

CEC Kargil Dr Jaffer Akhoon attend Stakeholders Meet-cum-Workshop on Medicinal Plants

Kargil, October 08, 2026: A Stakeholders Meet-cum-Workshop on “Strengthening of Medicinal Plants Sector through Conservation, Sustainable Cultivation and Entrepreneurship Development” was organised in Kargil in collaboration with the School of Horticultural Science and Technology, University of Ladakh, Kargil Campus, with participation from scientists, farmers, students and officials.

The programme was attended by CEC, Kargil, Dr Mohd Jaffer Akhoon as the chief guest, along with Dr Faizan Ahmad, Dean, School of Horticultural Science and Technology, University of Ladakh; Ali Raza, Chief Horticulture Officer Kargil; Dr Mansoor Hussain, Junior Scientist, KVK Kargil, University of Ladakh; Tsering Norboo, Agriculture Extension Officer, Department of Agriculture Kargil; Niyaz Ali, Range Officer, Sankoo; Dr Imtiyaz Ali, Project Manager, RCFC NR-II, SKUAST-K; and Dr Ather Sidiq Zargar, Marketing Manager, RCFC-II, SKUAST-K attended the event.

The programme began with a welcome address by Dr Imtiyaz Ali, who highlighted the economic potential of medicinal plants and stressed the challenges posed by climate change, overharvesting, overgrazing and loss of traditional knowledge.

Dr Imtiyaz highlighted the growing demand for medicinal plant raw materials, estimated at around 6,000 tonnes, and stressed the need for scientific cultivation, sustainable harvesting, proper packaging, processing and marketing to reduce losses and enhance farmers’ income.

He highlighted Ladakh’s rich medicinal plant diversity and assured that RCFC would provide technical support and capacity building to farmers and entrepreneurs for commercial cultivation and value addition.

Addressing the gathering, CEC Dr Jaffer Akhoon highlighted the important role of traditional knowledge holders in identifying and collecting medicinal plant resources. He mentioned locally known medicinal plants such as Makshang, Shamdun, Bila Mandok and Buma, traditionally used for various ailments, including stomach-related problems.

The CEC stressed that the medicinal plant sector has significant potential for employment generation and entrepreneurship, particularly for the youth. He urged students and young entrepreneurs to participate in such awareness programmes and explore opportunities in scientific cultivation, processing and marketing.

In the programme, also discussed the need for research trials, demonstration plots, improved cultivation practices, packaging standards and commercialisation of medicinal plants. RCFC proposed initiatives including the establishment of a herbal garden in Ladakh, subject to availability of land, and support for a skill-development workshop proposed in November.

Discussions focused on establishing two nurseries in Kargil and nearby areas, with departments assuring farmers of support under various schemes, including transportation and entrepreneurship assistance.

The participants also discussed the economic potential of local fruits and the scope for expanding their markets and exports following the removal of earlier restrictions on their movement and marketing.

During the Q&A session, farmers and students raised concerns regarding cultivation, marketing, packaging, transportation and nursery development, which were addressed by RCFC and concerned departments.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Dr Ather Sidiq Zargar, who appreciated the participation of farmers, students, scientists and officials and emphasised continued collaboration for conservation, sustainable cultivation and entrepreneurship development in the medicinal plant sector in Ladakh.

