

Ayurveda digitised to prevent bio-piracy

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New Delhi: The Department in collaboration with the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), has created the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) in order to prevent the bio-piracy of the Indian Traditional Medical Knowledge said Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare, Dinesh Trivedi said in written reply to a question raised in the Indian parliament on Friday.

Agreements have been signed with the European Patent Office (EPO) and United States Patent Organization (USPO) to provide them access to this library, in order to

prevent grant of wrong patents.

Natreon Inc., a US Multinational had filed a patent application titled “Method of Treatment or Management of Stress” on July 27, 2006 through a composition comprising Withania somnifera plant extract; and a pharmaceutically, veterinary or nutritionally acceptable carrier(s) before the EPO.

The Traditional Knowledge Digital Library submitted evidences to EPO along with references of various texts of Ayurveda, Siddha & Unani.

These evidences established that Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera) is frequently and effectively used through oral administration in the treatment of depression, insomnia, gastritis, gastric ulcer and convulsions which are defined as the causative factors of stress in the patent application.

TKDL evidences also mention the use of Ashwagandha in the treatment of palpitation, excessive perspiration, diabetes mellitus and anemia which have been stated as conditions resulting from stress by the applicant.

After examination of the evidence presented before it, the EPO has observed that, in the light of this document, the subject-matter of claims cannot be considered as novel. Accordingly, the applicant Natreon Inc. withdrew its application on March 25, 2010.