The Growing Threat of Qanunsuz Dərman in Balakən Villages

Living in Balakən means being close to nature, but it also means facing challenges that come with isolation. One of the most pressing issues I have seen in the past few years is the spread of qanunsuz dərman, or illegal drugs, into our rural communities. These substances are not just a city problem anymore. They have quietly made their way into villages where families have lived for generations, and the consequences are becoming impossible to ignore.

I remember talking to a local teacher last spring who told me about a student who stopped coming to school. The boy was fourteen, from a farming family. At first, people thought he was just lazy. But then word got out that he had started using a cheap synthetic drug that some older teens had brought from the regional center. The teacher tried to help, but the damage was already done. That story is not unique. It is one of many I have heard in Balakən over the last year.

How Illegal Drugs Reach Balakən

The geography of Balakən makes it both beautiful and vulnerable. We sit near the border, with mountains and forests that offer cover for smuggling routes. Most of the qanunsuz dərman that ends up here comes from outside the region, brought in small quantities by individuals who know the back roads and trails. The drugs are often synthetic cannabinoids or cheap stimulants that are easy to hide and sell. Because the local economy is small, dealers target young people who have some money from seasonal work or family remittances.

Another factor is the lack of regular police patrols in remote villages. Some settlements are hours apart by dirt road, and law enforcement resources are stretched thin. By the time authorities hear about a dealer operating in a village, he has usually moved on. This creates a cycle where illegal drugs take root in communities that have little experience dealing with addiction.

Real Stories from the Ground

I spoke with a farmer in one village who lost his nephew to an overdose last winter. The nephew was twenty-two, strong and hardworking. He had started using qanunsuz dərman at a wedding party where someone passed around a powder mixed with tobacco. Within six months, he had sold his motorcycle, then his phone, then started borrowing money from friends. His family tried to intervene, but there were no treatment centers nearby. The nearest doctor who understood addiction was in Balakən town, two hours away by shared taxi. The young man died alone in a shed on the family property.

Stories like this are hard to hear, but they are important. They show that the problem is not abstract. It is happening in homes we pass every day. The people affected are not strangers. They are our neighbors, our relatives, our friends.

What Makes the Situation Worse

Several factors have made the illegal drug trade worse in Balakən. First, there is very little awareness among parents about what to look for. Many older adults did not grow up around synthetic drugs, so they do not recognize the signs. A teenager acting irritable or sleepy might just seem like normal teenage behavior. Second, there is stigma around asking for help. Families often try to handle addiction privately, out of shame, which delays any real support. Third, the economic pressure pushes some young people into selling drugs themselves. When a young man cannot find a job, and someone offers him quick money to deliver a package, the temptation is real.

Community Responses That Are Working

Not everything is bleak. I have seen some encouraging efforts from local people who refuse to accept the situation. In one village, a group of women started a neighborhood watch program focused on suspicious visitors. They do not confront dealers directly, but they report any unknown cars or people to the police hotline. The police have made two arrests based on their tips. In another village, a retired schoolteacher began holding informal evening classes for teenagers, talking openly about the dangers of drugs. He does not lecture. He tells stories and invites the kids to ask questions. Attendance has grown steadily.

These grassroots actions matter because they come from trust. Outside programs often fail in Balakən because they do not understand the local culture. But when an elder or a neighbor speaks, people listen. The key is to keep these efforts small and consistent, not to turn them into big campaigns that lose touch with the community.

What Needs to Change

While community action is vital, it cannot replace what the government should provide. Balakən needs a permanent addiction counseling center, not just a visiting nurse once a month. The roads to remote villages need maintenance so that police can respond faster. And there must be better cooperation between Azerbaijani border guards and local police to intercept drugs before they reach the villages. Right now, the flow of illegal drugs is too steady. Cutting the supply is the only way to give communities a real chance.

Schools also have a role to play. Currently, drug education in Balakən is minimal. A few schools have a single lesson per year, often taught by a teacher who has no training on the topic. That

is not enough. Regular, honest conversations about addiction should start in the fifth grade, with age-appropriate materials. Kids need to hear the truth before they hear the lies from dealers.

Practical Advice for Families

If you live in Balakən or a similar rural area, there are steps you can take right now. First, talk to your children openly about drugs. Do not wait for a problem to appear. Ask them what they see in their friend group. Listen without judging. Second, know the signs: sudden changes in friends, loss of appetite, missing money or valuables, and unusual secrecy. Third, build connections with other parents. A shared network can spot trouble earlier and offer support. Fourth, if you suspect use, do not try to handle it alone. Contact the local police or a health worker. They may not have perfect resources, but they have more experience than most families.

Finally, do not give in to shame. Addiction is a disease, not a moral failure. The sooner a person gets help, the better the chances of recovery. In Balakən, we take care of each other. That same spirit should extend to those who are struggling with substance abuse.

Looking Ahead

The problem of qanunsuz dərman in Balakən is not going away by itself. It requires a sustained effort from everyone: families, schools, police, and local government. But I have seen what this community can do when it unites. We rebuilt a bridge after a flood. We raised money for a family whose house burned down. We can also protect our young people from drugs. It will take time and patience, and there will be setbacks. But every life saved is worth the work.

For now, the most important thing is to keep the conversation going. Silence only helps the dealers. Speaking up, sharing stories, and asking for help are the tools we have. And in a place like Balakən, where people know each other by name, those tools are powerful.