

Army conducts awareness programmes under Nasha Mukta Abhiyan in Rajouri

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The Indian Army organised awareness programmes under the Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan at different locations in District Rajouri, with the aim of sensitising youth and local communities about the harmful effects of drug abuse and encouraging them to adopt a healthy and drug-free lifestyle.

At Government Higher Secondary School Badhal, Rajouri, an interaction was conducted with students to enhance awareness on the Nasha Mukta Abhiyan. The session focused on educating students about the adverse impact of drug abuse on health, family and society.

The importance of discipline, sports, education and positive activities was also highlighted.

Students were encouraged to become ambassadors of a drug-free society and contribute towards spreading awareness in their community. At Government High School



Mughlan Moh, Sindrha, Rajouri a "Say No To Drugs" awareness initiative was organised as part of the ongoing Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan.

Awareness wall paintings and informative floaters carrying anti-drug messages were displayed within the school

premises. The activity witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, teachers and local residents, reinforcing the message of collective responsibility in fighting the menace of drugs. Army officials emphasised the important role of educational institutions, families and

society in guiding youth towards responsible choices. The events concluded with students and staff taking a pledge to support the mission of a Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir and contribute positively towards building a healthier and stronger nation.

Electricity Crisis in Bishnah: Neeraj Kundan Demands Immediate Resolution of Power Cuts

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A constituency-level meeting was organized today at Morchapur in Bishnah Constituency by Madan Bhagat Ji. The meeting was graced by the presence of Constituency Incharge Sh. Dwarka Choudhary Ji.

District President Neeraj Kundan strongly highlighted the ongoing electricity crisis in the area while addressing the gathering.

He said, "Smart meters have been installed in the area but reliable power supply is still not available. Daily power cuts are severely affecting the public, especially the farming community. This electricity crisis needs immediate resolution."

Neeraj Kundan further stressed the need for strengthening the party at the grassroots level and resolving public issues.

"We must work collectively to make our organization strong from the booth level to the constituency



level. Our priority is to make every worker active and connected with the people. We are reaching every village and household in Bishnah Constituency to listen to their real issues and problems," he added.

He appealed to all party workers: "I urge every karyakarta to participate wholeheartedly in this constituency-level campaign. Let us turn this into a mass movement. Our strength

lies in unity and continuous ground-level work. Together, we will resolve public issues, including the electricity crisis, and strengthen the party in every corner of Bishnah Constituency."

Sh. Dwarka Choudhary Ji also emphasized the successful implementation of organizational activities at the constituency level.

The meeting was attended by prominent leaders including Block President Kailash Saini,

Surender Devgoda, Sarpanch Subash Saini, Retd. Xen Mulkhraj, Ropplal Bhagat, Retd. Principal Somnath, Kisan Cell District President Happy Randhawa and several other active workers.

The campaign will continue with a strong focus on strengthening the party's grassroots presence and effectively addressing public grievances, particularly the electricity supply issues in Bishnah Constituency.

Freezing govt posts in name of austerity is cruel joke on unemployed youth: Bhalla

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Expressing strong concern over the government's decision to freeze all vacant posts as part of its austerity measures, former minister and Working President of the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC), Raman Bhalla, on Sunday described the move as a cruel joke on the educated unemployed youth of Jammu and Kashmir who are already grappling with limited employment opportunities.

Addressing a public gathering at Rajeev Nagar in Jammu, Bhalla said the decision would further aggravate the unemployment crisis in the Union Territory and diminish the hopes of thousands of qualified young men and women aspiring for government jobs.

He urged the government to immediately review and withdraw the decision, arguing that austerity measures should not come at the cost of employment generation. Instead of freezing government posts, Bhalla said, the administration should focus on reducing extravagant expenditure incurred by the ruling establishment and the bureaucracy. "The burden of austerity should not be placed on the shoulders of unemployed youth. If the government is serious about reducing expenditure, it should begin by curtailing unnecessary spending by the ruling elite and senior bureaucrats rather than blocking employment opportunities for deserving candidates," he said.

Highlighting the growing unemployment challenge,



Bhalla observed that joblessness among educated youth has emerged as one of the most pressing socio-economic issues not only in Jammu and Kashmir but across the country. However, he noted that the situation in Jammu and Kashmir is particularly serious due to the region's unique economic structure and limited private-sector opportunities.

"Unlike many other states where industries, manufacturing units and private enterprises provide large-scale employment, Jammu and Kashmir has a relatively weak industrial base. For decades, government service has remained one of the principal sources of stable employment for educated youth. Any decision to freeze recruitment or keep posts vacant will only deepen frustration among job seekers," he said.

The Congress leader warned that prolonged unemployment could have serious social and economic consequences, including increasing distress among young people and slowing the region's overall development.

He stressed that employment generation should be treated as a priority area of governance rather than a sector where expenditure cuts are imposed.

Bhalla further said that thousands of vacancies across various government departments remain unfilled despite an acute shortage of staff in essential sectors such as education, healthcare, public administration and rural development. Filling these vacancies, he argued, would not only strengthen public service delivery but also provide much-needed employment opportunities to qualified youth.

Calling for a long-term solution to the unemployment crisis, Bhalla demanded that the government formulate and implement a comprehensive employment policy tailored to the needs and aspirations of Jammu and Kashmir's youth.

He said such a policy should focus on accelerating recruitment to vacant government posts, promoting industrial investment, encouraging entrepreneurship, supporting start-ups,

enhancing skill development programmes and creating opportunities in emerging sectors such as information technology, tourism, agriculture and allied industries.

"The youth of Jammu and Kashmir do not seek charity; they seek opportunities. The government must create an environment where educated young people can secure dignified employment and contribute to the economic growth of the region," he said.

Bhalla reiterated that addressing unemployment should remain at the centre of public policy and urged the administration to engage with stakeholders, youth organisations and experts while framing employment-related initiatives.

"The future of Jammu and Kashmir depends on its youth. Any policy that limits employment opportunities will only widen the gap between aspirations and opportunities. The government must reconsider its decision and take concrete steps to provide jobs and hope to the younger generation," he added.

Congress leaders slam rising unemployment, inflation and continued neglect of rural J&K

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In a major show of organisational strength and intensified public outreach, the Jammu & Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) on Sunday organised a massive Sangathan Srijan Abhiyan at Mandli Block in Billawar Constituency, where senior Congress leaders launched a scathing attack on both the Union Government and the Jammu & Kashmir administration for "abandoning the people after making lofty promises of development, employment and prosperity." The programme was organised by former Minister Dr Manohar Lal Sharma and presided over by former Deputy Chief Minister Tara Chand accompanied by former JKPCC Chief Vakar Rasool Wani and former Minister Bhusan Dogra.

Speaking on the occasion, Tara Chand said the BJP government at the Centre had failed to fulfil even a fraction of the promises made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir over the past several years. He alleged that soaring prices of essential commodities, unprecedented unemployment and neglect of border and remote areas have severely impacted ordinary citizens. "Instead of addressing people's issues, the governments are busy with publicity campaigns while ground realities continue to deteriorate," he said, adding that the frustration among youth and farmers was increasing with every passing day.

Tara Chand further said that people in rural belts continue to face poor road connectivity, irregular drinking water supply, unscheduled power cuts and inadequate healthcare facilities despite repeated assurances from the administration. He stressed that



Congress has always stood with the people during difficult times and would intensify its struggle to ensure justice, development and democratic empowerment for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

The former Dy CM also expressed concern over what he termed as the shrinking democratic space in Jammu and Kashmir. He said people feel alienated due to the absence of an elected government with full powers, while public representatives are being sidelined in decision-making processes.

He reiterated that Congress would continue to fight for restoration of democratic rights, protection of land and jobs for locals, and equitable development of all regions and communities of Jammu and Kashmir. He urged party workers to strengthen grassroots connections and expose the "failures and false narratives" of the ruling dispensation before the masses.

Addressing the gathering, Vakar Rasool Wani accused the BJP-led Union Government and the present J&K administration of pushing the people of the Union Territory towards "deep disappointment, uncertainty and economic distress." He said

the people of Jammu and Kashmir were promised unprecedented development, jobs for youth, restoration of dignity and strengthening of democratic institutions after the abrogation of Article 370, but nothing substantial had been delivered on the ground. "The people were shown stars and sky, but today every section of society feels neglected and betrayed," he said.

Wani said unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir has reached alarming levels, while inflation, lack of recruitment, closure of livelihood avenues and worsening economic conditions have badly affected common people. He alleged that daily wagers, contractual employees, farmers, labourers, traders and educated unemployed youth are struggling for survival, but the governments at the Centre and in J&K remain insensitive to their plight. He further said that developmental claims made by the administration exist only in advertisements and official statements, whereas rural areas continue to suffer from poor roads, erratic power supply, water scarcity, inadequate healthcare facilities and collapsing education infrastructure.

Earlier, welcoming the senior Congress leadership and workers, Dr Manohar Lal Sharma highlighted several pressing issues being faced by the people of Billawar and adjoining areas. He said the region continues to suffer due to inadequate infrastructure, poor healthcare facilities, lack of employment opportunities for youth and persistent neglect of rural development works. He alleged that despite repeated demands from locals, many basic issues concerning roads, irrigation, drinking water and educational institutions remain unresolved, causing immense hardship to the people.

50 paintings of Bharti Verma on Display at Kala Kendra Jammu

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A three-day Painting Exhibition comprising 50 artworks by artist Bharti Verma is presently on display at the Master Sansar Chand Gallery of Kala Kendra Society. The colourful exhibition has attracted a large number of distinguished artists, painters, art students and art lovers. The exhibition has been organized by Kala Kendra Society functioning under the aegis of the Department of Culture, Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

Registrar, University of Jammu Neeraj Sharma, after visiting the gallery, appreciated the impressive works of Bharti Verma and congratulated the faculty of the Institute of Music and Fine Arts (IMFA), Jammu for nurturing creative young artists. He expressed hope that Kala Kendra and the University would collaborate in organizing meaningful art events across the region in future. He remarked that Jammu is full of talent and such tal-



ent must be properly channelized to showcase the rich cultural heritage of the region.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Javaid Rahi, Secretary of Kala Kendra, said that the institution is making continuous endeavours to promote young talent by providing emerging artists a suitable platform to exhibit their creativity and receive guidance from senior artists of the region.

Dr. Shohab Anayat Malik, Principal, Institute of

Music and Fine Arts, Jammu, stated that the creative works of Bharti Verma would inspire students to showcase their talent before a larger audience. He also demanded that the University Art Gallery be allotted to IMFA Jammu for the promotion of student artists.

Speaking on the occasion, Gokal Dembi recalled his own journey as a student of the Institute and emphasized that all cultural institutions should

encourage and support young upcoming artists like Bharti Verma.

Lalit Mangotra Padama Shree awardee observed that Bharti Verma's artworks reflect the essence of womanhood and portray the dynamic life of women through contemporary artistic trends and expressions.

Richta Datta, faculty member at IMFA Jammu, conducted the proceedings of the programme and presented the vote of thanks.

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