

Department of Ayush's 'Arogya 2012' inaugurated in Hyderabad

Our Bureau, Mumbai

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The 'Arogya 2012', the **Department of Ayush's** fair to showcase the strength of Ayush systems and inevitable linkages with the industry, was inaugurated at Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh today by Ghulam Nabi Azad, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare.

The four-day event is being organised in collaboration with FICCI from October 12 to 15, 2012. "Arogya" is an exhibition showcasing the strength, efficacy and affordability of the Ayush systems of medicine which include Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa and Homoeopathy. The fair showcases the best and latest developments in the field of **Ayush**. The last Arogya fair at Hyderabad was held in November 2005.

Addressing the meeting of Arogya fair at Hyderabad, Azad, said the fair has grown into a country-wide phenomenon with more than 10 fairs organized throughout the year now. The **Department of Ayush** organises and supports these fairs to encourage the dissemination of information on the benefits and achievements of the Ayush systems of medicine and for sharing of experiences and best practices between the industry, academia and research institutions. The active participation of Ayush drug industries, medicinal plant traders, research institutions, hospitals, publishers and other stakeholders in the Arogya fairs ensures a wide spectrum of activities thus making it more informative and interesting for the general public.

He said that over the past three decades there has been a tremendous resurgence of peoples' interest in the Ayush Systems of Medicine, not only in India but also in many parts of the world, including Europe and the USA. This is mainly because of holistic approach towards preventive, promotive and positive health and multi-dimensional aspects of disease management in these traditional systems of medicine. It is a matter of pride that there are 504 Ayush educational institutions including 111 postgraduate colleges where about 27,000 students are admitted annually. India has the largest number of traditional and alternative medicine teaching institutions in the world. India has signed several MoUs for bilateral cooperation in the area of traditional medicine and setting up Ayurveda chairs and Ayush information centres in various countries, such as South Africa, Malaysia and Trinidad & Tobago.

He said that **Ayush** has been adopted as one of the core strategies under NRHM to augment effective provisioning of healthcare services. Ayush services are being introduced at various levels, i.e. in the primary health centres, community health centres, sub-district and district hospitals across the country. The aim is to utilize the **Ayush** doctors in implementation of the national health programmes. A national survey report from National Health Systems Resource Centre says that the use of **Ayush** and local health traditions is the mainstay of healthcare in many rural areas.

With mainstreaming of Ayush strategy under NRHM, the patients' attendance in the PHCs, CHCs and District Hospitals has increased in the last three to four years. The **Department of Ayush** has set up a **Traditional Knowledge Digital Library** in collaboration with **Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**. This initiative, well acknowledged by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), is a patent compatible instrument for patent search and prevention of wrong patenting of products based on traditional knowledge. **Ayush** systems have a long history of use by the communities as it requires simple technological inputs for diagnosis of ailments and preparation of medicinal products. Organization of such fairs in other parts of the country will continue to promote our holistic systems for overall public good, Azad added.