

Two-Day Seabuckthorn Conclave-cum-Reverse Buyer-Seller Meet Concludes in Leh

Chief Secretary calls for scientific, sustainable and industry-led approach to unlock Ladakh's Seabuckthorn potential



Leh, September 19, 2026: The two-day Seabuckthorn Conclave-cum-Reverse Buyer-Seller Meet 2026, organised by the Department of Industries and Commerce, UT Ladakh, concluded today at Hotel Zen, Leh, bringing together experts, researchers, government representatives, farmers, producers, entrepreneurs, scientists and delegates from

Mongolia to deliberate on product development, value addition, certification, packaging, marketing and export opportunities for Ladakh's seabuckthorn sector.

Chief Secretary, UT Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, attended the valedictory session as the Chief Guest, while Himanshu Gupta, Administrative Secretary, Industries and Commerce Department, was the Guest of Honour.

Addressing the valedictory session, the Chief Secretary called for a comprehensive, scientific and industry-driven approach to harness the potential of seabuckthorn as an important economic resource for Ladakh, with emphasis on increasing production and harvesting, value addition, professional branding, quality standards and domestic and international market linkages.

Highlighting the importance of learning from Mongolia's experience, the Chief Secretary appreciated the participation of Mongolian experts and emphasised the need to strengthen linkages between farmers and processing industries so that the benefits of the seabuckthorn value chain reach cultivators and local communities. He highlighted the historic and cultural ties between Ladakh and Mongolia and welcomed the emerging opportunities for economic cooperation between the two regions.

The Chief Secretary observed that seabuckthorn in Ladakh is largely harvested from naturally growing, wild resources, while only a limited portion of the available produce is currently being harvested and processed. He stressed the need to address gaps in harvesting, increase production and explore possibilities

for commercial cultivation, while ensuring that cultivation remains closely linked with processing and industry.

He called for developing a sustainable and mutually beneficial model involving farmers, entrepreneurs and industries across the entire seabuckthorn value chain. He noted that several local entrepreneurs are already producing pulp, juice and other seabuckthorn-based products and marketing them through various platforms, but emphasised the need for greater scale, consistency in quality, professional branding, modern processing facilities and wider market access.

Highlighting the domestic and international potential of Ladakh's seabuckthorn, the Chief Secretary stressed the need to develop high-quality finished products locally and explore opportunities for exports. He also underlined the ecological significance of seabuckthorn, including its role in soil protection, and called for scientific planning for its cultivation and management in suitable areas.

Drawing parallels with other important economic sectors of Ladakh, including apricot and pashmina, the Chief Secretary called for exploring cooperative, farmer-producer and enterprise-driven models suited to seabuckthorn. He stated that the objective should be to strengthen the rural economy while promoting value addition and entrepreneurship.

The Chief Secretary directed the Department of Industries and Commerce to prepare a strategy/approach paper within one month, in consultation with experts, farmers, local entrepreneurs, scientists and other stakeholders. The proposed document will focus on increasing production and harvesting, commercial cultivation, processing and value addition, investment opportunities, quality standards, branding and market development.



He further suggested exploring institutional collaboration with Mongolia and proposed that a delegation from Ladakh may visit Mongolia to study its seabuckthorn cultivation, processing and industry models. He also stressed the need for establishing modern processing facilities in Ladakh to facilitate large-scale value addition and enhance the competitiveness of local products.

The Chief Secretary also appreciated the field-based components of the conclave, including practical demonstrations on tools, seeding and planting practices, stating that such initiatives would help farmers and entrepreneurs understand modern and scientific methods of seabuckthorn cultivation and management.

The second day of the conclave featured a series of technical and interactive sessions covering various aspects of seabuckthorn development. The session on Product Development and Diversification included technical presentations by Dr Vidhyashankar Srivatsan, IHBT, on value addition and future prospects of seabuckthorn, and Dr Parabdh Badgujar, NIFTEM, on product development, followed by discussions on challenges and opportunities in product development.

The session led by Dr Tsering Stobdan, DIHAR-DRDO, Leh, focused on the current status, opportunities and way forward for seabuckthorn in Ladakh. This was followed by a session on value addition, certification and export opportunities, in which Ms Shehreen Maqbool, Regional Head, Ladakh & J&K, APEDA, highlighted avenues for facilitating exports and expanding market opportunities.

A dedicated session on SC-ST schemes was conducted by Dr D.K. Aggarwal, providing information on schemes and support available to eligible stakeholders.

The conclave also featured a session by the Mongolian delegates, including Mrs Tsetsegsuvd Zagir, Head, UVS Seabuckthorn Producer Association, and Ms Uranchimeg Enebish, Senior Manager, Sustainable Agriculture, UVS Khuns JSC. The session facilitated an exchange of experiences and perspectives on seabuckthorn production, processing and sustainable agriculture.

The session on Packaging of Seabuckthorn Value-Added Products, conducted by Mr Rahul Tripude, Deputy Director, Institute of Packaging, Delhi, focused on packaging-related challenges and solutions to improve the presentation, shelf appeal and marketability of seabuckthorn-based products.

Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Himanshu Gupta, presented an overview of the proceedings and key outcomes of the two-day conclave.

The concluding technical session, led by Dr Disket Dolkar, Scientist, Fruit Science, KVK Leh, University of Ladakh, addressed assessment of seabuckthorn populations, quality germplasm and marketing potential in Ladakh.

The conclave concluded with a focus on strengthening linkages among producers, processors, researchers, government institutions and potential buyers, with the

objective of promoting value addition, entrepreneurship, investment and wider market opportunities for seabuckthorn products from Ladakh.

As part of the programme, delegates also visited Leh Market, followed by a networking dinner, providing an opportunity for further interaction and exchange among stakeholders.

Secretary, School Education and Cooperatives, Smt Bhanu Prabha; experts and representatives from Mongolia; farmers; entrepreneurs; scientists; researchers and other stakeholders were present during the valedictory session.