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NEWS

INDO–U. K. COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH IN FIBRE OPTICS

A research collaboration in the field of fibre optics and optical communication systems has been agreed between the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, and the University of Strathclyde and the British Telecom Research Centre. The collaborative research will be funded under the Indo-British technical co-operation programme.

Fibre optics enables the transmission of light from a precisely defined input point, via a flexible link, to a precisely defined output point. The input and output points may be separated by distances ranging from a few metres to over 100 kilometres, and the light may be modulated either at the input to form a communication system, or during the transmission along the fibre to form an environmental sensing, or information processing system.

(For more details please contact: British Information Services, British High Commission, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi 110 021.)

SAVING LIVES BY SAVING PLANTS

Plants have been used as medicine for millennia. They are a major element of health care systems that rely on traditional medicine but also play an important role in Western medicine. Many of these plants are under threat and it is estimated that if present trends continue, by the turn of the century, some 20,000 plants used in traditional medicine as healing agents may have become extinct.

In order to assess the use of medicinal plants in different communities and to give advice to governments on the conservation and utilization of such plants, a major International Consultation on Conservation of Medicinal Plants, organized jointly by the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and the World Wildlife Fund, Gland, Switzerland, met in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from 21 to 26 March.

In reaffirming their commitment to the collective goal of Health for All by the Year 2000 through a primary health care approach, the participants at the meeting, unanimously adopted an official Declaration of ten points.

(Further particulars may be had from WHO Media Service, 1211, Geneva 27, Switzerland.)