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# DST sets up ayurveda task force

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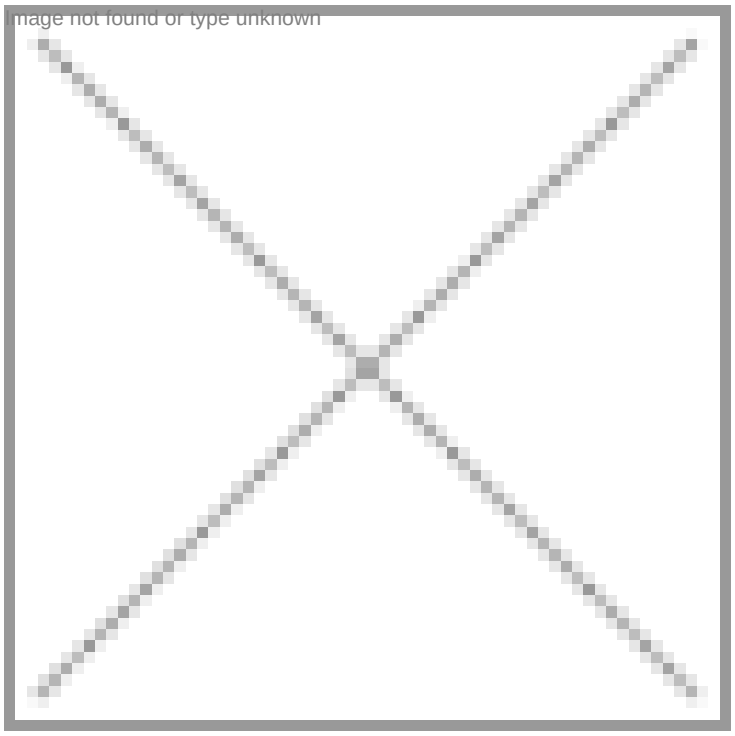


The concepts of body constitution, digestive process of food in the gut and substrates in tissues, rejuvenation, body adaptation to seasons, degradation of habitat by human conduct, and taste as a chemical indicator are examples of the rich collection of cues that ayurveda provides for the modern investigator. But the research in ayurveda has been dominated by studies on medicinal plants and the development of herbal drugs, which has a large market growing at 15 percent per year.

Therefore, in order to fill the gap between the basic research and ayurvedic biology, the Department of Science &Technology (DST), Ministry of Science & Technology, has constituted a task force under the chairmanship of Dr MS Valiathan, National Research Professor, Manipal University. The objective is to promote the application of basic sciences in the investigation of Ayurvedic concepts, procedures and products, and nurture the discipline of ayurvedic biology.

## Code verification tech gets govt nod

A high-level task force on pharmaceutical manufacturing recommended the adoption of unique code verification technology and mobile SMS authentication for all domestic medicines produced in India. The task force, put together by the Union Health Ministry last year, undertook research on available track and trace technologies as part of an ongoing effort by the government to curb drug counterfeiting.

The task force recommended this particular solution based on its viability and affordability in implementation across the pharmaceutical market in India. It also suggested the technology be implemented in several phases.

The task force recommendation is now in the hands of the Indian government who will make a decision on whether or not to

require this track and trace technology as an addendum to the Drug and Cosmetics Act.

## H1N1 virus hasn't mutated

Seeking to dispel the notion that the influenza H1N1 pandemic virus is going to attain its worst mutated form, the Indian health ministry recently issued a statement that the situation with respect to instances of H1N1 is well under control and is being monitored. The ministry sought to clear air on the recent media reports by denying that the virus has mutated to a more virulent form or changed its character.

World Health Organisation (WHO) while declaring Pandemic to be over in August 2010, had conveyed that the influenza H1N1 pandemic virus would take on the behaviour of seasonal influenza virus and continue to circulate for some years to come. Quoting the same, the health ministry statement issued on April 11, 2012 said that in the post-pandemic period, localized outbreaks of varying magnitude with significant level of H1N1 transmission are expected.

## India's first neat microalgal biodiseal run

In an important development, the test-run of a fully loaded Tavera (a regular diesel vehicle) on neat (B100) â€œmicroalgal biodieselâ€? was conducted in New Delhi. The microalgal biodiesel was produced from a marine microalgal strain cultivated in a solar saltpan.

The endeavour is the outcome of an ambitious project initiated in April 2010 under the (CSIR-NMITLI) program by CSIR and the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) that seeks to develop a scalable process for production of biofuel from marine microalgae.

Waving the green signal to the test run vehicle the union minister for science technology, Vilasrao Deshmukh, said, â€œIn a significant advancement in this NMITLI project, I am given to understand that the proof-of-concept for running a regular diesel vehicle on B20 biodiesel from marine microalgal source was achieved last year.â€?

Scientists from nine partnering institutions spread across the country, such as Andhra University (AU), Vishakhapatnam; Calcutta University (CU), Kolkata; CSIR-Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (CSIR-CSMCRI), Bhavnagar; CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (CSIR-IICT), Hyderabad; Indian Institute of Technology, Khargpur (IIT-Kgp); CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory (CSIR-NCL), Pune; CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (CSIR-NIO), Goa; National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai; and CSIR-National Institute of Interdisciplinary Science and Technology (CSIR-NIIST), Thiruvananthapuram are participating in the aforesaid endeavour.