

Global Markets:

The trade figures for Unani products per se, are not very easily available. The DGCIS publication clubs the figures of Ayurveda and Unani together under one head, although it differentiates them under two subheadings, viz.

?? Exports (or Imports) of Ayurveda and Unani products not put up for retail sale.

?? Exports (or Imports) of Ayurveda and Unani products put up for retail sale.

The former largely includes raw materials like herbal plants and other such crude products that are worked upon to get to the final products. On the other hand, the latter includes finished products that can be consumed directly. Since Unani system of medicine is not recognized in most parts of the world (save for some neighboring countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal etc.), these products are not exported as medicines but as food supplements. The figure for export of Ayurveda and Unani products put up for retail sale is given as annexure 2(i.).

As can be seen, the major markets for Unani products include USA, Russia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, UK, and Germany (this is after taking into consideration both the subheads-products not put up and those that are put up for retail sale). This result is arrived at after analyzing the trade figures of the DGCIS Publication. But another source of this information is the companies who are into the exports of Unani products.

There are very few companies that manufacture and export Unani products, Hamdard Labs being the main player accounting for as much as 70% of the foreign market in Unani exports. According to the said company, the major export markets for Unani products are the Middle East, Canada, USA, UK, Russia, and Singapore. The various items exported by Hamdard include Sherbet Ruh-Afza, Pachnol, Joshanda, and Safi. These are exported as food additives and health food in Canada and the US, and as shelf products in the United Kingdom. But in the Middle East, some of the Unani products are even exported as medicines. The turnover of Hamdard from exports of Unani products is about Rs. 7-8 crores.

Problems and Bottlenecks:

There are a number of problems, which stop the Unani system of medicine to gain a firm footing. Some of the major ones are the following: -

- ?? Structure of the sector remains highly unorganized.
- ?? Data on Unani medicine exports/imports per se cannot be taken from any of the authentic publications. The information given by the company has to be relied on.
- ?? The awareness of Unani medicine in India itself is pretty low, not to talk of its awareness abroad. This prevents it from gaining the confidence of the people.
- ?? Very few manufacturing companies in the Unani system of medicine and not very many companies coming up in this field because of, perhaps, lack of financial viability.
- ?? The shortage of professionally qualified manpower. This can be gauged from the fact that the number of non-institutionally qualified practitioners account for more than half the total number of Unani practitioners.

Proposed solutions and strategies:

One of the most important features of Unani medicine is that it has no proven side effects. This fact combined with the fact that it has proven efficacy makes it a reasonably viable system. But this has not been the case. What needs to be done is to make the system financially more viable and popular. The following measures are suggested: -

- ?? Increase the awareness of Unani medicine by organizing various seminars, doing an awareness campaign and other such methods that make it more publicized.
- ?? Increase the number of colleges and universities offering professional Unani knowledge, particularly those imparting postgraduate degrees.
- ?? The government should give incentives to the Unani manufacturing sector, so that more companies take up this system.
- ?? The government should encourage private sector initiative in research and development by granting concessions etc.

- ?? Pro-active participation at International Forums like WHO to convince for increased acceptance of Unani medicine.
- ?? Mandate Good Manufacturing Practices for production.
- ?? Develop appropriate technologies for processing of herbs/formulations.
- ?? Promotion of Unani practitioners to establish medical practice abroad.
- ?? Steps should be taken to get Unani system of medicine legally permitted abroad.

Annexure 2 (i)
Exports of Ayurveda and Unani products
put up for retail sale

COUNTRIES	YEAR				
	92-93	94-95	96-97	97-98	98-99
Total	176292928	424214474	985250139	1187745520	988464125
USA	4766571	64606806	89087644	57041075	80938318
UK	561454	3888107	19230117	80074433	14138195
Germany	28346637	13290884	26861438	36783776	21337041
France	2952406	267946	4097484	9454601	10935001
Indonesia	3633328	490054	326231	343024	212122
Malaysia	2283376	14424140	4090953	16142395	26275355
Nepal	8914101	119651394	196148983	195891565	135830649
Afghanistan	269405	396296	10845568	1556984	37367553
Nigeria	17112390	33681914	21658317	33441277	42769017
Russia		56160925	283099310	321222322	91459600
UAE	3464164	7777763	15013379	6045456	24163108
Sri Lanka	2799840	7397701	11421384	9066244	7200747

Source: Indian Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy in India, 1999.

Annexure 2 (ii)
Exports of Ayurvedic and Unani products
not put up for retail sale

COUNTRIES	YEAR				
	92-93	94-95	96-97	97-98	98-99
Total	226545251	409870836	395000210	422417579	347602952
USA	18698384	142690866	110793211	23358520	65744508
UK	4214772	18571050	11419487	2966321	12024606
Germany	22475179	6801134	1500581	13901179	6175143
France	6249609	2924905	3508108	15186367	1274654
Canada	1146333	3810642	4690315	4058861	7900902
Indonesia	7079555		145610		
Malaysia	14284244	6191393	17852280	35424851	25809899
Sri Lanka	4711159	22037274	93080008	17819428	10375531
Singapore	1937263	11294013	37062055	29365457	11122398
Nepal	19093988	20484314	18958004	4335960	5643953
UAE		15581345	13522309	26030061	28206432
Russia		49576109	32883378	23097193	3025332

Volume in kg
source: DGCIS publication

