

L-G VK Saxena inaugurates two-day International Sea Buckthorn Conclave in Ladakh

L-G announces 100% increase in procurement price of Sea Buckthorn, aimed at enhancing income of farmers and local communities

Two-day Sea Buckthorn Conclave brings together 20 buyers and around 120 MSME-registered entrepreneurs and SHGs



Leh, September 18: In a landmark decision aimed at enhancing the production of Sea Buckthorn, increasing farmers' income and strengthening the complete value chain, Lieutenant Governor, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today announced an increase in the procurement price of Sea Buckthorn from Rs 150/kg last year to a

minimum of Rs 300/kg this year, effecting a massive increase of 100%.

Inaugurating the first two-day International Sea Buckthorn Conclave in Leh today, Shri Saxena said this significant increase in production price is essentially aimed at increasing the income of farmers and local communities engaged in production of Sea Buckthorn – the wonder berry of Ladakh. On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor also released a postal cover featuring Ladakh's Sea Buckthorn, marking the recognition of the region's distinctive natural resource and its growing identity.

The Sea Buckthorn Conclave 2026 is bringing together 20 top buyers and around 120 MSME-registered entrepreneurs and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) involved in the Sea Buckthorn ecosystem, along with technical experts, scientists, researchers and entrepreneurs from Mongolia, Vietnam and Arunachal Pradesh, providing an opportunity to exchange knowledge and learn from experiences in developing Sea Buckthorn as an economic resource.

Currently, wild sea buckthorn grows in dense, thorny bushes, making extraction so difficult that almost 85% of the annual crop is wasted. To improve this stark 15% commercial utilisation rate, L-G Shri Saxena has directed boosting crop recovery to at least 50% this year, with a strict

target of achieving 100% utilisation by next year, by adopting modern harvesting techniques, so as to meet the growing demand for Sea Buckthorn across the country. He stressed that improved harvesting techniques, value addition, packaging and market linkages are essential to achieving this goal.

“At present, Sea Buckthorn grows naturally across Ladakh, which often makes harvesting difficult for farmers. In coming times, we will be promoting the cultivation of Sea Buckthorn in a curated manner, so as to harvest maximum produce out of it. A comprehensive action plan is being chalked out to develop a complete value chain within Ladakh – right from cultivation, harvest, processing, packaging and marketing – so that a larger share of the economic value reaches the local farmers, entrepreneurs and local communities,” L-G Shri Saxena said.

Shri Saxena highlighted harvesting as one of the major challenges confronting Sea Buckthorn farmers in Ladakh. At present, much of the resource grows naturally, and extracting berries from thorny bushes is difficult, labour-intensive and time-consuming, resulting in a significant loss of the produce.

Thanking the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for giving international recognition to Sea Buckthorn by calling it a “Sanjeevani” during his “Mann ki Baat” programme, the L-G said that the GI registration of Ladakh Sea Buckthorn was an important milestone in establishing its identity, authenticity and brand value in national and international markets. He also noted its inclusion under the One District One Product initiative for Leh district, which has provided further impetus to the sector.

Notably, the Union Ministry of Agriculture, on the request of LG Shri Saxena, has also constituted a high-level committee to examine the establishment of a dedicated National Sanjeevani Research Centre in Nubra Valley for research, development, genetic improvement, propagation, harvesting, and value addition of Sea Buckthorn.

Breaking away from conventional conference halls, the Sea Buckthorn Conclave has been hosted amidst the natural ambience of the Choglamsar forest – Sea Buckthorn grows extensively, thereby providing delegates with an immersive, on-ground experience of witnessing the plant's native habitat and the natural growth patterns.