

India to Host Second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine

Global leaders to converge in New Delhi to shape the future of holistic health and well-being

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New Delhi will become the focal point of a global dialogue on health and well-being as India jointly organises the **Second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine** from **17 to 19 December 2025**. Co-hosted by the **World Health Organization (WHO)** and the **Ministry of Ayush, Government of India**, the Summit will bring together policymakers, scientists, practitioners, Indigenous knowledge holders and civil society leaders from across the world to advance a shared vision of balanced, inclusive and sustainable health systems.

The Summit will be held under the theme “**Restoring balance: The science and practice of health and well-being.**” At a time when health systems globally are grappling with inequities, environmental stress and rising chronic disease, the Summit seeks to reaffirm the relevance of Traditional Medicine while firmly grounding its role in science, evidence and responsible practice. Building on the momentum generated by the inaugural Summit held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, in 2023, the New Delhi edition marks a significant step forward in positioning Traditional Medicine within the global health agenda.

Guided by the **WHO Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034**, the Summit will focus on how Traditional Medicine systems can contribute meaningfully to people-centred healthcare and planetary well-being. Discussions will highlight emerging evidence, innovations and policy pathways that support the safe, effective and ethical integration of Traditional Medicine into national health systems.

The technical deliberations of the Summit will open with a high-level plenary on **restoring balance**, examining why imbalances in knowledge, access, governance and planetary health persist, and what restoring balance could mean for societies today. Global leaders and experts will explore how scientific rigour, equitable governance, biodiversity stewardship, Indigenous rights and diverse knowledge systems can together shape a more just and resilient global health future. The session will also introduce emerging ideas for coordinated global action to support implementation of the Global Traditional Medicine Strategy.

A strong emphasis on science and innovation will define the second day of the Summit. One plenary will focus on **investing in science to drive progress in Traditional Medicine**, highlighting the importance of rigorous research, sustained financing, methodological harmonisation and innovation ecosystems. The discussions will underscore how strategic investment and scientific collaboration are essential to elevate Traditional Medicine as an evidence-driven contributor to sustainable development and universal health coverage.

Another plenary will centre on **re-imagining health systems for balance, safety and resilience**, outlining the vision and priorities of the Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034. Drawing on regional and country experiences—particularly from South-East Asia and the Western Pacific—the session will showcase how Traditional Medicine is being integrated into primary health care through policy, legislative and regulatory advances. The importance of robust governance frameworks, quality assurance and international regulatory cooperation will be a key focus.

The Summit will also turn attention to **accountability, standards and data**, exploring how progress in Traditional Medicine can be measured and guided responsibly. A dedicated plenary will examine the role of standardized data, transparent reporting and responsible, human-centred use of digital technologies, including artificial intelligence. The discussions will emphasize respect for ancestral knowledge, cultural integrity and community trust, while calling for accountability frameworks that recognise plural ways of knowing and ensure fair and ethical use of resources.

Over three days, the Summit will address a wide range of forward-looking issues, including regulation and integration of Traditional Medicine within public health frameworks; respectful exchange of knowledge with Indigenous Peoples; protection of biodiversity and sustainable use of medicinal resources; safeguarding intellectual property rights; and the responsible application of frontier technologies in research, education and practice.

The event will feature **more than 170 expert speakers across over 25 sessions**, showcasing perspectives from science, policy, practice and community leadership. **Twenty-one selected innovations** will be presented, highlighting new approaches, products and solutions emerging from different regions of the world. The Summit will also highlight experiences from **WHO and biocultural regions**, underscoring the deep connections between health, culture and ecosystems.

Participants will include government leaders, scientists, traditional medicine practitioners, representatives of Indigenous communities, industry stakeholders and civil society organisations. With **over 100 countries represented**, the Summit will serve as a truly global platform for dialogue and collaboration. In keeping with its inclusive approach, the Summit will be held in a **hybrid format**, enabling participation from around the world, both on-site in New Delhi and online.

A key outcome of the Summit will be the announcement of **new initiatives, collaborations, pledges and commitments** aimed at strengthening the evidence base, policy environment and global cooperation in Traditional Medicine. These outcomes are expected to contribute to more holistic, resilient and sustainable approaches to health, aligned with broader global health and development priorities.

The inaugural WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine in 2023 laid a strong foundation by bringing global attention, data and technologies to the field. The 2025 Summit builds on this legacy by exploring scientific innovation, governance and accountability in greater depth, while underscoring the importance of protecting traditional knowledge systems and the natural resources on which they rely.

As the world seeks health solutions that are not only effective but also equitable and sustainable, the Second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine presents a timely and significant opportunity. By convening diverse voices and knowledge systems, the Summit aims to chart a collective path towards restoring balance—for individuals, communities and the planet—at a moment when the future of health and well-being is being reimagined globally.

SR/GS/SG

(रिलीज आईडी: 2204243) आगंतुक पटल : 2701

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