) software, being used for translation, will also include video footage demonstrating yoga postures," official sources said.

In the first phase, to be completed by December this year, work on 150 asanas will be completed. The plan is to cover 1,500 most commonly used kriyas and asanas.

Work on digital library of other traditional systems of medicines like Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha has been completed. Over 1,20,000 medicinal formulations have been digitised.

"Discussions are on with patent offices of EU, US and Japan on modalities for sharing this library on traditional knowledge," a government official said.

Once these patent offices have been given the database, they would not grant any patent on anything already documented as traditional knowledge.

Taking a strong view of grant of patents to yoga asanas in the US, the government has already asked its mission in Washington to take up the matter with American authorities.

Department of AYUSH in Health Ministry has written to Department of Industrial and Policy Promotion under Commerce Ministry on the issue, which has, in turn, brought the matter to the notice of the Indian mission in Washington to be taken up with the US Trade Representative.