

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 109
ANSWERED ON 29TH JANUARY, 2026

SEA BUCKTHORN PROCESSING UNIT AT CHUSHOT AND LEH

109. SHRI MOHMAD HANEEFA:

Will the Minister of **FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that the Sea Buckthorn Processing Unit at Chushot, Leh and the Apricot Processing Unit at Chanigound, Kargil are still pending completion despite their strategic importance for horticulture-based livelihoods in Ladakh and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the present status of civil works, machinery installation and commissioning of both the units, along with reasons for the delay, if any;
- (c) whether the Government recognizes that these processing units are vital for value addition amid high post-harvest losses for Sea Buckthorn and perishable Kargil apricots and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the concrete steps being taken by the Government to expedite the completion and operationalisation of these units so as to enable value addition, reduce farmers' losses, and generate sustainable income for local farmers, women self-help groups and youth-led enterprises in Ladakh?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
(SHRI RAVNEET SINGH)

(a) to (d): Under the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme, the proposals for Sea Buckthorn Processing Unit at Chushot, Leh and Apricot Processing Unit at Chanigound, Kargil have been approved for establishment of Incubation Centres. The proposals have been approved in March, 2024 and are supported through 100% Central Government Grant-in-Aid (GIA) with a total grant of ₹5.50 crore. These 2 Incubation Centres are to be implemented by the Union Territory Administration of Ladakh.

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (CSIR-IHBT), Palampur, Himachal Pradesh, has been designated by the UT Government as the Mentor Institute for these projects. Based on the site assessment conducted by the Mentor Institute, the identified facility was found unsuitable for installation of the processing lines. Consequently, the Union Territory Administration of Ladakh has identified an alternative location and has submitted a revised Detailed Project Report (DPR) to the Public Works Department.

The government is regularly reviewing with the Union Territory Administration of Ladakh to monitor progress and address implementation-related issues.

Under the Incubation Centre component of PMFME Scheme, support is provided to micro-entrepreneurs, Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) with access to food processing infrastructure without capital investment. Each centre has 3–5 processing lines for ODOP and allied products and operates on a custom hiring basis. The incubation centres are aimed at addressing critical infrastructure gaps for value addition of Sea Buckthorn in Leh and apricots in Kargil, crops that are prone to significant post-harvest losses due to limited processing capacity. Establishment of these units will help in reducing wastage, generating direct and indirect employment, and promoting entrepreneurship, with focused support for women SHGs and youth-led enterprises through training and mentoring under the Incubation Centre framework
