



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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WHO Traditional Medicine Global Summit

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Why is in news? WHO Traditional Medicine Global Summit co-hosted by Ministry of Ayush adopted ecofriendly methods aimed at reducing carbon emissions

The Ministry of Ayush has been adopting and propagating eco-friendly methods to **reduce carbon emissions and environmental pollution, aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

The recently concluded WHO Traditional Medicine Global Summit held at Gandhinagar, Gujarat **hosted by WHO and co-hosted by Ministry of Ayush** clearly demonstrated it.

This effort led to **reduction of approximately 72,960 Kg of CO2 equivalent emission**. It is estimated that **more than 50 thousand plastic bottles & 30,000 single use plastic cutleries were avoided**.

Summit was **completely paperless** and had strong online presence, thereby reducing transport emission as much as possible.

Instead of plastic; badges were made of biodegradable material and in exhibition zone only reusable materials were used.

The summit **witnessed a unique initiative**, where delegates and participants' badges were biodegradable and ready to be **planted - seed papers** (marigolds).

Ministry feels that such initiatives will have a large impact in the long run and initiatives taken for reduction of carbon emissions can be precedence for other such large scale events.

One of the major thrusts of the summit was to have online presence, thereby reducing the need to travel. In total, there have been 6,046 streams of the Summit online, both live and Video/recordings, significantly reducing the number of participants/travels onsite. This effort paid off, as significant amount of carbon emission was avoided.

The Ministry of Ayush and WHO efforts are aligned to the G20 New Delhi Leaders Declaration, which reiterates commitment to achieve global net zero GHG emissions/carbon neutrality by or around mid-century.

In **March 2019, 4th United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-4)**, adopted a resolution on "**Addressing Single-use plastic products pollution**", which "encourages Member States to take actions, as appropriate, to promote the identification and development of environmentally friendly alternatives to single-use plastic products, taking into account the full life cycle implications of those alternatives".

Traditional Medicines:

The **WHO describes** traditional medicine as the total sum of the "**knowledge, skills and practices indigenous and different cultures** have used over time to maintain health and prevent, diagnose and treat physical and mental illness".

Its reach encompasses ancient practices such as **acupuncture, ayurvedic medicine and herbal mixtures as well as modern medicines**.

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The most widely used traditional medicine systems in the world today include those of **China, India, and Africa**.

Traditional medicine in India:

India has been known to be rich repository of medicinal plants.

The forest in India is the principal repository of large number of medicinal and aromatic plants.

About **8,000 herbal remedies** have been codified in AYUSH systems in INDIA.

Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Folk (tribal) medicines are the major systems of indigenous medicines.

Ayurveda and yoga are practised widely across the country.

The **Siddha system** is followed predominantly in **Tamil Nadu and Kerala**.

The **Sowa-Rigpa system** is practised mainly in **Leh-Ladakh and Himalayan regions** such as Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Darjeeling, Lahaul & Spiti.