

# New patent pact offers extra shield to Indian genetic resources and traditional knowledge

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** Members of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) have finalised a new treaty that will make it mandatory for patent applicants to disclose the country of origin or the source of genetic resources if the claimed invention is based on those materials or associated traditional knowledge.

The treaty, that will provide additional protection for Indian genetic resources and traditional knowledge, such as yoga, siddhi and ayurveda, has been a key demand of the developing world, led by India.

The Geneva-based agency, responsible for evolving rules related to patents and trademarks, finalised the agreement Friday, which will require several countries to re-



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India has insisted on global giants giving credit to the vast traditional knowledge such as yoga, siddhi and ayurveda

work their domestic regulations. India has insisted on global giants giving credit to the vast traditional knowledge and genetic resources instead of seeking to exploit them by registering patents.

While protection against misappropriation is available

in India, countries, which do not have disclosure of obligations, the disclosure requirements will provide for protection across countries. At present, 35 countries have some form of disclosure obligations, most of which aren't mandatory and don't have ap-

propriate sanctions in place for effective implementation.

The WIPO treaty on intellectual property, genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, will for the first time take note of the knowledge and wisdom which have supported economies, societies and cultures for centuries and are now inscribed into the global IP system.

"These are historic achievements championed by India as a provider of traditional knowledge and wisdom and repository of biodiversity. A significant win for countries of the global South and for India," said a govt official.

The resistance from countries such as the US and multinationals is evident from the fact that it took 150 countries to evolve a consensus after two decades of negotiations.