

Herbal home remedies now spared patent

Pune Mirror | Aug 3, 2015, 02.30 AM IST

India has successfully protected its traditional knowledge, preventing an attempt by Europe's leading pharmaceutical laboratory — **Pangaea Laboratories Limited** — to get the patent on a medicinal composition containing turmeric, pine bark and green tea for treating hair loss.

Traditional Knowledge Digital Library, a unit of the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR-TKDL)**, located the patent application filed at the European Patent office by **Pangaea Laboratories Limited** and filed a pregrant opposition along with prior-art evidences from **TKDL**, proving that turmeric, pine bark and green tea have been used for centuries in traditional Indian healing systems like ayurveda and unani as a treatment for hair loss.

"The UK-based company had filed the patent application at the European Patent office in February 2011. **CSIR-TKDL** had filed evidences from **TKDL** on January 13, 2014, after the patent application got published on the website, pursuant to which it was finally withdrawn by the applicant on June 29, 2015," said the statement released by the Ministry of Science and Technology.

Till date, the **CSIR-TKDL Unit** has achieved success in about 200 such cases without any cost. Recently, the unit foiled an attempt by **Colgate-Palmolive** to patent a mouthwash formula containing Nutmeg extract, which is used in Indian traditional medicine to cure oral diseases, at European Patent office. **CSIR-TKDL**, headed by **Dr Archana Sharma**, submitted proof in the form of references from ancient books in this case, which said the herb and its extract (*Myristica Fragrans*) were historically used for oral diseases in Indian systems of medicine.