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Speech by Amb. Abhishek Singh, High Commissioner of India to Nigeria on Ayurveda Day Celebration 2026 on 23.09.2026

**Prof. Martins Emeje, Director General, Nigeria Natural Medicine
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Friends from the Indian community and media,

Namaste and Good Afternoon.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my great honour to welcome you all to the celebration of the 11th Ayurveda Day. This year, Ayurveda Day is being celebrated under the theme "**Ayurveda for a Healthier Tomorrow**" and with the tagline "**One Health, One Future: Integrating Ayurveda through Science, Evidence, Innovation and Holistic Care**". We are privileged to celebrate it here in Abuja, together with our Nigerian brothers and sisters. For us, Ayurveda Day is much more than merely a celebration of India's 5000-year-old heritage. As Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi has said, it is a vision for global wellness - **where health is not just the absence of disease, but a balance of body, mind, lifestyle, diet and harmony with nature**. We are not just celebrating a tradition; we are taking Ayurveda to the world as a sustainable solution for modern healthcare challenges.

Ayurveda is fundamentally the science of prevention. As many of you know, the word Ayurveda comes from two Sanskrit words - **Ayur** meaning life and **Veda** meaning science or knowledge. It translates to the "**Science of Life**". Originating in the Indian subcontinent thousands of years ago, it remains one of the world's oldest continuously practiced healthcare systems. In India, Kerala is renowned globally for its authentic Ayurvedic treatments - combining traditional herbal remedies, personalized diets and intensive cleansing therapies such as **Panchakarma, Shirodhara and Abhyanga**,

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which provide deep detoxification, calmness of the nervous system and relief from joint pain.

Now the question that comes naturally:-

Why Ayurveda, and why Nigeria?

India and Nigeria share a deep respect for traditional knowledge. Nigeria has a rich tradition of herbal medicine and traditional healing, formally recognized and nurtured by the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare through the Department of Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medicine. This shared respect is a natural bridge that connects us. Today, the world is looking for preventive healthcare, healthy lifestyles, nutrition and holistic well-being. This is precisely where Ayurveda, with its principles of **Dinacharya**, **Ritucharya** and **Ahara**, and Nigeria's traditional systems can work together. India sees health cooperation as a central pillar of the India-Nigeria partnership.

Through our Ministry of Ayush and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), we offer scholarships, training and capacity-building at premier institutes like the All India Institute of Ayurveda, New Delhi and the National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur for Nigerian practitioners and researchers. These scholarships are fully funded by the Government of India. Every year, we offer 30 to 40 ICCR scholarships to Nigerian students for undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD courses in reputed universities and institutions in India, including in the field of Ayurveda and traditional systems of medicine. To deepen our collaboration in this important sector, India has offered to sign an MoU for Cooperation in the field of Ayurveda and other Traditional Systems of Medicine. This MoU will facilitate:

- a) Promotion of safe use of Ayurveda and other traditional systems;
- b) Exchange of experts for training;
- c) Mutual recognition of pharmacopoeias;
- d) Promotion of trade and commerce in Ayurveda and traditional medicine and their medicinal products.

The draft MoU is currently pending for comments from the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. I would like to take this opportunity to humbly

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urge the esteemed Ministry to kindly expedite the process, so that we can give concrete shape to our partnership.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Ayurveda is for the masses. To mark Ayurveda Day as a **Jan Andolan** - a People's Movement, we have today tried to showcase the diversity of Ayurvedic science - from Yoga to Art of Living, from an exhibition of natural herbs to live demonstration of Ayurvedic therapies, and from medicinal plants to free Ayurvedic health camps. Furthermore, India can facilitate linkages between Indian Ayurvedic pharmaceutical companies adhering to WHO-GMP standards and Nigerian regulatory authorities, including NAFDAC, to ensure that quality and affordable traditional medicine products reach those who need them.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this year's campaign rests on three pillars: **Integrative Healthcare for Better Health Outcomes, Evidence-Based Research and Innovation, and Community Wellbeing and Sustainable Living**. These resonate strongly with Nigeria's health priorities. Let us move beyond nostalgia. Let us build on evidence, research and innovation - which is the motto of this year. Let India and Nigeria together show the world how traditional wisdom can shape a healthier tomorrow.

I sincerely thank the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, particularly the Department of Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medicine and for co-hosting this celebration and for your visionary leadership in integrating traditional medicine into Nigeria's national health system. I also acknowledge the unwavering support provided by Abuja Chambers of Commerce & Industry (ACCI).

I thank you for your presence.

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