



Shri Sudhansh Pant, Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment Leads Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan Awareness Programme at Solan, Himachal Pradesh

Secretary Interacts with Students, Administers Nasha Mukht Bharat Pledge; Calls for Greater Youth Participation in Building a Nasha Mukht Bharat

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An awareness programme under the *Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA)* was organized today at the **Vertex Institute, Solan**, an authorized partner of National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India (NIELIT) Shimla, in collaboration with the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of Himachal Pradesh.

Shri Sudhansh Pant Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, graced the programme as the Chief Guest.

Shri Divyanshu Singal, Additional District Commissioner, Solan; Shri Keshav Nand Gautam, Deputy Director (SCDP), Department of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of Himachal Pradesh; and Shri Vivek Arora, District Welfare Officer, Solan, were also present.



The programme was aimed at strengthening awareness among young people about the adverse consequences of substance abuse and encouraging active youth participation in the collective endeavour towards a healthier, safer and drug-free society.

A key feature of the programme was the interaction of **Shri Sudhansh Panth, IAS**, with students pursuing **Computer Applications and Artificial Intelligence under PM-AJAY at Vertex Institute**.

During the interaction, the Secretary encouraged students to focus on acquiring **industry-relevant skills, strengthening digital capabilities and making effective use of emerging technologies** in the Information Technology sector. He highlighted the importance of equipping young people with contemporary skills and enabling them to take advantage of emerging opportunities in the Information Technology sector.



Shri Pant also distributed certificates to meritorious students in recognition of their academic performance and achievements. He appreciated the efforts of Vertex Institute in providing job-oriented and skill-based IT programmes, including courses in emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, and acknowledged the role of such initiatives in enhancing the employability and strengthening the skill ecosystem for young people.



The programme also featured a **Nasha Mukta Bharat pledge ceremony**, during which Shri Pant administered the pledge to the participating students. The students pledged to stay away from drugs and substance abuse and to contribute towards creating a healthier, safer and drug-free society.



The pledge reaffirmed the importance of transforming awareness into individual and collective responsibility, particularly among young people, who are central to the long-term success of the Nasha Mukta Bharat initiative.



A range of educational and creative activities were organised to engage students and reinforce the message of prevention and awareness against substance abuse. These included **painting, slogan writing, debate, declamation and a thematic skit** centred on the vision of a Nasha Mukta Bharat.

Around **96 students** participated in the programme with enthusiasm.



Students also presented cultural performances conveying messages on healthy lifestyles, responsible decision-making and the importance of remaining free from substance abuse. The active participation of students reflected the critical role of youth in carrying the message of prevention and awareness to families and communities.

Representatives from various departments and organisations participated in the programme. Smt **Minaxi and Shri Dilip from NIELIT Shimla**, along with **Shri Rohan and Shri Om Prakash from the District Welfare Office, Solan**, extended their support to the awareness initiative.

The programme was supported by the Vertex Institute team, including **Shri Subhash Attri, Shri Shashi Bhaskar, Smt Manisha Attri, Ms. Neha Kamal, Shri Kuldeep Kashyap, Ms. Samriti, Ms. Jyoti, Shri Rohit Tomar, Ms. Nidhika, Shri Gaurav** and other members of the institute.

The programme concluded with a reaffirmation that **sustained awareness, youth engagement, community participation and coordinated institutional efforts are vital to advancing the vision of a Nasha Mukht Bharat**.

The enthusiastic participation of students and stakeholders provided a meaningful platform for strengthening preventive awareness and promoting responsible, healthy and substance-free lifestyles among young people.

It is pertinent to mention that **Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA)** was launched on **15 August 2020** by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi with the objective of creating greater awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse and strengthening preventive efforts against drug dependence.

The Department of Social Justice & Empowerment is the nodal department for NMBA, with emphasis on **awareness generation, preventive education, youth and community participation, treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration**.

The Abhiyaan adopts a comprehensive and participatory approach involving government departments, educational institutions, civil society organisations, communities and other stakeholders.

Youth-focused awareness programmes such as the one organised at Vertex Institute, Solan, are an important component of efforts to build informed communities and strengthen the collective resolve towards a **Nasha Mukht Bharat**.

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