

VOLUNTARY ACTION FOR REHABILITATION & DEVELOPMENT

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021



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PRESIDENT'S NOTE

VARHAD (वर्हाड) began its' journey as a voluntary group to enable 'Access to Justice' to the Poor and Marginalized Prisoners besides their meaningful Reformation, Rehabilitation and dignified Reintegration in the mainstream world. Past 20 years, our consistent effort to uplift the poor prisoners, their penurious families and vulnerable children has continued to place us amongst one of a very few organizations working in such a distinctive field in the country. Our steady efforts in the field of Criminal Justice System are recognized generously by Sir Dorabjee Tata Trust (SDTT), JRD Tata Trust (JRDTT) and recently by the Azim Premji Foundation (APF) and rendered financial support to carry out various programmes to enhance Criminal Justice System in the society.

VARHAD believes that no human being should be deprived of attaining the basic human rights. This applies to the prisoner as well and merely being in jail should not stop any prisoners to attain fundamental rights. In order to strengthen the rights of the prisoners, VARHAD has initiated many development programmes in the field of Education, Livelihood and skill development. Besides this VARHAD provides Psycho-Social support to enhance the Socio-Economic aspect of the prisoners. VARHAD facilitates the educational support to the children of prisoners by sponsoring them to study in the residential schools. VARHAD also supports the needy youths in attaining empowerment, education, skills & livelihood thus shielding them from the world of crime which results due to poverty and unemployment. In this area, our study centre (*Samrat Asoka Study Centre*) has been instrumental in shaping careers of hundreds of young boys and girls.

With the sense of pride, I would like to express that, the devoted and proficient team of VARHAD played a substantial role amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The tireless toil of our field staff during the COVID-19 pandemic has not only safeguarded the lives of the prisoners, their families, youths and women but the commuters and other migrant labourers who were on the road amidst the chaos of COVID-19. Team VARHAD showed the helping hand to these disadvantaged people irrespective of working hour across the of Vidharbha region of Maharashtra

Accomplishing our objectives has always been a testing task as criminal justice system is considered as immoral in most societies. It is a most challenging factor to seek for the financial support to work in the field of criminal justice system. I believe that people's perception towards prisoners would change in the years to come and people become more humane as our consistent efforts would continue to achieve it.

RAVINDRA B. VAIDYA
President, VARHAD

WHO WE ARE

Voluntary Action for Rehabilitation and Development (VARHAD) was founded in the year 2001 by Shri. Ravindra B. Vaidya, an alumnus of Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai. It is registered under the Societies Registration Act-1860 and Maharashtra Public Trust Act- 1950 in the Amravati district of Eastern Maharashtra (Vidarbha). The focus of the organization has been providing 'access to justice' in the field of 'criminal justice system'. VARHAD's assistance in various forms reaches to the family members of the prisoners who are in different prisons of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra. VARHAD is committed to work for the families and children of the prisoners. It not only aids the poor prisoners to access their legal rights like bail, parole and furlough but also keeps their families connected to the prisoners who are serving their sentence. Thus, VARHAD is able to maintain the emotional bond which often leads to an optimistic reformation, promising rehabilitation and healthy social integration of the prisoners.

VARHAD operates with an understanding that a man is not born a criminal but due to being confined in circumstances like growing-up in deleterious atmosphere, socio-economic deprivation, one is prone to indulge in deviant behaviour. One of the keys aims of the organization is to enable access to justice by acting as a bridge between all the law enforcing agencies. Our forte is that of a sole organization in the region working to eradicate the breeding of crime at the very grass root level. VARHAD, although, began its intervention in the Criminal Justice System but recently expanded its scope towards other developmental challenges particularly in the area of Mental Health and Education, Youth Development, Livelihood Opportunity and Farmer's Empowerment. VARHAD has a special focus on women and youth development in the Vidarbha region.

VARHAD's contribution in the field of prison reforms and human rights is lauded by government and non-government organizations at state, national and international levels. Some of our initiatives and interventions have been instrumental in bringing about changes in the policies that uphold the rights of the prisoners as well as their families. In particular, the Balsangopan, BPL ration card, Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Yojana, Shravanbal Yojana, Gharkul Yojana, Mukta Bandi Yojana are some of the government welfare schemes that have been made available to prisoners' families through the consistent efforts of VARHAD.

VARHAD's long experience in the field has also become an invaluable asset for the humanity, which we have gained through our constant engagements like interactions and workshops with the police and judicial staff in campaigning for the rights of the prisoners and taking long-lasting measures for their rehabilitation. Thus far, we have been able to contribute positively to the lives of many poor, less privileged and divested population and enthusiastically continuing our pursuit for their development by enabling them to access justice. The greatest asset of VARHAD is its committed leadership, staff, advocates and a huge corpus of volunteers who are relentlessly work for the cause in coordination with various government and non-government functionaries especially during COVID-19 pandemic time this year.

OUR VISION & MISSION

VISION

VARHAD aspires to be an organization that continuously responds to the changing social realities by enabling access to Social Justice and promoting Mental Health, Education, Livelihood opportunities, Youth Development, Farmers' Empowerment and wellbeing of the under-served population.

MISSION

Promotion of Mental health, Education, Livelihood opportunities, Youth Development, Farmers' Empowerment with special emphasis on children, youth, women with inadequate access to realize these aspects; and strives to respond to the socio-economic and legal needs of the prisoners and their families especially reformation, rehabilitation, and reintegration of the prisoners and facilitate education and employment of the Children of Prisoners (CoP) and families in view to protect their interests due to the effect of incarceration.

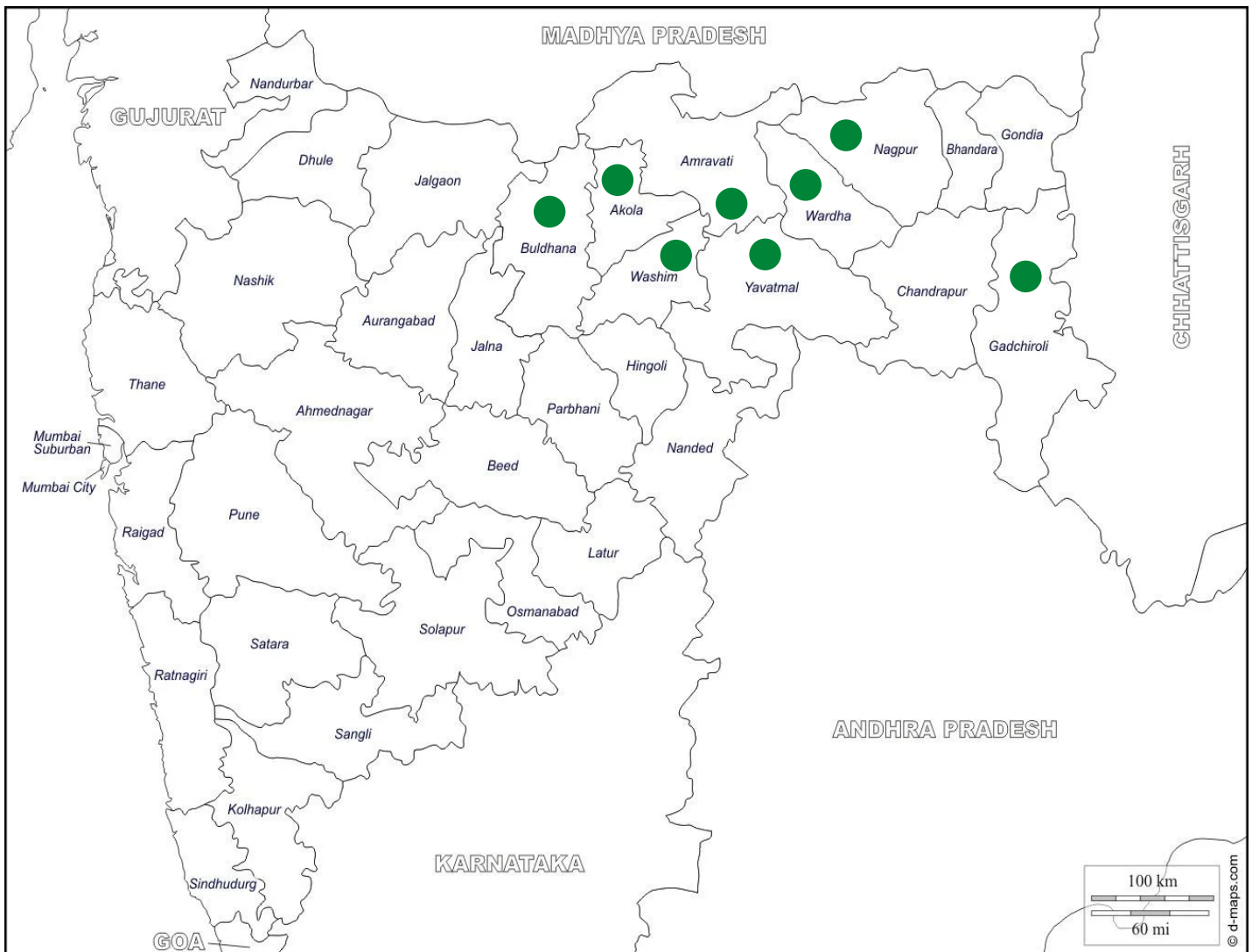
NEW MISSION OF VARHAD

While VARHAD is a well-known entity in the field of Criminal Justice System, recently, VARHAD has forged new collaborations and expanded its work in view of the growing needs to address the other developmental challenges particularly in the area of Mental Health Education, Youth Development, Farmers' Empowerment. VARHAD has a special focus on children, youth and women with inadequate access to realize these aspects in the Vidarbha region. Over the years VARHAD also realized the fact that an educated neighbourhood is found to report low level of crime rate. In order to uproot the breeding of crime, VARHAD initiated a few projects with the local support. VARHAD has been instrumental in changing lives of hundreds of youths and their families by helping them secure government jobs in this new initiative and VARHAD has a mission to increase the numbers in this field in the times ahead.

WHERE WE WORK

VARHAD's intervention in the Criminal Justice System spreads in the two Central Prisons located in cities of Nagpur & Amravati, six District Prisons located at Akola, Wardha, Yavatmal, Washim, Buldhana and Gadchiroli districts of Maharashtra State and one Open Prison in Morshi (Amravati District). VARHAD's contribution in the field of criminology, justice and prison reforms and human rights have been enormously appreciated. VARHAD was also recognized by different organizations at national and international levels apart from the State Government and respective local administrations. VARHAD's visionary work culture, devoutness towards its mission attracted the prestigious organizations like Sir Dorabjee Tata Trust (SDTT), JRD Tata Trust (JRDTT), Give India, Global Fund for Women (GFW) and Ajim Premji Foundation (APF) to collaborate with VARHAD to work for the underprivileged ones.

VARHAD's Operational Area in Maharashtra



The green dots symbolize the operational areas of VARHAD

OUR TARGET POPULATION

VARHAD targets the following demographic aspects and its primary actions revolves around these elements.

PROFESSIONAL CRIMINALS OR HABITUAL OFFENDERS

VARHAD focuses on reformation of the group of offenders for an unobstructed progress of the civil society. VARHAD leaves no stone unturned to ensure that these offenders do not continue in the world of crime after their release from custody. This involves consistent training and counseling so that they earn their living in a dignified manner and lead a distinguished life in the society.

NON-CRIMINALS OR FIRST-TIME OFFENDERS

In most cases, the first-time offenders are victims of circumstances and they have remarkable potential for reformation if they are treated with optimism. VARHAD intervenes in three ways to reform them. (1) it ensures prison to be a place of reformation by organizing literary, cultural and sports activities within the prison. (2) it pushes to reduce the sentence for such prisoners to prevent further criminalization. (3) it prioritizes to facilitate the under-trial prisoners to interact with their respective families which minimizes negativity and shows affirmative possibilities in integration.

COMPLETELY INNOCENT

There are many innocent individuals who are accused or charged with the criminal charges due to some circumstances and got imprisoned. They are the victims of a faulty law enforcement system and are unable to get justice. This is due to the ignorance, or absence of legal aid. VARHAD ensures them to get access to justice by providing with legal aid.

CHILDREN OF PRISONERS

Children of Prisoners are the most vulnerable and neglected ones due to the incarceration of their parents. For any child to live in a healthy society, education is an indispensable component. VARHAD works on the educational support mechanism for the children of prisoners and arranges residential educational facilities to many children of the prisoners in coordination with the state-run and socially responsible private run educational institutions free of cost. This helps to eliminate the adverse impact of the imprisoned parents on the children.

WOMEN

In India, although the women are venerated as Goddess but in reality, they are vulnerable in the male-dominated society. This vulnerability multiplies for those women who belonged to underprivileged communities. VARHAD facilitates the skill development and vocational training programmes for them to seek a meaningful livelihood opportunity

YOUTH

Most of the youths after their graduation look forward to seeking for a job. VARHAD provides these youths with much needed library facility and accommodation to prepare for various job-oriented examinations along with career guidance. This makes these youths to refrain from the unlawful activities.

FARMERS

VARHAD empowers the farmers by conducting capacity building programmes on livelihood development, farm productivity improvement and increase income from the farm and extends psycho-social support to the poverty-stricken farmers and enlightens about sustainable agricultural practices and links them in the appropriate market to get fair price for their products.

IMPACT NUMBERS 2020-21

12 Children of Prisoners were provided with Educational Support and **16** of them were admitted to the Residential Schools.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT



At least **60** Women were provided with sewing training

VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR WOMEN



At least **40** Women were able to get livelihood opportunity of sewing due to VARHAD

LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT FOR WOMEN



At least **58** Prisoners got bail in the Session Court and **05** Prisoners got acquitted. **06** prisoners appealed in the High Court and **16** prisoners got bail and **11** prisoners got acquitted.

LEGAL AID SERVICES



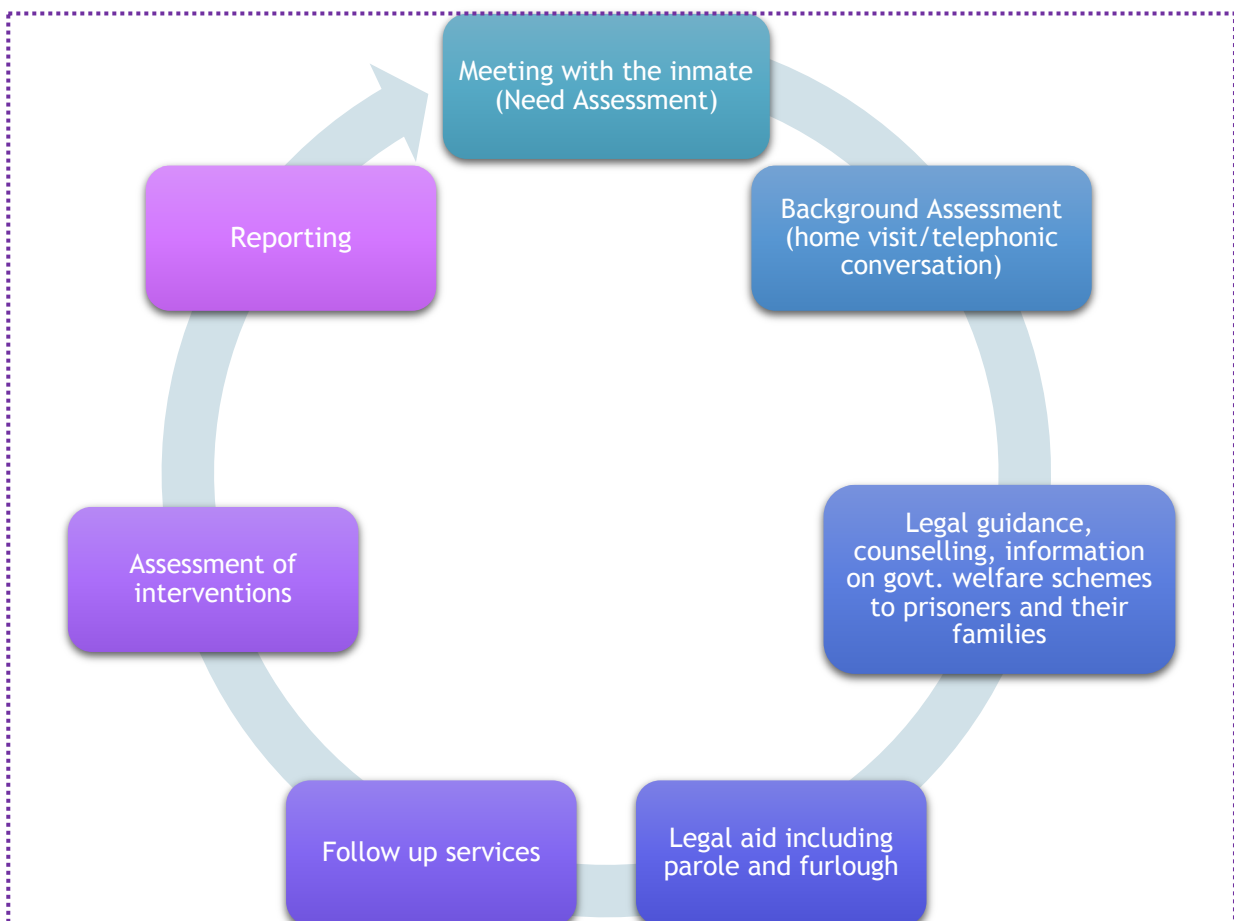
During the COVID-19 Pandemic, VARHAD facilitated mode of transportation for the released prisoners. It also started running community kitchen for the migrant workers and served over **1.5 lacs** meal. Apart from the cooked food distribution, it distributed dried food packets of daily essentials to the prisoners and underprivileged people in the Amravati city and outside.

COVID-19 RESPONSE



VARHAD MODEL OF INTERVENTION IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

VARHAD follows the following model of intervention in the criminal justice system. It aims to enable access to justice to the prisoners and their families. In an integrated manner, VARHAD intervenes with the families especially the children who are affected by the incarceration by linking them with the government welfare schemes. Upon release of the prisoners, VARHAD works closely with the released prisoner to be able to reintegrate them in the mainstream world and help them to secure a gainful employment to live a dignified life in the society.



VARHAD Model of Intervention in the Criminal Justice System

AREA OF EMPHASIS IN THE YEAR 2020-21

COVID-19 PANDEMIC & CHANGEOVER IN VARHAD'S WORK CULTURE

SOCIO-LEGAL AID TO PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

SUPPORT MECHANISMS FOR THE CHILDREN OF PRISONERS (CoPs)

INTERVENTION OF VARHAD FOR THE WOMEN PRISONERS

REHABILITATION OF RELEASED PRISONERS

INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

SUPPORT MECHANISMS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED YOUTHS

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES LINKED WITH THE FAMILY OF THE PRISONERS BY VARHAD

CHALLENGES

COVID-19 PANDEMIC & CHANGEOVER IN VARHAD'S WORK CULTURE

The year 2020 was shattering year for the entire globe. It disrupted the normalcy in every sector. Since March 2020, India witnessed completely a different scenario due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Considering the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic the Government of India issued several guidelines for its citizen. People had to follow the



Team VARHAD Extending support to the Commuters on the Road during COVID-19 Pandemic

protocol in order to sustain in safe condition. The work culture in every sector changed drastically and people started working at the home office. The prisons authorities also issued the COVID-19 guidelines to avoid the overcrowding in the prisons and it was towards a preventive measure from

COVID-19 virus. Due to this VARHAD's routine activities also got affected in a significant manner. VARHAD had constraints to arrange the meetings for the prisoners with their respective families. Other means of communications like sending the letters to the dear ones by post also immensely got affected. This inescapable scenario brought about insecurity, fear and distress not only in among the prisoners but also their poor families. In such inflexible circumstances VARHAD changed its usual working methods and adopted the following means to accomplish its primary objectives by extending assistance to the prisoners and their families.

CONSISTENT COUNSELING & FOLLOW-UPS: The Prisons Authority decided to create a special category in parole called 'Corona-Parole' to certain prisoners with a condition. This special category was meant to confine the surge of COVID-19 virus in the prison. the news of special parole was spread like a wild fire and many of the families of the prisoners were under the impressions that Prison Authority has decided to release every prisoner considering the severity of COVID-19 pandemic. However, this was a havoc that was created among the people by some of the crooked people. In this scenario VARHAD took an initiative to provide with the correct and verified information to the people so that the people do not get misguided. COVID-19 pandemic had negative impact on both the prisoners and their family members. VARHAD started counselling the prisoners and their families in the regular intervals over phone with the help of its volunteers and other social workers. In some cases, they followed-up by paying visits to the families personally. Likewise, VARHAD assisted hundreds of poor prisoners and their families from different districts in Maharashtra.

ENABLING THE MODE OF TRANSPORTATION: Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic the entire country experienced lockdown. This affected everything and the transportation services industry also got hugely affected. Due to the COVID-19 protocols the buses were not plying and other modes of transportation were not in action. In such scenario people found it really difficult to move from one place to the other. Many of the prisoners were granted the Corona-Parole and some of them were also released. However, there was no substantial mode of transport possible and for them it was an emergency



to reach in their respective places. This scenario drew the attention of VARHAD. It attempted to initiated the arrangement of transportation in every way possible for those prisoners. With the consistent efforts, it was able to arrange some Mini-Buses, Cabs, Auto-Rickshaws and even Motorbikes to assist those prisoners to reach in their respective places. VARHAD not only arranged the modes of transportation but also the essential documents and travel passes from all the concerned authorities to make the journey of the prisoners hassle-free.

DISTRIBUTION OF DAILY NEEDS: In addition to the arrangements of travel that was made for the released prisoners, VARHAD also distributed food packages and other daily



essentials to prisoners as well as the underprivileged people in the city of Amravati and outside. Each package contained dried food items like rice, wheat, pulses, lentils, cooking oil, spices, sugar and salt for a month. Some prisoners found it difficult to carry the daily essentials to their respective places that was

distributed to them. In such cases, for their convenience there was a provision that they could avail the daily essentials from their nearest store and the payment was made by VARHAD straight away to the storekeeper and financial assistance of Rupees 2000 was also rendered to them.

LEGAL AID AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC: The COVID-19 infections and fatalities up surged in the prisons and the Supreme Court of India directed the state governments to make a high-power committee to consider methods for de-congestion of the prisons. Further, the Government of Maharashtra also came up with the directives for emergency parole and temporary bails which is called 'Corona Parole' to release the prisoners. However, many prisoners didn't qualify the eligibility criteria. The prisoners charged with or convicted for the crime with imprisonment of seven year or more were not released. In such condition, VARHAD provided legal aid to the prisoners interested to come out of the prisons by providing them advocates for bail proceedings in Session Courts and the High Court. Many under-trial prisoners were also provided with legal support by gathering and assembling the necessary documents required for securing permanent bails.



Amid the lockdown situation VARHAD continued extending its commitment towards intervening for the prisoners. However, VARHAD took the migrant workers, unemployed youth, daily laborers, differently abled persons and senior citizens into consideration and extended its helping hand by initiating the following activities.

COMMUNITY KITCHEN FOR MIGRANT WORKERS (24/7 HOURS): The complete lockdown



VARHAD's Community Kitchen opened for the Migrant Labourers amid the COVID-19 Pandemic

was imposed throughout the country in a short notice. This resulted in a chaotic situation and that developed insecurity among most of the migrant laborers. The migrant laborers from the various states like Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh were on their way to their respective states. Most of them worked in cities like Mumbai and Pune

and while going to their respective places they passed through the Amravati national highway number 6. Considering their helplessness VARHAD opened 24/7 hours of free community Kitchen Service that served with cooked food and water to lakhs of helpless people. VARHAD was appreciated for its act of generosity by the district administration who paid a curtesy visit to the community kitchen.

SOCIO-LEGAL AID TO PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

One of the key areas of VARHAD's intervention is to provide legal assistance to prisoners and their pretentious families. VARHAD considers the fact that every individual, regardless of class, caste race, creed, religion, gender, and age have rights to access



to 'free and fair trial', which is preserved in the constitution of India. While there is state machinery in place to uphold the rights of the prisoners but sadly it is embedded with delayed and neglected process. VARHAD acts not only as a bridge between prisoners and the criminal justice system but also works at the family level for their

participation in the overall reformation and rehabilitation of the prisoners. VARHAD works towards these aspects by offering legal aid, speedy trials and judicial guidance to the most deserving under-trial and convict prisoners. VARHAD does this in consultation with and involvement of the prisoner's family and relatives to avoid the psychological break down of the prisoners. VARHAD enables them to access to their legal rights for bail, trial and appeal and also helps the convict prisoners to avail parole and furlough provisions.

In India 3/4th of prison population is still waiting for a fair trial in the court of law. The existing data demonstrates the pitiable condition of the accused prisoners without trial. The key factor behind this is the inaccessibility of an appropriate legal aid process to the deserving accused prisoners. According to the Indian law no prisoner is guilty until he/she is proved guilty by the court of law. However, the prisoners have to go through a lot of torment in the prison. This becomes even worse for the prisoner who belonged to a poor and marginalized background. The absence of an effective Judicial system, they have to be behind the bars for months and years together waiting for the justice.

VARHAD's experience in last two decades in this field discovers that not all prisoners are hardcore criminals. A substantial proportion of the prisoners languishing in the prisons are either petty offenders, first time offenders or completely innocent. Lack of awareness about the legal procedures, illiteracy and poverty continue to be the biggest hurdles for the prisoners to languish behind the bars for longer. Although the rule of the land permits the under-trial prisoners to release on bail or on a "Personal Bond" but majority of the prisoners especially those who are underprivileged or those who

have poor financial standing find it difficult to avail this. Justice Krishna Iyer has appropriately validated his point by stating that, “The bail system is highly loaded against poor.” Disappointingly, the poor and underprivileged are instinctively excluded from availing the bail system since the court considers only money or assets, as surety. Therefore, a large number of prisoners are not even represented legally, as they cannot pay the expensive fee of the advocates. Although the state has a provision of free legal aid for poor prisoners but it does not function efficiently. The Government lawyers are not so keen to fight for those who cannot pay even if the lawyers fight, they do not do it in a meaningful manner. The poor prisoners always have a fear of losing their cases and therefore, they are unwilling to avail the legal aid through the State Legal Services Authority. In many cases, it was noticed that, the families of the prisoners attempt to arrange the fees of the private and effective lawyers for once or twice and thereafter they fail to arrange until the case is over. This results in the prisoner’s entire family is being doomed to exploitation by those lawyers.

In order to address such a complex scenario, VARHAD intervenes towards strengthening the state legal aid provisions so that the needy get competent advocates for their respective cases. VARHAD also coordinates with the advocates for improved and hassle-free functioning of this mechanism. In one of its milestone achievements VARHAD has built-up a network of quality advocates across the eastern Maharashtra (consisting 11 districts) who are sensitive in nature and interested in fighting for the poor prisoners to give them justice. In later stage, these advocates associated with VARHAD and served for the poor prisoners (referred by VARHAD) and charged a minimum compensation only to cover basic expenses. For these advocates, their client is the prisoner intervened by VARHAD and they do not have to pay any charge to the advocates. Within VARHAD network many prisoners have been benefitted greatly and this network extends support to the prisoners from the lowest courts to Highest courts in the country. VARHAD has succeeded in extending legal aid to hundreds of under-trial prisoners as well as convicted prisoners each year who are unable to afford the expenses to appeal in the High Court.

MANNERS OF INTERVENTIONS OF VARHAD

VARHAD extends free legal aid right from imprisonment to acquittal to the underprivileged prisoners and their families in the following manner:

- ♣ **ASSISTING TO GET BAIL:** This is the immediate relief against cash/surety and this is not feasible to avail by the poor prisoners. This process also includes a number of formalities and it is time consuming factor. Therefore, VARHAD takes care of all the formalities that is required in this process.
- ♣ **TRIAL:** VARHAD has a team of dedicated lawyers who not only provide effective services free of cost but also ensure that the legal rights of the accused are safeguarded. They present the cases in well-organized manner

by going thoroughly the background of the accused by collecting all the necessary information along with continuous follow-ups.

- ♣ **APPEAL TO THE HIGHER COURTS:** In absence of proper and effective legal aid, the decisions of lower courts go against the accused and these poor prisoners have no efficient advocates who can put their cases in well-documented and argumentative method in the higher courts. In such situations, VARHAD works and arguments to ensure that the accused receive proper legal aid in the High Courts and even in the Supreme Court.
- ♣ **ENSURING PERSONAL BONDS:** There is a legal provision where the court can release prisoners on Personal Bonds, who have committed petty offences, VARHAD ensures that poor prisoners avail this facility by helping them in writing their applications to the court, collecting the required certificates & documents from their families, court, government offices and police stations.
- ♣ **HOME VISITS:** VARHAD promotes and stands for the above-mentioned exercises tremendously. It also plays a pivotal role in helping the prisoners to interact with their families, friends dear and near ones. Team VARHAD visit the families of the prisoners and their neighbourhood in the regular intermission to assess the ground reality. On the basis of the assessment VARHAD proceeds further and acts upon it. The prompt action by VARHAD makes an impact in the courts process to even release the 'deserving prisoners' without surety and without the presence of an advocate. VARHAD has been instrumental in releasing more than hundred prisoners each year applying this method. VARHAD is the only organization to have the honour of creating a bench mark in releasing the prisoners from different prisons in Maharashtra without surety.
- ♣ **COUNSELLING:** VARHAD conducts counselling sessions and helps the prisoners and their families to make pace with the difficult situation that they have. It also makes them aware of things like parole and the furlough, which are legal rights of prisoners as per the Prison Manual. VARHAD encourages the release of the prisoners on the basis of these laws and coordinates the same with the prisoner's family, prison, police, judiciary, the revenue department and other concerned agencies of the state administration.
- ♣ **PAROLE & FURLOUGH:** In Indian criminal justice system, Parole and Furlough are two major tools used to maintain a convict's interaction with the society. This facility is offered to the convicts (not to under trial prisoners) but in most of the cases due to lack of awareness they are completely ignorant of these provisions. The term 'Parole' is known to be a leave or an absence from prison granted to a prisoner who is subjected to continuous monitoring as well

as compliances with certain terms and conditions for a specified period. Whereas, Furlough is defined as a fortnight leave granted to a prisoner without furnishing any reason for it. It works as a bridge between a prisoner and the family to keep the relationship intact, and to ensure the psychological well-being of the convict.

- ♣ **POLICY & ADVOCACY:** VARHAD believes in policy and advocacy approach and accordingly works considering the policy level decisions with the concerned departments to ensure that maximum number of convicts get benefits out of it which is legally offered. VARHAD also believes that a well-thought and well-versed legal tools help the prisoners to remain optimistic and have faith in the judicial system.
- ♣ **BRIDGING THE GAP:** VARHAD puts humble efforts to bridge the gap between the prisoners and their families by assisting the prisoners in sending letters to their respective family members and VARHAD also conveys the message of the prisoners to their respective families. This is how VARHAD connects the prisoners with their respective families and maintain the emotional bond with one end to the other. This innovative mechanism adopted by the VARHAD helps in building up the trust in the Judicial System and encourage the prisoners not to adopt the illegal and unfair means to escape from the prison rather than to have patience and release from the prison with the due process of the judicial system.

VARHAD's model of intervention is derived from the principles of Social Work profession. The employees of VARHAD identify the need of the prisoner and then prepare a roadmap for intervention. While intervening, the employees ensure to interacts with all the stakeholders to comprehend first-hand account and act upon it and also keep the family members updated with the progress of the cases. At a smaller but a significant level VARHAD also offers support to prisoners by assisting them in sending letters to their family members and making visits to their homes on the prisoners' behalf to convey their messages. In this way, prisoners are connected with their families maintaining the emotional bond in distressed situations. This helps in maintaining the belief in the judicial system and discourage the prisoners to adopt violent or illegal means such as escaping from prisons.

INITIATIVES FOR THE CHILDREN OF PRISONERS (CoPs)

VARHAD has initiated various programmes and development activities for the well-being of the Children of Prisoners. These programmes have nurtured numerous Children of Prisoners and it has restored their hopes to live a decorous life like any other. Working with the families of prisoners and their children emphasizing on their overall development is one of



Children of Prisoners at the Balwadi set up by VARHAD

the challenging tasks. Most of the children of the prisoners are the most vulnerable and neglected ones due to the incarceration of their parents. In majority of the cases, when the head of the family or the bread winner of the child is imprisoned, the whole family encounters severe setback from every sphere of life especially in the socio-economic front and children experience setbacks in their educational fronts. The social ostracism faced by these children in their day-to-day life at their neighbourhood, locality or in their school in particular is a matter of grave concern. They have to undergo such circumstances just because their parents are incarcerated. This not only disturbs their educational ecosystem but also adversely impacts on their mental health. In such scenarios, the education of those children gets affected and it becomes secondary thing for them. That results in increasing numbers of dropouts' cases and further it leads them to develop eccentric behaviour in the society.

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) statistics consistently throws some lights on the fact that over a quarter of the prison population is illiterate and the vast majority of those languishing behind the bars belong to the socio-economically underprivileged background especially from the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities. The combination of poor socio-economic standings and destructive approach of the society about the prisoners' family further disrupts the hope of life in the children of prisoners to grown in their life meaningfully.

VARHAD works with these children through a three-pronged approach and they are the following.

NURSERY SCHOOL (BALWADIS): The law of our country permits the children of convicts to reside with their imprisoned mothers until the age of six. VARHAD works towards protecting these children from the adverse impact of prison life. Elements like violence, child abuse, threats and living in fear suppresses the children of prisoners in the prison. VARHAD tries to minimize the adverse impact of the prison on their mental health and assist them to get empowered. VARHAD initiated the liberation of these very children by opening Balwadis for the children of prisoners. These Balwadis function as a full-fledged school and efforts are being made to impart all-round education to the children. With this initiative, children are taken care of meaningfully and an affectionate atmosphere is created for them to learn. Their basic amenities like food, clothes and school kits are taken care of VARHAD. Currently VARHAD runs two Balwadis one within the prison premise of Central Prison in Amravati and the other one is in the district prison, Akola. For a constructive development of the children of prisoners, the prison employees started sending their children to study in these Balwadis. This corrective move signifies the noble initiatives of VARHAD which was accepted by the people. VARHAD believes that it is a responsibility of the state to safeguard the childhood of these innocent children of the women prisoners residing with their respective mothers. The state should also ensure to meet every requirement of the children of the prisoners by sponsoring. The only sure-proof method for all-round development of a child is to put them in the good hands. VARHAD ensured that employees who worked in the Balwadis were dedicated, selfless and well trained. This brought about a positive change and over a period of time, VARHAD was permitted to open the Balwadis and Crèches (at the expense of the Government of Maharashtra) in all of the eight central prisons of the Maharashtra.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE EDUCATION: Imprisonment of any individual brings a rippling negative outcome on his/her children even if they are not in prison with them. In many unfortunate cases, the entire adults of a family are in the prison due to a mass crime. In this scenario, the minor or the children are deprived of proper care and they suffer the most. For any child to live in a healthy society, education is an indispensable component. In order to eliminate the adverse impact of the imprisoned parents on the children, VARHAD works on the educational support mechanism for the children of prisoners where nobody wishes to take their responsibilities. VARHAD has arranged residential educational facilities to many children of the prisoners in coordination with the state-run and socially responsible private run educational institutions free of cost. Many of them were admitted in the Balgrihas and ashram schools in places like Akola, Amravati, Buldana and Nagpur. VARHAD took the responsibility of guardianship and sponsored the study materials and school kit for these children. Every year more than fifty children were admitted in such schools free of cost.

WAYS OF REINTEGRATION WITH THE FAMILIES

In order to reintegrate the children of prisoners with their families, VARHAD works following ways.

- ♣ **MASS MEETING:** The emotional bonding between parents and children is very precious for the psychological well-being. It helps both parties to ease their difficulties for a time being and make them feel that they are not isolated. Every month, VARHAD organizes mass meetings of prisoners with their children in the prisons and it is accompanied by cultural events, picnics and games.
- ♣ **ONE-TO-ONE MEETING:** VARHAD also facilitates the meetings of children with their parents inside the prison walls with the direct contact. Usually, this sort of practice is prohibited inside the prison but VARHAD made it possible for those prisoners to have direct contact with their children.
- ♣ **LEISURE TRIPS OR OUTING FOR CHILDREN OF PRISONERS:** VARHAD organizes outing or small tours for the Children of Prisoners during their school vacations. Bringing all the children of prisoners together at one common place is a joyful and gratifying experience for the team as well as VARHAD. This gives a platform of progress and growth and it gives opportunity to instill hope, motivation and encouragement among themselves who most often lack confidence for obvious reasons.
- ♣ **BALSANGOPAN SCHEME:** Due to the intervention of VARHAD and the amicable support from the Government Agencies, the Balsangopan scheme was implemented in the year 2008 by the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Maharashtra. Under this scheme every month, an amount of Rupees 425 was sanctioned to each child and now it has been increased to Rupees 1100 and that was given to the ones who were willing to adopt or take responsibility of the child. The scheme allows a maximum of two children from each family to be supported by the State until the age of 18. This is another benchmark set by VARHAD and the scheme will run till the year 2025 and several children of prisoners will be benefited out of it.

INTERVENTION OF VARHAD FOR THE WOMEN PRISONERS

The women in India are venerated as Goddess and most often they are called Goddess Lakshmi but in reality, they are vulnerable and suppressed in the male-dominated society. This vulnerability multiplies for those women who belonged to the economically as well as socially underprivileged communities. This secondary status of women in male-dominated society stigmatizes them if at all they are imprisoned for some reason. Its further impacts on their mental health adversely and they lose their confidence and fail to remain optimistic in their entire lives. The worrisome fact is that, in many cases the female prisoners break their relationship and get disassociated from their respective families. This is to safeguard the reputation or the prestige of the family. Most often, the women lose their social security and parting ways with their dear and near ones traumatize their life and at challenging times she takes extreme steps like committing suicides or become violent to others.

ACTIONS OF VARHAD ON THE WELL-BEING OF THE WOMEN PRISONERS: VARHAD identifies various issues associated with the women prisoners and attempts to address this in a holistic manner. The women prisoners most often get alienated and there is no one to take care of them neither within the prison walls not after their release from the prison. In this scenario, VARHAD steps into rehabilitate them in two ways.

- ♣ **VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT MECHANISM FOR WOMEN:** VARHAD imparts various types of vocational training to the women prisoners irrespective of caste, class, creed and age so that they become self-dependent and can sustain all by themselves after they get released from the prison. The vocational training given to them are of sewing, wax making and incense sticks making. The VARHAD employees encourage them to save their hard-earned money to utilize for a notable cause. VARHAD also make them aware about the menstrual-hygiene and it gives other necessary health tips for a healthy life. The duration of the sewing course is six-months in which they learn to sew 15-20 types of garments apart from the embroidery works. This is a long-term course and wax making and incense stick making course doesn't take much longer. For making them feel at home in the prison, VARHAD organizes special programmes on occasions like women's liberation Day, Rakhi Din in which they are allowed to participate in all the celebratory activities inside the prison.

- ♣ **ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMME:** VARHAD has been effective in operating the Adult Literacy Programmes (ALP) for the imprisoned women by providing them with the formal education within the prison wall. After the influential intervention of VARHAD with the education department, Government of



A woman Prisoner is learning through the Adult Literacy Programme

Maharashtra the 4th standard board examinations were conducted in the prison premises. Besides this, VARHAD was in constant touch with the local authorities like Municipal Corporations in order to take initiatives in providing education to those female prisoners who are illiterate along with their children by establishing the literacy centres within the prison premise. Likewise, VARHAD was able to come up with many of the success stories in which many illiterate women and children became literate. The board examinations have been conducted regularly since the year 2007 and it still continues. Every year, around 15-20 women prisoners get succeeded this exam owing to VARHAD's initiative. VARHAD aims to assist these women to gain knowledge and much-needed confidence to assimilate themselves in the mainstream world after they get released from the prison. Apart from the educational activities, VARHAD also conducts many cultural and sports events keeping in mind their mental and physical well-being during their stay in the prison. VARHAD highly encourage everyone of them to participate in these events actively.

REHABILITATION OF RELEASED PRISONERS

Rehabilitation process of the released prisoners is highly neglected aspect. After their release, most of the prisoners are clueless as to how to live their lives. On one hand, there is a question of societal acceptance and on the other hand, the stigma is attached with them to be a prisoner and due to this factor, they are not so welcome in the typical job market. Public perception towards the released prisoners is far more negative than



one could imagine. When the prisoners release from the prison, they experience a lot of public-apathy, apprehensions and that causes anxieties and hampers their routine life and it becomes a threat in leading a normal life. In many cases they are victimized and deprived of their basic human rights. In order to address such incidents, VARHAD helps them to rehabilitate by investing its time and resources and other support mechanisms. VARHAD rehabilitate the released prisoners through three different ways.

- ♣ **REHABILITATION CENTRE:** VARHAD has its own Rehabilitation Centre for the released prisoners in Amravati. Here they are provided with vocational training so that they enable themselves to pick up a reputable livelihood opportunity. During the process of rehabilitation, the food and accommodation is taken care of those released prisoners who are underprivileged in all aspects. The rehabilitation centre also has a farm where activities like, dairy farming, vegetable cultivation and other small-scale activities are carried out. The released prisoners show willingness to get engaged on full-time basis in the farming process. Where they get stipend every month along with their food and accommodation. They also get direct access to consume everything from the farm. VARHAD has established this infrastructure on its own and without any substantial sponsorship. The

rehabilitation centre is meant for both male and female without the gender bias. VARHAD also considers the rehabilitation of the habitual offenders especially the extradited prisoners from different cities. For them there is a provision in VARHAD that they get all facilities for six months as other prisoners get. This is matter of pride for VARHAD that, this rehabilitation centre has become a seamless solution for complete reformation, employment and long-term intervention for the released prisoners and the hard-core offenders.

- ♣ **COLLABORATIONS WITH THE SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES:** VARHAD collaborates with the small-scale industries to seek for the employment opportunities for the released prisoners. These small-scale industries organize the vocational trainings for them and many released prisoners have been benefitted considerably from.

- ♣ **FORMATION OF SELF-HELP**

GROUPS: VARHAD has always been standing for women empowerment. It has always paid attention to the women prisoners and attempted to work on their upliftment. In the rehabilitation centre, VARHAD encourages the released women prisoners to form self-help groups to improve their economic condition and quality of life.



- ♣ **MONETARY ASSISTANCE:** VARHAD voluntarily offered monetary assistance to the susceptible released prisoners to start up with small business to make their ends meet. Among these prisoners, some of them were interested to start up with a small vegetable shop and some of them were interested to start up with stationary shops especially the women released prisoners and some of them showed willingness to start up with small grocery shops. VARHAD stood up with them in their journey of empowerment.

INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

VARHAD applies multilevel approach to minimize the crime within society even attempts to decrease the female prison population of the state. With the devotion of smooth integration into society, VARHAD has a provision for all marginalized men and women in the state. With the collaboration with the sponsors, it started beauty parlour, computers, handicrafts, yoga, mehendi and sewing classes in the year 2001, for the marginalized women mostly lived in the slums. This provision was formed with the objective of helping all those looking for a decent livelihood opportunity. This provision is open for all and this has no bar in terms of age, gender and educational qualification.



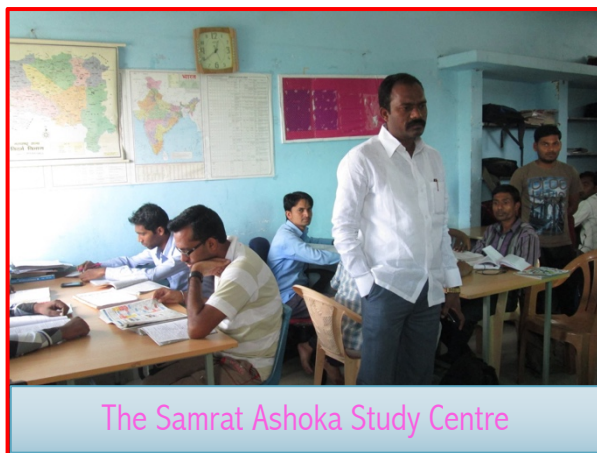
Women Prisoners are learning sewing through Vocational Training

VARHAD sponsored the fees for the ones who could not pay their fees towards it which was minimal. The trained erstwhile students of these courses are now working in beauty parlours across the state and are able to make a good amount of money. There are numbers of women who have utilized this course to either start working or change their erstwhile professions and headed towards success. The sewing and embroidery class, which is offered by VARHAD outside prisons, within the slum community is a six-month course during which the women can learn to sew just like professional institutions. However, the brown paper and newspapers were used as raw materials as it was not feasible for the prisoners to avail the original raw materials. Apart from this, VARHAD partnered with an organization called Krantijyoti in Pune district of Maharashtra. This organization works exclusively on women empowerment by providing with various types of vocational trainings to the women who belonged to the poor and marginalized communities. Apart from vocational training programmes, it also focused on education of women by conducting regular workshops and sensitization programmes. With the help of SERA foundation, VARHAD has trained those women at the 'Usha School' and later it distributed sewing machines to all the trained women.

SUPPORT MECHANISMS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED YOUTHS

VARHAD works out of the box to extend the support mechanisms to the youths apart from the core work that it does. It also organizes many events with regard to youths' welfare. They are the following.

- ♣ **LIBRARY & HOSTEL FACILITIES (SAMRAT ASHOKA STUDY CENTRE):** The educated youths preparing for the job-oriented exams such as UPSC, MPSC, Banking, Railways, SSC and SSB get access to the library and hostel facility free of cost in Amravati. In



the library there is a sound infrastructure and well-furnished facilities for the purpose of education. VARHAD has a corpus of nearly 1000 books for the students. Around 100 students (70 male and 30 female) from rural and backward socio-economic background avail this facility each year. Around 25 male youths stay in the hostel. In the coming years,

VARHAD plans to extend this facility to more in number. In last few years hundreds of students have been successful in getting the jobs due to the timely guidance by the experts which VARHAD invites from different cities.

- ♣ **IDENTIFICATION OF URBAN YOUTH LEADERS TO SENSITIZE YOUTH TOWARDS SOCIAL ISSUES:** VARHAD's Youth leaders are specially identified and trained by seniors at VARHAD, to carry out their social initiatives in colleges and educational institutions. The mode of engagement of new students is via street plays, dramas, puppet shows, awareness speeches, and cultural programs. This method is applied as the youngsters respond very positively to these methods.
- ♣ **CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH CULTURAL ACTIVITIES WITH URBAN POOR:** Research is conducted by VARHAD and its outcome proves that the vulnerable youth of urban slums get attracted to crime either because of a disturbed family background or antisocial peer-groups. The youth leaders devise ways to keep youth engaged in constructive things and away from unlawful activities.

ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY VARHAD FOR THE FAMILY OF PRISONERS

The contribution of VARHAD in the field of prison reforms and human rights is lauded by government and non-government organizations at national and international levels. Some of the initiatives and interventions have been instrumental in bringing about a change in the policy that upholds the rights of the prisoners as well as their families. There are some of the government welfare schemes that have been made available to the families of prisoners through the consistent effort of VARHAD and they are the following.

BALSANGOPAN SCHEME: The Balsangopan scheme was implemented in the year 2008 by the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Maharashtra. Under this scheme every month, an amount of Rupees 1100 was sanctioned to each child and that was given to the ones who were willing to adopt or take responsibility of the child. The scheme allows a maximum of two children from each family to be supported by the State until the age of 18. VARHAD succeeded in linking this scheme with the children of prisoners and created a bench-mark and numerous children of prisoners were benefited out of it.

BPL RATION CARD: There are three types of BPL ration cards that are given to the eligible ones in Maharashtra. VARHAD ensured to make it available to most family of the prisoners. This is because, when the head of the household or the bread winner of the family is in the prison, the family faces numerous difficulties to make ends meet. With the help of BPL ration cards, at least the families of the prisoners would be able to avail the food grains at the subsidized price which the families of the prisoners can afford.

SANJAYA GANDI NIRADHAR YOJANA: This scheme is meant for destitute persons of age below 65 years, orphans, handicapped, person suffering from critical diseases, destitute widows, farmers who committed suicide, destitute divorced women and women in process of divorce, women freed from prostitution and outraged women. Every month, this scheme entitles Rs. 600 to a single beneficiary and Rs. 900 for two or more beneficiaries in the family whose annual family income is up to Rs. 21,000. VARHAD's consistent effort included the family of the prisoners in this scheme and ensured that they also become the beneficiary of this scheme.

SHRAVANBAL YOJANA: This Scheme has two category (A) every destitute person of age 65 years & above and whose annual family income is below Rs. 21000 who is not included in the BPL list gets Rs.600 per month from the state Government. (B) every destitute person of age 65 years and above belongs to BPL category is eligible to get pension of Rs. 400 from the state Government and Rs. 200 from the central Government respectively. VARHAD has been instrumental to ensure every family of prisoners to avail this scheme.

MUKTA BANDI YOJANA: Under this scheme some of the released prisoners used to get Rs. 5000. However, VARHAD's consistent intervention increased the amount up to Rs. 25000 and that was applicable to every released prisoner and most of the released prisoners got benefited tremendously.

REMISSION PROVISION: State government has special power to provide remission. Generally, state provides occasional remission programme, for instance, the government of Maharashtra granted remission upon attainment of 50 years of independence, and birth centenary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. 125th birth anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar was celebrated as 'Samta Varsh'. VARHAD lobbied for remission on account of Samta Varsh in Maharashtra. With the consistent effort of VARHAD, remission was granted for all convict prisoners for a period between 5 to 90 days for various categories of prisoners. Life imprisoned prisoners got the maximum benefit of 90 days. Likewise, VARHAD has been lobbying continuously with the government authorities to enact welfare schemes for the prisoners and their families.

CHALLENGES

There are numerous purposes of VARHAD to serve and the prime purposes lies in the field of Criminal Justice System in terms of prisoners' reformation, human rights, development of youths and women empowerment. In order to serve the noble purposes VARHAD has to go through multiple challenges and they are the following.

- ♣ To make an effective implementation of prisoner's legal rights (bail, parole and furlough) by making the prisoners' authorities sensitized and aware on this issue. It could be done by organizing various programs for their orientation, re-orientation, updating and up-gradation of knowledge & procedures on regular basis, however this is a major challenge to organize such programmes.
- ♣ To rehabilitate the prisoners released after completion of their sentence by providing them training and livelihood opportunities in various fields is a challenging factor for VARHAD as the Rehabilitation Centre is not sufficient to accommodate a greater number of the released prisoners at a time.
- ♣ It is a challenging factor to organize the seminars, conferences and workshops on the issues of prisons reforms, youths' development and women empowerment along with relevant publications in a regular interval.
- ♣ It is a challenging factor to increase the Human Resources in VARHAD to carry forward the extended objectives in a meaningful manner for a fruitful outcome in this field due to the limited existing resources.
- ♣ It is a challenging factor to work for the rights of the prisoners as it sometimes gives a negative message that VARHAD works in order to protect the interest of the prisoners who are charged for various crimes. This sometimes has an adverse impact on VARHAD and team.

VARHAD'S REACH IN 2020-21

VARHAD's Reach in 2020-21	
AREAS OF INTERVENTION	NUMBERS
Prison Visit	156
Home visit	150
Children of Prisoner (CoP) Visit	10
Institutional Visit	21
CoP Educational Support	12
Admission in Residential School	16
Balwadi/ CoP Home Visits	07
Parole leave	01
Furlough leave	02
Death Parole	01
Session Court- Visit	127
Bail	58
Trial	
Acquittal	05
High Court -Appeal	06
Bail	16
Acquittal	11
Case status provided to prisoners	166
Case status on Personal Bond	00
Number of women trained in stitching (USHA)	Trained 60 Employed 40

CASE STUDY-1

INTERVENTION OF VARHAD HELPED IN RELEASING THE DISTRESSED INNOCENT PRISONERS FROM THE PRISON

Ganesh Paturkar (name changed on request) is 30 years old and he comes from Danapur village of Telara block in Akola district. Including him, his father and wife were also convicted and were imprisoned in the Akola prison. His wife was granted the bail by the session court. However, the bail plea of his father and him were rejected at the session court. There was no one in the family who could help them to assist in appealing in the higher courts. His mother-in-law was the only person who was a close relative but she had already taken surety for her daughter and therefore, she could not arrange someone to take surety of her son-in-law. She was running out of resource because of poverty and she did not have any other sources to make money. In order to pay the fees of the lawyer she sold the house of her son-in-law and that is how they became dispossessed. Ganesh came in contact with VARHAD and requested to look into his matter. VARHAD attempted to contact the lawyer who fought at the session court and assisted to gather all the necessary documents. That is how VARHAD helped them to appeal at the Bombay high court of Nagpur bench. After 2-3 hearing, both of them were granted bail from the high court. They were impoverished and they literally had nothing with them and they could not manage to pay the fees of the lawyer as well. VARHAD took care of the fees of the lawyer. VARHAD got to know much later that their house was being sold in order to pay the fees of the lawyer. Despite getting the bail, they were not able to get out of the jail because they did not have a surety person. There was a person who was willing to take the surety and kept on taking money time to time but he never showed up and much later he was agreed to take the surety. Ganesh was released from the prison but his father was still in the prison because again there was no one who could take the surety of him and six months were already passed. He was so frustrated that he and his family attempted to commit suicide by consuming poison and he thought being in the prison was better than being outside and not able to do anything for his father and that too after getting bail. Usually, the surety has to be taken both in the court and in the Local Crime Branch. In this case, persons agreed to take the surety in the court but not in the Local Crime Branch and this was quite frustrated scenario for Ganesh. As they were dispossessed, they worked somewhere near their village as agricultural labourers and they hardly managed to earn Rs. 100-200 in a day. It was a challenging task for them to even survive with this money and it could not be imagined to save some money out of it. Eventually, a person agreed to take the surety and he demanded Rs. 10000 and they paid him with great obstructions and Ganesh's father was released from the prison. In this process, VARHAD was in constant touch with Ganesh and his family and followed-up every updates. VARHAD sensed that they factually were impoverished and they did not even have clothes to wear. VARHAD provided them with cloths and took care of the expenses of transpiration after they released. They were very happy when they received the cloths and other assistances by VARHAD. They honoured the VARHAD's employee who intervened in this case as God and they believed that their house would not have been sold if they were aware of VARHAD before.

CASE STUDY-2

VARHAD ENSURED RELEASE OF A SENIOR FEMALE PRISONER WHO WAS IN THE PRISON FOR 1.5 YEARS AFTER GETTING THE BAIL

Ramabai Yewale (name changed on request) a 69 years old lady hailed from a village called Khari which falls under Dharni block of Amravati district. Ramabai has two sons and a daughter. Her both her eldest son and the daughter were married. Her eldest son had two children who lived separately and Ramabai lived with her younger son who was unmarried. Ramabai's grandchildren always paid a visit to her despite living separately. Ramabai's younger son was belligerent and always had a fight with his elder brother pertaining to the property which they had. He always claimed to take all the property they had. One fine day out of the grudge, he decided to murder his nephew who was playing near the shiv temple of the village. While he murdered, there was a kid who was also playing along witnessed the act. The kid went into the village and spread the news of murder. Ramabai's eldest son was stunned to learn the news of murder, he was shattered and the least he could do was to lodge an FIR in the nearest police station. He lodged an FIR and he mentioned that his mother also supported in this heinous crime. Both Ramabai and her younger son were arrested and later sent to the prison. Ramabai was completely innocent she wanted someone to assist her to get out of the prison. She wanted her daughter to help her out to get out of the prison but she lived in another village and she was not in a condition to do something for her mother. Ramabai came in contact with VARHAD and urged to help her to get out of the prison. After understanding the case VARHAD showed the helping hand towards her and applied for the bail plea at the Achalpur session court and she was granted bail by the court. After getting the bail her son also urged VARHAD to do the same but VARHAD was aware of him and VARHAD sternly refrained from helping this culprit. Ramabai was granted bail but she was unable to get a surety person and hence, she had to continue in the prison for another 1.5 year more despite getting the bail. After 1.5 years of time the court questioned why Ramabai has not been released yet despite being granted the bail. The court also wrote to VARHAD requesting to look into her matter and assist her release at the earliest. VARHAD went to the prison and inquired if she has anybody who can take surety of her. Later, VARHAD learnt that she has a brother in Betul town of Madhya Pradesh. VARHAD hired a cab and went to reach out to her brother. VARHAD's arrival in Betul created a chaos among the people and many people gathered to understand the matter. VARHAD had a conversation with the sarpanch and communicated about the matter of Ramabai and also shared the contact details mentioning that if at all they are interested, they should help Ramabai to get out of the prison. Ramabai's brother was afraid and was reluctant to help her out and he reached out to one of the villagers of Ramabai but nobody helped her and she continued to remain in the prison. VARHAD made her brother understand everything and later her brother agreed and came down to Amravati from Madhya Pradesh and VARHAD arranged their mode of transportation and looked after all the expenses. Finally, Ramabai was released from the prison and went with her brother to Madhya Pradesh. She lived with her brother but she missed some of the court sessions to attend in Achalpur session court. This is because she could not afford to come to Amravati due to financial constraints. VARHAD made her understand the repercussions of not appearing in the court on time. Keeping this in mind she again shifted to her own village where she worked and attended the court whenever she is called. She paid a visit to VARHAD office and thanked VARHAD saying that without the support of VARHAD she would have been in the prison even after getting the bail.

TEAM VARHAD

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

NAME OF THE MEMBER	DESIGNATION
Mr. Ravindra Vaidya	President, VARHAD
Dr. Ravindra D. Kolhe	Vice-President, VARHAD
Mr. Dhananand Nagdive	Secretary, VARHAD
Mrs. Pushpa G. Rangari	Joint-Secretary, VARHAD
Mr. Jayakant Singh	Treasurer, VARHAD
Mr. Pravin Khandpasole	Board Member, VARHAD
Dr. Vijay V. Motghare	Board Member, VARHAD

VARHAD OPERATIONAL TEAM

NAME OF THE MEMBER	DESIGNATION
Mr. Ravindra Vaidya	Chief Executive Officer, Project Director
Mr. Dhananand Nagdive	Project Coordinator
Mrs. Swati Bhowate	Senior Social Worker
Mrs. Pramila Meshram	Senior Social Worker
Mrs. Vanmala Mahajan	Social Worker
Mr. Manoj Gaikwad	Social Worker
Mr. Namdev Sonone	Para Social Worker
Mrs. Jaya Kharade	Para Social Worker
Mrs. Lata Bansod	Office Administrator
Mr. Umesh Diwan	Accountant
Mrs. Veena Varhade	Balwadi Teacher
Mr. Dhananjay Bansod	Rehab Staff
Mr. Sandip Rathod	Office Boy

OUR BELIVERS



AUDITOR'S REPORT

RATAN SHARMA & CO.

Chartered Accountant's
1st floor, Gulshan Tower
Near Panchashil Talkies, AMRAVATI
Registration No. F-10006/ Amt

Name of the Public Trust : Voluntary Action For Rehabilitation And Development (VARHAD) , Amravati
For the year ending 31st March 2021

Report of an auditor relating to accounts audited
Under sub-section (2) of section 33 & 34 and
rule 19 of the Bombay Public Trusts Act.

(a) Whether account are maintained regularly and in accordance with the provisions of the Act and the rules;	Yes
(b) Whether receipt and disbursements are property and correctly shown in the accounts;	Yes
(c) Whether the cash balance and vouchers in the custody of the manager or trustee on the date of audit were in agreement with the accounts;	Yes
(d) Whether all books, deeds, accounts, vouchers or other documents or records required by the auditor were produced before him;	Yes
(e) Whether a register of movable and immovable properties is property maintained, the changes therein are communicated from time to time to the regional office, and the defects and inaccuracies mentioned in the previous audit report have been duly complied with;	No
(f) Whether the manager or trustee or any other person required by the auditor to appear before him did so and furnished the necessary information required by him;	Yes
(g) Whether any property or funds of the Trust were applied for any object or purpose other than the object or purpose of the Trust;	No
(h) The amounts of outstandings for more than one year and amounts written off, if any;	No
(i) Whether tenders were invited for repairs or construction involving expenditure exceeding Rs. 5000/-;	No
(j) Whether any money of the public trust has been invested contrary to the provisions of Section 35;	No
(k) Alienantions, if any, of the immovable property contrary to the provisions of Section 36 which have come to the notice of the auditor;	Nil
(l) All cases of irregular, illegal or improper expenditure, or failure or omission to recover monies or other property belonging to the public trust or of loss or waste of money or other property thereof, and whether such expenditure, failure, omission, loss or waste was caused in consequence of breach of trust or misapplication or any other misconduct on the part of the trustees or any other person while in the management of the trust;	Nil
(m) Whether the budget has been filed in the form provided by rule 16A;	No
(n) Whether the maximum and minimum number of the trustees is maintained;	Yes
(o) Whether the meetings are held regularly as provided in such instrument;	- " -
(p) Whether the minute books of the proceedings of the meeting is maintained;	- " -
(q) Whether any of the trustees has any interest in the investment of the trust;	No
(r) Whether any of the trustees is a debtor or creditor of the trust;	No
(s) Whether the irregularities pointed out by auditors in the accounts of the previous year have been duly complied with by the trustees during the period of audit;	No
(t) Any special matter which the auditor may think fit or necessary to bring to the notice of the Deputy or Assistant Charity Commissioner.	Nil

Date at :

10 NOV 2021



Chartered Accountants

UDIN: 21106202AAA*KP6375

The Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950
SCHEDULE IX C
(Vide Rule 32)

Statement of income liable to contribution for the year ending : 31st March 2021

Name of the Public Trust : Voluntary Action For Rehabilitation And Development (VARHAD) , Amravati

Registered No. F-10006/ Amt

	Rs.	Rs.
I. Income as shown in the income and Expenditure Account (Schedule IX)		6338055.00
II. Items not chargeable to Contribution under Section 58 and Rules 32 :		
(i) Donations received from other public Trusts and Dharmadas		
(ii) Grants received from Government and Local authorities		
(iii) Interest on Sinking or Depreciation Fund	6,147,695.00	
(iv) Amount spent for the purpose of secular education		
(v) Amount spent for the purpose of medical relief		
(vi) Amount spent for the purpose of veterinary treatment of animals		
(vii) Expenditure incurred from donations for relief of distress caused by scarcity, drought, flood, fire or other natural calamity		
(viii) Deductions out of income from lands used for agricultural purposes :-		
(a) Land Revenue and Local Fund Cess		
(b) Rent Payable to superior landlord		
(c) Cost of production, if lands are cultivated by trust		
(ix) Deductions out of income from lands used for non-agricultural purposes :-		
(a) assessment, cesses and other Government or Municipal Taxes		
(b) Ground rent payable to the superior landlord		
(c) Insurance premia		
(d) Repairs at 10 per cent of gross rent of building		
(e) Cost of collection at 4 per cent of gross rent of buildings let out		
(x) Cost of collection of income or receipts from securities, stocks, etc. at 1 per cent of such income		
(xi) Deductions on account of repairs in respect of buildings not rented and yielding no income , at 10 per cent of the estimated gross annual rent		
Gross Annual Income chargeable to contribution Rs.		190360.00

Certified that while claiming deductions admissible under the above Schedule, the Trust has not claimed any amount twice, either wholly or partly, against any of the items mentioned in the Schedule which have the effect of double - deduction.

Trust Address :

Dated :

Chartered Accountants
Auditors

Dated :

Trustee

VARHAD
Voluntary Action for Rehabilitation and Development
Yasoda Nagar No. 1, P. O. Rukhmini Nagar, Amravati
AMRAVATI (Maharashtra, India Pin - 444606)
Fax-10721 2566768 ☎ 2567857



President
Voluntary Action for Rehabilitation
& Development, Varhad (Amravati)

VOLUNTARY ACTION FOR REHABILITATION DEVELOPMENT (VARHAD), AMRAVATI

F-10006/AMT.

(FCRA)

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

RECEIPTS	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	PAYMENTS	AMOUNT	AMOUNT
TO, <u>OPENING BALANCES</u>		1851390.50	By, <u>EXPS ON OBJECTS</u>		118853.00
Cash in Hand	911.00		Admin Exps	117255.00	
Sate Bank Of India	1850479.50		Bank Commission Charges	1598.00	
" Interest Accrued on Bank AIC Saving		50705.00	By, <u>CLOSING BALANCES</u>		1884948.50
			Cash in hand	911.00	
			State Bank of India	1884037.50	
" <u>Grant IN Aid</u>		101706.00			
Swarna Kamble Fondation, USA					
Total		<u>2003801.50</u>			<u>2003801.50</u>

Date :

Chartered Accountants
Auditors

Date :

TRUSTEE

10 NOV 2021



President
Voluntary Action for Rehabilitation
& Development, Varhad (Amravati)

**VOLUNTARY ACTION FOR REHABILITATION
DEVELOPMENT (VARHAD), AMRAVATI
F-10006/Amt.**

(VARHAD SANSTHA)

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

RECEIPTS	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	PAYMENTS	AMOUNT	AMOUNT
" <u>OPENING BALANCE</u>		303093.26	BY, <u>EXPS ON OBJECTS</u>		361608.00
Cash in hand	146.57		Telephone Exp.	2600.00	
Bank of maharashtra	302946.69		Electricity Exp	23460.00	
			Family Support Exps	3875.00	
" Rent Receipt		44100.00	Reparis & Maitances Exps	105902.00	
			Stationery	2515.00	
" Donation received		27300.00	Office Exp	950.00	
" Staff Advances		222306.00	SDTT Project Expences	222306.00	
" Bank Interest		7376.00	Utensils Purchases		11521.00
			" <u>CLOSING BALANCES</u>		
			Cash In Hand	1724.57	231046.26
			Bank of Maharashtra	229321.69	
Total		604175.26	Total		604175.26

Date :

Chartered Accountants
Auditors

Date :

TRUSTEE

President

Voluntary Action for Rehabilitation
& Development, Varhad (Amravati)

0 NOV 2021



The Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950

SCHEDULE - IX
[Vide Rule 17 (1)]

Name of the Public Trust : Voluntary Action For Rehabilitation And Development., (VARHAD), Amravati

Income and Expenditure account for the year ended 31st March 2021

Registration No.: F-10006/Amt.

EXPENDITURE	RS	RS	INCOME	RS	RS
To, Expenditure in respect of properties :-			By, Rent (accrued)		
Rents, Taxes, Cesses			(realized)		44100.00
Repairs and maintenance					
Salaries			(accrued)		
Insurance			By, Interest (realized)		118960.00
Depreciation(by way of provision of adjustments)			On Securities		
Other Expenses			On Loans		
To, Establishment Exps		117255.00	On Bank Account		
To, Remuneration to Trustees			By, Dividend		
To, Remuneration (in the case of a math) to the head of the math, including his household expenditure, if any			By, Donations in Cash or Kind		27300.00
To, Legal Expenses			By, Grants		
To, Audit Fees			Grant in aid		
To, Contribution and Fees			1) APPI	3045989.00	
To, Amount written off :			2) Covid	3000000.00	
(a) Bad Debts			3) FCRA	101706.00	
(b) Loan Scholarship					6147695.00
(c) Irrecoverable Rents					
(d) Other Items					
To, Miscellaneous Expenses					
To, Depreciation		808837.00			
To, Amount transferred to Reserve Or specific Funds					
To, Expenditure on Objects of the Trust		6315233.40			
a) Religious					
b) Educational					
c) Medical Relief					
d) Relief of Poverty					
e) Other Charitable Objects					
	6315233.40				
By, Surplus carried over to Balance Sheet			By, Deficit carried over to Balance Sheet		903270.40
Total RS		7241325.40	Total RS.		7241325.40

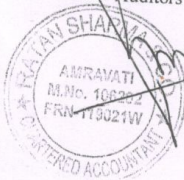
Date :

Chartered Accountants
Auditors

Date :

TRUSTEE

10 NOV 2021



President
Voluntary Action for Rehabilitation
& Development, Varhad (Amravati)

The Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950

SCHEDULE - VIII

[Vide Rule 17 (1)]

Name of the Public Trust : Voluntary Action For Rehabilitation & Development, (VARHAD), Amravati
Balance Sheet As At : 31st March, 2021

Regi. No. F10006/ Amt.

FUNDS & LIABILITIES	RS	RS	PROPERTY AND ASSETS	RS	RS
<u>Trust Funds or Corpus :-</u>		12214.00	<u>Immovable properties :- (At Cost)</u>		
Balance as per last Balance sheet	12214.00		As per Schedule		2672869.00
Adjustment during the year(give detail)					
<u>Other Earmarked Funds :-</u>		4567227.00			
(Created under the provisions of the trust deed or scheme or out of the Income)					
Depreciation fund	808837.00				
Sinking fund					
Reserve fund					
Any other fund (Building Fund)	424223.00				
Hostel Fund	1734167.00				
Medical Instrument Fund	1600000.00				
Club development fund					
<u>Loan (Secured or Unsecured) :-</u>		2986679.00			
From Trustees					
From Staff					
Grant in advance (Date 1.4.21 to 15.09.21)					
<u>Liabilities :-</u>		1800.00	<u>Loan (Secured or Unsecured) :</u>		
For Expenses		41600.00	Good/doubtful		
Professional Tax			Loans Scholarships		
For Advances for staff			Other Loan		
			<u>Loans & Advance :-</u>		
<u>Income and Expenditure Account</u>		213544.92	To Trustees		5800.00
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	587254.32		To Employees		
Less : Appropriation, if any			Staff Advances		
Add : Surplus As per income and			To Gas Connection deposit	3800.00	
Less : Deficit Expenditure a/c	373709.40		To Others, Telephone Deposits	2000.00	
			<u>Investments :-</u>		
			FDR Sweep A/c (SBI Bank)		
			<u>Income Outstanding :-</u> rent		
			Interest, Other Income (TDS)	40393.00	40393.00
			Usha Silai School Project		
			Closing Stock		

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President
Voluntary Action for Rehabilitation
& Development, Varhad (Amravati)

10 NOV 2021



			Cash & Bank Balances :-		
			a) In Current Account		
			SBI		
			SBI (FCRA)	1884037.50	
			Bank of maharashtra		
			APPI	2986679.16	
			Varhad Sanstha	229321.69	
			b) With the trustee		
			c) With the Manager	3964.57	
			Income and Expenditure Account		
			Balance as per last Balance Sheet		
			Surplus :		
			Less : Appropriation, if any (Transfer to Trust Fund)		
			LESS : Deficit As per income		
			and		
			ADD : Surplus Expenditure a/c		
Total RS		7823064.92	Total RS.		7823064.92

Date :

Chartered Accountants
Auditors

Date :

Trustee

10 NOV 2021



President
Voluntary Action for Rehabilitation
& Development, Varhad (Amravati)

VARHAD
Fixed Assets Schedule
31/03/2021

Particulars	Rate of Dep	Opening Balance	Dep Till Date	Net Assest	Add During the yr Ist.	Add During the yr IInd.	Ded During the yr	Total	Dep. For the yr.	Total Depreciation	Total As
Cattle Shed	10	27855.00	5293.00	22562.00				22562.00	2256.00	7549.00	2785
Computer	40	7034.00	4502.00	2532.00	150480.00			153012.00	61205.00	65707.00	15751
Cow	0	140100.00	0.00	140100.00				140100.00	0.00	0.00	14010
Dead Stock	10	12680.00	2409.00	10271.00				10271.00	1027.00	3436.00	1268
Furniture	10	306021.00	58143.00	247878.00	89300.00			337178.00	33718.00	91861.00	39532
Invertor	15	8456.00	2346.00	6110.00				6110.00	917.00	3263.00	845
LCD Projector	15	34851.00	9671.00	25180.00				25180.00	3777.00	13448.00	3485
Library Books	0	106549.00	0.00	106549.00				106549.00	0.00	0.00	10654
Machinery	15	2753.00	764.00	1989.00				1989.00	298.00	1062.00	275
Plot A/c	0	166500.00	0.00	166500.00				166500.00	0.00	0.00	16650
Surgical Machine	15	1600000.00	444000.00	1156000.00				1156000.00	173400.00	617400.00	160000
Utensils	15	0.00	0.00	0.00	11521.00			11521.00	1728.00	1728.00	11521
Water Pump	15	8769.00	2433.00	6336.00				6336.00	950.00	3383.00	8769
Grand Total		2421568.00	529561.00	1892007.00	251301.00	0.00	0.00	2143308.00	279276.00	808837.00	267286

10 NOV 2021



President
Voluntary Action for Rehabilitation
& Development, Varhad (Amravati)

VOLUNTARY ACTION FOR REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT
(VARHAD) AMRAVATI

F.Y. 2020-21

SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES & NOTES ON ACCOUNTS

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES :

Accounts have been prepared in accordance with the general accounting principles and assumptions. Mercantile system of accounting is consistently followed by the concern. These financial statements are the responsibility of the management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in India. Those standards requires that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by the management as well as evaluating the overall statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

2. FIXED ASSETS :

The Fixed Assets are valued at cost .

3. BOOKS OF ACCOUNTS :

Books of Accounts are maintained on computerised basis.

4. QUANTITATIVE DETAILS :

The trust has not maintained the stock register hence it is not possible for us to give quantitative details .

5. CONTINGENT LIABILITY :

No contingent liability has been provided for in the books of account .

VOLUNTARY ACTION FOR REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT
(VARHAD) AMRAVATI

DATE: _____
PLACE: _____

Secretary
Voluntary Action for Rehabilitation
& Development, Varhad (Amravati)

10 NOV 2021

For, Ratan Sharma & Co
Chartered Accountants



Ratan Sharma
(Proprietor)

VARHAD & MEDIA COVERAGE

Jhappis in jail: This NGO unites inmates with their children

Sharmila.Ganesan@timesgroup.com

Raman Pandit was around five when his father was whisked away to jail. He would probably have never met him had it not been for the persistent visits of some NGO workers to Raman's boarding school on behalf of a pining Pandit. They finally arranged a meeting when the elder Pandit came out on parole eight years later. To the young boy, this emaciated stranger — who embarrassed him with a hug and kept calling him 'babu' — didn't exactly fit the bill of a man who had set his mother ablaze in a fit of rage, and whom Raman grew up hating. Soon, a series of letters, money orders and warm meetings in Mushi open jail ensued. Today, a year after Pandit's release, father and son live together in a cement shanty built from Raman's savings. After deftly rolling chapatis, the gaunt ex-lifer now entertains guests with jail stories involving contraband beedis while Raman — a wheatish third-year arts student — chuckles at Pandit's habit of pulling the TV's main wire to switch it off. "I consider him a friend more than a father," says Raman.

This bittersweet reunion is one of many small victories for VARHAD (Voluntary Action For Rehabilitation and Development) based in Amravati, which has been organising meetings between jail inmates and their children for more than 15 years. Besides a website, the NGO — partnered by Tata Trusts — also boasts soft-spoken staffers who haven't been paid for four months for lack of funds. It was founded by a moustachioed man named Ravindra Valdyia who had spent two months in jail as a teenager after "an elderly woman with a rivalry against my family immolated herself and blamed me in her dying declaration." After his release on bail from Amravati Central Jail, Valdyia studied social work and started helping poor prisoners in Vidarbha with free legal aid and counselling.

"Most prisoners in Maharashtra who are lifers are not hardcore criminals or habitual offenders," says Valdyia. According to him, several innocent inmates from the backward regions of Vidarbha land in jail because they can't afford good quality lawyers. "Family members then paint the inmate as a villain, and keep kids away," he says.

Amravati Central Jail, for instance, has many convicts whose families stay far away and can't afford to meet them often. When they do, it's for 20 minutes from beyond a three-tier partition — glass, mesh and a grill. "But people want to touch and feel close to their family members," says Valdyia, adding that Gala Bhet — a two-year-old initiative by Maharashtra prisons department which facilitates poignant meetings between families and inmates without the noisy barrier of a mesh

"So, when is your father getting out?" says Rakesh, who started pestering his mother for the truth which came out finally when he was barely a teenager.

VARHAD project coordinator Dhananand Nagdive says that what families go through outside is often worse than what the prisoners go through inside. Rakesh recalls his father sending a money order once. "My mother sent it back," Rakesh says, adding that accepting it would have invited taunts from neighbours. After release, his father did work as a security guard in Pune and sent money home but succumbed to a brain tumour in May. "If only there was someone to guide me, I'd be more confident today," says Rakesh, an IAS aspirant, whose home still doesn't have a picture of his father.

While stigma escapes families of prisoners in busy metros, they often pay other invisible prices. "It's like driving a car without one wheel," says Thane's 19-year-old Sonal Kokate, about the five painful years that followed the arrest of her father on June 21, 2012, the day she saw her mother wailing and banging her forehead against the wall. Three hurried glass-partition meetings had



BITTERSWEET: Raman Pandit (right) grew up hating his father, Rakesh (left) because he set his mother ablaze in a fit of rage. He is keen to let go of the past and now lives with his father

When 20-year-old Rakesh Kamble (name changed) met his father in Amravati Jail for the first time, he sat on his lap and cried. His family had told him that his dad killed his grandmother and then died soon after

grill — gets its cue from meetings organised by VARHAD.

Often, workers have to deal with incensed families and unshakeable mindsets. But tearful reunions make it all worthwhile. "I sat on his lap and cried," says 20-year-old Rakesh Kamble (name changed), recounting his first meeting in Amravati Central Jail with the father he had never seen. The youngest of six children, Rakesh had been told that his father had killed his maternal grandmother and died soon after, which is why there were no photos of him in the house. "But every time we would go to a wedding, relatives would ask with a smile,

followed. Then, it was during a Children's Day Gala Bhet in 2015 — for which VARHAD sponsored her travel tickets — that Sonal and her younger brother met their father for an hour at Amravati Central Jail.

Sonal says her civil contractor dad became sad on learning that his wife was working as a domestic help to pay the rent and fund the kids' education. "I learnt to curb my desires," says Sonal, who penned a 46-page handwritten letter to the PM via his radio show Mann Ki Baat, urging him to consider her father's case for bail. Her problems have given the MBA aspirant a long-term goal. "I will adopt a child or at least fund a child's education when I start earning," says Sonal, who has now left her CAT classes midway for lack of funds.

Meanwhile, Rakesh says he will share his name with the world when he "becomes a success". Raman — who wants to believe his father who pinches his own Adam's apple to say that his mother burnt herself after a big fight — is keen on letting go of the past and starting his own business. He also seems to be warming up to his dusky 'baba'. "He looks more like me now," says Raman.

लोकमत

प्रलंबित खटल्यांमुळे न्यायही लांबतोय

उच्च व सर्वोच्च न्यायालय : देशात ४५ लाख, तर महाराष्ट्रात
पावणेतीन लाख खटले

लोकमत न्यूज नेटवर्क

यवतमाळ : देशातील उच्च व सर्वोच्च न्यायालयात दाखल प्रलंबित खटल्यांची संख्या दिवसेंदिवस वाढत असल्याने पक्षकारांना मिळणारा न्यायही लांबणीवर पडतो आहे. यामुळे पक्षकारांच्या पदरी प्रतीक्षा आणि निराशाच येते. स्थानिक न्यायालयांमध्येही असेच चित्र असल्याने तेथील दररोज दिसणारी गदी तेवढीच कायम आहे.



देशातील २५ उच्च न्यायालयांमध्ये २९ जानेवारी २०२० पर्यंत ४५ लाख ८१ हजार ६९९ खटले न्यायनिवाड्याची प्रतीक्षा करीत आहेत. त्यात महाराष्ट्रातील उच्च न्यायालय व खंडपीठांचा आकडा दोन लाख ६७ एवढा आहे. यातील ७९ हजार ७४९ प्रकरणे दहा वर्षांपेक्षा जुनी आहेत. त्यात कामगार, भाडे, जमीन अधिग्रहण, सेवा, मोबदला, फौजदारी, कौटुंबिक, धार्मिक, सेवाभावी संस्था, सार्वजनिक वाद, शेती, ग्राहक आदी प्रकरणांचा समावेश आहे. न्यायदानासाठी न्यायालयांची दारे खुली असली तरी प्रलंबित प्रकरणांची वाढती संख्या व त्यामुळे विलंबाने मिळणारा न्याय ही विधी व न्याय मंत्रालयापुढील खरी चिंतेची बाब आहे.

खटले प्रलंबित राहण्यामागे

विलंबाने मिळणारा न्याय हा अन्यायच - रवींद्र वैद्य

◆ कैद्यांच्या हक्कासाठी लढणाऱ्या 'वन्हाड' या संस्थेचे संस्थापक अध्यक्ष रवींद्र वैद्य म्हणाले, शासकीयस्तरावर अधिकारी नेमले असून त्यांना जबाबदारी व अधिकार दिले गेले आहेत. परंतु ते न्यायिक बुद्धीचा वापर करून आपल्यास्तरावर न्याय देत नाहीत, त्यासाठी टाळटाळ करतात. त्यामुळेच आज न्यायालयीन खटल्यांची संख्या वाढते आहे. क्षुल्लक बाबींसाठी जनतेला न्यायालयाचे दार ठोठावावे लागत आहे. सरकार व प्रशासनस्तरावर न्याय मिळत नसल्याचा हा पुरावा आहे. न्यायालयांच्याही मर्यादा आहेत. रातोरात न्यायालये, न्यायाधीश व पायाभूत सुविधांची संख्या वाढविणे, निर्मिती करणे शक्य होत नाही. खटले प्रलंबित राहण्यामागे कारण कोणतेही असो मात्र विलंबाने मिळणारा न्याय हा अन्यायच ठरतो. प्रलंबित खटल्यांमुळे कारागृहांमधील गर्दीही प्रचंड वाढू लागली आहे. एखादा आरोपी आर्थिक परिस्थिती नसणे, वकील लावू न शकणे, पोलिसांच्या स्तरावरील हलगर्जीपणा यामुळे पाच-सात वर्षे कारागृहात राहिल्यास त्याची ती वेळ व झालेले नुकसान भरून देता येत नाही. त्याची कौटुंबिक व सामाजिक हानी होते. त्यामुळे प्रशासनाने आपल्यास्तरावरच न्याय दिल्यास न्यायालयांकडील खटल्यांची गर्दी कमी होण्यास मदत होईल.

विविध कारणे आहेत. खटले निकाली निघावे, वेग वाढावा म्हणून विविध उपाययोजना केल्या गेल्या. परंतु प्रलंबित खटल्यांचा आकडा पाहताना या उपाययोजना थिठ्ठा पडताना दिसत आहेत. विशेष असे, सत्र व कनिष्ठ न्यायालयांमधील प्रलंबित खटल्यांची संख्या वेगळीच आहे. या प्रलंबित खटल्यांचे परिणाम पक्षकारांच्या सामाजिक व वैयक्तिक जीवनावर होताना दिसतात. मुलभूत हक्कांवरच गदा - अॅड. असीम सरोदे

प्रख्यात विधिज्ञ तथा सामाजिक न्याय विश्लेषक अॅड. असीम सरोदे म्हणाले, प्रलंबित खटले ही देशाच्या न्याय व्यवस्थेसमोरील बिकट समस्या आहे. 'प्रत्येकाला जलदगतीने न्याय

मिळेल' या मुलभूत हक्कावरच गदा आली आहे. केवळ गंभीर गुन्हेच नव्हे तर प्रत्येकच दिवाणी व फौजदारी प्रकरणांचा निवाडा हा ठराविक कालमर्यादित होण्यासाठी आग्रह धरला पाहिजे.

पोलीस, वैद्यकीय अधिकारी, न्यायाधीश, सरकारी वकील, बचाव पक्षाचे वकील यांनी बांधिलकी ठेऊन व आपसात सहकार्य, संवाद ठेऊन काम करणे गरजेचे आहे. सामान्य नागरिकांच्या मनात न्याय व्यवस्थेबाबत विश्वास असला तरी विलंब आणि आरोपींना मिळणाऱ्या फायद्याबाबत रागही आहे. न्यायाधीशांच्या कामकाजावर लक्ष देण्यासाठी नागरिकांचा सहभाग असलेली समिती नेमली जावी.

New Delhi
Page No. 4 Feb 15, 2020
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दिव्य मराठी

स्वाती वैद्य यांचा मुंबईमध्ये सत्कार

कैद्यांच्या उत्थान कार्याचा केला गौरव



सत्कार समारंभात उपस्थित डॉ. नीलम गोऱ्हे, मंत्री अॅड. यशोमती ठाकूर व स्वाती वैद्य आदी.

अमरावती। कैद्यांचे पुनर्वसन व उत्थानासाठी काम करून सामाजिक क्षेत्रात अमूल्य योगदान दिल्याबद्दल येथील वन्हाड संस्थेच्या स्वाती रवींद्र वैद्य यांचा नुकताच मुंबई येथे सत्कार करण्यात आला.

मुंबई येथील महिला आर्थिक विकास महामंडळाच्या ४५ व्या वर्धापन दिन समारंभात आयोजित कार्यक्रमात मुख्यमंत्री उद्धव ठाकरे व महिला व बालकल्याण मंत्री अॅड. यशोमती ठाकूर यांच्या हस्ते प्रमाणपत्र, शाल, स्मृती चिन्ह देवून सत्कार करण्यात आला.

बचत गटातील महिलांच्या प्रेरणादायी कन्यांना 'तेजस्विनी कन्या' या पुरस्काराने गौरवण्यात आले. सामाजिक क्षेत्रामध्ये स्त्री सक्षमीकरणासाठी भरीव योगदान देणाऱ्या कर्तृत्ववान महिलांना मान्यवरांच्या हस्ते सन्मानित करण्यात आले. यावेळी उपमुख्यमंत्री अजित पवार, विधान परिषदेच्या उपसभापती डॉ. नीलम गोऱ्हे, महसूलमंत्री बाळासाहेब थोरात, महिला व बालकल्याण मंत्री अॅड. यशोमती ठाकूर, महिला आर्थिक विकास महामंडळाच्या सचिव आय.ए. कुंदन, व्यवस्थापकीय संचालक श्रद्धा जोशी उपस्थित होत्या.

APPEAL

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We Appeal You to Extend your Generous Support for the Noble Cause.



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