

REFORMING ASIA'S LARGEST PRISON COMPLEX

TRANSFORMING PRISONS



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© Author

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Transforming Prisons

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Author's Note

Why this illustrative book format?

Seeing is believing - Visuals inside are factual, hence precious and rare.

What does it contain?

It contains real-life images/sketches of the state of prison management and prison reforms we introduced, followed by the birth and growth of India Vision Foundation in Delhi Tihar Prisons from 1993 and beyond. Establishing the collaborative power of

Prevention- Correction-Rehabilitation

What is its message?

Reformation is possible, provided the proper management practices are adhered to with missionary zeal.

The objective is to **"SAVE THE NEXT VICTIM"**

Where are the contents sourced from?

The book "It's Always Possible" and the documentation from the **India Vision Foundation**

Who will benefit the most?

Society as a whole.

Yours truly



KIRAN BEDI

Inspector General Tihar Prisons, Delhi

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PREFACE

As a police officer, I sent many lawbreakers to prison to safeguard society from their criminal actions.

I noticed that many inmates released from jail were angry and revengeful.

The prison system was a contaminating institution, resembling a revolving door.

But what was causing this cycle?

I witnessed first-hand the prevailing 'inhuman' practices, which were leading to an increase in violence and gangsterism.

Upon their release, inmates were hostile and vindictive against society.

We, as a team comprising Dr. Jayadev Sarangi, K.R. Kishore, P.R.Meena, Tarsem Kumar, D.P. Diwedi, Sunil Gupta and others resolved to grapple with the challenge head-on by creatively using existing resources.

This effort received international acclaim, including the **Ramon Magsaysay Award 1994.**

This illustrative compilation is evidence of that transformation.



There were two options.

The first option was to let the status quo be and take the easy way out. Be reactive and punitive. The other was to be transformative and preventive.

It meant a comprehensive shift in how the institution was being administered - most of all in the mindsets of the supervisors.

There was no time to lose. It needed urgent surgery in the methodology of its leadership.

Prison management in India has never been the same since then.

SECTION- 1

WHAT I SAW



WHAT I SAW



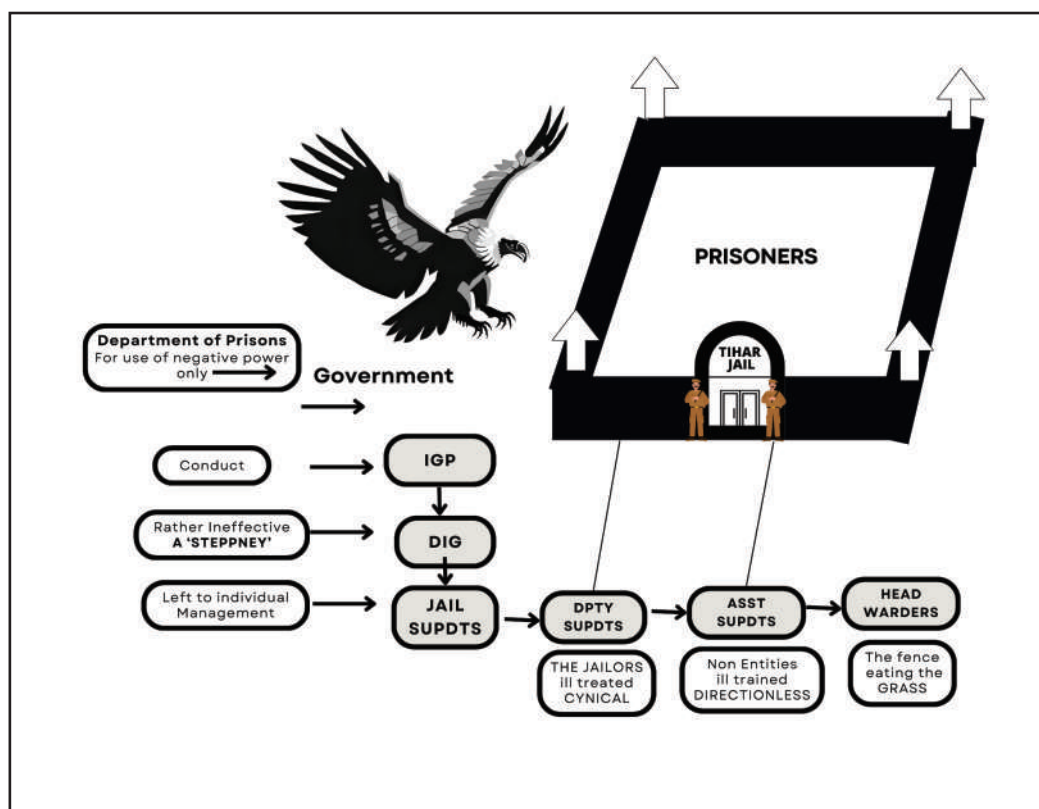
The Legacy

Tihar, one of India's most prominent high-security prisons, started in 1956 was initially run by the State of Punjab. In 1966, the administration was transferred to the national capital of Delhi. This jail is known to house the most notorious of prisoners- terrorists, rapists, gangsters, and smugglers all mixed up in wards and contaminating each other.

Corruption was rampant, internal violence was widespread, and we even heard of women being maltreated!

The prison had a capacity of 2000 but housed 10,000 inmates

The Prevailing Vulture Culture

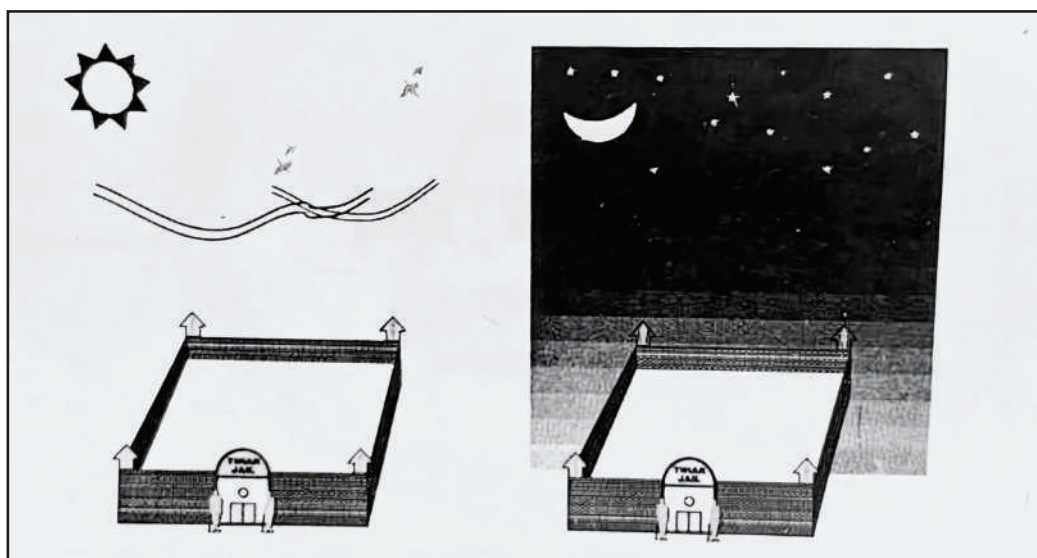


In May 1993, I was posted as Inspector General of Tihar Jail. What I saw was that there were problems of enormous magnitude. Ten thousand prisoners were waiting to be transformed, and the prison management was in a mess. The supervisory ranks were distant, the official hierarchy only existed to take punitive actions, and the culture that existed in the prison administration was akin to a vulture culture.

WHAT I SAW

No Difference Between Night & Day

One night, I went on a round to see what Tihar was like at night. I was concerned and wanted to know if the prisoners slept well at night. But I was appalled to hear prisoners howling like animals. When I asked my SI what these noises were all about, he said, "Madam, they are all addicted to drugs, some taking an overdose of calmpose, some taking cough syrup, and others getting drugs from outside so sleep eludes them. Day and night were the same for them.



We had started with a system of 'head counts' and 'lock-ups'. It was a place where occupants did not sleep at night for various reasons. The night sounds resembled those of a zoo. A place inhabited by humans to whom it hardly mattered whether it was a day or night! This is how I felt when I first saw Tihar...

First Day At Office - A Punishment Posting



Made by an Insider

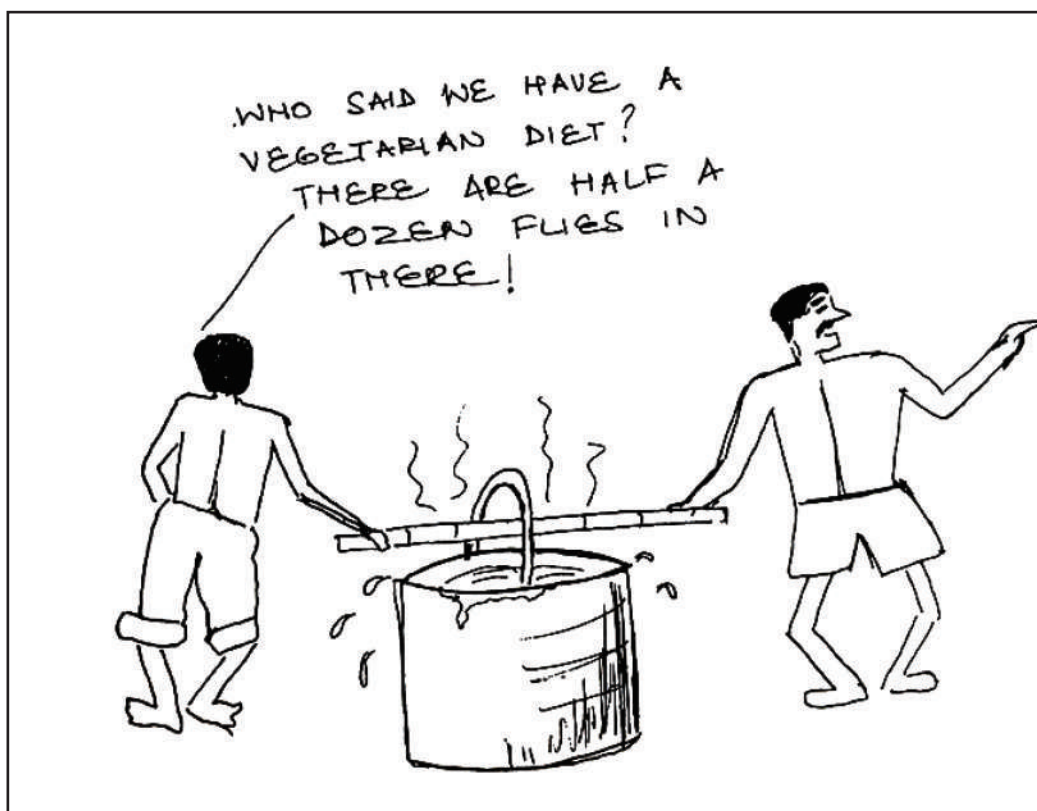
On my first day at Tihar, I found little mice running over my feet as I sat on my office chair. It was said this was their home, as no occupant had been in this office long — a flurry of bird feathers scattered everywhere when I stood to turn on my desert cooler. It turned out that the cooler had not been operated for an extended period, and it housed a bird's nest.

WHAT I SAW

Unhygienic and Unsanitary Food

Seeing that the rusted iron buckets in which the staff delivered the meals doubled up as mopping buckets and were used for washing clothes and storing water was appalling. As a result, the food had insects and flies, and the supplied dal was also highly diluted.

Prison Food as Depicted by an Inmate



Made by an Insider

Pilferages, Contamination Fights and Vandalism

Milk Pilferage



Made by an Insider

As I went about scrutinizing the jail over the next few weeks, I was both agonized and angered at the deplorable conditions in which the prisoners were living. They didn't have access to proper basic facilities like hygienic food and water. The milk supplied had equal water and was not boiled before supplying to prisoners. The staff also pilfered, sold and shared among themselves. Tea was almost black and bitter.

WHAT I SAW

Insensitive Staff

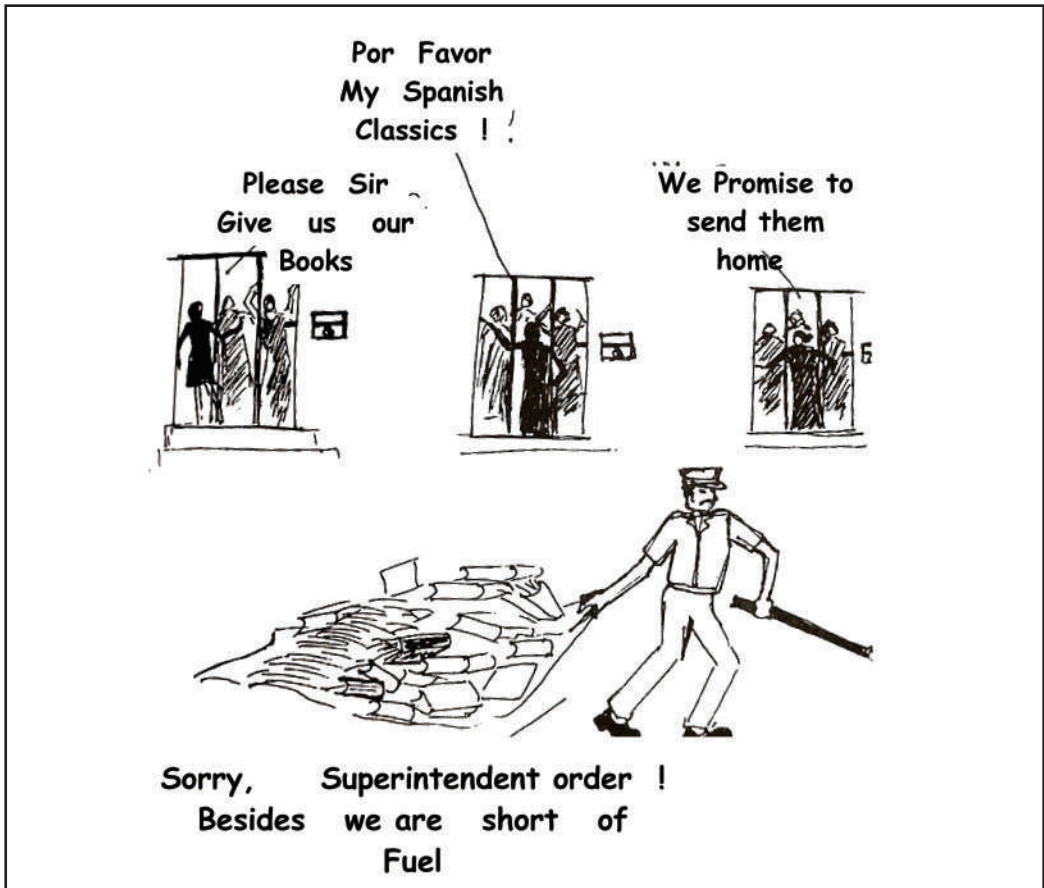
During my rounds to the women's ward, one woman, agonised by the conditions there, poured her heart out to me and told that once the rice that was served contained pieces of rusted wire, she somehow got the warder to call the duty officer and report it.

Iron in Rice



Made by an Insider

Staff Vandalism



Made by an Insider

When women required fuel for cooking, dried prison chapatis became their preferred choice. They utilized these chapatis as a fuel source for preparing meals and brewing tea for themselves, the staff, and doctors. During the winter months, when the demand for tea increased, the chapatis were sold for 10 paise each. In instances when chapatis were unavailable, books were quickly taken and repurposed. It illustrates the kind of staff vandalism that occurred within the prison walls.

WHAT I SAW

Fighting over Water

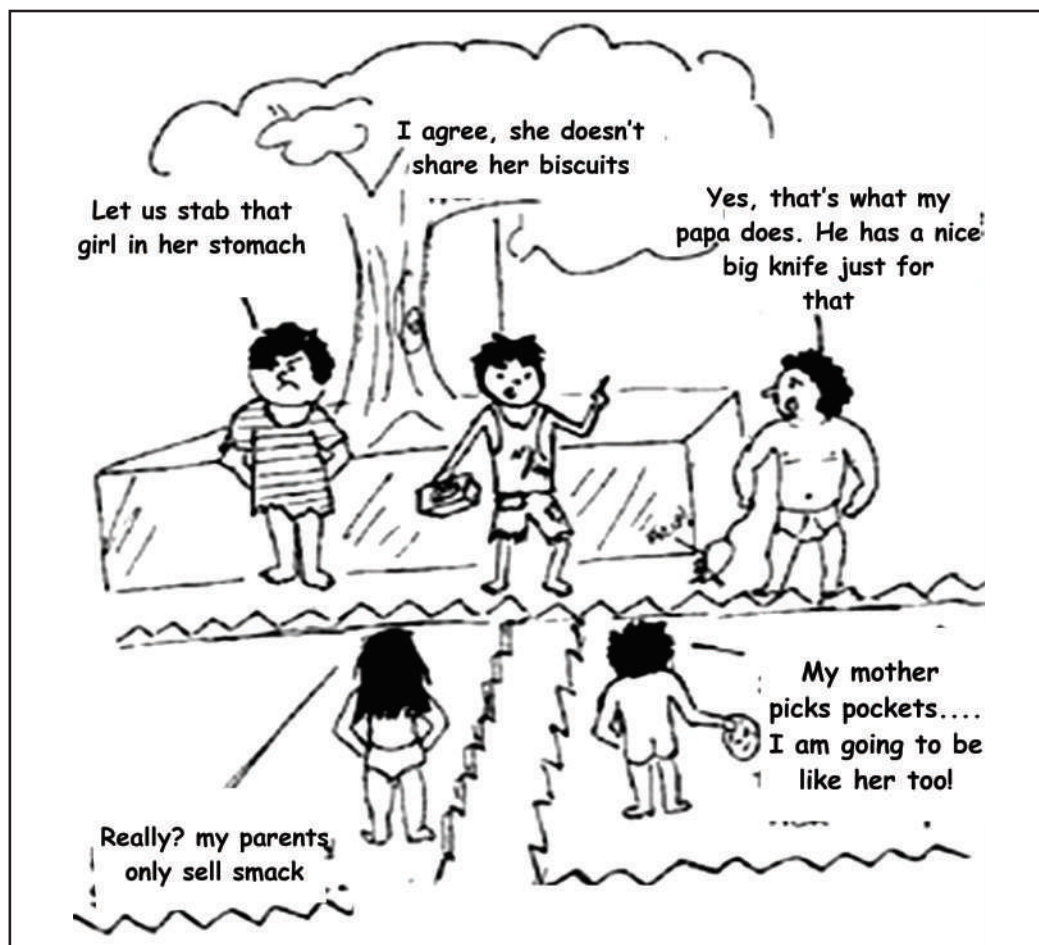


Made by an Insider

Frequent fights would often break out at the handpump.

Water was the most precious item inside the prison, and there was no guarantee of it. There were very few hand pumps as opposed to the number of prisoners, and at times, one had to pump at least 50 times for water to come in the pumps. Although boards were saying the water was not potable, illiterate prisoners were seen gulping this water. Because of the water shortage, many women even cut their hair short.

The Little Monsters



Made by an Insider

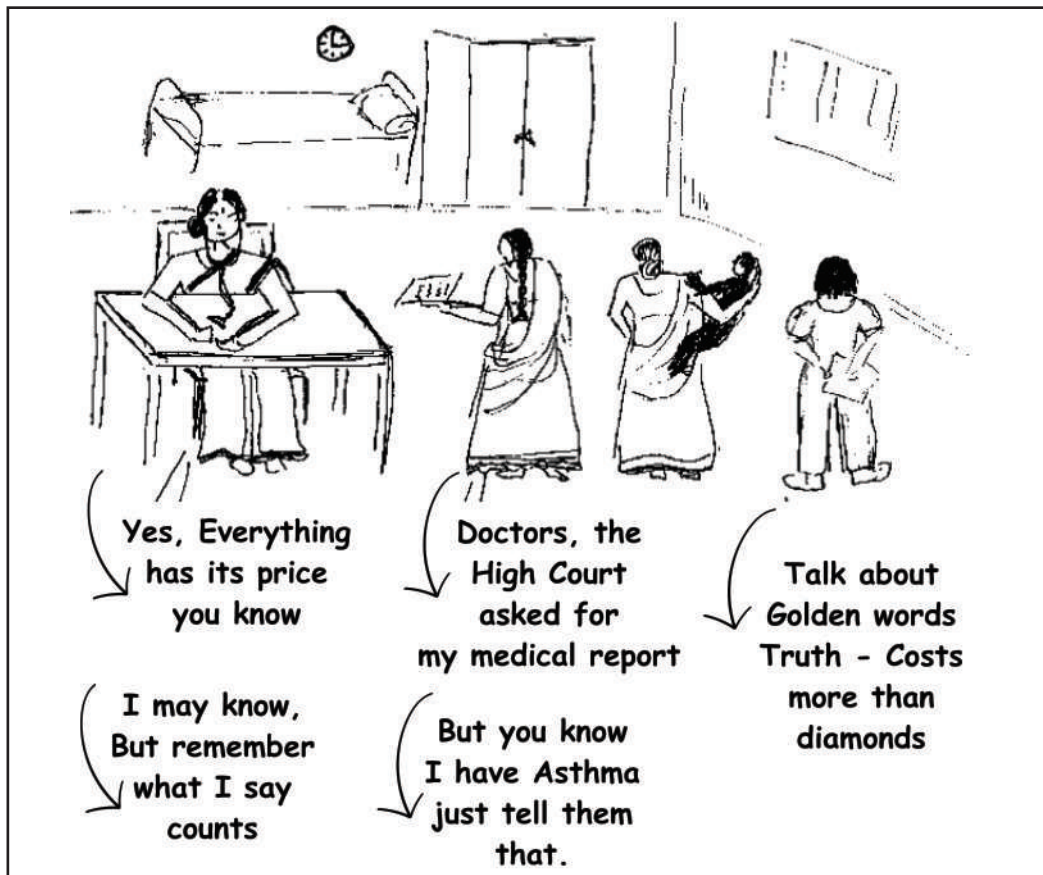
Shocking Conversations among Children

Children who accompanied their mothers, as permitted by Indian law until the age of six, lacked access to medical care, education and proper nutrition. They imitated and repeated whatever they heard the inmates would speak.

WHAT I SAW

Lack of Medical Services

Insensitive Mercenary Medical Services

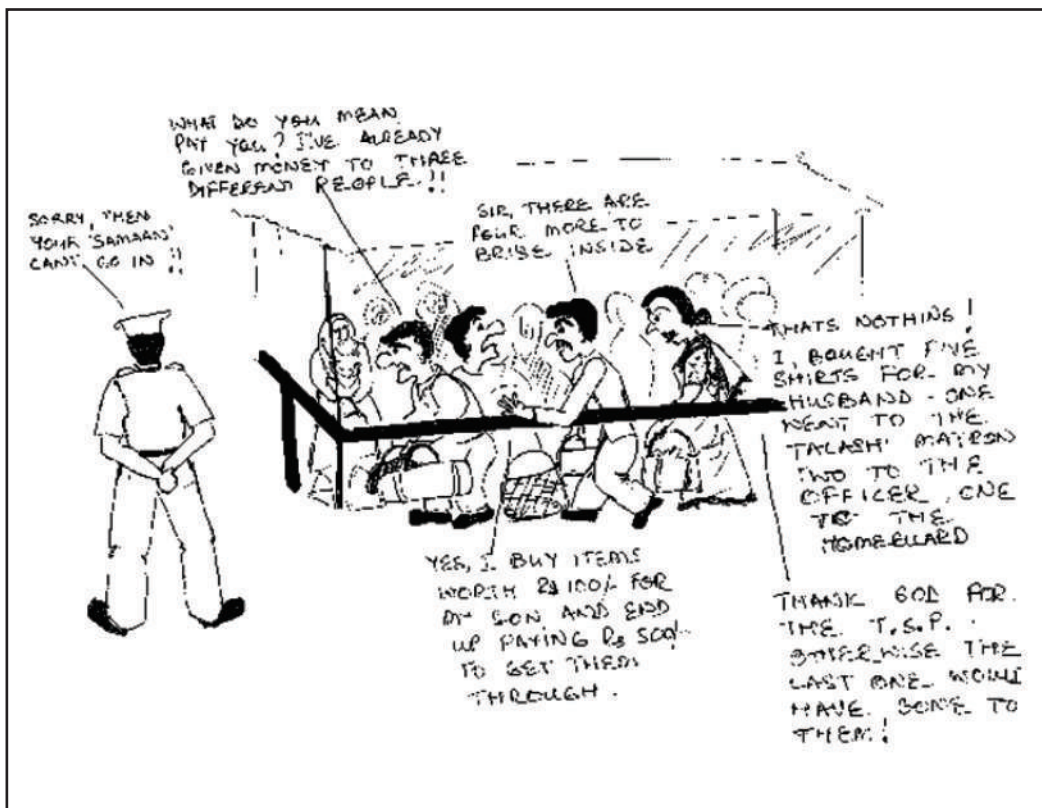


Made by an Insider

Tuberculosis was rampant inside the prison. Prisoners pilfered cough syrups and sedatives. There was no drug abuse treatment program. After 2 PM, for all 10,000 prisoners, there was only 1 Doctor. Children had no medical cards and they suffered the most.

Gangsters Ruled The Roost

Family Visits



Made by an Insider

Corruption during family visits (mulaquat) was rampant.

WHAT I SAW

Extent of Exploitation

White Water



Made by an Insider

Women - a neglected species

SECTION- 2

WHAT WE DID



WHAT WE DID

Creche Setup Inside

We carved out a separate space for children from the women's ward to have a space to play among themselves. Later we expanded.



In India, the law permits incarcerated women to keep their children with them in prison until the age of six.

**Play Way Creche for Children
Expanded with The Help of NGOs**



Mobile Creches training women inmates as creche workers

WHAT WE DID

Literacy for All Prisoners

Removing Illiteracy Among Women and Men



We began by correcting the biological clocks of the prisoners by adding day and evening activities, beginning with learning for all 10,000 prisoners. We took the help of schools from the city, asking them to donate used school books for all classes. Literate and skilled prisoners became educators.

Vocational Skills for Women

Vocational Training Towards Self-Reliance

Apart from regular education, we also focused on vocational training for prisoners. We tried to make headway into vocational training for the prisoners to keep them occupied even in their free time. We started teaching them book binding, file cover making, hand-rolled incense sticks rolling, chalk making, tailoring, TV and radio repair and computer training.



Women Inmates in Creative Sessions

WHAT WE DID

Converting Garbage into Manure

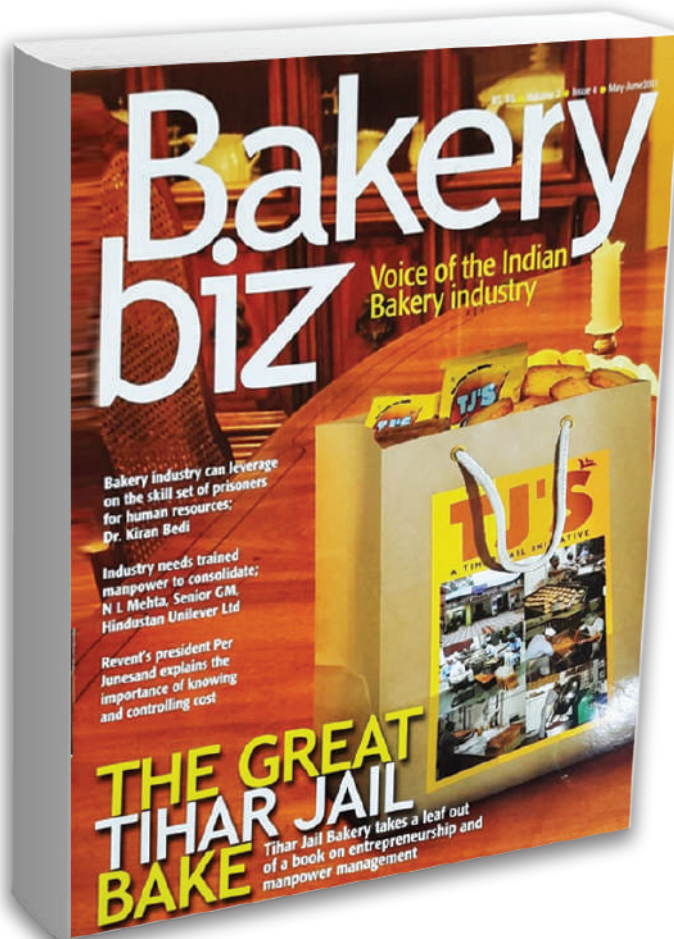
Walking around the prison amidst the stench of garbage made me realize the need to clean up and recycle this. Excel Industries trained the staff and inmates to convert horticulture and vegetable waste into manure. The money generated became a welfare fund. We also collaborated with organizations like Sulabh International to extract biogas from the garbage before turning it into manure.



Turning Garbage into Manure

Tihar Bakery

We started a Bakery to provide fresh Bread and Confectionery to over 10,000 inmates.



Income Generated Went to Prisoners Welfare Fund

WHAT WE DID

The Petition Box

To control corruption and be preventive, I started the mobile petition box system so that prisoners could write and share their problems and other developments. We started this on 1st June 1993, exactly a month after I took over as IG prisons in May 1993.

The locked mobile petition box was a simple system of grievance redressal. It was a wooden box, painted green, with the number of prisoners written on it. Each prison was given a different box, and four constables/clerks were earmarked by rotation to take these boxes to the jails. The keys of the petition boxes remained with me, and every evening, I would open the boxes, read the letters and plan what needed to be done with a sense of urgency regarding the issues brought to my notice in confidence.



Feedback System - The Petition Box

Community & Harmony

We brought much community harmony within the prison by celebrating festivals of all faiths. All such special events were celebrated together, and prisoners cooked, served, shared and cared for each other.



A photograph of one such event

WHAT WE DID

Spirituality

During my visit to the women's ward, I inquired, "Do you read? Do you practice yoga?" The response was a resounding 'No', as they lacked the facilities for both activities. Then I asked, "Would you like to read and do yoga?" they chorused a joyful 'Yes.'

'This moment marked the inception of spiritual programs in Tihar Jail.



Regular Meditation Sessions

Vipasanna (Meditation)

The magical metamorphosis happened when an Assistant Superintendent told me about Vipassana, a form of meditation known to help prisoners. We immediately connected with Mr Ram Singh and requested that Vipassana meditation to be started in the prison. We were blessed to have Goenkaji and Mataji to stay in jail for 10 days to teach this meditation to 1000 prisoners for the first time. This led to the inauguration of a permanent Vipassana prison centre to continue with the courses.



Men and Women in Meditation course

WHAT WE DID

History Made



**Over 1000 inmates sat in the Vipassana Meditation course.
The largest ever conducted inside any prison in the world.**

TESTIMONIALS ON VIPASSANA

A Norwegian Prisoner - 1

THE EXPERIENCE OF VIPASSANA IN TIHAR

As I went through my first Vipassana ten-day course I realized that as long there is going to be pleasures in life there will also have to be pain. Learning how to handle my pain just through sitting, for ten days was my most difficult experience ever. Vipassana taught me how to smile when I'm sad and how to be happy without becoming hysterical.

Vipassana is creating perspective. Seeing things as they really are. That all phenomena are epheral, and there is of no use clinging or craving towards them. Better just to accept the external world as it is. Learning how to see with eyes of wisdom from a

A Norwegian Prisoner - 2

internal viewpoint. Just observing one's physical sensations and mind realizing how it's all connected. How every action has a direct effect, karma, and learning to act instead of merely reacting.

That it is possible to be sitting for these courses while serving time in jail is very beneficial. Not only for the individual meditators but also for society as a whole. Time for reflection and meditation should be obligatory in every jail as it gives the word reform a new meaning. To me Vipassana is a tool of reforming myself, improving my ways of life. It's the real thing as it doesn't mix religion or sectarian rituals with the art of meditation. It is simply a scientific instruction on how to live in the present, more aware, and more awake to see reality, as it is.

It is my deep wish and I hope from my heart that as many as possible will benefit from the precious teachings of the Buddha, the enlightened one, the dhamma and the Sangha the community which now even

A Norwegian Prisoner - 3

aroses inside jail. May the flower of dharma
grow bigger and higher in order to benefit
all beings. May all be happy!

Yours faithfully

Leo Sande Gasnier
Convict



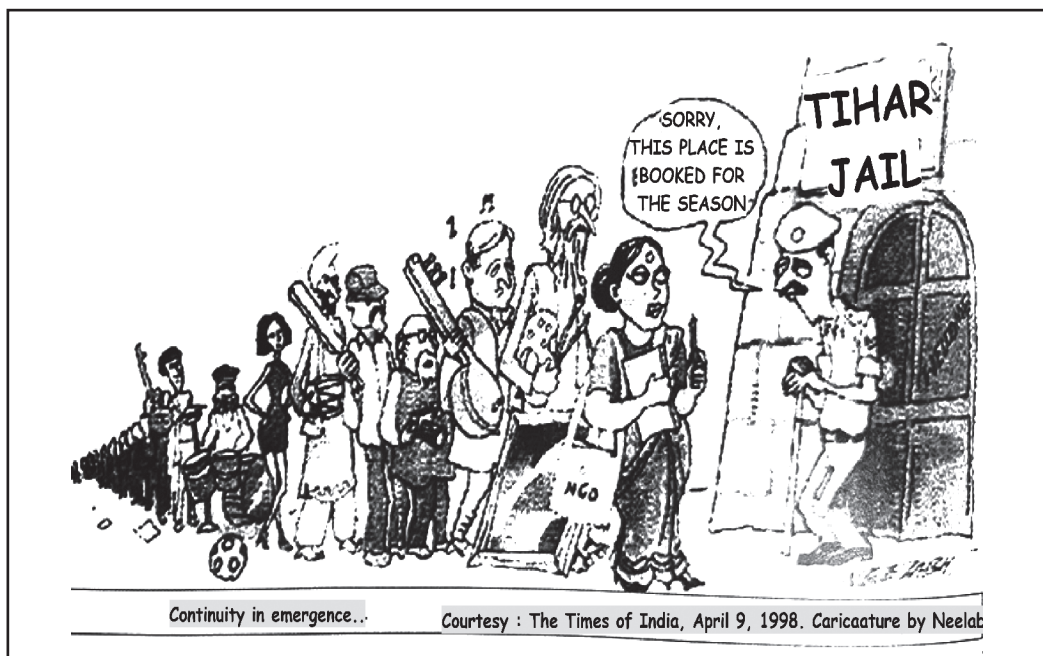
Vipassna Center Inaugurated at Tihar

WHAT WE DID

Tihar Over Booked

Soon, the community and the media entered the prison to help us improve the situation. The press was given limited access to cover the prison reforms without much glorification. International media like BBC, New Times, CNN, and others connected with us to learn about our work and to give us visibility. Students, too, were allowed inside to intern or do research.

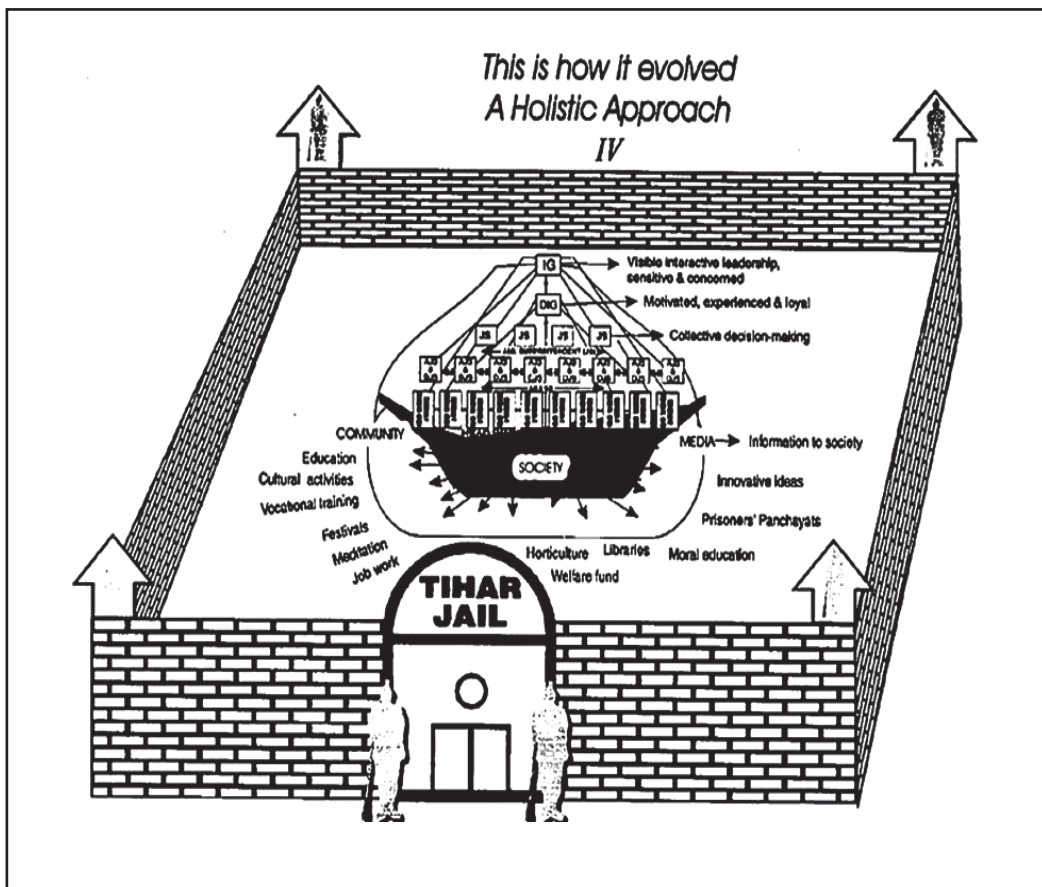
The most happening place in town? Tihar Jail, of course !



9th April 1998 Times of India

Emergence of 3C Model

We transformed the legacy of a notorious prison, characterized by crime, corruption, and violence that we inherited into a 3 C model of Collective, Corrective, and Community based policing, which has been embraced by prisons worldwide.





Save the Next Victim

SECTION- 3

BIRTH OF INDIA VISION FOUNDATION



BIRTH OF INDIA VISION FOUNDATION

Acceptance of Ramon Magsaysay Award

The award has propelled me to consolidate and expand my work. For this, I have registered with a trust called India Vision. I am breathing life into it at this moment. It will carry forward projects in prison reform, drug abuse prevention, women empowerment, mental disability, and sports promotion. I would appreciate your help in these projects. I accept the Ramon Magsaysay Award with total gratitude to the Foundation and the Philippines on behalf of my team, comprising Police-Prison-People and my family from India.



Manila, Philippines, 31st August 1994

BIRTH OF INDIA VISION FOUNDATION

Bedi to launch prison reform foundation

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI, September 5
Mrs Kiran Bedi, inspector general of Tihar jail, today announced launching of a foundation to carry forward projects in the field of prison reform, drug abuse prevention, empowerment of women, mental disability and sports promotion.
Mrs Bedi, who returned yesterday after receiving the Ramon Magsaysay award for public service for 1994, told newsmen that the \$30,000 US dollars (approximately Rs 15 lakhs) from the award would form the main corpus for the "Indian Vision Foundation".
Besides, the Filipino-Indian chamber of commerce has also joined the foundation for collaborative projects and pledged a donation of \$ 10,000 and their president will be a member of the board of trustees, Mrs Bedi said.
Stating that the award had propelled her to consolidate and expand her work, Mrs Bedi, who brought a series of reforms in the

IG Metall fordert 6 Pr
Die Metallergewerkschaft
tall in Deutschland ford
die Löhne für die Stahlart
sechs Pr erhöhen
Lohn, die Ohnsohg her
sehr oft eine Bestimmung

6 SEP 1994

Institutionalization of the Foundation

What is India Vision Foundation & Why?

It works to save the next victim. It means that if an inmate leaves the prison with anger and revenge, they look for their next victim and continue the cycle of crime, victim, jail, bail, victim, and back to prison. The prison system is both for deterrence and reform. It fails in its ultimate purpose if it does not address the latter. The Foundation also provides nurturance and support to the children of the prisoners and those released to save them from the intergenerational cycle of crime.

What does it do? Who all do we serve?

It works with men, women and children who have come with their mothers inside the prison.

How does it work?

It works on education, skills, and ethical reformation. It also trains prison personnel through in-person and online programs.

Where does it serve?

It works with prisons around the country and provides an internationally recognized model for prison reforms.

The Uniqueness of this Program

It is a unique program as it works with children of incarcerated parents inside and outside prisons, focusing on need-based nurturance and interventions.

Looking ahead

The route to crime prevention is reform and reintegration of all who undergo imprisonment. Many need-based programs can be practised. This section of the book is to help spur actions that can work in different settings. It is based on the philosophy that we save the next victim by providing nurturance to the children of prisoners and those released.

INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

About INDIA VISION FOUNDATION



With over three decades of saving the next victim, India Vision Foundation has touched several lives and strives to give new hope to prison inmates. India Vision Foundation is a 30-year-old nonprofit organization committed to the rehabilitation and reintegration of prison inmates and founded by Dr. Kiran Bedi (the first female Officer of the India Police Service) with the prize money of the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 1994. The foundation has been working tirelessly towards transforming the lives of incarcerated individuals, assisting them in their journey towards successful reintegration into society. Having reached 13,14,672 beneficiaries as of Dec 2024, the Foundation is presently operational in 172 prisons across 14 states & 2 UTs of the country.

PROGRAMS



Inside Prison Program

Inside Prison Program aims to reform inmates (male, female & youth) inside prison under its 4S Model of reformation: Shiksha, Sanskar, Skills, and Swasth along with other therapeutic interventions (Art, Music, Dance, Gardening)



Early Childhood Care Development Program

This program aims to engage with children of prison inmates who are less than 6 years of age by enrolling them in the inside prison day-care centre, facilitating elementary education, nutritious food, and health care



Children of Vulnerable Families Program

This program aims to mainstream & educate the children of incarcerated families after the age of 6 years; ensure their all-around well-being & development through the intervention of uninterrupted education and psychosocial well-being



Reintegration & Rehabilitation Program

This program aims to enable the released inmates to put their lives in prison behind them and embark on a journey that recognizes their talent, skills, and self-respect to reduce the chances of reoffending and help them reintegrate into society.



Training for Prison Officials

Training of Prison Officials aims to sensitize prison officials about prison reforms, help to standardize & sustain correctional programs and enhance their capacities on relevant issues to ensure their well-being at work.

1 MILLION+
LIVES IMPACTED



Vision



Mission

#SaveTheNextVictim

India Vision Foundation aspires to contribute towards a crime-free society. By initiating reformation programs for prison inmates and reintegration opportunities to released inmates for the reduction in recidivism, also facilitate welfare programs for their children to save them from becoming victims of their parental incarceration.

INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

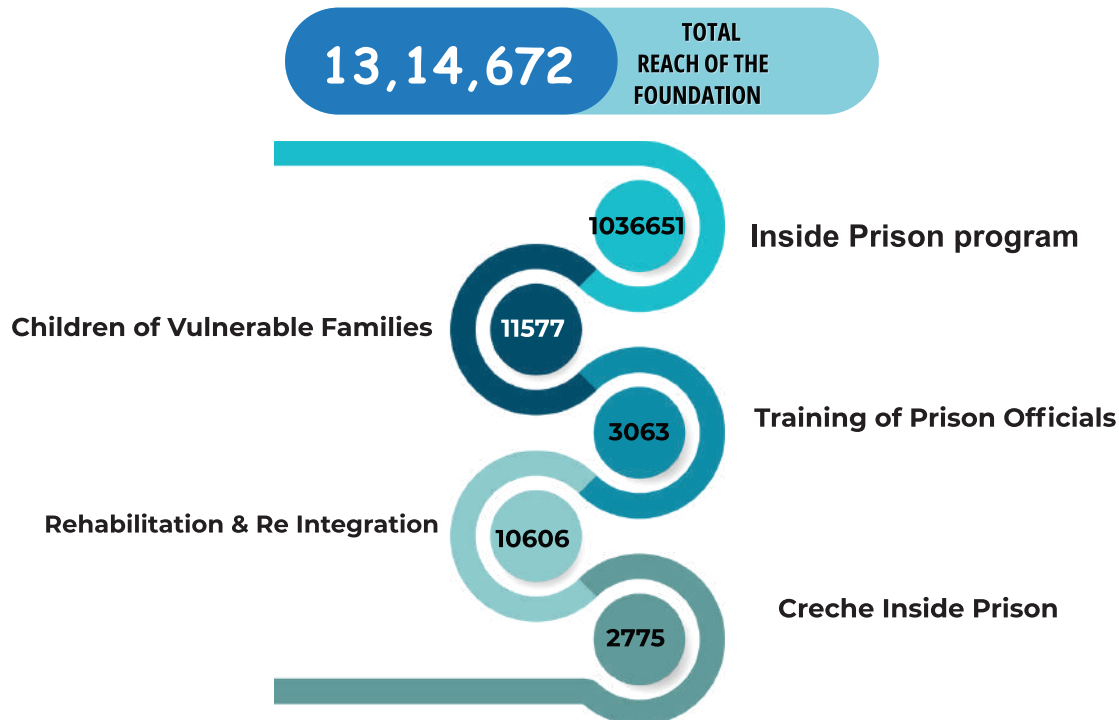
Model of Intervention:

The Foundation has adopted 4S Model (Shiksha, Sanskar, Skills, and Swasth) along with other therapeutic interventions (Art, Music, Dance, Nature), life skill sessions, sports & festival celebrations for the rehabilitation and reintegration of the prison inmates.

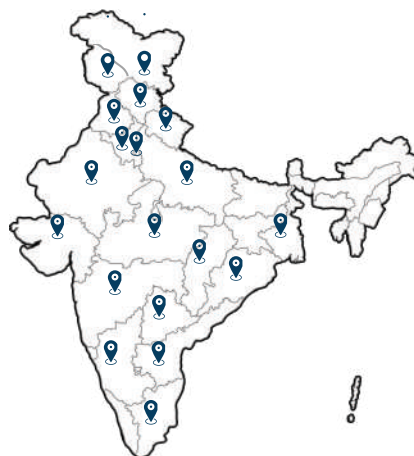


INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

Footprints

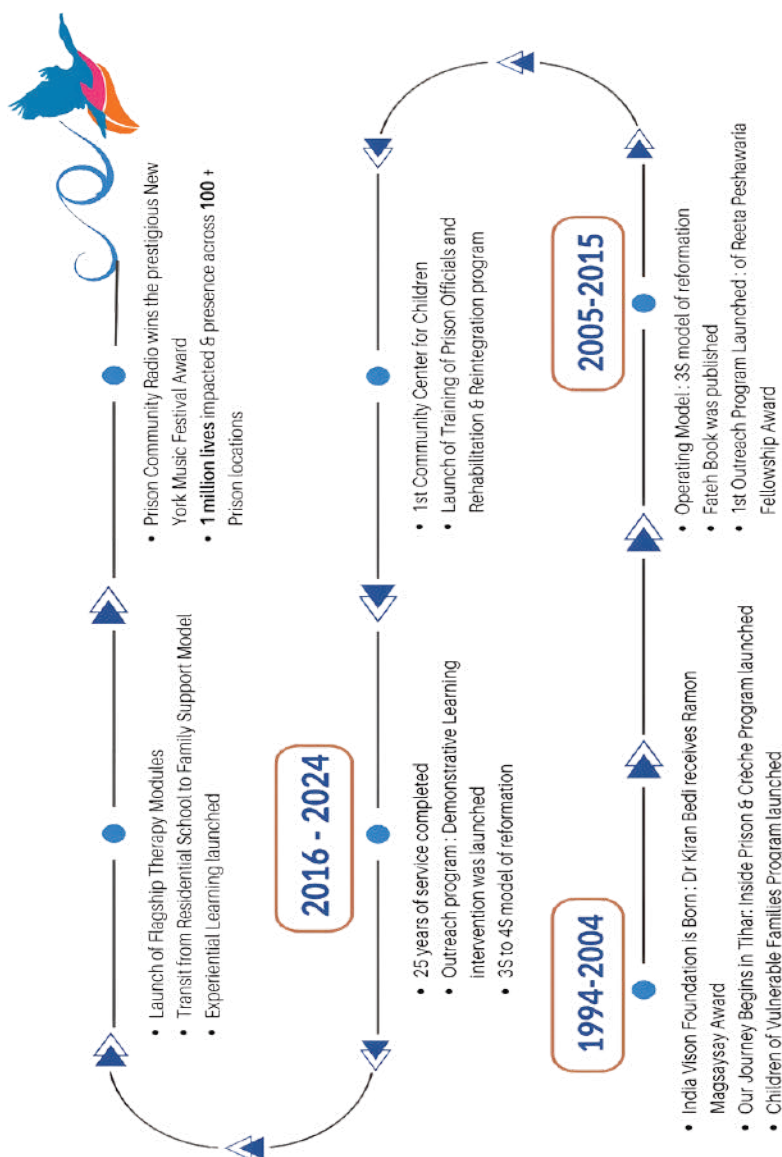


172 Prisons
14 States
02 Union Territories



INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

Milestones



INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

The ECCD Program



To prevent these children from becoming victims of their parental incarceration, a Crèche was set up in Tihar Jail by Dr. Kiran Bedi for nearly 80 children present during that time. Later the Crèche Project was handed over to India Vision Foundation in 1994. Many philanthropists donated soft toys, cradles, educative games, uniforms, and stationery items for the Crèche. Later in 1995, India Vision Foundation invited Mobile Crèches to conduct crèche worker-certified training for the women inmates.

2006 Hon'ble Supreme Court Judgement



The Honorable Justice R D Upadhyay in his judgement observed that the rights of women prisoners differ significantly from those of other inmates. Therefore, it was emphasized that special provisions must be made within the prisons to address the specific needs of women and children.

Expansion of the ECCD Program

India Vision Foundation replicated the successful Tihar Creche Model in the prison of Gurugram (2012), Faridabad (2015), Dasna (2015), Kasna, Mandoli and Sonipat (2018). The Foundation again invited Mobile Creches to train the female inmates of Gurugram prison as Creche workers in 2014 and also female coordinators and creche teachers 2018.

Launch of Nanhi Kiran Project



A standardized Early Childhood Care and Education* (ECCE) curriculum for Creches in prisons along with guidelines for for setting up Creches in prisons, prepare a cadre of trainers to facilitate, run and manage these Creches, and strengthen existing Creches being run by the foundation as model centers.

Children of Vulnerable Families

The Children of Vulnerable Families (CVF) Program aims to mainstream and educate the children of incarcerated families after the age of 6 years, ensuring their all-round well-being and development through continuous education and psychosocial support.

The goal is to help them achieve their academic, social, and emotional aspirations and save them from becoming a victim of their Parental Incarceration.

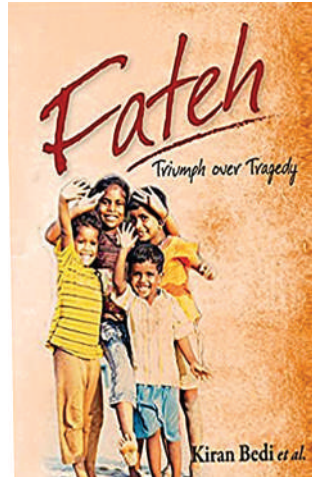


Students with Dr Kiran Bedi

INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

Fateh (Triumph Over Tragedy)

Courageous children of prisoners share their travails in their own words never recorded before. Children who are determined to convert their tragedy into triumph.



GLIMPSE OF ALL SKILL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING ACTIVITIES



INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

The Prison Community Radio By India Vision Foundation



Global Appreciation for Radio Parvaaz

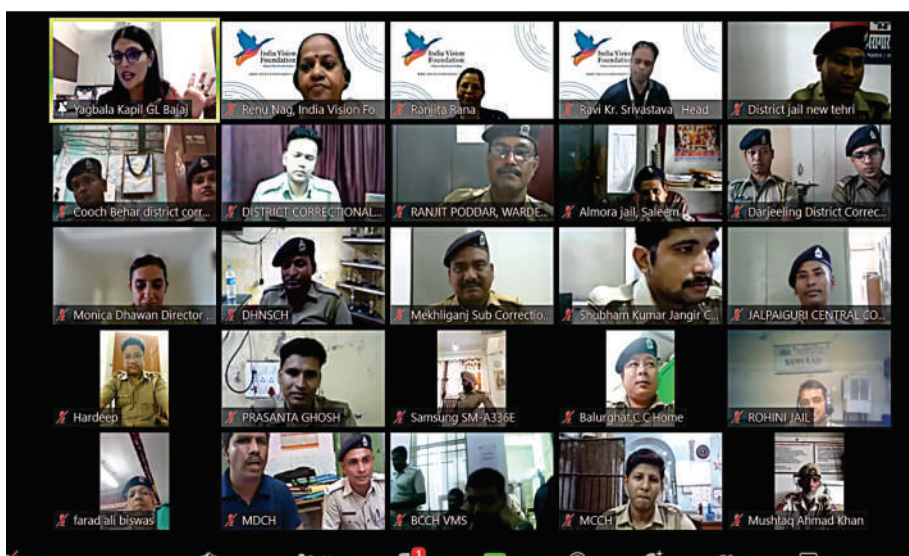


INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

Training of Prison Officials



In-Person



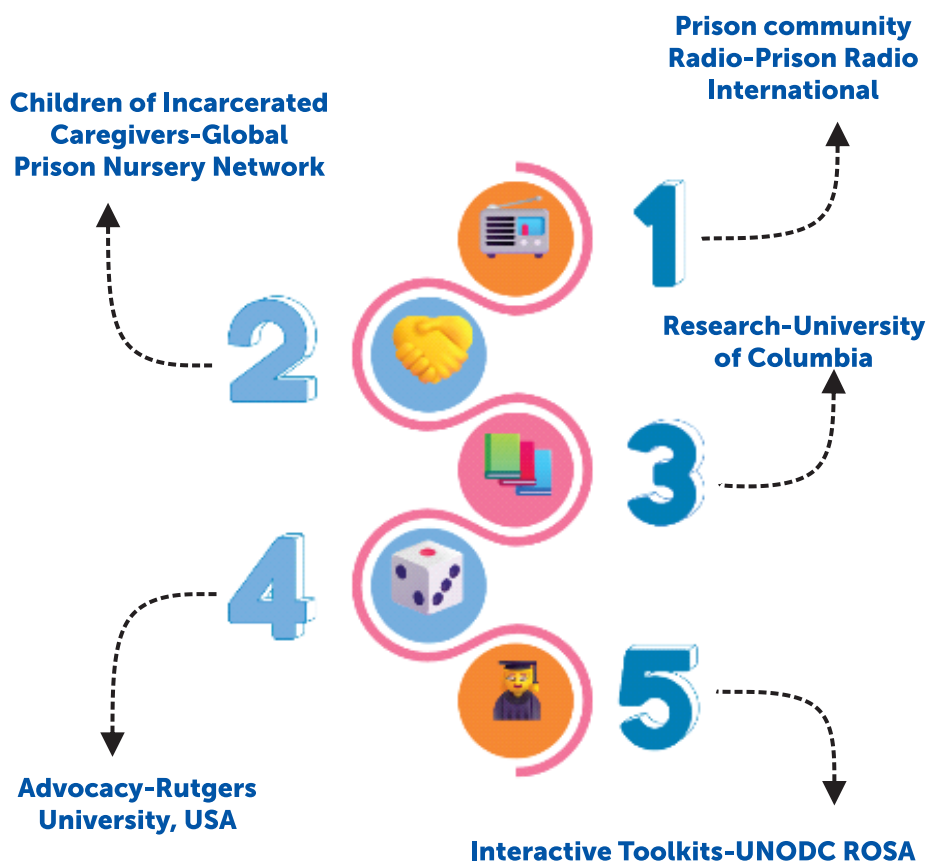
Through Online

INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

REHAB & REINTEGRATION PROGRAM



India Vision Foundation Goes Global



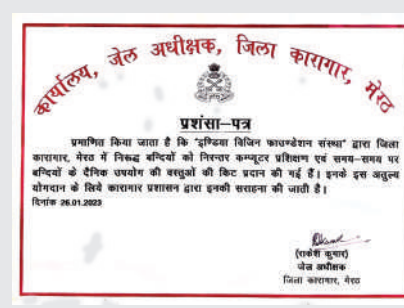
INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

UNODC

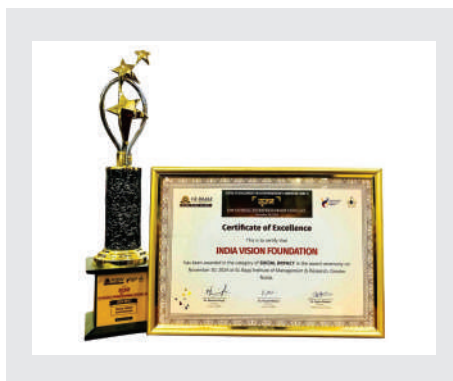


INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

Awards and Appreciation



INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM



INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM



INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

Research Studies

2023-24

- Report on Prison Nurseries by Stuti Shah, Doctoral Scholar, Columbia University, US
- Training Program Impact Study by Poulomi, Jindal Institute of Behavioural Sciences, OP Jindal University
- A Qualitative Impact Study on the Convicted Inmates of Crime Against Women in Ghaziabad Prison by GL Bajaj Institute of Management and Research (GLBIMR)
- Beyond Carcerality and Invisibilisation: Exploring Work Lives of the Incarcerated Persons by Nikita Garg, Tata Institute of Social Sciences

2022-23

- Studying the impact of the India Vision Foundation's Interventions (Khushali Project & Project Sabrang) by the Department of Psychology, IILM University Gurugram
- Impact of social support on the young adults of incarcerated mothers by PEARLY PAUL, PhD Study, Jamia Millia Islamia University, Delhi
- Effects of Dance Movement Therapy on the Overall Well-being and self-esteem of male prison inmates by Izeen Fatima, Department of Psychology, Jamia Millia Islamia University)
- The Effect of Rehabilitation Activities on the Psychological Well-Being of Female Prison Inmates by Girika Batra, MSc. Forensic Psychologist, National Forensic Science University, Gandhinagar Gujarat
- Study on the Invisible Victims of Maternal Incarceration by Pearly Sanil, Jamia Millia Islamia University
- Impact Study on the Role of India Vision Foundation in Empowering Children in High-Risk Environments by Palak Gujarathi (MSc. Forensic Psychologist from National Forensic Science University, Gandhinagar Gujarat)

2022-21

- "Exploring the health conditions of women ex-undertrial prisoners in the Delhi NCR region" by Parul Soni, Azim Premji University, Bangalore
- Study on the Rehabilitative experiences of ex-prisoners in India: the push for

INDIA VISION FOUNDATION - SAVING THE NEXT VICTIM

a central prison reform program by Siri Reddy (UCL Scholar) University College London, UK

2021-20

- "Experiences of Women in Conflict with Law during their Legal Recourse in Delhi" by Smriti Sikri, M.Phi. Delhi School of Social Work
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**And the journey
continues.....**

Team India Vision Foundation



Celebrating New Year 3rd January, 2025



Team India Vision Foundation and Beneficiaries 2024

Gratitude

*To all those who
made this transformation possible*

**Director General of Prisons
Additional Director General of Prisons
Inspector General of Prisons,
Deputy Inspector General of Prisons
Superintendents
& all other Prison Officials**

Name of the Prison Department

- Bihar Department of Prisons and Correctional Services
- Chhattisgarh Jail Department
- Department of Prisons and Correctional Administration, UT, Chandigarh
- Delhi Prison Administration
- Prisons Department of the Government of Haryana
- Department of Prisons and Correctional Services,
- Himachal Pradesh Jammu & Kashmir Prisons Department
- Department of Home, Jail, and Disaster Management Jharkhand
- Jails and Correctional Services (JCS) Department of Madhya Pradesh
- Maharashtra Prison Department

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- Department of Prisons and Correctional Services, Government of Meghalaya
- Directorate of Prisons, Nagaland
- Odisha, Directorate of Prisons and Correctional Services
- Punjab Prisons Department.
- Rajasthan Prisons Department
- Prisons Administration & Reform Services, Uttar Pradesh
- Department of Prison, Government of Uttarakhand.
- Department of Correctional Administration, West Bengal

*Gratitude to all those who
made this book possible*

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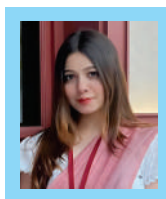
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Dr. Amrita Bahl



Dhairya Kumar



Ghazal Khan



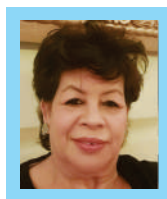
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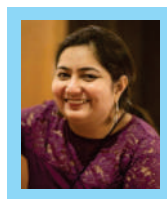
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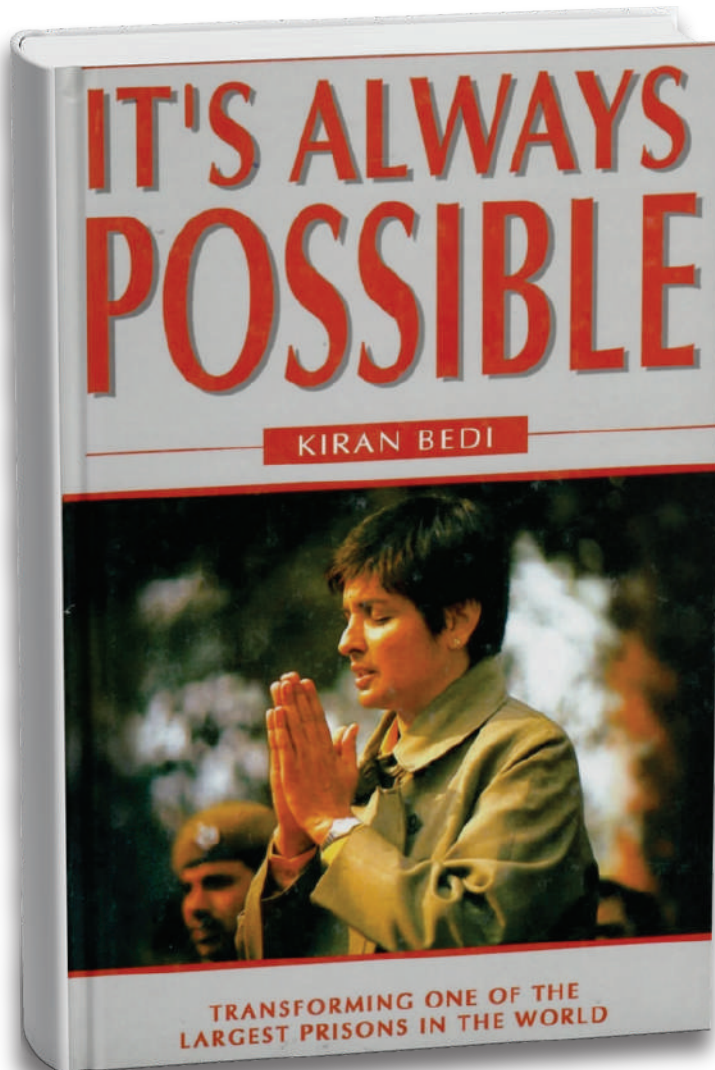


Sumitra Rai

Blessings



S.N Goenka ji and Mata ji conducted the Vipassana course for 1000 inmates




Illustrations and selected content have been sourced from the book "IT'S ALWAYS POSSIBLE"



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