

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1468
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31/07/2026

EXTENSION OF SAFFRON CULTIVATION TO NON-TRADITIONAL AREAS

1468. SHRI SAT PAUL SHARMA:

Will the MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has undertaken any initiatives to expand saffron cultivation to nontraditional areas such as Doda, Kishtwar and Udhampur which have similar agro-climatic conditions as Pampore;
- (b) whether these districts have been considered under the National Saffron Mission or other horticulture support programmes;
- (c) whether there is any proposal to establish saffron processing or grading facilities in these regions to support farmers; and
- (d) the measures being taken to promote research and commercial utilisation of saffron based products through institutions such as CSIR-IIIM ?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
(SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a): Yes, the Government of J & K has undertaken initiatives to expand saffron cultivation to non-traditional areas. Under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), the project “Promotion of Niche Crops in UT of J & K” envisages expansion and promotion of high-value niche crops, including saffron, in suitable non-traditional areas based on scientific suitability, availability of quality planting material and farmers’ willingness. The Project envisages establishment of 2900 nurseries over an area of 290 hectares for production of quality planting material of Saffron for its cultivation in the non-traditional areas of District Kupwara, Baramulla, Ganderbal, Bandipora, Kulgam, Shopian, Anantnag, Doda, Ramban, Pooch, Rajouri, Udhampur and Reasi.

(b): The National Mission on Saffron was sanctioned primarily for the traditional saffron-growing areas of Kashmir. However, farmers in the non-traditional districts are eligible for assistance for saffron cultivation under various Government schemes relating to horticulture, agriculture and medicinal & aromatic crops, subject to scheme guidelines.

Further, under HADP, the Government of Jammu & Kashmir is promoting niche crops to provide an enabling framework for extending saffron cultivation to scientifically suitable locations through area expansion, quality planting material, technical support and market linkages in the Districts of Kupwara, Baramulla, Ganderbal, Bandipora, Kulgam, Shopian, Anantnag, Doda, Ramban, Poonch, Rajouri, Udhampur and Reasi.

(c): As reported by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir, HADP envisages to set up 01 Mini Spices Park. Moreover, the existing post-harvest infrastructure established under the National Mission on Saffron viz. India International Kashmir Saffron Trading Centre (IIKSTC) at Dusoo, Pampore, Pulwama includes facilities such as processing, drying, grading, quality certification and e-auction for saffron growers of the UT of J&K.

(d): CSIR-IIIM is developing saffron based phytopharmaceutical leads against neurodegenerative diseases. The Institute has filed 2 patents and an Investigational New Drug (IND) application to the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) for permission to conduct Phase-I clinical trials.
