

PRESS RELEASE

Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu inaugurated 2nd Siddha Day Celebrations

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru Banwarilal Purohit inaugurated 2nd Siddha Day Celebrations organised by Central Council for Research in Siddha and National Institute of Siddha in association with Directorate of Indian Medicine & Homeopathy, Government of Tamil Nadu at Kalaivanar Arangam, Chennai today (26.12.2018).

Hon'ble Governor said, "I am delighted to be participating in the 2nd Siddha Day celebrations being jointly organised by the Central Council for research in Siddha, National Institute of Siddha and the Directorate of Indian Medicine & Homoeopathy.

I am informed that the Siddha system of medicine traces its origins to the Podhigai hills of Tamil Nadu. In fact the system of Medicine derives its name from the word, "*SIDDHI*", which means "Eternal Bliss.

The saint Agasthiyar is recognized as the father of Siddha medicine and hence the National Siddha Day is observed on his birthday which is the day of the Ayilyam Star in the month of Margazhi.

Palm leaf manuscripts say that the Siddha system was first described by Lord Shiva to his wife Goddess Parvati. Parvati explained this to her son Muruga. Lord Muruga taught the science to his disciple sage Agasthya who in turn taught his disciples for its propagation for the benefit of mankind.

The fundamental principal that forms the bedrock for the Siddha System is that the instrument for attaining Siddhi is the human body which should be kept healthy if eternal bliss is to achieved. The focus of the Siddha system of medicine is therefore towards maintaining bodily health. For this, the science emphasises the means for physical, mental, social and spiritual well being. Simple lifestyle practices, dietary regimens and effective nature based medicines based on the holistic approach for healthy living form the prescriptions under the Siddha system.

The Siddhars who were saints lived thousands of years ago and practised the eight types of yogic practices - Ashtanga yogam. They were 18 in number and among them, Agasthiyar, is considered to be the pioneer who laid the foundations for the development of Siddha Medicine, Astrology, Philosophy, and Alchemy.

Some other Siddhars such as Bogar, Punaikannar, Sattanathar and Romarishi are credited with propagating Siddha medicine beyond the borders of India in countries such as China, Sri Lanka, Italy and Egypt.

The Siddha system of Medicine gives great importance to the five elements of nature: fire, water, air, earth and ether and is based on the principle of setting right the deficiency of balance among Pitta, Kapha or Vayu in the human body by prescribing the right medicine.

The drugs used by the Siddhars can be mainly classified into three groups: thavaram (herbal product), thadhu (inorganic substances) and jangamam (animal products). These have sub classifications under them. For example the Thadhu drugs are further classified as : uppu (water-soluble inorganic substance or drugs that give out vapour when put into fire), pashanam (drugs not dissolved in water but emit vapour when fired), uparasam (similar to pashanam but differ in action), loham (not dissolved in water but melt when fired), rasam (drugs which are soft) and ghandhagam (drugs which are insoluble in water, like sulphur).

Apart from providing effective remedies for several serious ailments Siddha Medicine even offers solutions for Hair-fall, Dandruff, Scars, Pimples and Warts etc. Hence Siddha products are sought after and are also becoming more and more popular in the field of cosmetics.

You may all be aware that the Ministry of AYUSH was formed in November 2014 for the development and propagation of Indian and traditional systems of medicine. The letters A Y U S H stand for Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy. In October 2016, India's first All India Institute of Ayurveda was dedicated to the nation by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji. All this goes to show the importance that the Government attaches to the propagation of the benefits of the traditional systems of medicine.

For its part, the Tamil Nadu Government is also providing Siddha healthcare through more than 1000 Siddha units in PHCs, Taluk Hospitals and General Hospitals in the State.

About 5000 institutionally qualified Siddha doctors are practicing Siddha medicine all over Tamilnadu and also in Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra and Delhi. Siddha Medicine is also being widely used by the Tamil speaking people in Srilanka, Singapore, Malaysia, the UAE and the United States of America.

The National Institute of Siddha (NIS), Chennai established in 2004, as an autonomous organization under the control of Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India, is being developed as a Center of Excellence for the Siddha system of medicine. The Institute has been established by the Government of India as a joint venture with the Government of Tamil Nadu under the Societies (Registration) Act 1975.

The Central Council for Research in Siddha was established in the year 2010 for undertaking research activities for the promotion of Siddha Medicine. The research programme mainly focuses on clinical research including safety and efficacy studies of Siddha drugs, validation of the fundamental principles, drug standardization and quality control, survey and cultivation of medicinal plants and literary research.

The Indian Systems of Medicine are based on the principle of “prevention is better than cure”.

At the same time, it is also important to realise that the allopathic system of medicine has its own benefits. Mahatma Gandhi, who was a great believer in naturopathy and herbal remedies, started having faith in Western medicine after his intractable piles problem was solved by surgery. This faith got further reinforced when he was successfully operated for appendicitis in Yerwada Jail, where he was interned during the freedom struggle. Based on these experiences Gandhiji advocated continuous interaction between different medical traditions, whether modern or ancient, whether of the west or east, so that they could blend harmoniously and rid each other of their defects.

It is therefore clear that medical care should be that which is effective in reducing pain and suffering and in increasing longevity.

A new model for health and healing, keeping the patient at the core of the treatment, without being fixated on a single system of medicine will be the ideal solution.

I am sure that the organisers of the National Siddha Day celebrations, namely the National Institute of Siddha, the Directorate of the Indian System of Medicine and the Central Council for Research on Siddha are jointly working together on this noble mission. I congratulate them for having organised the Siddha Day celebrations in a befitting manner and wish them well. May their efforts be greeted with success and may the propagation of the Siddha system of medicine to places far and wide bring greater benefit to mankind.”

On this occasion, Thiru Shripad Yesso Naik, Hon'ble Minister for AYUSH, Government of India, Dr. C. Vijayabaskar, Hon'ble Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Thiru R.C. Aggarwal, Deputy Director General, Ministry of AYUSH, Dr. K. Senthil raj, Director, Department of Indian Medicine & Homoeopathy, Prof. Dr. V. Banumathi, Director, National Institute of Siddha, Prof. Dr. K. Kanakavalli, DG, Central Council for research in Siddha and other dignitaries participated.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai -22

Sd/-

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Joint Director (PR)