

## India foils Colgate-Palmolive bid to patent nutmeg mouthwash

Vanita Srivastava

vanita.shrivastav@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** India has foiled an attempt by consumer goods giant Colgate-Palmolive to patent a mouthwash formula containing herb extracts by citing ancient texts that show it was traditionally used in ancient medicinal practices.

The multinational submitted an application in 2011 to patent an oral composition containing extracts of *Myristica Fragrans* or nutmeg but an update on its status last month showed it was deemed to have been withdrawn.

This came after the **Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL)**, a unit of the government's science regulator **Council of Scientific & Industrial**

### THE LIBRARY SUBMITTED RELEVANT EVIDENCE IN UNANI & AYURVEDA BOOKS THAT TALK OF THE TRADITIONAL USES OF NUTMEG

**Research**, submitted proof in the form of references from ancient books, which said the herb and its extracts were used for oral diseases in Indian systems of medicine. In addition, other third party observations also made submissions against the claims.

"There are several references where *Myristica fragrans* and some others were used alone or in combination to eliminate bad breath, teeth strengthening,

treatment of gingivitis, fissures of the tongue and palate, diseases of the mouth and excess salivation. These herbs were also used for dryness of the mouth, diseases of the pharynx, lips, tongue and teeth in Indian medicine," **TKDL** said in its observations.

The library also submitted relevant evidence in printed books of the Unani and Ayurveda branches of Indian medicine, including texts from *Caraka-Samhita* (1000 BC-4th century) and *Qarabaadeen-Najm-al-Ghani* (20th century AD).

*Myristica fragrans* is a genus of trees that is distributed in India and Southeast Asia to North Australia and Pacific Islands. It is occasionally cultivated for its aril (mace) and seed (nutmeg) used as a spice.