

and legislation and circumstances. For knowledge sharing between South East Asian Countries Ministry has signed MoUs with Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand, Indonesia and Myanmar (Member States of SEAR) for cooperation in the field of Traditional Medicine, to establishment of AYUSH Academic Chairs in these countries, to exchange experts for training of practitioners, paramedics, scientists, teaching professionals and students, for mutual recognition of pharmacopoeias and formularies etc. India has organized 9 International Conference wherein an expert from member states of WHO South-East Asia Region has been participated.

(b) Ministry has designated National Institute of Ayurveda (NIA), Jaipur, National Institute of Unani Medicine (NIUM), Bengaluru and National Institute of Homoeopathy (NIH), Kolkata as Regional centres under the Delhi Declaration in which the countries agreed for cooperation, collaboration and mutual support amongst the South-East Asian Countries in all fields of traditional in accordance national priorities. India has reserved 20 seats in undergraduate courses (one seat each in Ayurveda and Homoeopathy for each SEAR country), 7 seats for MD and 2 Seat for PhD courses for SEAR member countries under AYUSH Scholarship scheme in the premier national institutes from the academic session 2015-16 onwards through ICCR.

(c) Ministry has organized two training programs (each for 14 days) on Traditional Medicine for 10 members from Ministry of Public Health, DPR Korea in February, 2017 and December, 2017 under WHO fellowship and study tours program on Traditional Medicine for Member States. A 6 member delegation from Ministry of Health, Bhutan visited India for 2 weeks to study Traditional Medicine during November, 2018. India has shared its traditional medicine knowledge with Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri-Lanka, DPR- Korea, Myanmar and Thailand through Bilateral meetings, Academic Chair, Scholarships, Fellowships, Trainings, International Conferences and Study tour programs.

#### **Promoting Yoga in rural areas**

1736. SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: Will the Minister of AYURVEDA, YOGA AND NATUROPATHY, UNANI, SIDDHA AND HOMOEOPATHY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any special initiatives have been taken by Government for promotion of Yoga on the eve of International Yoga Day, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that steps taken to promote Yoga are mostly restricted to the urban areas of the country and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government proposes to promote Yoga in rural and backward areas of the country with same enthusiasm as in urban areas of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF AYURVEDA, YOGA AND NATUROPATHY, UNANI, SIDDHA AND HOMOEOPATHY (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Ministry of AYUSH has the mandate of being the Nodal Ministry for the observation of International Day of Yoga (IDY) and it encourages other Ministries, State governments, local self-government bodies and other stake-holding institutions to observe International Yoga Day in a befitting manner, and suggests detailed lists of activities.

The Government has taken the initiatives of promoting eco-friendly Yoga accessories like Yoga mats. Its objective is that the popularity of Yoga should not lead to increased use of environmentally harmful material, made of plastic or other polluting substances. In the IDY celebration this year, Yoga mats and apparel made of natural products like cotton were largely used. This has led to gains for our artisans working in the Khadi sector.

As part of the effort to take Yoga closer to the people, the Government has recently launched a mobile App called “Yogalocator”, which will help an individual to locate the Yoga events and trainings that happen near her or him, so that plans can be made to join one such event or training programme.

The Government has also set up a Yoga Certification Board (YCB) to standardize and strengthen Yoga training by providing certification to individuals and accreditation to Institutions. This is a significant step in spreading Yoga in India.

(b) No, promotion of Yoga is not restricted to urban areas. Many of the activities of the Ministry of AYUSH for Yoga Promotion serve to create awareness in rural areas for the benefit of the people.

Under the Information Education and Communication (IEC) Scheme, many activities are taken up to reach out to people and to create awareness about Yoga in Rural areas. IEC activities include programs on TV, Radio and Print-media etc.

The Ministry of AYUSH has also reached out to about 2.5 lakh Gram Pradhans with suggested plan of action for Yoga promotion in villages.

In addition to the above, under National AYUSH Mission (NAM), financial assistance is provided to States and Union Territories for setting up AYUSH Wellness Centres, in which Yoga is an important component.

(c) Yes. Sir.