

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Lavender Festival concludes, to make Baderwah a global Lavender hub

BHADERWAH JUNE 07: The two-day Lavender Festival 2026 concluded in Baderwah on Sunday with stakeholders from the government, scientific community, industry and farming sector reaffirming their commitment to transform the region into a globally recognised centre for lavender cultivation, processing and aroma-based entrepreneurship.

Organised by the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM) under the CSIR Aroma Mission, the festival brought together farmers, startup founders, scientists, industry leaders, students and policymakers under the theme "Lavender Goes Global."

The event highlighted the remarkable journey of Baderwah from a traditional agricultural region to what is increasingly being recognised as India's Lavender Capital.

The second day of the festival featured technical sessions, industry interactions, buyer-seller meetings and presentations by successful entrepreneurs and farmers.

Representatives from leading aroma and fragrance companies shared market insights and explored opportunities for strengthening linkages between growers and industry players.

Startup founders and innovators also showcased value-added products and discussed emerging opportunities in the lavender ecosystem.

Addressing the valedictory session, Director CSIR-IIIM Jammu, Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, said the overwhelming response to the two-day festival reflected the growing success of the Aroma Mission and the vision outlined by Hon'ble Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh during the inauguration of the festival.

He said the Hon'ble



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh's call to take "Lavender Goes Global" beyond a slogan and transform it into a practical roadmap for farmers, entrepreneurs and industry stakeholders would guide future efforts of CSIR-IIIM and its partners.

Dr. Ahmed noted that the festival had successfully connected farmers, startups, scientists and industry leaders on a common platform and generated meaningful discussions on cultivation, processing, value addition and market expansion.

He said the objective of linking cultivation with entrepreneurship, innovation and market access had been effectively achieved through the various sessions and interactions held over the two days.

Highlighting the festival's theme, he said the vision of taking Baderwah's lavender sector to the global stage would require sustained efforts from all stakeholders.

While the region has already earned national recognition for lavender cultivation, he said the next challenge is to establish Baderwah as an internationally recognised centre for aroma-based industries.

He called for detailed documentation of the discussions and action points emerging from the festival so that they could be incorporated into future strategies under the next phase of the Aroma Mission.

Dr. Ahmed credited farmers for the success of the lavender movement, describing them as the driving force behind the Purple Revolution in Jammu and Kashmir. He said scientific institutions and government agencies could provide technology, training and market support, but the real transformation had been achieved through the dedication and hard work of local growers.

He also outlined future priorities, including improved processing facilities, enhanced distillation systems, value addition, branding and tourism integration to maximise economic returns for farmers.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Baderwah, Sunil Kumar Bhutyal, who graced the occasion as the guest, lauded the partnership between the district administration and CSIR-IIIM and described it as a key factor behind Baderwah's emergence as a nationally recognised centre for lavender cultivation and aroma entrepreneurship.

He said the collaboration had played a vital role in transforming Baderwah into a nationally recognised centre for lavender cultivation and aroma entrepreneurship.

Bhutyal attributed the success of the Aroma Mission to the combined efforts of scientists, farmers, entrepreneurs and policymakers. He acknowledged the support and vision of Prime

Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh in promoting lavender cultivation as a viable source of income for rural communities and in bringing national attention to Baderwah's lavender movement.

He emphasised the need to further expand cultivation, strengthen market linkages and increase value-addition activities so that local growers could secure better returns. Highlighting Baderwah's tourism potential, he said the region offers much more than lavender fields, including scenic landscapes, adventure tourism, horticulture, religious tourism, rich cultural traditions and unique local cuisine. Inviting visitors to return, he urged them to become ambassadors of Baderwah and share their experiences with others.

Earlier in welcome address, Principal Scientist and Nodal Officer of the CSIR Aroma Mission, Dr. Suphla Gupta, said the success of the mission is the result of year-round teamwork and continuous engagement with farmers, entrepreneurs, startups and other stakeholders. She noted that the mission extends beyond cultivation and includes processing, value addition, product development, marketing and addressing challenges faced by growers and startups at every stage of the value chain.

Drug-Free Society, Clean Environment are collective responsibilities: Sat

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JUNE 07

Shri Ram Mandir Committee Gurha Bakshi Nagar, Jammu, organised an Anti-Drug Awareness Programme and Rally under the theme "Say No to Drugs", witnessing the participation of local residents, school children, social activists and prominent citizens in a united effort against the growing menace of drug abuse.

J&K BJP President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma, participating in the programme, inspired participants to actively contribute towards building a drug-free society. The event commenced with a cleanliness drive within the temple premises, formally inaugurated by Sat Sharma along with Vikrant Gupta, President, Shri Ram Mandir Committee, Gurha Bakshi Nagar, in the presence of committee members and distinguished guests.

Emphasizing the importance of environmental conservation alongside social responsibility, Sat Sharma also planted a sapling under the Government of India's flagship initiative "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam". School children, local youth and members of the temple committee



enthusiastically joined the plantation drive, reinforcing the message of sustainable development and environmental protection.

Addressing the gathering, Sat Sharma expressed concern over the growing challenge of drug addiction and stressed the need for collective efforts by families, educational institutions, social organizations and government agencies to safeguard the younger generation. He administered the "Say No to Drugs" Oath to all participants and urged them to become ambassadors of awareness in their respective communities.

A massive Anti-Drug

Awareness Rally was subsequently flagged off by Sat Sharma from Shri Ram Mandir Gurha Bakshi Nagar. The rally witnessed enthusiastic participation from hundreds of school children, local youth, residents and dignitaries from across Jammu city. Marching through Bakshi Nagar and adjoining areas, participants raised slogans such as "Say No to Drugs" and "Drug-Free Society, Healthy Society", spreading awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse and the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Following the successful culmination of the rally at

the temple premises, Prasad was distributed among all participants.

On the occasion, Vikrant Gupta thanked Sat Sharma for his inspiring leadership, valuable guidance and wholehearted support to the campaign. He also expressed gratitude to all volunteers, school children, residents and committee members whose active participation made the programme a grand success.

Sat Sharma also participated in a plantation drive organized by the BJP Jammu & Kashmir Mahila Morcha and the Cooperative Cell, and planted a sapling.

JKCCA to organize National Painters' Camp

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JUNE 07

National Painters Camp will be organized by Jammu & Kashmir Centre for Creative Arts (JKCCA), Jammu at Manwal (Udhampur) from 27th to 29th June, 2026 to commemorate the death anniversary of Late Pt. Triloke Kaul, celebrated eminent painter of Jammu & Kashmir. Twelve senior and young artists from different states/UTs of the country have been selected and invited to participate in this camp.

According to Sh. O P Sharma, Founder Director, JKCCA, the proposed camp would pay tributes to Late Pt. Triloke Kaul, the world renowned painter of Jammu & Kashmir who left for his heavenly abode during June, 2025. He informed that Pt. Triloke Kaul (1925-2025) belonged to the first generation of Modern artists of Kashmir and who formed the Progressive Artists Association (PAA) of Kashmir.

He said that such art & cultural events like the upcoming National Painters' Camp at Manwal (Udhampur) would help promote the art & culture activity in the area. He said that such events provide opportunities to the artists of the country to come closer and share their skills and information regarding the art activities and trends



emerging in their respective areas and share the mediums and techniques amongst them. He added that the monumental places and the tourist places in the area would also explore the possibility of the scenic beauty of the region to the participating artists from different parts of the country.

The prominent and senior

artists who have been selected and invited to participate in the camp include Dr. Mamta Singh (Dehradun, UK); Mohd. Moin (Dehradun, UK); Chitrakar Jai (Haridwar, UK); Yashwant Patel (Vallabh Vidya Nagar, Gujarat); Dr. Rekha Rani Sharma (Gorakhpur, UP); Dr. Mamta Verma (Prayagraj, UP); Gayatri (Hoshiarpur, Punjab); Rani Prasad (New Delhi); and Kamal Nain Bhan, O P Sharma, Sunita Gandhi and Shivani Bhat Koul (Jammu, J&K).

It may be mentioned here that Jammu & Kashmir Centre for Creative Arts (JKCCA), Jammu is working for the progress, promotion and preservation of different art forms like visual, literary and performing arts. The centre is committed to conduct art, culture & literature based events of the JKCCA regularly throughout the year, including remembering and celebrating the contribution of the achievers of this region, in the field of art, culture and literature.

2-Day Mega Swachhata Abhiyan organized by Sangarsh RTI Movement Concludes at Sanasar

PATNITOP, JUNE 7:

A two-day Mega Swachhata Abhiyan and Cleanliness Drive, organized by Sangarsh RTI Movement in collaboration with the Directorate of Tourism and the Patnitop Development Authority (PDA) on the occasion of World Environment Day, which was started from Patnitop yesterday, concluded successfully today at Sanasar.

The campaign was led by noted RTI activist and Convener of the Sangarsh RTI Movement, S. Balvinder Singh, and was inaugurated by Sh. Shiv Kumar Sharma, IPS, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Udhampur-Reasi Range, in the presence of Sh. Varunjeet Charak, Additional Deputy Commissioner Ramban; Sh. Aijaz Qaiser, Joint Director Tourism Jammu; Sh. Virender Manyal, Chief Executive Officer, Patnitop Development Authority; Sh. Pankaj Sasan, Deputy Director Tourism Jammu; and Sh. Vishal Sadhotra, Assistant Director Tourism. The drive witnessed enthusiastic participation from 35-40 volunteers of the Sangarsh RTI Movement, members of the Khelo Masters Games Association led by Jaswinder Singh Kuku, and the cultural and musical group LG Studioz headed by S. Gurdeep Singh and Lowsant Kumar.



During the campaign, volunteers cleaned major tourist spots, meadows and public areas frequently visited by tourists. Awareness pamphlets carrying the message "Hills Are Not Dustbins - Help Keep Them Clean and Green" were distributed among visitors, urging them to preserve the natural beauty of the region.

The cultural team of LG Studioz presented a vibrant musical programme at the main meadow of Patnitop, attracting hundreds of tourists.

Addressing the gathering, S. Balvinder Singh appealed to visitors to actively participate in environmental conservation. Hundreds of tourists raised their hands and took a cleanliness pledge, vowing not to litter and to uphold their Fundamental

Duty under Article 51A(g) of the Constitution of India to protect and improve the natural environment.

Interacting with tourists, students and families, DIG Shiv Kumar Sharma stressed the importance of cleanliness and environmental responsibility. He urged teachers and school principals to educate children about maintaining clean surroundings and preserving the ecological balance of hill stations and tourist destinations.

The DIG and other senior officers of the Tourism Department highly appreciated the efforts of the Sangarsh RTI Movement and its volunteers for organizing a large-scale awareness campaign on such an important issue. "In recognition of his efforts of S Balvinder Singh in organizing a mega cleanliness

and environmental awareness campaign on an issue of immense public importance, DIG Shiv Kumar Sharma honoured S. Balvinder Singh.

In the second day, volunteers extended the drive to Nathatop and Sanasar, where they not only encouraged tourists and locals to dispose of waste responsibly in designated dustbins but also personally collected litter scattered across public spaces, setting an example of community participation and environmental stewardship. The organizers expressed hope that such sustained awareness campaigns would significantly contribute towards keeping the region's picturesque hill stations clean, green and environmentally sustainable for future generations.

MP visits Majua Uttami to Boost Sports, Launch Development Projects & Encourage Youth

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JUNE 07

Jugal Kishore Sharma Member of Parliament Lok Sabha Jammu Parliamentary Constituency along with MLA Bishnah Dr. Rajeev Bhagat, former MLA Ashwani Sharma and senior BJP leaders today visited Majua Uttami Panchayat in the Bishnah Assembly Constituency.

The delegation attended the final match of a local cricket tournament at the village ground, boosting the morale of participating players and motivating the youth to adopt a positive and responsible lifestyle, including saying no to drugs.

During the visit, MP Jugal Kishore Sharma inaugurated several development initiatives under the Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme, including the construction of sitting stairs and a plat-



form around the Pipl tree and the development of a bathing ghat (Sanan Ghat) at the village pond. In addition, tree plantation activities were carried out under the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" initiative, reflecting the BJP government's commitment to environmental conservation and rural development under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister

Shri Narendra Modi Ji. MLA Bishnah Dr. Rajeev Bhagat expressed his gratitude to MP Jugal Kishore Sharma for his continued support and contributions toward the development of the constituency, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts in improving rural infrastructure and community welfare. Former MLA Ashwani

Sharma also said that best efforts would be made for the betterment of the youths of the Bishnah area. Senior BJP Leaders mandal President Rakesh Bhagat, Raghunandan Khajuria Rehal, Rajeev Sharma Shahpur, Rakesh Sharma Powal, Supinder, Chandar Shekhar, Sonu Kumar and others also graced the occasion.