

Development of India's highest commercial Lilium cultivation field begins in Ladakh

Choglamsar Flower Field to generate sustainable livelihoods for farmers, Self-Help Groups and Cooperatives



Leh, July 16: Development of India's highest commercial Lilium cultivation field has commenced at Choglamsar in Leh, marking the beginning of a first-of-its-kind floriculture initiative of this scale in Ladakh, aimed at creating new avenues of livelihood through

floriculture.

Over the last three days, more than 50 thousand premium Lilium bulbs have already been planted at the flower field, with the first bloom expected around the first week of September this year.

Spread over an area of 93,000 square metres, the Choglamsar Flower Field, on the banks of the River Sindhu, is being developed as one of the largest organised high-altitude floriculture parks in the country. At present, India's highest flower field is located at an altitude of 3200 meters at Mana in Uttarakhand, while the Choglamsar flower park sits at an altitude of nearly 3265 meters.

The project is being implemented with scientific and technical support from the CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (CSIR-IHBT), Palampur. L-G Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena had laid the foundation of the Choglamsar flower field on 22 June 2026.

The project aims to produce premium Lilium flowers and buds that command high prices in national and international markets and thus, create a new, sustainable source of income for Ladakh's farming community, through self-help groups and cooperatives.

This initiative is aligned with the Hon'ble Minister of Home Affairs and Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah's vision of "Sahkar se Samriddhi," which seeks to strengthen cooperatives to create sustainable local employment and enhance the income of local communities, particularly women and farmers, engaged in cooperatives.

Conceived by LG, Shri Saxena, the project aims at positioning Ladakh as an emerging centre of premium floriculture, while opening access to high-value domestic and international flower markets. This flower field will also emerge as a new recreational destination for tourists.

Under the project, the Agriculture department in the first year will develop the flower field and, at the time of bloom, transfer it to the selected Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and cooperative societies. The department will handhold the SHGs and the cooperatives in marketing flowers in national and international markets to maximise returns. Subsequently, from the next year, the cooperatives will themselves undertake commercial cultivation, harvesting and value addition of the Liliu flowers. For this, local farmers are being given structured training in scientific floriculture, modern cultivation practices, and establishing floriculture as a viable commercial enterprise.

Ladakh offers ideal agro-climatic conditions for Liliu cultivation. The bulbs perform exceptionally well under cold climatic conditions – between minus 4 degrees and 4 degrees – making them naturally suited to the region's high-altitude environment. An important advantage of Liliu cultivation is that in three years, the bulbs begin to multiply naturally, significantly enhancing future production and increasing farmers' returns without any additional investment.

"Ladakh's climate, which is often seen as a challenge, is in fact one of our greatest strengths. By introducing commercial cultivation of Liliu, we are opening a completely new avenue of income for our farmers, women and youth. Our vision is to transform Ladakh into a high-altitude floriculture hub, where scientific cultivation, value addition and market linkages generate sustainable livelihoods for local communities. This initiative will not only diversify agriculture but also empower Self-Help Groups, cooperatives and young entrepreneurs through high-value floriculture," said L-G Shri Saxena.

Liliu is one of the world's most sought-after cut flowers because of its exceptional ornamental value and longer shelf life. The flowers are widely used in the floral industry and hospitality sector, with premium varieties priced between Rs 150 and Rs 200 per stick in domestic retail markets.