

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Census 2027: Training for Enumerators concludes at Bhadarwah

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAY 16

The three-day training programme for the second phase of Census 2027 concluded today at Community Hall Bhadarwah.

The training programme was supervised by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Sunil Kumar Bhutyal; Divisional Census Officer and Census Change Officer (Rural) Kamal Preet Singh.

The sessions were conducted by experienced master trainers Dr. Yunus Rasheed and Dr. Bharat Singh, who provided detailed guidance on enumeration procedures and field operations. The trainees



were sensitised to the importance of accurate data collection and proper coordination during the survey process.

Key aspects covered during the training included confidentiality of census data, effective communication in the field, handling

challenges in remote and difficult terrains, real-time error checking, and inclusive data collection covering all sections of society.

Director RDD visits vibrant villages Namblan, Chitti Bakri; reviews development initiatives

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JAMMU, MAY 16

Director Rural Development Jammu Shahnaz Akhtar today conducted an extensive tour to Vibrant Village Namblan to review the developmental activities under the Vibrant Village Programme and assess public grievances and demands.

During the visit, the Director was accompanied by Assistant Commissioner Development Auqil Nuvaid; Assistant Commissioner Panchayat Rafiq Choudhary; Divisional Publicity Officer Zamood Ahmed and other officers



and officials of various line departments.

The Director participated in a Gram Sabha meeting and held detailed interactions with the locals. She patiently listened to the grievances, suggestions and developmental demands projected by the people and

reviewed the ongoing and proposed works aimed at improving infrastructure and public services in the area.

While interacting with the public, Akhtar appreciated the active cooperation and participation of the locals in developmental ini-

tiatives being undertaken under the Vibrant Village Programme.

Later, the Director also visited Chitti Bakri, where she interacted with the residents and took stock of their issues and demands. She assured the people that all genuine concerns would be addressed in a phased and time-bound manner.

The visit reaffirmed the commitment of the Rural Development Department and district administration towards inclusive and sustainable development of border villages through strengthened public participation and effective implementation of the Vibrant Village Programme.

Omar-led Govt clears Rs 72 cr used water management projects for Baramulla, Rajouri

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAY 16

The Jammu and Kashmir Government has approved Used Water Management Projects for Baramulla and Rajouri at an estimated cost of ₹37.96 crore and ₹34.43 crore respectively, aimed at strengthening sanitation infrastructure and addressing wastewater management challenges in the two urban areas.

The projects, cleared by Omar Abdullah led Government, are expected to ensure scientific treatment of sewage, prevent pollution of water bodies and significantly improve public health, hygiene and overall living conditions for the residents of Baramulla and Rajouri.

The Housing & Urban Development Department has formulated Detailed

Project Reports (DPRs) for the Used Water Management Projects for Municipal Council Baramulla and Municipal Council Rajouri under the CAPEX component of Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) 2.0.

The DPRs have been technically vetted by National Institute of Technology Srinagar. The projects will be executed using Sequential Batch Reactor

(SBR) Technology, which provides high treatment efficiency through a single-step biological treatment process.

The projects have been conceived to improve sanitation facilities and create sustainable wastewater treatment systems in Baramulla and Rajouri. Both projects are scheduled to be completed within a period of 18 months.

UT Admin signs MoU with IIT Jammu to establish satellite campus in Ladakh

LEH, MAY 16: In a landmark step towards strengthening higher and technical education in Ladakh, IIT Jammu will set up its Satellite Campus in Leh. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to this effect was today signed between the UT Administration of Ladakh and IIT Jammu in the presence of Lieutenant Governor, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, who described the initiative as a "historic and transformational moment" for the youth of Ladakh and said this would create pathways for aspiration, excellence and achievement.

The MoU was signed by Director, IIT Jammu, Prof Manoj Singh Gaur and Secretary, Higher Education Department, UT Ladakh, Smt Bhanu Prabha.

The development assumes great significance, as for decades, students from Ladakh faced grave challenges in pursuing higher and technical education. For want of a quality technical institution in Ladakh, Ladakhi youths were forced to travel thousands of kilometres, away from home, to study in prestigious institu-



tions. For families living in difficult and remote regions, this often meant emotional hardship, financial burden, and social challenges. However, this collaboration with IIT Jammu would now provide talented students from Ladakh with access to high-quality education closer to their home and open a world of opportunities in research, innovation, entrepreneurship and employment.

As per the MoU, in the initial phase, around 40 students from Ladakh will begin pursuing courses at the IIT campus in Jammu from the July - August 2026 academic session onwards. Subsequently, a temporary Satellite Campus of IIT Jammu will be established at the Government Polytechnic College in Leh to facilitate academic activities within Ladakh. In the long

term, a full-fledged residential engineering campus is proposed to be developed in Kargil.

To begin with, the campus will offer two future-oriented disciplines — Civil Engineering and Artificial Intelligence & Data Science. These programmes have been selected keeping in view both global technological trends and the developmental requirements of Ladakh. Civil Engineering will focus on sustainable infrastructure and climate-resilient construction suited to the mountainous terrains of Ladakh, while Artificial Intelligence and Data Science will prepare students for emerging technological opportunities and digital innovation.

LG Shri Saxena stated that the collaboration would open the doors of world-

class technical education for students from the remote and high-altitude regions of Ladakh and reduce the long-standing educational challenges faced by local families. He noted that the collaboration would create opportunities for faculty exchange, research partnerships, startup incubation, innovation centres and skill development.

Speaking on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor said that one of the major priorities of the UT Administration has been to strengthen educational infrastructure in Ladakh and stop the continuous brain drain from the region by creating the best possible academic facilities locally. He further exuded confidence that the initiative would produce future scientists, engineers, innovators and researchers from Ladakh.

Shri Saxena expressed gratitude to IIT Jammu for extending its academic excellence and vision to Ladakh and thanked the Government of India for continuously supporting transformative initiatives for border and remote regions.

DCO J&K, Ladakh Signs Historic MoU With University of Ladakh for Census Data Workstations

LEH, MAY 16: In a major step towards promoting data-driven research and evidence-based policy planning in the Union Territory of Ladakh, the Directorate of Census Operations (DCO), Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh on Saturday signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the University of Ladakh for establishment of dedicated Census Data Workstations at Leh and Kargil campuses of the University.

The MoU was signed by Chief Principal Census Officer and Director Census Operations, J&K and Ladakh, Amit Sharma, and Vice Chancellor, University of Ladakh, Prof Saket Kushwaha, during a formal programme held in Leh.

Under the agreement, two specialised Census Data Workstations will be established at the Leh and Kargil campuses to facilitate structured institutional access to Census databases, demographic statistics and socio-economic datasets for academic, research and policy-related purposes.

Speaking on the occasion, Amit Sharma described the workstations as specialised knowledge and research support centres that would provide access to Census data at multiple levels of aggregation and analysis. He said the initiative would benefit students, research scholars, faculty members, government departments, policy planners and other stakeholders in undertaking detailed demographic and socio-economic studies.

He said the initiative would significantly strengthen research capabilities in Ladakh by enabling access to authentic



Census datasets for studies related to population dynamics, migration trends, literacy, employment, urbanisation, housing, infrastructure planning and rural development.

Highlighting the importance of Census data, Sharma stated that it forms the backbone of governance, planning and policy formulation and remains one of the most comprehensive and authentic sources of statistical information in the country.

He further said that the establishment of the workstations would create a strong institutional platform for encouraging research-oriented utilisation of Census data and facilitate evidence-based developmental planning suited to the unique geographical and socio-economic realities of Ladakh.

Vice Chancellor Prof Saket Kushwaha termed the collaboration an important academic milestone for the University of Ladakh. He said the dedicated Census Data Workstations would provide valuable opportunities for students, scholars and faculty members to undertake meaningful and

policy-relevant research using authentic Census datasets.

He added that the initiative would also encourage interdisciplinary research and strengthen the academic ecosystem of the University by integrating statistical and demographic analysis into developmental studies relating to Ladakh.

During the programme, Amit Sharma also highlighted the upcoming Census 2027 exercise, stating that it would be India's first fully digital and paperless Census with technology-driven features such as mobile-based digital enumeration, Self-Enumeration, geo-referenced mapping and real-time monitoring systems.

He informed that the Census would be conducted in two phases, beginning with House Listing Operations and Housing Census, which would be preceded by a dedicated Self-Enumeration period enabling citizens to voluntarily submit their details through a secure online portal before household visits by enumerators. Calling Self-Enumeration one of the most

significant citizen-centric reforms in the history of Census operations, Sharma urged students, faculty members and researchers to actively participate in the process and spread awareness among the public.

He also stressed the importance of institutional collaboration between Census authorities and universities, stating that such partnerships would help bridge the gap between data generation and policy implementation while promoting a stronger culture of data-based decision making in Ladakh.

The programme also witnessed discussions on future collaborations in areas including demographic studies, data literacy, academic workshops and research-oriented utilisation of Census information.

Among others present on the occasion were Deputy Chief Principal Census Officer Manmeet Singh Loomba, Assistant Chief Principal Census Officer Jatinder Kumar, Dean Commerce and Management, University of Ladakh, Dr Mohd Rafee, besides faculty members and officials from both institutions.

Kala Kendra releases Music Album of Mahi Mandla

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAY 16

Kala Kendra Jammu today organized an impressive function here this afternoon for the release of a music album by Mahi Mandla, a student of the Institute of Music and Fine Arts Jammu. The ceremony was held at the Seminar Hall, Ground Floor, Kala Kendra Jammu.

The album was formally unveiled by eminent theatre personality and Padma Shri awardee Balwant Thakur. Dr. Javaid Rahi, filmmaker Rajesh Raja and noted journalist Sunny MJ shared the presidium.

While welcoming the guests, Dr. Javaid Rahi stated that the main objective of organizing such programmes is to provide a platform to the younger generation. He said that Mahi Mandla of Bilawar Kathua is an emerging



painter and singer who represents an ambitious youth force of the region.

Speaking on the occasion, Balwant Thakur lauded the inspiring struggle and artistic journey of Mahi Mandla from Kathua to national scene, and appreciated the creative team for their dedication towards promoting local talent. He remarked that music serves as a powerful medium for preserving culture and expressed satisfaction that the younger

generation is reconnecting with its roots.

Rajesh Raja, Creative Director of the Music album, while speaking on the cultural significance of the release, said that although the vocals were recorded in Jammu, the album was creatively designed by the production team at Chandigarh.

In her address, Mahi Mandla narrated her inspiring journey from a remote village of Bilawar in Kathua

district to Jammu, where she is presently pursuing studies at the Institute of Music and Fine Arts Jammu.

Among others present on the occasion were Sangeeta Sharma, Deputy Director Archives, Archaeology and Museums Jammu; noted journalist Sunny Dua; Dr. A.S. Aman, former Secretary Kala Kendra; and Suresh Abrol, Director Shashvat Art Gallery and Museum.

RESTI Ramban hosts Soft Toys Training Programme for women at Batote

RAMBAN MAY 16: A Soft Toys Training Programme aimed at empowering women and promoting self-employment opportunities was formally inaugurated at Batote by Director RSETI S. Harvinder Singh in presence of officials from National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM).

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from local trainees, especially women eager to acquire new skills in soft toy designing and manufacturing.

Speaking on the occasion, the dignitaries highlighted



the importance of vocational training in generating livelihood opportunities and encouraging entrepreneurship among rural youth and women.

The Director RSETI appreciated the efforts of the organizing team and emphasized that such initiatives play a vital role in strengthening self-reliance

and economic empowerment in the region. NRLM officials also encouraged participants to make full use of the training programme and develop sustainable income-generating skills.

The inaugural session concluded with an interactive discussion with trainees, where participants expressed gratitude for providing skill-based training opportunities in Batote.

The programme is expected to benefit numerous aspiring trainees and contribute positively towards skill development and employment generation in District Ramban.