

## CGPWA, BALGRAN jointly launch Plantation Drive

Jammu July 18:- The Central Govt Pensioners' Welfare Association. Jammu (CGPWA) today launched an ambitious Plantation Drive-2026 in BALGRAN premises.

The drive was inaugurated by the President of the CGPWA Kuldeep Khoda by planting a sapling of Ficus Benjamin plant, also known as weeping fig. This plant is a species of flowering plant in the family Moraceae, native to Asia and Australia, and is the official tree of Bangkok. It is considered a lucky plant in many traditions, particularly in Feng Shui and Southeast Asian cultures. It is widely believed to attract good fortune, promote harmony, and bring positive energy into a home or business.

Under the first phase of this Plantation Drive, launched in collaboration with BALGAN (which runs Bal Bharti Public School), more than 100 plants were planted today by the students. The students were very excited in planting these saplings. As announced by the President of BALGRAN, Vinod Raina, each student will adopt one plant and take post-plantation care; a prize will be given to the student with the best-grown plant. Other prizes will also be considered for different categories. This announcement generated unusual enthusiasm among the students.

The plants planted by the students and the guests today included acacia auriculiformis, amla, behra, kachnar ( Bahunia) ficus spp, amrood, jamun and arjun. The Acacia auriculiformis plant, native to Australia and Papua New Guinea, is a fast-growing, nitrogen-fixing tree. Ecologically, it is a key species for reforestation, preventing soil erosion, and rehabilitating degraded or nutrient-poor wastelands. Different parts of the tree are utilized in folk medicine. Root and bark decoctions of this plant are commonly used to treat aches, pains, sore eyes, and rheumatism, while seed preparations are used for skin complications. Most of these plants were provided by the Urban Social Forestry and some were procured from different nurseries.

Earlier, addressing students and guests, Khoda explained the importance of growing plants as they provide oxygen and control pollution caused in abundance by various activities like construction, vehicular movement, industry, and straw burning, etc. A mass movement must be launched to meet the growing threat to the environment, and children at an impressionable age are the best carriers of this message of plantation.

Dr Ashok Bhan, speaking to media persons, stressed the urgent need to create mass awareness of the challenges facing the current ecosystem, stating that plantation at every available place is the easiest and most effective tool to counter this challenge.

K B Jandial, General Secretary CGPWA, said that the pensioners' association has decided to promote plantation as a tool to cleanse the environment, adding that greenery is our saviour.

Earlier, the President of BALGRAN, V. K. Raina, welcomed the guests and said that plantation is not a ritual but a greatest need for understanding the causes of pollution and the measures available to counter it individually and collectively. He impressed upon the students to take plantation as a serious matter and nurture these plants with devotion and commitment.

Among those who joined the plantation drive and planted saplings included Dr Ashok Bhan, K B Jandial, Dr C M Seth, Upender Pachnanda, S C Sharma, O P Sharma, Sunil Sharma, V K Padha, Nisar Ahmad, C L Banal, Er Vinod Gupta, Er. Chandra Uday, R S Baroca, Col S S Jamwal, Er K S Sambyal. Dr Ashok Sharma, Vijay Gupta.

In the second phase, the CGPWA will collaborate with GMC and Friends of Govt Medical College to plant more than 100 plants at their stadium next week.

