From Addiction to Independence

Gorakhpur UP’s Imran Khan’s Journey Towards a Drug-Free Life

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Timely access to medical treatment, counselling and rehabilitation can help individuals recover and rebuild their lives. Substance dependence can affect an individual’s health, family relationships and livelihood.

The journey of Imran Khan **(name changed)**, a 33-year-old self-employed AC mechanic from Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh, illustrates the role of rehabilitation support in helping a person move towards recovery and financial independence.

Imran’s struggle with addiction began at the age of 12, when he started smoking cigarettes under peer pressure. Over time, his dependence expanded to tobacco, gutkha, alcohol, smack, injectable drugs and cannabis. His physical and mental well-being deteriorated, and he experienced behavioural difficulties and financial dependence. His substance dependence affected several aspects of his life, including his relationships, livelihood and social standing.

Imran belonged to a financially disadvantaged family with two brothers and six sisters. His addiction placed emotional and financial strain on the household, while social stigma and strained relationships added to the family’s difficulties. Although he had learned AC repair and other mechanical work, much of his income was spent on substances, preventing him from achieving financial stability. His family remained deeply concerned about his health, and his father experienced heart complications that required bypass surgery. Despite these hardships, his family continued to support him and encouraged him to seek treatment.



On 22 October 2019, Imran received support at Punarjanm Integrated Rehabilitation Centre for Addicts (IRCA), Sonbarasa, Gorakhpur, operated by Basudev Tiwari Sewa Sansthan. He received medical treatment and detoxification support, psychological counselling, motivational therapy and structured rehabilitation. The centre also provided medicines, safe accommodation, nutritious food, emotional support, family counselling and regular monitoring, along with relapse-prevention guidance and livelihood support.

With professional care, continued encouragement and family involvement, Imran developed greater confidence and self-control. He completed a three-month rehabilitation programme and overcame his substance dependence. The intervention helped him focus on his recovery, restore family relationships and return to productive work.

Today, Imran leads a drug-free life and works independently as an AC mechanic, undertaking other mechanical jobs as well. He earns approximately ₹30,000–₹40,000 per month and contributes to household expenses, improving his family's financial position. His recovery has also helped him regain his family's trust and respect within society.

Imran's experience highlights the importance of accessible treatment, psychological support, structured rehabilitation and family involvement in supporting recovery and social reintegration. The assistance provided through Punarjanm IRCA has helped him rebuild his livelihood and move towards a more stable and independent future.

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