

Chief Secretary chairs meeting to review mission-mode strategy for promotion of Seabuckthorn in Ladakh

Leh, October 8, 2026: Chief Secretary, UT Ladakh, Shri Ashish Kundra, today chaired a meeting to review the outcomes of the recently held Seabuckthorn Conclave and deliberate on a comprehensive, mission-mode strategy for strengthening seabuckthorn production, harvesting, processing, value addition and marketing in Ladakh.

At the outset, Divisional Commissioner/Administrative Secretary, Agriculture & Horticulture, Ladakh, Shri Shurbir Singh, and Administrative Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Shri Himanshu Gupta, briefed the meeting on the present status of seabuckthorn production and collection in Ladakh, district-wise production, processing capacity, registered processors and unit holders, as well as the key outcomes of the Seabuckthorn Conclave.

The meeting discussed the need for a coordinated and market-oriented intervention to develop seabuckthorn as a commercially viable economic activity by strengthening the entire value chain, from village-level harvesting and aggregation to pulping, processing, value addition and marketing.

The Chief Secretary reviewed the production and procurement trends of the current year vis-à-vis the previous year and sought an assessment of the factors influencing changes in procurement rates. He also directed that the existing procurement mechanism, including variations in rates among buyers, be examined to ensure greater transparency and better returns to producers.

Emphasising the significant potential of seabuckthorn, the Chief Secretary called for village-wise planning for harvesting, aggregation and marketing. The meeting also discussed strengthening local processing units, establishing village-level pulping facilities and exploring viable models of joint ventures, public-private partnerships and private investment to expand processing and value addition within Ladakh.

The meeting particularly emphasised structured engagement with existing and potential buyers. The Chief Secretary directed that consultations with major buyers be undertaken to understand their procurement requirements, buying capacity, pricing and long-term market needs, and to identify suitable opportunities for aggregation, processing and value addition. The initiative aims to expand the buyer base, strengthen market linkages and create sustainable economic opportunities for farmers, aggregators and processors.

Secretary Planning, Shri Himanshu Gupta, suggested exploring the feasibility of seabuckthorn cultivation in suitable areas of Nubra by identifying appropriate land and assessing its commercial potential.

The meeting further discussed developing a digital platform to connect farmers, aggregators, processors and buyers, improve market transparency and facilitate village-level aggregation. The Chief Secretary also emphasised exploring wider domestic and international markets and studying successful seabuckthorn models in countries such as Mongolia for possible adaptation in Ladakh.

The departments were directed to work in close coordination and prepare a practical roadmap covering production, scientific harvesting, processing, market linkages, investment opportunities and value addition. The roadmap will also focus on strengthening awareness

among farmers regarding scientific harvesting practices, quality standards and market requirements.

The meeting was attended by Divisional Commissioner, Ladakh, Shri Shurbir Singh; Administrative Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Shri Himanshu Gupta; Shri Mandeep Mittal, IFS; Additional Secretary Dr. Usman Malik; Deputy Commissioner, Leh, Shri Romil Singh Donk; Managing Director, SIDCO, Shri Sonam Norbu; and other senior officers of the concerned departments.

