

Punjab turned into river of drugs by Akali leadership : Shakeel Ahmed

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- **Bajwa gets massive response in Kalanaur**

The All India Congress General Secretary and in-charge of Punjab affairs, Dr. Shakeel Ahmed, today blasted the Akali Dal-BJP leadership for turning this sensitive border state into a river of drugs affecting the very future of the youth and the region. He was addressing a massive and responsive rally at Kalanaur near the international border in the Dera Baba Nanak Assembly segment, in support of the state Congress chief, Mr. Partap Singh Bajwa, who is seeking re-election from Gurdaspur. Mr. Ahmed said the sea of humanity that had turned up at the rally in this remote corner of the constituency was an strong indication that the people would send back packing both the Akali Dal-BJP's paratrooper candidate, Mr. Vinod Khanna and Mr. Sucha Singh Chhotepur, a rank opportunist fielded by the Aam Aadmi Party. He said Mr. Bajwa had been entrusted with the responsibility to lead the party by the high command for a special task which he had been carrying out very efficiently and successfully with the result that the party had got strengthened every day. He said the party high command was standing like a wall behind Mr. Bajwa. Coming down heavily on the Akali Dal-BJP government, he said smuggling was being patronised by the ministers as had been revealed by Jagdish Bhola, an ex-cop arrested by the police in Rs. 5000 crore smuggling racket who had spilled the beans in front of journalists. He said this government was playing with not only the future of the youth but also the state itself. He said the present election was a fight between two diametrically opposite ideologies. The Congress was a symbol of all inclusive secular ideology without which this diverse country could not be kept united. However, the Bharatiya Janata Party in general and its prime ministerial candidate Mr. Narendra Modi symbolised the most dangerous communal and divisive approach. It was Mr. Modi who presided over the Gujarat communal massacre but had never expressed any remorse for the same, what to talk of apology. Mr. Ahmed said Mr. Modi betrayed his divisive credentials recently at the Ambedkar Jayanti when he said the Congress had ignored dalits at the cost of the Muslims. However, while in UP, he would speak the opposite. He said such an approach would prove disastrous for this great country with a rich legacy of co-existence. He slammed Mr. Modi for misleading the people about the so called pink revolution. He said the export of meat products during the NDA regime had touched 3.5 lakh metric tonnes. Not only that, in Gujarat, it had increased to 22,000 tonnes from 10,000 tonnes per annum. He said Mr. Modi was a habitual liar who had always tried to mislead the people by distorting or ignoring facts. He said yet another example of the treatment being meted out to the minorities in Gujarat was the case of the Sikh farmers settled in Kutch area of that state who were facing the threat of eviction. These farmers who were issued evictions orders from the lands they had been cultivating for about 50 years had been given relief by the Gujarat High Court but the Modi government went in for appeal against this order to the Supreme Court. He said Mr. Badal had failed to impress upon Mr. Modi to withdraw this SLP from the Supreme Court. He said this was the real face of the man whom Mr. Badal had been projecting as the prime ministerial candidate. Mr. Ahmed said the BJP was steeped in corruption and two of its presidents had to go precisely because of the corruption charges. One of these presidents was convicted. In Karnataka, the party had re-inducted the former chief minister who had to quit on corruption charges. He said the BJP had no moral right to talk about corruption. Blasting the Gujarat model of development, he said Mr. Modi had sold out his state to the corporate sector and the Adani group was allotted 45,000 acres of land for peanuts. Now the corporate sector was managing his poll campaign at the national level. He appealed to the people to strengthen the hands of Mr. Bajwa and send him to the Lok Sabha with a record margin. Mr. Bajwa spoke at length listing the achievements of the UPA

government including the implementation of one-rank-one-pension, food security, right to education, increase in MSP of wheat and paddy in last nine years and NRHM (108 Ambulance), PMGSY, MNREGA etc. he said the UPA care for the common man. He said on the other hand, the Badal government had failed to implement its assurances in the manifesto like doubling of old age pension and unemployment allowance. Those present included Dera Baba Nanak MLA Mr. Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, Batala MLA Mr. Ashwani Sekhri, BKU leader Mr. Bhupinder Singh Mann, Mr. Inderjit Singh Randhawa, Mr. Deepinder Singh Randhawa, Mr. Janak Raj, Mr. Kulwant Singh Swami, Mr. Pardip Sachdeva, Mr. Salwinder Sindhu and Mr. Gurjit Singh Aujla.

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