

KERALA AS GLOBAL HUB FOR AYURVEDA TOURISM

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The Government has adopted a comprehensive strategy to promote Ayush-based tourism in the country. The Ministry of Tourism has formulated a National Strategy and Roadmap for Medical and Wellness Tourism in consultation with other Ministries including the Ministry of Ayush.

To facilitate international visitors seeking Ayush-based treatments, the Government introduced a separate category of Ayush Visa on 27 July 2023. Ministry of Ayush has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), Ministry of Tourism to work together for the promotion of Medical Value Travel (MVT) in Ayurveda and other traditional systems of medicine. So far, Ministry of Ayush has organized two Medical Value Travel Summits, one for Western zone on 30.09.2024 at Mumbai with participation of States/UTs of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Goa, and Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, and the other for the Southern Zone on 26.05.2025 at Chennai with participation of States/UTs like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Puducherry, with the aim of strengthening India's position in Medical Value Travel.

The research activities in the State are undertaken through the units/institutes under the respective Research Councils of the Ministry of Ayush. At present, 34 research programmes are being carried out at the National Homoeopathy Research Institute in Mental Health (NHRIMH), Kottayam, which functions under the Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH). Two institutes under the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) are functioning in the State of Kerala, namely the National Ayurveda Research Institute for Panchakarma (NARIP), Cheruthuruthy, and the Regional Ayurveda Research Institute (RARI), Thiruvananthapuram. CCRAS has undertaken various research projects in the State, including Medico-Ethno Botanical Surveys (MEBS), ethno-dietary studies, inventory of phytodiversity of medicinal plants, and programmes related to the cultivation of medicinal plants. The Clinical Research Unit of the Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM) is functioning at Edathala, Kerala, and provides healthcare services across geriatric, reproductive, and non-communicable disease sectors. The Siddha Regional Research Institute (SRRI) functioning under the Central Council for Research in Siddha (CCRS), situated in Poojapura, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala is dedicated exclusively to research in Siddha medicine. The institute is actively involved in scientific validation of traditional Siddha formulations, evidence-based clinical studies, and standardization of Siddha medicines. This institute engages in Intramural Research (IMR) projects on clinical research, Drug Standardization Research and Medicinal Plants Research.

Under the National Ayush Mission (NAM), the Government of India extends financial assistance to the State of Kerala for strengthening Ayush healthcare services through the State Annual Action Plans (SAAPs), which are approved annually in accordance with the provisions of the NAM Operational Guidelines. The support provided under NAM includes both recurring and non-recurring grants. Recurring grants cover the supply of medicines and contingencies to Ayush institutions, as well as human resource

support for Ayush hospitals. Non-recurring grants include infrastructure development such as construction, renovation, upgradation and strengthening of Ayush healthcare facilities, along with the provision of equipment and furniture for Ayush institutions.

Under the ‘Conservation, Development and Sustainable Management of Medicinal Plants’ a Central Sector Scheme implemented by National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB), Ministry of Ayush, project based financial support is provided for research activities on various aspects of medicinal plants to government as well as private universities/research institutions/organizations across the country. The details are at Annexure I.

Under Ayurswasthya Yojana, a Central Sector Scheme, implemented by Ministry of Ayush, two Centres of Excellence (CoE) projects have been approved in Kerala. The details are at Annexure II.

The Government has taken the following steps to promote evidence-based Ayurveda, international accreditation, and exports of Ayurvedic products, including from Kerala:

- i. To strengthen regulatory oversight, Ayush Vertical in Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) facilitates the issuance of the World Health Organization Certificate of Pharmaceutical Product (WHO-CoPP) for eligible Ayush drugs through joint inspections with State/UT Licensing Authorities and CDSCO.
- ii. Ayush Standard Mark and Ayush Premium Mark are awarded to Ayush drugs by Quality Council of India (QCI) based on third-party assessment of compliance with prescribed national and international quality standards respectively. Ayush Quality Mark Programme was launched in 2025 by the Ministry of Ayush to strengthen quality assurance, enhance consumer confidence, and improve the global recognition and competitiveness of Ayush products and services. Over the years 77 Ayush healthcare organizations in Kerala are accredited by National Accreditation Board for Hospitals (NABH), a constituent board of the QCI.
- iii. Ayurveda and Yoga have been included under Sectional Committee 2 of ISO/TC249 to focus on international standards of Ayurveda and Yoga, terminology, quality and safety of ingredients, extracts, finished products, Ayurveda-based dietary supplements, Yoga accessories etc.
- iv. As reported by the Government of Kerala, a 14-member Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani (ASU) Standardization Committee has been constituted under the chairmanship of the Principal Secretary, Dept. of Ayush. The Committee has been tasked to examine the various challenges faced by the ASU drug manufacturing industry, to suggest practical solutions, and make recommendations for improving standardization across the sector. As part of its mandate, the Committee organized a one-day stakeholder workshop on 15 February 2024, bringing together representatives from the Ayurveda drug manufacturing industry and other relevant stakeholders. The workshop facilitated the identification of existing issues and explored feasible corrective measures for strengthening quality assurance and regulatory compliance.

Annexure I

Details of research project supported on various aspects of medicinal plants during last five years in Kerala are as under;

S.No.	Organization Name	Project Title	Sanctioned Amount (In Rs)

1.	Vaidyaratnam Ayurveda College, Ollur, Thaikattusery, Thrissur, Kerala	Exploring the ayurveda concept of controversial drug (SandigdhaDravya) by pharmacognostical, phytochemical and DNA barcoding of source plants of ayurvedic drug “Murva”	29,88,375/-
2.	Arya Vaidya Sala, Kottakkal, Malappuram, Kerala	Identification of substitute /sustainable alternative species or plant part for selected rare medicinal plants by phytochemical and pharmacological evaluation	33,01,830/-
3.	KSCSTE – Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden & Research Institute, Palode, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala	Preparation of a Monograph on Selected Medicinal Plants Used as Substitutes/Adulterants in Ayurveda with Special Reference to Mesuaferrea L.: An Integrated Pharmacognostic, Phytochemical, and Pharmacological Approach	19,45,430/-
4.	Arya Vaidya Sala, Kottakkal, Malappuram, Kerala	Functional characterization and Epigenetic regulation of standardized herbal extracts used in Ayurveda for cancer therapy.	19,35,190/-

Annexure II

The details of Centres of Excellence (CoE) under Ayurswasthya Yojana in Kerala is as under;

S. No.	Name of Organization	Project Name	Fund released (<i>Amount in Rs.</i>)	
			Total approved Fund	Total released fund
1.	Arya Vaidya Sala, Kottakkal	Setting up CoE in Cancer Research Arya Vaidya Sala, Kottakkal	Rs. 6,64,45,170/-	Rs.5,31,56,136/-

2.	Kerala State Council for Science, Technology & Environment (KSCSTE)	Systematic Documentation of Traditional Knowledge (TK) related to plants used for Food, Ayush and Indigenous Medicine	Rs.1,90,81,000/-	Rs.1,90,81,000/-
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This information was given by Union Minister of State (I/C) for Ayush, Shri Prataprao Jadhav in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

SR/SV/SG

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