

# Government College Barotiwala

## Virtual Conference on the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

The International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, observed annually on June 26, aims to raise awareness among students and the broader public about the detrimental effects of drug abuse. This year, the Vyaktitva Foundation, in collaboration with the Department of Education of Himachal Pradesh, organized a virtual conference to commemorate this significant day. The event commenced at 12 noon and continued for two hours, concluding at 2 PM.

The theme for this year, in alignment with the United Nations' World Drug Day campaign, was "The Evidence is Clear: Invest in Prevention." This theme underscores the pivotal role of prevention as a fundamental strategy in the fight against drug abuse. It highlights how evidence-based prevention strategies can substantially mitigate the adverse impacts associated with drug abuse.

The Vyaktitva Foundation, in partnership with the Department of Education, aims to initiate the UDAAN program in educational institutions across Shimla. Although the Secretary of Education for Himachal Pradesh, Mr. Rakesh Kanwar, was designated as the chief guest, he was unable to inaugurate the conference due to unavoidable commitments.

The primary focus of the conference was to explore and identify effective methods and strategies for preventing substance abuse. The conference opened with a welcome note and an introductory address by Ms. Arunima, setting the stage for the subsequent discussions.

The event featured a panel of distinguished speakers, including Professor Sister Molly Abraham, Principal of St. Bede's College; Mr. Kulpreet Saini; Major Vikas Kadsholi; Dr. Deepak Yadav; and Mr. Rahul Joshi. These experts provided comprehensive insights into the nature of drug abuse and detailed various prevention strategies.

The speakers emphasized several key points: the significance of prevention in combating drug abuse, the effectiveness of evidence-based prevention strategies, and the importance of empowering communities to develop resilience against drug abuse. The discussions aimed to provide a thorough understanding of the multifaceted approaches needed to address this pressing issue.

The conference concluded with remarks from Ms. Smita Dixit, co-founder of the Vyaktitva Foundation, who encapsulated the critical points discussed and reiterated the commitment to advancing drug prevention initiatives.