

Govt bracing up to popularise traditional medicines: Minister

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Focal theme

'Health Challenges and Ayurveda'

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India's ancient medicinal systems are being given a 'new-look image' as part of the new government's effort to popularise them without losing their essence, Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram said.

Such a concerted exercise will specially benefit rural India where people largely rely on local herbal doctors, he said while inaugurating a two-day Traditional Healers Meet in the national capital as part of the Sixth World Ayurveda Congress (WAC).

“Deliberations are on with experts and practitioners ensure that such a plan benefits the country's huge number of villages,” Mr Oram told a gathering of healers, who called upon the government to give accreditation to deserving traditional healers.

The minister, while interacting with the Pragati Maidan gathering that had 100-plus healers who would present a string of research papers on ancient traditional treatment practices across India, expressed optimism that the meet would facilitate exchange of ideas between practitioners of different branches of ancient medicines. “The outcome of the deliberations would further enable the government to chart ways on empowering Ayurveda and traditional Indian treatment systems,” added Mr Oram, himself a tribal leader.

Bengaluru-based scholar, Darshan Shankar said in his keynote address that the healers' fraternity had two suggestions before the government to strengthen traditional cure in India. “One is a scheme that would ensure a home-level network of use of herbal medicines. The other is fast and prompt accreditation of healers by a competent body of experts,” said Prof Shankar, who is Vice Chancellor of Institute of Trans Disciplinary Health Sciences and Technology (ITDHST), Bengaluru.

Prof Ritu Priya of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, stressed the need for bridging a gap between traditional and modern medicines in present-day India.

Healers from the south, west, central and Northeast India at the meet expressed anguish that traditional treatment systems in India were not getting their due recognition even as they formed the basis for modern medicine. ITDHST's Prof G

Hariramamurthi welcomed the gathering. The sixth WAC will begin on Friday and conclude on Sunday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing the valedictory session.