

PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCES VISAS FOR AYUSH THERAPY

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his Mauritius counterpart Pravind Jugnauth, left, and WHO Director-General Tedros Ghebreyesus in Gandhinagar on Wednesday. VIJAY SONEJIVIJAY SONEJI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said that to promote the traditional medicine industry, India would soon launch 'AYUSH mark' which would give authenticity to quality AYUSH products made in the country. Speaking of 'Heal in India', he announced that a special visa category would be created soon for those who want to travel to the country to avail themselves of AYUSH therapies.

Mr. Modi inaugurated a Global AYUSH Investment and Innovation Summit in Gandhinagar in the presence of Director-General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus and Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Kumar Jugnauth.

He held a bilateral meeting with Mr. Jugnauth on the sidelines of the summit at the Mahatma Mandir convention centre.

Mr. Jugnauth and Dr. Ghebreyesus were present in Gandhinagar a day after laying the foundation stone for a WHO global centre of traditional medicines in Jamnagar.

Talking about the rising popularity of traditional medicines and wellness products, Mr. Modi said the possibilities of investment and innovation in the field of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) were unlimited. "We are already witnessing unprecedented growth in the production of AYUSH medicines, supplements and cosmetics," he noted.

The AYUSH sector was less than \$3 billion in 2014, which had now crossed \$18 billion and growing rapidly. Traditional medicine helped in increasing the tourism of Kerala, and similarly, every State should promote it, he said.

'Heal in India' could become a big brand of this decade and wellness centres based on Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha etc. could be very popular and attract people from across the world, the Prime Minister pointed out.

Modi lauds WHO

Mr. Modi also mentioned about food products and herbal nutritional supplements that were becoming popular not only in India but in many other countries as well. He lauded the WHO for setting up its traditional medicine centre in Jamnagar.

The Prime Minister gave Gujarati name Tulsibhai to Dr. Ghebreyesus.

The WHO chief talked about the huge potential of AYUSH and how India could help the world in providing those medicines and practices that could help in wellness and holistic health of people.

(With PTI inputs)

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