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UN Forum Highlights The Need to Save Traditional Medicines From 'Bio-Piracy'

A United Nations-backed forum in Delhi today discussed efforts to protect potentially life-saving centuries-old traditional medicines from bio-piracy.

Representatives from more than 35 countries wrapped up a three-day meeting in New Delhi today that

discussed emulating India's **Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL)**, a database documenting traditional medicinal treatment, concluding that such a mechanism can fuel future innovation and benefit-sharing in their own nations by protecting traditional knowledge (TK) from misappropriation.

Co-organized by the UN World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and India's **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**, the conference heard from countries that are rich in TK, such as Ecuador, Indonesia, Kenya, Peru, Republic of Korea and Thailand, with speakers agreeing on the need to protect traditional knowledge.

TKDL was launched to "assert certain rights against bio-piracy," provides information on Indian traditional knowledge in languages and format understandable by patent examiners at International Patent Offices (IPOs), thus acting as a bridge between traditional knowledge information existing in local languages and patent examiners at IPOs to prevent the grant of wrong patents.

WIPO is a specialized UN agency that is dedicated to developing a balanced and accessible international intellectual property (IP) system, which rewards creativity, stimulates innovation and contributes to economic development while safeguarding the public interest.

Source: United Nations