

## Tibetan medicine popular among Chinese too: Dalai Lama

Tibetan medicine is sought after the world over now and even officials in Communist China are keen followers of the system of treatment, Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama said here Saturday.

'There is a lot of interest in Tibetan medicine all over the world... even Communist officials in China have shown interest, and many even take treatment,' the Dalai Lama said at the launch of the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Institute and Cancer Centre at Max Healthcare hospital in Saket, south Delhi.

He said that while advanced healthcare services provide 'immense service' to the public, there was need to extend the facilities to rural areas also in India.

'India still needs a lot of facilities for health, specially in rural areas,' he said, adding that compassion was an integral part of providing healthcare services.

The Dalai Lama in October 2008 had undergone a surgery at the Gangaram Hospital for removing his 'problematic' gall bladder which had agonised him for 15 years. Referring to the surgery, the Tibetan spiritual leader laughed and said that Tibetan medicine had failed in his case, but it was especially useful in digestive and respiratory ailments.

Pradeep Chaubey, the doctor who performed his surgery, is now with Max's new centre.

Speaking about the centre, Chaubey said: 'This institute has a team that has developed the frontiers of least invasive surgery in the country. Our foremost priority is to train doctors and also develop and provide the most advanced laparoscopic procedures.'

On Tibetan medicine, the Dalai Lama said that during the spread of the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in 2003 in South Asia, 'many Chinese officials had resorted to preventive Tibetan medication, and that was successful'.

He said that a Tibetan medicine clinic was recently established in Poland's capital Warsaw.

'The Chinese Medical Organisation has conducted research on Tibetan medicine and ascertained that the mercury used in many medicines is really purified and not poisonous. For centuries-old treatment like Tibetan, Unani and others, research through modern techniques is essential,' he added.

The Tibetan leader also spoke of 'analytical meditation' as a way to attain inner peace and spirituality. He emphasised that secular ethics needed to be promoted in modern education as 'just relying on religious faith is not enough'.

'In the West more and more people are showing interest in this. India should be the leader in promoting this,' he added.

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