

# Standing Committee Report Summary

## Review of National Ayush Mission

- The Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare (Chair: Mr. Bhubaneswar Kalita) submitted its report on the ‘Review of National Ayush Mission’, on February 9, 2024. The National Ayush Mission was launched in 2014 to promote accessibility to ayurveda, yoga, unani, sidhha, and homeopathy (AYUSH). The Mission focuses on promoting and improving research, education, quality of drugs, and infrastructure related to Ayush. Key observations and recommendations of the Committee include:
  - **Fund utilisation:** The Committee observed that utilisation of funds under the scheme was low. For example, in 2022-23, 85% of the funds from the revised stage were utilised. The Committee recommended the Ministry of Ayush to work towards full utilisation of funds.
  - **Implementation of the Mission:** The Committee noted that more than 69% of integrated Ayush Hospitals approved under the Mission are still under construction. Moreover, only 65% of Ayush Health and Wellness centres have been established. The Committee recommended extending the Mission by five years beyond 2024-25. It also recommended that Sowa-Rigpa, a traditional system of medicine prevalent in the Himalayan regions, should be included in the Mission.
  - **Delays and Challenges:** The Committee noted that delays in implementation of the Mission are primarily caused due to: (i) late allocation of funds, (ii) overlapping functions between entities, and (iii) delays in submitting utilisation certificates. In order to address these challenges, the Committee recommended reducing the number of budget line items in state action plans and clearly differentiating roles between different entities. The Committee also recommended: (i) training existing staff in managing projects effectively, (ii) creating specific action plans for Ayush Health and Wellness Centres, (iii) providing financial incentives to states for better implementation, and (iv) streamlining processes through technology.
- **Research and Development:** The Mission includes key components such as building Ayush Health and Wellness Centres, co-locating Ayush facilities with existing health centres and setting up Ayush hospitals. It also includes areas that states can choose to flexibly spend funds on. These include telemedicine, sports medicine through Ayush, and capacity building and training. The Committee noted that promotion of research and development should be included as a component of the Mission, as well as an area on which states can flexibly allocate funds.
- The Committee also recommended that patient data on diagnosis, treatment and outcomes from local health centres can be utilised to conduct large scale epidemiological studies. To support this, it recommended measures such as upgrading infrastructure, training Ayush practitioners in research skills, and standardising data collection.
- **Quality of Ayush drugs:** The Committee highlighted concerns related to high metal content in Ayush drugs. It recommended the Ministry to: (i) conduct post-marketing surveillance of Ayush medicines to track their safety and efficacy, (ii) harmonise standards of Ayush medicines with international norms, and (iii) develop systems to report adverse events related to Ayush medicines.
- **Promotion of Ayush:** The Committee observed various measures taken by China, South Korea, and Africa to promote traditional medicine. The Committee recommended integrating modern and traditional medicine by including Ayush systems in medical education and school curricula. The Committee also recommended pursuing private insurance companies to cover Ayush treatments and foreign governments to recognise Ayush systems. It also recommended the government to regulate consultation rates related to Ayush.

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