



**MEDIA AND PUBLICITY CELL
KARGIL CAMPUS
UNIVERSITY OF LADAKH**

Press-Release

Kargil Campus of the University of Ladakh Hosts Seminar on Mental Health, Drug Abuse and Substance Use among the Youth in Ladakh

On **July 25, 2024**, the Kargil Campus of the University of Ladakh organized a pivotal one-day seminar titled “Mental Health, Drug Abuse, and Substance Use Among Youth in Ladakh.” This significant event was held in collaboration with the District Health Department, featured expert speakers and interactive sessions aimed at addressing these urgent issues.

The seminar was graced by Prof. S.K. Mehta, the Honorable Vice Chancellor of the University of Ladakh, who served as the Chief Guest, alongside Dr. Jalil Ahmad Wani, Incharge Chief Medical Officer of Kargil, as the Guest of Honour. The event commenced with a traditional Khatak ceremony, followed by a welcome address from Rector Kargil Campus, Madam Kaneez Fatima. She warmly welcomed Hon’ble Vice Chancellor Prof. S.K. Mehta, Dr. Jalil Ahmad Wani and introduced distinguished speakers, including Dr. Fathima Nisa, Nodal Officer, NMH & NTCP Kargil; Dr. Kunzes Dolma, Clinical Psychologist, UOL; Mr. Aga Hassan Shah, Psychologist, DMHP Kargil; and Dr. Murtaza Ali, Psychiatrist, DMHP Kargil. In her address, Madam Kaneez Fatima emphasized the critical importance of tackling mental health and substance abuse among youth. She highlighted the urgent initiatives that educational institutions must undertake, calling on teachers and professors to raise awareness and work toward reducing drug and substance use to zero levels.

Dr. Jalil Ahmad Wani in his address extended his appreciation to Kargil Campus of the University of Ladakh and the National Mental Health and National Tobacco Control Programme in District Kargil for their efforts in organizing crucial awareness programs at both educational and societal levels. He also addressed the growing levels of anxiety and depression among youth, attributing these trends to the intense competition of the modern era.

Prof. S.K. Mehta then addressed the seminar, underscoring its vital significance. He emphasized the pressing need to confront mental health and substance abuse issues affecting the youth and praised the collaborative efforts of the university and the District Health Department in organizing the event.

Dr. Fatima Nissa provided a comprehensive analysis of Substance Use Disorders (SUDs), examining their aetiology, symptoms, and societal impact. She explored the neurobiological and psychological dimensions of addiction and discussed the exacerbating social and environmental factors. Dr. Nissa spotlighted cutting-edge treatment methodologies for SUDs, including behavioural therapies, medication-assisted treatments, and holistic approaches. She emphasized the crucial role of early diagnosis and sustained support for individuals undergoing recovery.



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Dr. Kunzes Dolma discussed psychosocial management, emphasizing therapies and public education initiatives aimed at reducing stigma. Mr. Aga Hassan Shah stressed the importance of early educational programs and community-based measures to prevent substance abuse, while Dr. Murtaza Ali examined prevalent mental health issues in Ladakh, reviewing available support systems and treatment options.

The seminar also featured the documentary Thugsam–Sal, which addressed substance abuse, along with the release of Dr. Nisar Ahmad Dar’s books, *Ifhamo-o-Tafheem* and *Tasawwur-e-Mard-e-Momin*, which delve into the philosophy of Sir Mohammad Iqbal and a significant contribution to the academia of Urdu Language.

A notable highlight of the seminar was the release of the books *Ifham-o-Tafheem* and *Iqbal Ka Tasawwur-e-Mard-e-Momin*, authored by Dr. Nisar Ahmad Dar. This scholarly work delves into the philosophical and ideological constructs of Iqbal, particularly his vision of the ideal Muslim man. The book’s release was a significant moment, reflecting Dr. Ahmad’s substantial contribution to the understanding of Iqbal’s philosophy and its contemporary relevance. The book was well-received, adding valuable perspectives to the field.

The event concluded with a panel discussion and a question-and-answer session, fostering deeper understanding and collaborative efforts among participants. Dr. Jaffar Ali Khan delivered the closing remarks, presenting a vote of thanks to Vice Chancellor Prof. S.K. Mehta, Rector Madam Kaneez Fatima, Dr. Jalil Ahmad Wani, and all the distinguished speakers. He expressed gratitude to the participants, organizers, technical staff, media, and supporters for their unwavering dedication to addressing clinical issues in the region. Special thanks were extended to the sponsors and partners, particularly the National Mental Health and National Tobacco Control Programme District Kargil, for their invaluable support and collaboration.

Convener

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