

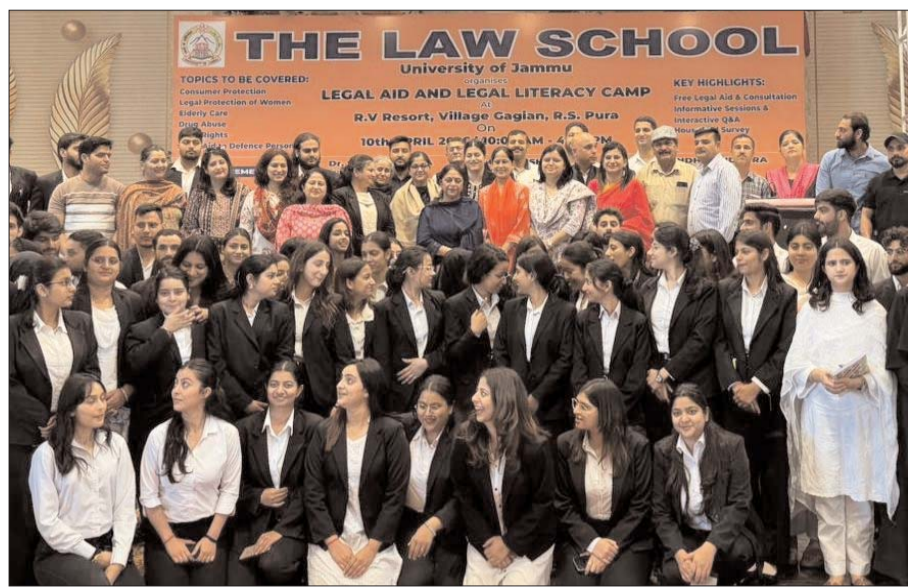
Law School, JU organise legal literacy camp to empower rural community in RS Pura

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, APR 10

In a significant step towards strengthening grassroots legal awareness and access to justice, The Law School, University of Jammu, in collaboration with Lakrishna Foundation, Miran Sahib organized a comprehensive Legal Aid and Legal Literacy Camp at village Gagian in RS Pura today. The programme witnessed active participation from legal experts, academicians, and social activists, creating a vibrant platform for dialogue, awareness, and community engagement. The initiative aimed at bridging the gap between legal institutions and rural populations, ensuring that vital legal knowledge reaches those who need it the most.

Prominent among those who graced the occasion included Prof. Seema Rohmetra, Director, The Law School, University of Jammu; Dr. Monica Narang, Coordinator, Legal Aid & Legal Literacy Committee; Advocate Meenakshi Slathia, Deputy Advocate General, High Court of J&K and Ladakh; Advocate Sugandh Gandotra, Fellow, NLU Delhi; Dr. Swati Sharma, Social Activist; and Advocate Aman Suresh Sharma. The proceedings of the programme were conducted by Dr. Nitan Sharma, Assistant Professor, The Law School, who ensured smooth coordination and active engagement throughout the event.

The camp featured insightful deliberations by legal experts and resource persons who elaborated on critical legal and social issues affecting rural communities. Key topics covered during the sessions included consumer protection laws, legal safeguards for women, rights and welfare of senior citizens, child rights, prevention of drug abuse, and legal aid provisions for defence personnel. The experts emphasized that lack of awareness often deprives individuals of their rightful protections and benefits under the law. A major highlight of the camp was the interactive session and open Q&A, where villagers freely shared their concerns and sought guidance on various legal matters. The legal experts provided on-the-spot advice, helping attendees better understand procedures related to filing complaints, accessing legal aid, and safeguarding their rights. Additionally, free legal aid and consultation services were extended to the participants, ensuring immediate assistance for those facing legal challenges. A household survey was also conducted to assess the ground realities and identify prevalent issues requiring institutional intervention. Such initiatives play a



crucial role in empowering marginalized and rural populations by making legal systems more accessible and understandable. By directly engaging with communities, these camps help demystify complex legal frameworks and build trust between citizens and legal institutions. The programme also contributes to preventive justice—educating individuals about their rights and responsibilities reduces the likelihood of exploitation, abuse, and legal disputes. Awareness regarding drug abuse, women's rights, and child protection is particularly vital in shaping a safer and more informed society.

Speakers unanimously stressed the need for regular and sustained outreach programs in rural and semi-urban areas. They highlighted those one-time interventions, though impactful, must be complemented by continuous engagement to ensure lasting change. Legal literacy, they noted, is not merely about information dissemination but about enabling citizens to actively participate in democratic and judicial processes. Strengthening such awareness at the grassroots level ultimately leads to a more equitable and just society. The role of Lakrishna Foundation proprietor Adv Devraj Sharma was widely appreciated by speakers and participants alike. Known for its consistent support and sponsorship of religious, social, and community-centric initiatives, the Foundation has emerged as a key contributor to societal development. Its commitment to organizing and backing programs that address real community needs—ranging from legal awareness to social welfare—was hailed as exemplary.

Stakeholders emphasized that such organizations play a pivotal role in complementing institutional efforts and ensuring that impactful initiatives reach the grassroots. The event concluded with a collective call for continued collaboration between academic institutions, social organizations, and the community to build a more informed, aware, and empowered society.

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LG Vinai Kumar Saxena inaugurates Old Age Home at Saboothang

LEH, APRIL 10: The Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today inaugurated the Old Age Home (Zimskhang) for senior citizens at Saboothang, marking a significant step towards strengthening social welfare and inclusive development in the region.

This Old Age Home has been constructed at a cost of ₹19.74 crore, spread over an area of 1,925 square metres. The facility has been designed as a state-of-the-art structure to accommodate 50 to 55 elderly residents, including both men and women, with 12 rooms and four dormitories. It also includes a reception and waiting area, TV room, dining-cum-kitchen space, medical and office rooms, and all essential internal and external utility connections such as water supply, electricity and sewerage systems.

Additional features of the facility include a geodesic dome with seating arrangements for prayer, a fire-fighting system with fire alarms and a public address system, passenger lifts and accessibility features for differently-abled individuals. The Old Age Home also incorporates several green



and energy-efficient features, including the use of eco-friendly construction materials, adherence to green building norms, an ECBC (Energy Conservation Building Code) -compliant electrical substation, maximum utilisation of natural light, and thermal insulation through natural earth walls. The geodesic dome design helps in trapping solar heat, ensuring energy efficiency and comfort.

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor described the inauguration as a moment of great significance, stating that the facility is not merely a building but a symbol of the society's values, compassion and collective responsibility towards its elderly population.

Highlighting Ladakh's cultural ethos, he said the region has always upheld deep respect for senior citizens, who serve as custodians of traditions and guiding forces in society. He acknowledged the contributions of organisations such as the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre, HelpAge India and Tibetan Settlement Choglamsar, which have been working tirelessly for the welfare of the elderly.

The Lieutenant Governor noted that this marks the first instance of the UT Administration directly establishing such a facility for senior citizens, ensuring a safe, dignified and well-managed environment. This facility will be run on a collaborative model with the Mahabodhi Interna-

tional Meditation Centre. Emphasising the invaluable role of senior citizens, Shri Saxena said they are repositories of wisdom, experience and cultural values. Their guidance not only unites families but also helps shape a cohesive and resilient society.

The Lieutenant Governor also underlined the moral responsibility of society to care for its elderly, particularly in their later years when they require both physical care and emotional support.

He noted that with advancing age, loneliness can become a concern, and urged families to spend time with their elders, listen to them and make them feel valued and included.

He emphasised that the objective should go beyond providing shelter, aiming instead to ensure that every senior citizen lives with dignity, security and a sense of belonging.

Reaffirming the Administration's commitment, Shri Saxena stated that efforts will continue to promote inclusive development, strengthen social security mechanisms and ensure that governance reaches every section of society, especially senior citizens.

Govt to leverage Aadhaar Data Vault to ensure timely delivery of welfare benefits to public

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, APR 10

In a significant move towards strengthening digital governance and ensuring fiscal prudence, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has launched a Centralized Aadhaar Data Vault (ADV) to streamline public service delivery and enhance oversight of social security schemes across departments and financial institutions.

The decision was taken in a meeting chaired by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, who underscored the transformative potential of the initiative and directed the concerned departments to identify and onboard additional government services that can be brought under the ambit of the Aadhaar Data Vault to maximize its impact and utility.

The meeting was also attended by ACS, Finance, Shailendra Kumar; MD, J&K Bank, Amitava Chatterjee; Commissioner Secretary, Information and Planning Departments, R Alice Vaz; DG, E&S, Ather Hussain Qadri; Scientists from NIC (J&K Chapter); Representatives from SBI and other Banks along with senior officers from the PD&MD.

Importantly, the Chief Secretary urged the banks to leverage this platform to streamline insurance claim settlements under PMJJBY and PMSBY by enabling instant verification of death records, thereby facilitating timely disbursement of



benefits to rightful nominees.

Simultaneously, he underscored the necessity that the system should be utilised in automatically identifying cases where government benefits such as pensions, social security assistance, and rations under Public Distribution System (PDS) continue to be availed even after the death of beneficiaries, thereby plugging leakages and safeguarding public resources.

He enjoined upon the NIC to allow this initiative to be also used to ease the onboarding process for departments and institutions by providing a single, secure gateway for verification and eligibility checks, reducing both administrative and technical complexities.

On this occasion it was presented by the NIC that the newly established Aadhaar Data Vault has been integrated with the Civil Registration System, including the Birth and

Death Portal here, to function as a secure and specialized Aadhaar Data Vault-as-a-Service (ADVaaS). This unified digital infrastructure is designed to act as a "Single Source of Truth," enabling real-time, secure, and authenticated access to vital records while strictly adhering to UIDAI-prescribed security and privacy protocols.

The initiative focuses on creating a robust and scalable platform for managing civil registration data and Aadhaar-based authentication services. It incorporates seamless API integration with the Office of the Registrar General of India (ORGI) to access real-time master and transactional data. Automated schedulers have been deployed to ensure periodic updates of records, keeping the system dynamic and accurate.

Additionally, the platform enables inter-departmental integration through standardized APIs, thereby eliminating the need for multiple Memorandums of

Understanding and significantly simplifying data-sharing processes.

The Centralized ADV is expected to play a transformative role in strengthening the delivery and monitoring of welfare schemes. By introducing a "Single Token per Aadhaar" framework, the system facilitates effective de-duplication, preventing multiple or fraudulent claims across schemes and departments.

Describing the initiative as a milestone in governance reforms, the Chief Secretary emphasized that the centralized Aadhaar Data Vault reflects the administration's commitment to leveraging technology for data-driven decision-making. He reiterated that by ensuring accurate, secure, and real-time access to critical data, the government aims to protect public funds while guaranteeing that welfare benefits are delivered efficiently and reach to the intended beneficiaries in a time-bound manner.

J&K Auto Retail Posts 37% YoY Growth in March; FY26 Ends on Strong Note

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, APR 10

In J&K for March 2026, the 2-Wheeler category witnessed a growth of 56.91% at 10,441 units in March 2026, as compared to 6,654 units in March 2025. The 3 Wheeler category witnessed a growth of 31.90% at 1,352 units in March 2026, as compared to 1,025 units in March 2025. The Commercial Wheeler category witnessed a growth of 3.02% at 1,230 units in March 2026, as compared to 1,194 units in March 2025. The Construction Equipment category witnessed a downfall of -24.19% at 47 units in March 2026, as compared to 62 units in March 2025. The Passenger Vehicle category witnessed a Growth of 24.21% at 6,563 units in March 2026, as compared to 5,284 units in March 2025. The Tractor Vehicle category witnessed a downfall of -5.17% at 330 units in March 2026, as compared to 348 units in February 2025.

In J&K total retail is 19,963 in March 2026 as compared to 14,567 in March 2025 thereby registering a growth of 37.04 % YoY.

Mr Sanjay Aggarwal, Chairperson, Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations Jammu said that reflecting on March 2026 Auto Retail performance in J&K, "March 2026 achieved a growth of 37.04 % YoY.

Mr Sanjay Aggarwal said that March 2026 has been a reasonably encouraging month for vehicle retailers across Jammu & Kashmir. We have observed steady demand across most categories, particularly in passenger vehicles, which continue to drive growth in the region.

Mr Aggarwal said that the financial year-end played a crucial role in boosting retail numbers, with attractive offers and improved product availability drawing customers to showrooms. In addition, improved rural sentiment and better accessibility to financing have contributed to incremental demand in the two-wheeler segment.

Mr Aggarwal said that the turning point arrived in September with the implementation of GST 2.0. The rate rationalisation which meaningfully reduced the

effective tax burden on mass-segment two-wheelers, small cars, three-wheelers, and select commercial categories improved real affordability at a time when the consumer was already positioned to respond.

Mr Aggarwal said from September onwards, we witnessed a clear inflection: the festive convergence of Navratri and Diwali in October delivered an all-time record monthly retail, and the momentum carried through the remainder of the year. January, February, and March 2026 each registered strong double-digit YoY growth, validating that the upshift was not merely festive but structural he added.

Mr Aggarwal said that looking ahead we remain cautiously optimistic. With the onset of the new financial year and expected policy support, we anticipate a gradual strengthening of demand. Continued focus on inventory management, customer engagement, and financing accessibility will be key to sustaining this momentum."

At last Mr Aggarwal said that Auto Retail in J&K for

Financial Year 2026, showed a growth of 12.27% when compared to Financial Year 2025

In J&K for FY 2026, the 2-Wheeler category witnessed a growth of 13.31% at 1,05,481 units in FY 2026, as compared to 93,088 units in FY 2025. The 3 Wheeler category witnessed a growth of 4.38% at 13,420 units in FY 2026, as compared to 12,857 units in FY 2025. The Commercial Wheeler category witnessed a growth of 3.06% at 11,212 units in FY 2026, as compared to 10,879 units in FY 2025. The Construction Equipment category witnessed a downfall of -22.84% at 419 units in FY 2026, as compared to 543 units in FY 2025. The Passenger Vehicle category witnessed a Growth of 15.44% at 67,640 units in FY 2026, as compared to 58,595 units in FY 2025. The Tractor Vehicle category witnessed a downfall of -3.37% at 3,818 units in FY 2026, as compared to 3,951 units in FY 2025.

In J&K total retail is 2,01,990 in FY 2026 as compared to 1,79,913 in FY 2025 thereby registering a growth of 12.27 % YoY.

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Govt committed to equitable development of Jammu, Srinagar cities: Dy Chief Minister

JAMMU, APRIL 10: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today reiterated the Government's firm commitment towards ensuring balanced and equitable development of both Jammu and Srinagar cities.

The Deputy Chief Minister made these remarks while interacting with various public and individual delegations at the Civil Sec-



retariat, Jammu. A delegation led by former MLC, Rattan Lal Gupta, along with Tejinder Pal Singh (Aman) called on the Deputy Chief Minister and highlighted several issues

and demands pertaining to the development of Jammu city. Giving a patient hearing to the delegation, the Deputy Chief Minister assured that the Government is focused on holistic and

robust development across all regions, with special emphasis on key urban centres like Jammu and Srinagar.

He stated that a series of progressive initiatives are being undertaken, ranging from city beautification to creation and upgradation of essential infrastructure, including roads and civic amenities, aimed at enhancing the overall quality of life for residents.

Director, Accounts and Treasuries (A&T) Kashmir, Imtiaz Ahmad Wani, today paid a maiden visit to Saddar Treasury Srinagar to review its functioning and assess service delivery mechanisms.

During the visit, the Director laid special emphasis on ensuring smooth, efficient, and citizen-friendly services for pensioners. He took a detailed review of the pension section, focusing on ease of access, availability of ramps, and adequate seating arrangements for visiting pensioners. He also interacted with sev-



eral pensioners on the spot to gauge their satisfaction levels and receive direct feedback. The Director further reviewed the overall functioning of the treasury with respect to financial governance. He

assessed the status of IT interventions, the level of computerisation, and inspected the attendance of employees to ensure discipline and efficiency in service delivery. Reiterating the impor-

tance of responsive and transparent governance, the Director stressed the need for continuous improvement in public service delivery and effective utilisation of technology in treasury operations.