



English rendering of PM's address at the 2nd WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine in New Delhi

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Director-General of the WHO, our Tulsi Bhai Dr. Tedros; my colleague in the Union Ministry of Health, J. P. Nadda ji; Minister of State for AYUSH, Prataprao Jadhav ji; Ministers from other countries associated with this event; ambassadors of various nations; all distinguished representatives; esteemed experts working in the field of traditional medicine; ladies and gentlemen!

Today is the concluding day of the second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine. Over the past three days, experts from around the world associated with the field of traditional medicine have engaged in serious and meaningful discussions here. I am pleased that Bharat is serving as a strong platform for this, with the WHO also playing an active role. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the WHO, the Ministry of AYUSH of the Government of Bharat, and all the participants present here for making this event a success.

Friends,

It is our good fortune and a matter of pride for Bharat that the WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine has been established in Jamnagar, Bharat. The world entrusted us with this responsibility with great confidence at the first Global Summit on Traditional Medicine in 2022. It is a matter of happiness for all of us that the reputation and impact of this global centre are expanding from the local level to the global stage. The success of this summit is the biggest example of this. This summit is witnessing a confluence of traditional knowledge and modern practices. Several new initiatives have also been launched here, which have the potential to transform the future of medical science and holistic health. There has also been detailed dialogue among health ministers and representatives from various countries. This dialogue has opened new avenues for promoting joint research, simplifying regulations, and expanding training and knowledge sharing. Such collaboration will play a significant role in making traditional medicine safer and more reliable in the times to come.

Friends,

Reaching consensus on several important issues at this summit reflects our strong partnership. Issues such as strengthening research, increasing the use of digital technologies in the field of traditional medicine, and developing regulatory frameworks that can be trusted across the world will greatly empower traditional medicine. We have also witnessed a new collaboration between tradition and technology at the Expo here through digital health technologies, AI-based tools, research innovation, and modern wellness infrastructure. When these come together, the potential to make global health more effective increases manifold. Therefore, the success of this summit is extremely important from a global perspective.

Friends,

Yoga is also an important component of traditional systems of medicine. Yoga has shown the entire world a path of health, balance, and harmony. The United Nations declared 21st June as the International Day of Yoga through Bharat's efforts and with the support of more than 175 countries. Over the years, we have seen yoga reach every corner of the world. I commend every individual who has made a significant contribution to the promotion and development of yoga. Today, a few selected distinguished individuals have been conferred the Prime Minister's Awards. The awardees have been chosen by an eminent jury through a rigorous selection process. All these recipients symbolize dedication, discipline, and lifelong commitment to yoga. Their lives are an inspiration to everyone. I extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to all the honoured awardees.

Friends,

I am also pleased to learn that an important step has been taken to ensure the lasting impact of the outcomes of this summit. A global platform in the form of the Traditional Medicine Global Library has been launched, which will preserve scientific data and policy documents related to traditional medicine in one place. This will make it easier for valuable information to reach all countries in an equitable manner. The announcement of this library was made during Bharat's G20 Presidency at the first WHO Global Summit. Today, that resolve has been fulfilled.

Friends,

Health ministers from different countries have presented an excellent example of global partnership here. As partners, you have discussed issues such as standards, safety, and investment. The Delhi Declaration that has emerged from this dialogue will serve as a shared roadmap for the coming years. I appreciate the honourable ministers from various countries for this joint effort and express my gratitude for their cooperation.

Friends,

Today, the inauguration of the WHO South-East Asia Regional Office in Delhi has also taken place. This is a humble contribution from Bharat. It will serve as a global hub to promote research, regulation, and capacity building.

Friends,

Bharat is also emphasizing partnerships of healing across the world. I would like to share two important collaborations with you. First, we are establishing a Centre of Excellence for BIMSTEC countries, i.e., our neighbouring nations in South and Southeast Asia. Second, we have initiated a collaboration with Japan. This effort seeks to bring together science, traditional practices, and healthcare.

Friends,

The theme of this summit is "Restoring Balance: The Science and Practice of Health and Well-being." Restoring balance has always been a foundational concept of holistic health. All of you experts understand this well that Ayurveda defines balance, or equilibrium, as the very essence of health. A person in whom this balance is maintained is truly healthy. Today, we observe that lifestyle factors and various imbalances are emerging as major underlying causes of most diseases from diabetes, heart attacks, and depression to cancer. Many global health challenges such as work-life imbalance, dietary imbalance, sleep imbalance, gut microbiome imbalance, calorie imbalance, and emotional imbalance are being driven by these very disruptions. Studies confirm this, and data clearly supports it. You, as health experts, understand this reality far better. However, I would like to emphasize that restoring balance today is not just a global cause, it has become a global urgency. We must act with much greater speed and determination to address this issue.

Friends,

In this phase of the 21st century, the challenge of maintaining balance in life is only going to become more complex. With the arrival of a new technological era marked by AI and robotics, the greatest transformation in human history is poised to unfold. In the coming years, the way we live our lives will change in unprecedented ways. We must therefore remain mindful that such rapid lifestyle changes characterized by increased convenience and resources without corresponding physical effort are likely to create unforeseen challenges for the human body. Hence, we must not focus only on present needs in traditional healthcare; we also share a responsibility toward the future.

Friends,

Whenever traditional medicine is discussed, a natural question arises regarding safety and scientific validation. Bharat is consistently working in this direction as well. All of you have seen the example of Ashwagandha during this summit. It has been used for centuries in our traditional medical systems. During the COVID-19 pandemic, its global demand increased rapidly and it began to be used in many countries. Bharat is advancing Ashwagandha in a credible and scientific manner through rigorous research and evidence-based validation. A special global discussion on Ashwagandha was also organized during this summit, where international experts deliberated in depth on its safety, quality, and applications. Bharat is fully committed to integrating such time-tested herbs into global public health frameworks.

Friends,

There was once a perception that traditional medicine was limited only to wellness or lifestyle management. That perception is now changing rapidly. Traditional medicine can play an effective role even in critical situations. With this vision, Bharat is moving forward in this field. I am pleased to share that the Ministry of AYUSH and the WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine have launched a new initiative. Together, they have undertaken a joint effort to strengthen integrative cancer care in Bharat. This initiative aims to combine traditional medical systems with modern cancer treatments and will also help in developing evidence-based guidelines. Several leading institutions in Bharat are conducting clinical studies on serious health challenges, including anemia, arthritis, and diabetes. Many start-ups are also emerging in this sector in Bharat. Youth power is connecting with ancient traditions. Traditional medicine is clearly progressing toward a new and higher horizon through all these efforts.

Friends,

Today, traditional medicine stands at a decisive turning point. A large section of the world's population has relied on it for a long time. Yet, traditional medicine has not received the recognition it truly deserves, despite its vast potential. Therefore, we must earn trust through science. We must further expand its reach. This responsibility does not belong to any one country alone; it is a shared obligation of all of us. The participation, dialogue, and commitment witnessed over the past three days at this summit have strengthened the belief that the world is ready to move forward together in this direction. Let us pledge that we will collectively advance traditional medicine with trust, respect, and responsibility. Once again, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all of you on this summit. Thank you very much.

MJPS/VJ/VK

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