

# **Kerala Govt readying measures to take Ayurveda to greater heights: Chief Minister**

Trivandrum: Kerala can immensely contribute towards authentic, quality products as well as classic, curative and promotional services such as wellness centers and Ayurveda spas, according to Kerala Chief Minister Oommen Chandy. Inaugurating the International Business Meet held as part of the Global Ayurveda Festival currently on in the state capital, the Chief Minister said Kerala is undisputedly the land of original, authentic Ayurveda and the people of the state had always been great followers of this medical system.

The Government of Kerala has already taken necessary steps for Ayurveda to take a giant leap. When Sri Sam Pitroda, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Public Information, Infrastructure and Innovations, visited Kerala last week, he had given the cabinet 10 specific areas of action for growth. One of the important projects for Kerala's growth was Ayurveda. Sri Oommen Chandy mentioned that Sri Pitroda had insisted that Kerala should take Ayurveda to greater heights, not only for its health requirements but also for its economic growth.

The government of Kerala has selected 7 specific areas in Ayurveda for its wholesome development, the CM said. He added that scarcity of medicinal plants in the state has been one of the biggest threats that Ayurveda faces. The UDF government during its earlier term had enacted a law to help increase planting of herbal plants. This law will come to force as soon as possible. He also expressed belief that growth in Ayurveda sector can improve the financial sector and decrease the unemployment rate of the state. The CM also said the government is seriously looking at providing concession in the taxation of Ayurveda medicines.

Pointing out that the Government of Kerala had consistently and continuously encouraged the Ayurveda system in the state, he assured continued support to the traditional healthcare system of Ayurveda. Every Indian should be proud of Ayurveda and the government will find ways and means to support it for its organic growth and contemporary application, he said.

Sri Chandy said the Kerala government will do all that is needed for the growth of Ayurveda in the

state without any inhibition and with a transparent and participatory approach.

Expressing happiness to see the success of the Global Ayurveda Festival and its efforts to reach out to the whole Ayurveda community in particular and the general public at large, he said the Government of Kerala, who is hosting the grant gala event, is proud of its collaboration with CISSA (Center for Innovation in Science and Social Action) and the assemblage of Ayurveda organizations of this State.

The session started with the welcome speech by Dr. G.G Gangadharan, president of CISSA, at the event presided over by Smt. Mridula Jain, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Govt of India. In her presidential address, she emphasized the point that traditional medicines, especially Ayurveda, faces lot of problems in growth and so needs a helping hand. This help is to be provided by both central and state governments.

In his felicitation address, Sri V S Rajashekar Pillai, former VC of IGNOU said Kerala is a fertile soil for growth of business, adding that there needs to be plans for protecting and encouraging the medicinal plants' planting program. Another important program in connection with Ayurveda is the purification of water through Ayurvedic methods, he said.

Renjith Puranik, member of executive committee of Pharmexcil, in his felicitation address said "Ayurveda from Kerala has become an established brand all over the world now". He also mentioned that GAF is a great initiative and the Govt of Kerala and Dept of Commerce are playing a great part to promote this great medical culture of Kerala.

Padmasree P.R Krishnakumar said organizing GAF in such a grand way shows that Govt of Kerala is thinking of Ayurveda sector with much needed importance. But there is a long way ahead. Sri E.M Najeeb, Executive Director of KIMS hospital, said the combination of Ayurveda and tourism is gaining a great platform on the international forum. Ayurveda is the USP for Kerala tourism and can play the part of a money spinner for Kerala's economic sector, he said. Vote of thanks was delivered by Shri A. Jayaraj, coordinator of the Business Meet.

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Around 15 activities are taking place in this Global Ayurveda Festival including an International Seminar on Non-Communicable Diseases and around 3000 Ayurveda scholars participated in this event. The AYUSH Expo is also attracting the public at large. He hoped that the international business meet would throw light on more opportunities in India and abroad.

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