



India foils Chinese bid to patent pudina

Kounteya Sinha | TNN

New Delhi: India has foiled a major Chinese bio-piracy bid to patent the use of medicinal plants 'pudina' (mint) and 'kalamegha' (andrographis) for the treatment of H5N1 avian influenza or bird flu.

The **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**, with the help of India's **Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL)**, dug out formulations from ancient Ayurveda and Unani texts, like 'Cakradattah', 'Bhaisajya Ratnavali', 'Kitaab-al-Haawifil-Tibb' and 'Qaraabaadeen Azam wa Akmal', dating back to the 9th century, to show that

Ayurveda Wars

► Chinese pharma firm Livzon seeks **patent** on pudina and kalamegha **to treat bird flu**

► **CSIR** produces evidence of their **use in India** from texts dating back to **9th century**

► Based on evidence from India, on June 10, **European Patent Office** cancels its decision to grant patent

both 'pudina' and 'kalamegha' have been widely used in India since ages for influenza and epidemic fevers.

► **Patent filed in 2007, P 16**

Chinese co had filed pudina patent in '07

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February 25, 2010.

New Delhi: India has won a major battle to preserve its traditional knowledge systems, thwarting a Chinese pharma company Livzon's bid to patent the medicinal properties of pudina and kalamegha for treating bird flu. After receiving exhaustive evidence from **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research** that confirmed India's stand, the European Patent Office (EPO) on June 10 cancelled the decision to grant patent to the firm.

It all began when Livzon, on January 19, 2007 filed a patent application at EPO claiming usefulness of the two for the treatment of bird flu to be novel. Impressed with the data, EPO decided to grant patent to Livzon on

However, on April 27, director of India's **Traditional Knowledge Digital Library Dr V K Gupta** shot off a letter to the EPO informing the examiners that the medicinal properties of pudina and kalamegha have been long known in Indian traditional medicine.

The letter said, "The patent application number EP1849473, titled Chinese traditional medicine composition for treatment of avian influenza, method for preparation, and application thereof, may kindly be referred to wherein the usefulness of andrographis (kalamegha) and mint (pudina) for treatment of fever, detoxification and for the treatment of avian influenza, has been claimed to be novel."