

## Occupied Kashmir Faces Growing Drug Menace, unemployment: IIOJK PDP Leader.

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Altaf Hamid Rao.

MIRPUR (AJK): Jan 28 : In Indian Illegally occupied Jammu Kashmir state, youth leader of the Jammu & Kashmir Peoples Democratic Party (JKPDP), Zuhaib Yousf Mir has described the IIOJ&K as a “depressed society” due to rising drug abuse and unemployment in the occupied territory.

“Mir expressed grave concern over the region turning into “Udta Kashmir,” a term highlighting the alarming increase in drug addiction in the disputed occupied territory”, says a report reaching here on Tuesday from across the line of control.

Mir, who is also the general secretary of the party’s Youth Wing, linked the drug crisis to the prolonged conflict in Kashmir. He stated that 30 years of state violence, unemployment, and

frequent encounters with Indian occupational armed forces have caused psychological distress among people, leading to a surge in drug demand. “Many die from overdoses, and the root cause is the depression in society,” he revealed.

Unemployment is another major issue in the state in general and Kashmir valley in particular. he underlined, according to the report.

Mir noted that many Kashmiri youths are skipping higher education, believing it to be useless due to scarce job opportunities. “They think working odd jobs is better than studying, which is a backward mindset,” he said. Recruitment scams in recent years have further disillusioned young people, making them feel their education is wasted, he pointed out.

Mir also criticized the PDP’s past alliance with the BJP, saying it hurt the party’s image. He claimed the BJP broke promises to protect Article 370 and Jammu and Kashmir’s special status, which angered the public in the occupied state. “The so-called alliance emotionally hurt people and alienated the youth, who now blame the PDP for the loss of Article 370,” he explained.

Additionally, Mir accused the BJP of exploiting regional divisions, pitting Jammu region against Kashmir region. “They’ve convinced Jammu that Kashmiris are against them, and vice versa,” he underlined calling it a tactic to deepen divides, according to the report.

