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Propagation of Unani system of Medicine beyond the Indian boundaries has been boosted with the globalization process and efforts of international cooperation.

Unani system started in 5th and 4th Century B.C under the patronage of Hippocrates (Borate) in Greece (Unan). This system was then developed in Arab and Persian lands. It was introduced by Arabs into Indian subcontinent about a millennium ago and here it found its permanent home to attain the zenith of scientific development. This system, over the centuries has assimilated so well in the Indian civilization that today, Unani is recognized by the Government of India as one of the Indian systems of medicine, and forms an integral part of our national healthcare delivery structure. The Government has been providing increasing funds and support for its multi-dimensional development. As a result, today the country has several educational and research institutions, pharmaceutical industries and hospitals providing healthcare to the masses at national level. In the area of public healthcare, a large network of Unani hospitals and dispensaries is functioning across the country; predominantly through Central and State Government initiatives.

Propagation of Unani system of Medicine beyond the Indian boundaries has been boosted with the globalization process and efforts of international cooperation. These steps have led to setting up of a Unani Medicine Chair at the University of Western Cape, South Africa and proposals are in pipeline for establishing Unani Medicine Chair in many other countries.

The need for establishing a Centre of Excellence dedicated to tertiary healthcare and advanced research in Unani Medicine has been felt for a long time. The Ministry of AYUSH, has agreed in principle to set up an All India Institute of Unani Medicine (AIUUM) focused on research and development and high quality teaching and training at postgraduate and doctoral level. The Planning Commission has allocated a budgetary provision of approx. Rs.250 Crore for construction of this Institution.

Fundamentals of Unani Medicine

As the name suggests, the Unani System of Medicine owes its immediate origin to ancient Greece. Its fundamental framework is based on deep philosophical insights and...
scientific principles. The most important fundamental principles are; Natural Basic components (Umoor-e-Taba’iyah) which state that the human body is composed of seven natural and basic components called “Umoor-e-Taba’iyah” which are mainly responsible for maintaining the health. These are Elements (Arkaan), Temperament (Mizaj), Humours (Akhlaat), Organs (Aa’za’), Spirit/vital forces (Arwaah), Faculty/energy (Quw’a) and Functions/actions (Afa’al). Hippocrates propounded the doctrine of humours and a distinguished feature of Unani medicine conceived by him is that the human body consists of three types of materials: Solids which are named as organs (A’zaa), Liquids which are named as Humours (Akhlaat) and gaseous matter named as Arwaah (pneuma).

Trimmer theory (Mawaleed-e-Salasa) postulates that the entire universe is made up by these three matters i.e solid, liquid and gases. Unani system of Medicine lays emphasis on diagnosing a disease through Pulse (Nabz), Urine examination (Baul) and Stool (Baraz) etc. The system relies on the theory of four elements – Air, Water, Fire and Earth; and the theory of four humours – Blood, Phlegm, Yellow Bile and Black Bile. Any disturbance in the humoral balance in the body causes disease. A perfect balance of the humors is responsible for good health. In Unani system, great emphasis is placed on temperamen and the temperament is denoted by the dominant humour i.e. Sanguine, Phlegmatic, Choleric and Melancholic. The treatment aims at restoring the equilibrium by giving factors (including drugs) of opposite temperament. There are four modes of treatment in Unani system of medicine. They are Dietotherapy, Regimenal therapy, Pharmacotherapy and Surgery.

Areas of Strength

The strengths of Unani system of medicine are its holistic approach, temperament based prescription and treatment and principles of six essential factors of Life (Ashab-e-Sitah Zarooriyah) which are pivotal for an perseverance and maintenance of health. The toning up of organs and immune system is a unique feature of Unani system of medicine. Unani System has shown remarkable results in curing diseases such as Musculoskeletal disorders, Respiratory conditions, Skin disorders, Liver disorders, Nervous system disorders and several other acute and chronic diseases.

The Regimenal therapy (Ilaj-Bit-Tadbeer) is a boon of Unani system of medicine which works on the principle of modifying six essential factors of life. Regimenal therapies include Dietotherapy, Cupping (Hijamah), Leeching (Taleeq), Venesection (Fasd) etc which help to eliminate morbid humours from the body (tanqiyah) and can be used alone or in combination with drug therapy.

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Pain management and various skin disorders can be managed effectively with least medication by Regimenal therapies. The prompt effectiveness of Regimenal therapy excels it from other modes of treatment used in Unani system of Medicine.

Immuno-modulators such as khameera Marwareed, Jawahar Mohra are available which can boost such up the immunity. In chronic diseases as Tuberculosis, AIDS, Cancer etc where a long term medication is used, Unani a system of Medicine can act as adjuvant to minimize the side effects of main therapy, enhancing the body immunity and improving overall quality of life.

Unani system of Medicine offers an effective treatment for various diseases especially chronic disorders; GIT disorders as Gastritis, Peptic ulcer, Ulcerative colitis etc; Respiratory disorders such as Bronchial Asthma, Chronic Bronchitis etc; Musculoskeletal disorders such as Arthritis, Osteoporosis; Neurological disorders as Senile dementia, Parasis, Paralysis; Cardiovascular disorders such as Hypertension; Lifestyle and Metabolic disorders such as Obesity, Diabetes, Hyperlipidemia, Gout and Sexual disorders such as erectile dysfunction, loss of libido, premature ejaculation etc.

Unani Education in India

The education and practice in Unani system of Medicine is monitored and regulated by the Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM) established under Indian Medicine Council Act 1970. The five and a half year Undergraduate Course in Unani Medicine leading to award of BUMS Degree is governed by Indian Medicine Central Council (IMCC) Regulations 1995. Three year Post Graduate Courses leading to award of MD (Doctor of Medicine) /MS degree are governed by IMCC Regulations 2007. At present, there are 42 recognized colleges in India providing Education & Training in Unani System of Medicine at UG level, out of this 8 colleges have PG course facility. National Institute of Unani Medicine at Bangalore offers Post Graduate education and undertakes Research in Unani Medicine. The total seats available for UG and PG courses in these institutions are 1851 and 135 respectively. Recently, PhD programme has also been started at National Institute of Unani Medicine (NIUM) under Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Bangalore and Govt. Nizamia Tibbi College under Vijayawada University, Hyderabad.

Role in Health Care Sector

There are 50,475 registered Unani practitioners providing Health Care in remote areas across the country.
There are 259 Unani Hospitals with 3744 indoor bed facility. There are 1483 Unani dispensaries all over the country. The National Policy on Indian Medicine & Homeopathy 2002 insures provision for AYUSH Health care facility including Unani System of Medicine in primary health care network. 11650 AYUSH Doctors including Unani System of Medicine have been appointed on contract at primary & community health centre’s under the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM). AYUSH practitioners including Unani System of Medicine are also involved in Reproductive & Child Health and School Health Programme.

Advances in Research & Development

Research & Development in Unani Medicine is by and large in the hands of Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM). The Council has, over the past three and a half decades, emerged as the leading organization to bring out significant scientific documents for reference and use in this field. The CCRUM was established 1979 to build up research base for Unani System. The CCRUM has its headquarters in New Delhi with 23 centres functioning in different parts of the country.

The Institution Network of Council includes: Two Central Research Institute of Unani Medicine one each at Hyderabad and Lucknow; Eight Regional Research Institute of Unani Medicine with one each at Chennai, Bhabdak, Patna, New Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Aligarh & Srinagar; One Literary Research Institute of Unani Medicine is at New Delhi; Drug Standardization Institute at Ghaziabad; two Regional Research centres of Unani Medicine one each at Allahabad and Silchar; six Clinical Research Units one each at Bhopal, Burhanpur, Meerut, Bangalore, Kurnool and Edathala; One Drug Standardization Research Unit is New Delhi; Chemical Research Unit at Aligarh and Clinical Research Pilot Project at Imphal, Manipur; Two Co-location centre’s in major Allopathic Hospitals in New Delhi for providing free Unani treatment under one roof.

- Unani Medical Centre at Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya Hospital.
- Unani Specialty Centre at Deen Dayal Upadhayay Hospital.

Under Clinical Pharmacology activity, the CCRUM has conducted Pharmacological action and safety evaluation studies of 130 single drugs & 120 formulations in 30 diseases.

The initiative of the Department of AYUSH to set up CRISM is intended to meet increasing global concerns on the safety, efficacy and quality of Indian Systems of Medicine (ISM) products, and promote high level research in these systems and their worldwide acceptance. The primary mission of the Centre is to facilitate scientific validation and dissemination of information on ISM, in particular Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani Medicine, through collaborative research and advocacy by the Department of AYUSH and National Center for Natural Products Research (NCNPR), University of Mississippi, USA.

CCRUM has developed a kit of Unani drugs for common seasonal ailments and scientifically validated the efficacies of these drugs. These are now being commercially available through National Research Development Corporation. CCRUM Conducted studies on healthy ageing and developed a package for senior citizens. Council has also conducted multicentric trials of Unani drugs in different skin diseases.

Collaborative Research

The Council is engaged in collaborative studies with different scientific organizations and medical colleges of repute in the country, including Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), AIIMS, ICMR and other prestigious institutions of the country.

The Government of India is developing cooperation with foreign countries to promote traditional Indian systems of Medicine including Unani Medicine globally. In this area, a landmark was made with the launching of an Indo-US Centre for Research in Indian Systems of Medicine (CRISM) at University of Mississippi, USA in April 2009 by, Ministry of AYUSH. The initiative of the Department of AYUSH to set up CRISM is intended to meet increasing global concerns on the safety, efficacy and quality of Indian Systems of Medicine (ISM) products, and promote high level research in these systems and their worldwide acceptance. The primary mission of the Centre is to facilitate scientific validation and dissemination of information on ISM, in particular Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani Medicine, through collaborative research and advocacy by the Department of AYUSH and National Center for Natural Products Research (NCNPR), University of Mississippi, USA.

The Ministry of AYUSH has constituted a National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) to coordinate and support conservation, cultivation and trade of medicinal plants. Alongwith the Indian Medicines Pharmaceuticals Limited (IMPCL), Mohan (Uttarakhand)–Government of India enterprises for supply of medicines to Government dispensaries and hospitals, there are a good number of licensed manufacturing units for Unani drugs in the private sector.

Drug Standardization & Patenting of Drugs

Standards for 298 single and 100 compound drugs under the Technical Guidance of Unani Pharmacopeia Committee have been developed by
Based on this work, the Council has brought out two publications. The book, *Physicochemical Standards of Unani Formulations* carries monographs on Unani formulations. This title has appeared in four parts consisting of 350 compound Unani drugs. Another publication, *Standardization of Single Drugs of Unani Medicine*, carries monographs on single Unani drugs in five volumes – each having standards for 50 single drugs. The Council has also published books entitled *Chemistry of Unani Medicinal Plants and Chemical Investigation of some Common Unani Medicinal Plants*. Since 1978 the Council has carried out a series of ethno-botanical surveys in remote forest zones in different states, particularly which are mainly inhabited by tribals and various ethnic groups.

Classical Unani literature are abound with references about the use of medicinal plants. Unmindful over-exploitation of this important resource has led to extinction of several species. Availability of genuine raw drug material is very important for the efficacy of the formulation. Besides, there are also some medicinal plants/drugs whose identification is controversial. Keeping this in view, a herb garden at CRIUM, Hyderabad has been established for plantation of about hundred Unani medicinal plants of repute for demonstration purposes and field scale cultivation of medicinal plants particularly those used in clinical trials and kit medicines.

In order to popularize medicinal plants, particularly those used in Unani Medicine, the CCRUM has embarked upon a vigorous programme of cultivating about 100 species in its nursseries at its centers at Aligarh, Hyderabad, Chennai and Srinagar. Based on ethno-botanical survey in different forest zones of the country. Ethno-pharmacological data have been collected and compiled region wise (*Medicinal Plants in Folklores of Northern India, Southern India, Kashmir Himalayas, Northern India –part II*, *Orissa- part II*, *Southern India – part II*) in seven assortments.

The Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) is an important joint initiative of the Ministry of AYUSH, Ministry of Health Family Welfare, Government of India and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), and is being implemented by the CSIR through National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR), Ministry of Science and Technology, to prevent the bio-piracy and misappropriation of the classical Unani formulations.

Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) is a collaborative project of the Ministry of AYUSH and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) The main objective of this globally renowned project is to prevent misappropriation of India’s rich heritage of traditional medical knowledge. Details of 1,54,015 formulations of Unani Medicine are available with the TKDL.

Unani Drug Industry

There are 485 licensed Pharmacies manufacturing Unani Drugs, in addition to Govt. of India enterprises “Indian Medicine Pharmaceutical Corporation Limited” (IMPCL). Manufacturing and sale of Unani Drugs is regulated under Drug & Cosmetic Act 1940 with mandatory compliance of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP). Drug Standardization is undertaken by competent institutions e.g. Pharmacopeial Laboratory for Indian Medicine (PLIM), Pharmacopeia Commission of Indian Medicine (PCIM), Unani Pharmacopeia Committee (UPC) and CCRUM.

Global Scenario

Unani system is popular in different parts of the world with different names:
India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka & South Africa - Unani Medicine or Unani Tibb
Iran-Tibb-e-Sunnati (Traditional Medicine)
Pakistan- Eastern Medicine
China- Uyghur Medicine
United Arab Emirates (UAE)-Traditional Complementary and Alternative Medicine (TCAM)
Kuwait- Islamic Medicine

Conclusion

Unani system of Medicine is holistic in nature and takes into account the whole personality rather than taking a reductionist approach towards disease. It is a great healing art as well as a science whose theories, philosophies of nature (Tabi’at) and temperament (Mizaj) and practices of medicine are most appropriate for the maintenance of human health.

India is a land of great ecological diversity. Its healthcare system reflects this diversity, both in its plural systems of health knowledge and practice. In India, Unani system of medicine co-exists with conventional medicine and other AYUSH systems to form a unique model of medical conflation. Unani system of Medicine is a comprehensive medical system that deals with various states of the body (health and disease). Hippocrates, the father of medicine in conjunction with the founder of Unani medicine bought medicine out of superstition and his teachings were well adopted in modern system of medicine till the sixteenth century. While Arabs and Persians developed the fundamental principles and core practices of Unani but Indian Scholars explained and applied them to a peerless in the lands of its inception and Unani was very well comprehended in the soil of India. There was exchange of knowledge between Unani and Ayurved. Many things of Ayurved were assimilated in Unani by determining their temperament and actions. The continuing creativity of Indian Scholars is testified by emerging encyclopedia of Hakeem Azam Khan and research development by Hakim Ajmal Khan. It helped Unani to become the legacy of India.

The Unani System of Medicine has a long and impressive record in India. Today, India is one of the leading countries in so far as the practice of Unani medicine is concerned. It has the widest network of well developed educational institutions, Comprehensive health care facilities, state-of-art research and quality drug manufacturing. India has reached a stage where many countries are approaching for cooperation and support for Unani System of Medicine. Based on the above facts, it has been established that India is a world leader in Unani system of Medicine.

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