

## PREFACE

Traditional Systems of Medicines' have played important role in global health care need and the same is true to the 'Indian Systems of Medicines'(Ayurveda,Siddha,Unani,Tibetan medicines,Folklore medicines and Ethnic medicines) as well. This knowledge has mostly passed through generations by in-heritance within the family/students, due to which most of the ingredients of the Indian wonder drugs are not yet identified correctly, leading to production of less effective medicines.

In our country, at present 18 states have independent Directorate to look after ISM related issues. In six states the ISM is administrated under the Health Directorate of the State, in around six smaller states and Union Territories Officer in–charges look after the issues concerned with ISM. At present there are more than 6.11 Lakhs practioners of ISM & Homeopathy. The number of Hospitals and dispensaries in this sector is more than 26,000 where free treatment facility is available. In addition large number of practioners in the un-organized folklore sector provide remedies to considerable portion of the population (<http://www.indianmedicine.nac.in> ). There are more than 8500 manufacturers of Ayurvedic drugs in the country and the gross turnover of drugs used in all the ISM & H systems is approximately around 1 billion US dollars.

Globalization of Ayurvedic practice has gained momentum in the past two decades. Ayurvedic drugs are used as food supplements in USA, European Union and Japan. Many physicians practice Ayurveda in many parts of the world. Facilities are available in countries like USA, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, New Zealand, South Africa, Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Hungary, Netherlands, Russia, UK, Israel, Japan, Nepal, Sri Lanka (Kurup, 2004) for imparting short and long-term training in Ayurveda. Even then, ISM could not take any lead in battle against COVID-19.

Some of the challenges in Indian Systems of Medicines include quality issues, adulteration, misidentification of plants, faulty collection and preparation and incorrect formulation process and lack of processing techniques lead to the substandard quality of herbal drugs.

Recently, World Health Organisation announced that it will set up a Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in India, to which Indian Prime Minister expressed confidence that just like the country has emerged as the 'pharmacy of the world', these WHO institutions will become the centre for global wellness. This special issue of Indian Journal of traditional knowledge (IJTK), containing research papers from experts on various aspects of COVID-19 is presented with hope, that our scientists will come up to bring the ISM to the global expectations to combat the pandemics like COVID-19.



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