



**PARC**  
POLICY ADVOCACY RESEARCH CENTRE  
A Unit of Vivek PARC Foundation...

ENHANCING LIFE THROUGH POLICY INTERVENTIONS & APPLICATIONS

# From Purple Fields to Policy:

## PARC Highlights Scalable Rural Development at the Lavender Festival 2025 – Bhaderwah, Doda, Jammu & Kashmir

The 3rd Lavender Festival, held at the Government Degree College, Bhaderwah in Doda district of the Jammu Division on June 1–2, 2025, emerged as a vibrant convergence of innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainable agriculture, with the Vivek PARC Foundation, through its unit, the Policy Advocacy Research Centre (PARC), playing a pivotal role in positioning the lavender value chain development as a model for reinvigorating agriculture in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. Organized by the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), the event

drew over 1,200 participants, including farmers, startups, scientists, academicians, and policymakers.

### PARC's Impactful Presence

Representing the Vivek PARC Foundation, Ms. Ruchita Rane, Head of Territory Development for Jammu & Kashmir, actively engaged with key stakeholders and led critical knowledge-sharing initiatives throughout the two-day festival. Her address in the technical sessions highlighted the importance of the strengthening of the value chain for lavender in bringing about a paradigm





in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. She emphasized the importance of plugging the gaps in value and supply chain to scale up lavender farming and enhance rural livelihoods, aligning with the larger vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. The submissions were based on the on-ground study and primary data collected by the Jammu & Kashmir Division comprising the team members - Mr Qasim Gani, Ms Meghana Karandikar and with the support of the other divisions at PARC.

PARC also moderated a dynamic Buyer-Seller Meet on behalf of CSIR-IIIM on the concluding day, facilitating direct engagement between grassroots lavender farmers, aromatic product startups, and large-scale industry stakeholders. The session helped bridge vital market linkages and unlock new opportunities for rural entrepreneurs in the aroma sector.

### Lavender as a Beacon of Rural Prosperity

The festival was inaugurated by **Dr. Jitendra Singh**, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, MoS Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions and Vice President CSIR. Dr. Jitendra Singh, in his address, said that under the CSIR Aroma Mission, Lavender cultivation was started in a small area of Bhaderwah, about 8 years ago, on an experimental basis. But as the farmers here felt that Lavender provided them with an income several fold higher than the traditional crops they were cultivating earlier; a lot of farmers shifted to this crop. He indicated that CSIR-IIIM has been

supporting the farmers of the region by providing them quality planting material of Lavender, installation of lavender oil distillation units, hand-holding the startups and budding entrepreneurs for making value added products from Lavender. He added that the 'Purple Revolution' is an excellent example of Startup Mission where entrepreneurs and farmers are coming together and creating livelihood opportunities not only for themselves but also for others. This has created a significant impact in the region, and contributing towards realizing the mission of Viksit Bharat 2047 set for us, by our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. He added that the Lavender Festival 2025, marked a vibrant celebration of the 'Purple Revolution', spotlighting the transformative socio-economic impact of lavender cultivation in Bhaderwah and its potential as a model for sustainable agriculture across India.

Dr. Jitendra Singh officially launched the Lavender Harvesting Season, marking the onset of yet another prosperous cycle for the region's lavender growers. On this occasion, he also inaugurated the Sustainable Aroma Model Cluster, a visionary initiative aimed at developing an integrated value chain for lavender and other aromatic crops. This cluster is expected to enhance local processing infrastructure, improve market access, and promote environmentally sustainable practices.

Dr. Jitendra Singh also felicitated outstanding lavender farmers and innovative startups, recognizing their pivotal contributions to the growth and sustainability of the aromatic crop sector. Among those honoured were Mr. Bharat Bhushan of M/s Himalayan Essential Oils Producer Company



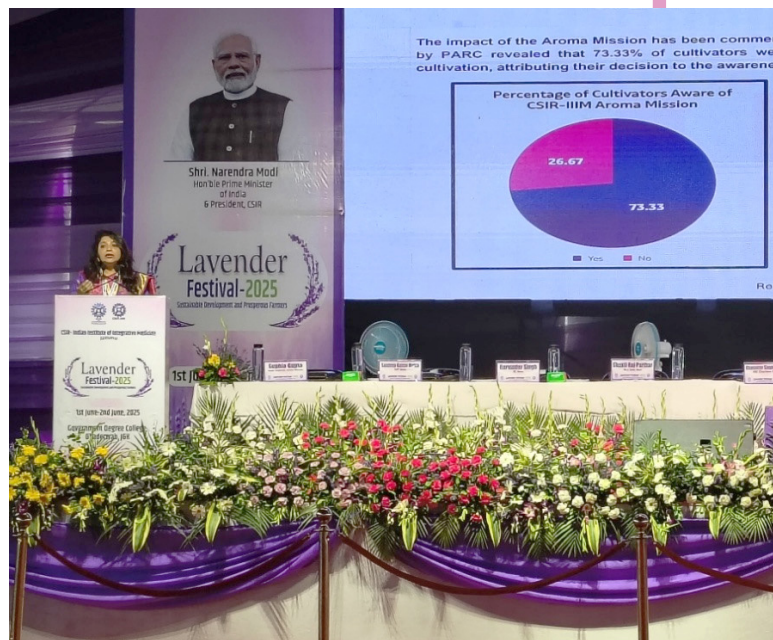
Ltd, Mr. Tauqeer Baghwan of M/s JK AROMA, and Mr. Arjun Raina of M/s Ridayu Botanics Pvt. Ltd. He emphasized that such recognition reflects a long-term commitment to empowering the farming community, fostering rural entrepreneurship, and positioning India as a global leader in the aromatic crop industry.

### Empowering the Ecosystem

In line with its mission of promoting economic self-reliance, PARC's presence was focused on encouraging startups and rural enterprises to expand their footprint in aromatic product innovation. The Foundation also explored collaborative avenues for research, training, and technological support, by supporting joint efforts between CSIR institutions and local incubators.

Notably, the event witnessed the signing of a significant MoU between CSIR-IIIM and the Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development (IBSD), Imphal, aimed at extending lavender cultivation to the North Eastern Region. Such strategic expansions reinforce the Foundation's pan-India rural innovation strategy.

Startup Expo and Community Upliftment A key highlight of the festival was the Agri-Startup Expo, where lavender-based product enterprises showcased a range of high-value innovations including perfumes, soaps, essential oils, candles, and cosmetics. Leading enterprises such as M/s JK Aroma, Himalayan Essential Oil Producer Company Ltd., and Ridayu Botanics Pvt. Ltd. were featured, emphasizing the role of rural entrepreneurship in powering India's aromatic economy. The participation of departments such as Agriculture, Horticulture, Floriculture, AYUSH, and Health further strengthened the collaborative ecosystem.



### Voices from the Field

Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director, CSIR-IIIM Jammu, reiterated the long-term socio-economic impact of the CSIR-Aroma Mission, which has now engaged over 5,000 farmers and facilitated the cultivation of lavender over 750 hectares across J&K. The festival showcased the cumulative turnover of ₹10.5 crore in Bhaderwah alone from lavender oil and dried flowers—underscoring the viability of lavender as a sustainable rural enterprise model.

Farmers shared their success stories during field visits and distillation demos, reaffirming the transformative impact of lavender cultivation on rural livelihoods. The event also celebrated women's growing participation through lavender nurseries and product-based enterprises, creating inclusive models for economic empowerment.







## A National Model for Sustainable Agriculture

The 3rd Lavender Festival marked more than a regional celebration—it underscored a national narrative of sustainable, high-value agriculture. The event was also graced by the presence of Sh. Daleep Singh Parihar, MLA Bhaderwah; Sh. Shakti Raj Parihar, MLA Doda; Sh. Dhanater Singh Kotwal, Chairman, DDC Doda; Sh. Harvinder Singh DC Doda, Sh. Sandeep Mehta SSP Doda, Mrs. Sangeeta Rani Bhagat, Vice Chairperson, DDC Doda and Sh. Arvinder Reen, Director Agriculture, Jammu. The gathering was further enriched by eminent scientists such as Dr. Ajit K. Shasany, Director, CSIR-NBRI, Lucknow, and Dr. Sridevi Annapurna Singh, Director, CSIR-CFTRI, Mysuru, Dr. Nanaocha Sharma, Director of the Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development (IBSD), Imphal. The event was organized under the patronage of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), under the overall supervision of Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director, CSIR-IIIM, assisted by his team of scientists, technical and administrative staff, and students, including Er. Abdul Rahim, Dr. Asha Chaubey, Dr. Shashank Singh, Dr. Dhiraj Vyas, Dr. Sumit Gandhi, Dr. Suphla Gupta, Dr. Qazi Naveed Ahmed, Dr. Raj Kishor Rai, Dr. Saurabh Saran, Sh. Ajay Kumar, Sh. Rajesh Gupta, Sh. Ashok Sharma.

The active role of the Vivek PARC Foundation, under its unit, the Policy Advocacy Research

Centre (PARC), reaffirmed the importance of cross-sector collaboration in building scalable rural development models rooted in local strengths and global potential.

As India strides toward its 2047 development goals, PARC continues to stand at the forefront of policy advocacy, stakeholder engagement, and mission-driven implementation, amplifying local successes into national movements for rural transformation.

— **Ruchita Rane**

Head, Territory Development for Jammu & Kashmir, PARC