



Invigorating the Ayush industry

- The Indian herbal medicine market is worth \$18.1 billion. The Indian Ayush sector has grown by 17% between 2014 and 2020.
- Its integration into mainstream systems will give wider acceptance to traditional systems of the country

Herbal medicine market: The traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) case

1. The global market for herbal medicine was valued at \$657.5 billion in 2020. It is expected to grow to \$746.9 billion in 2022. In China, the traditional medicine industry had total revenue of \$37.41 billion in 2018, according to an IBISWorld report.
2. In fact, the Healthy China 2030 plan forecasts that the value of the traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) market may reach \$737.9 billion within China and globally by 2030.
3. The growth of the TCM industry in China is attributed to the immense attention the sector has received in the country. In 1982, the Constitution of China gave full recognition to TCM.
4. Since 2009, there has been continuous support for TCM in health policies. China has focused on developing quality infrastructure for TCM to co-exist with modern medicine under the same roof.

The NAM scheme

1. In India, the National Ayush Mission (NAM) was launched in 2014 by the Department of Ayush, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, to promote Ayush systems and address the needs of the sector in a comprehensive way.
2. Providing cost-effective services, strengthening educational systems, quality control of drugs and sustainable availability of raw materials are the main objectives of NAM.
3. Under the 'Medicinal Plants' component of the NAM scheme (2015–16 to 2020–21), the cultivation of prioritised medicinal plants in identified clusters/zones is being supported.

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4. Cultivation of plants on farmer's land, the establishment of nurseries with backward linkages, post-harvest management with forward linkages, and primary processing, marketing, etc., are all covered under the scheme.
5. For the cultivation of plants, subsidies at 30%, 50% and 75% of the cultivation cost for 140 medicinal plants are being provided. So far, approximately 56,396 hectares are under the cultivation of medicinal plants, as per the Ministry of Ayush.

Beyond NAM

1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation of the WHO-Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in Jamnagar, Gujarat. This will be the first and only global outpost centre for traditional medicine across the world.
2. Further, last year Union Ayush Ministry announced that medicinal

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CABINET DECISIONS: 14 JULY, 2021

Promoting Holistic Health of Indians

Continuation of Centrally Sponsored Scheme National AYUSH Mission Approved

- National AYUSH Mission (NAM) to continue till 31-03-2026 with financial implication of ₹4,607.30 crore
- Better access to AYUSH healthcare services, more medicines and trained manpower
- Improvement in AYUSH education; Focus on reducing diseases through targeted public health programmes

plants will be cultivated on 75,000 hectares of land. The Ministry of Finance has also announced a ₹4000-crore package under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan for the promotion of herbal cultivation.



3. NITI Aayog has already constituted a committee and four working groups on integrative medicine, with more than 50 experts across the country, to provide deeper insights and recommendations in the areas of education, research, clinical practice and public health and administration.

SMPBs to be strengthened

1. The National Medicinal Plant Board (NMPB) implements the medicinal plant component of Ayush through state bodies—State Medicinal Plant Boards (SMPBs). The organisational structure of SMPBs needs to be strengthened.
2. They should have experts for conservation, cultivation, R&D, herbal garden and nurseries, IEC and marketing and trade of medicinal plants. On the trade front, developing comprehensive databases on Ayush trade, products and raw materials is needed.
3. To date, most ISM (Indian System of Medicine) products, herbal products and medicinal plant products are not identified under specific HS (Harmonised System) codes.
4. Expansion of HS national lines to accommodate various features of traditional medicine and medicinal plant products based on existing requirements is required to provide more comprehensive trade data on Ayurvedic products.

The Ayush industry in India can provide cost-effective healthcare to people across States. It has all the ingredients of success, to co-exist with the modern health systems, as a choice-based system of traditional medicine.

Funding woes haunt Indian science

Lack of funding and Human resource in R&D

1. With very little participation from the private sector in the country that includes some of the richest by global standards, curiosity-driven basic research in India is primarily sustained by direct funding from the government.
2. Still, it remains static in India and hovers between a paltry 0.6 to 0.8% of GDP over a decade, way below the United States, China, Japan, the European Union countries and South Korea.

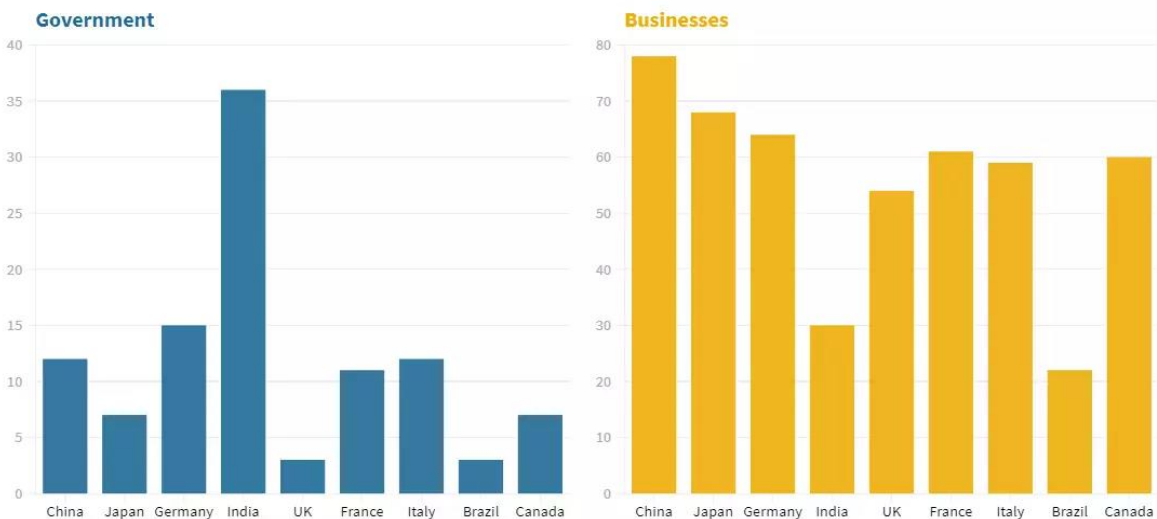


3. The World Bank statistics indicate that India had 255 qualified researchers per million people in 2017 — a minuscule fraction for its size and population, in contrast to 8,342 per million in Israel, 7,597 in Sweden and 7,498 in South Korea.

Defence Bias:

1. The budgetary allocations over the last several years show a consistent downward trend.
2. Much of the total the funding available goes to DRDO, Department of Space and Atomic Energy, leaving only 30 to 40% for agencies such as the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Department of Science and Technology (DST), Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

Comparison of contribution of governments and businesses to R&D personnel across 10 countries



Source: India Economic Survey 2020-21

The National Research Foundation (NRF)

1. Probably realising this demand from the new generation of researchers from the universities, the 2021-22 budget offered ₹10,000 crore (\$1.37 billion) every year starting from 2021, over the next five years, for a new funding agency called the National Research Foundation (NRF).

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2. This agency is expected to boost university science research, as well as the work in social sciences.

Way Forward:

1. To unleash the fullest potential of Indian science, a vibrant and responsive financial system is required. Such a system should be autonomous and more participatory.
2. India must choose to break the bureaucratic barriers that exist in the government departments and develop innovative ways to help basic research flourish.
3. India cannot aspire to be a global leader in scientific research if enough funds are not injected into basic research by committing to raise the R&D spending to at least 1% of the GDP.
4. It is also important for the private sector to chip in. But for that to happen, the government should incentivise the private players by giving them tax breaks, etc.

There are a lot of cues to be obtained from China on how it managed to become a world leader in scientific research. For all this to achieve, a foremost requirement is a dynamic R&D ecosystem, which India lacks today.