

# DRDO establishes COVID-19 Testing Facility at DIHAR, Leh

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DRDO has established a COVID-19 testing facility at the Leh based laboratory Defence Institute of High Altitude Research (DIHAR) to enhance the rate of testing to identify the Corona cases in the Union Territory of Ladakh. The testing facility will also help in keeping close watch of the infected persons. The facility meets the safety standards and guidelines of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). The centre was inaugurated by Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri RK Mathur on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020.

The testing facility at DIHAR is capable of screening 50 samples per day. The facility can also be utilized for training manpower for COVID testing and will be of great help to address future bio-threats and carrying out R&D activities pertinent to agro-animals diseases.

In his address, LG Shri RK Mathur lauded the efforts of DRDO in fighting Covid 19 and thanked Dr G Satheesh Reddy, Secretary, Department of Defence R&D & Chairman DRDO for making this facility available at DIHAR. He expressed hope that the facility will help in the treatment of infected persons.

The Lieutenant Governor also inspected the testing facility. He was briefed about the bio-safety aspect of the testing facility and precautionary measures to minimize cross-contamination and safety of researcher, health professionals and the environment.

Dr OP Chaurasia Director DIHAR, Brig JB Singh Commandant, Dr Padma Gurmet Director NRISR, Leh, Dr Mutup Dorje CMO along with his team of doctors from SNM Hospital, Leh and other senior army officials and DRDO scientists were present on the occasion.

DIHAR is one of the life sciences laboratories of DRDO working on cold arid agro-animal technologies. The laboratory is screening and identifying the medicinal and aromatic plants to exploit them for use for defence purposes and also on greenhouse technologies for high altitude and cold desert areas.

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