

January 2024 to April 2024



# PRAYAS

## Social Work in Criminal Justice

Established in 1990, Prayas is a field action project of the Centre for Criminology and Justice, School of Social Work, at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Its mission revolves around promoting the legal rights and rehabilitation of individuals impacted by the criminal justice system.

From prisoners to the children of incarcerated women, from children in conflict with the law to women exiting commercial sexual exploitation and their children, and women in distress situations living in shelter homes, Prayas extends its reach through a multifaceted approach.

It offers a spectrum of socio-legal services, including legal assistance, counselling, educational and vocational guidance and training, and emergency support during times of crisis. Their enduring commitment manifests in sustained social work interventions, fostering resilience and restoration within vulnerable communities.

Prayas is deeply entrenched in social work intervention and socio-legal practice principles. It strives to empower individuals through conscious and deliberate efforts, enabling them to emerge as active citizens who lead lives filled with dignity and purpose.

**Newsletter Issue  
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**Strengthening Mental health**

Amidst the holiday cheer, Prayas social worker orchestrated a heartwarming mental health workshop at Kalyan District Prison Women's Section. Using the metaphor of snakes and ladders, TISS students engaged participants in the 'Game of Life,' beautifully illustrating life's ups and downs. Staff dedication and women's enthusiasm merged, creating an atmosphere brimming with positivity. Winners were rewarded, symbolizing collective success and camaraderie. This workshop exemplified Prayas's commitment to holistic well-being, leaving a lasting impact on all involved.



**Mental Health Orientation Programme Held for Prayas Staff**

In collaboration with the Institute for Psychological Health (IPH), Prayas organized a one-day training programme on Orientation to Mental Health Issues. Led by former Head of the Psychiatry Department at KEM Hospital and a founding member of IPH, the event was well received by social workers, teachers, income generation workers, and legal fellows. Prayas and DLSA Mumbai Collaborate for Successful Para legal Volunteers training and issue ID Cards to Participants.

**Prayas and DLSA Mumbai Collaborate for Successful Para legal volunteers Training(PLV), Issue ID Cards to Participants**

In partnership with DLSA Mumbai, a PLV training was arranged for members of community-based women's groups. As part of the course, the members were taken on a field tour to the Metropolitan Magistrates' Court located in Mazgaon. The DLSA Mumbai has given the ladies who completed the program PLV ID cards.



**Celebrating Savitri Bai Phule birth anniversary**

Savitri Bai Phule's birth anniversary was joyfully celebrated at Hindu Samaj Hall in Virar, organized by the Saheli Self-Help Group (SHG) of Prayas. The event commenced with the traditional lamp lighting, followed by knowledge sharing on insightful thoughts on Savitri Bai Phule. Representatives from the Women and Child Development Department shared valuable information about various government schemes for women, enhancing awareness and empowerment among the participants. Motivational speeches from Senior Social Workers along with uplifting songs and discussions on self-help group benefits, created a vibrant atmosphere.



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### **Pre-placement initiatives**

Embracing tradition with a touch of creativity, a gajra-making activity at Thane and Kalyan District Prisons saw participants weave vibrant cloth gajras under the guidance of Prayas activity worker. The event showcased the participants' craftsmanship and celebrated the fusion of tradition and style, highlighting the beauty of handmade accessories. Additionally, A flower-making activity was organized for pre-placement trainees of its NGO Placement Programme - a rehabilitation programme specially developed by Prayas which is an apprenticeship programme for our clients in the NGO sector - at Prayas' Thane office.

Through this activity, trainees will be skilled through committed instruction and practice in creating complex, realistic flowers in high demand for events, decorations, and product embellishments. In addition to providing a platform for creative expression, this art form can lead to various job options, such as retail marketing, flower design, event organizing, and many more opportunities.

Beyond vocational training, this initiative offers a therapeutic and meditative outlet, fostering personal growth and creative expression among participants, and enriching their journey towards self-discovery and professional success.



### ***"Prayas Empowers Women Through Comprehensive Fashion Jewellery Course"***

Prayas has launched a transformative three-month certificate course on artificial fashion jewellery from February to May 2024, in collaboration with Jan Sikshan Sanstha at Shanti Sadan Mahila Vasatigrh and Kalyan District Prison respectively. The program engages 67 women in honing their skills in jewellery crafting. Participants explore diverse techniques, including recycled material utilization, to create exquisite pieces such as mangal sutras, pearl bangles, and more. Upon completion, attendees will receive certificates, marking skill acquisition, and a journey towards empowerment and creative expression.



## ***"Empowering Women Prisoners: Building Skills for Re-entry and Transformation"***



The vocational skills acquired by women prisoners through training sessions within the prison have become a gateway to employment opportunities for them. These sessions equip them with skills such as crafting, sewing, or other trades, empowering them with the means to earn a livelihood upon their release. By honing these skills during their incarceration, the women gain financial independence and undergo positive personal transformation. This initiative not only aids in their rehabilitation but also contributes to reducing recidivism rates, fostering a sense of hope and purpose for these women as they reintegrate into society.

A meeting with CCL was held inside the Children's Home regarding education. Education evaluation involves systematically assessing educational options to determine the effectiveness in achieving desired outcomes. It encompasses various methods such as testing, observation, surveys, and interviews to gather data on student learning, teacher performance, and institutional efficacy. This programme attempts to provide decision-making information, boost education quality, and improve teaching and learning.



## ***"Empowering Minds Through Art: Prayas' Inspiring Event at Alibaug District Prison"***



An impactful event was organized at Alibaug District Prison, centered on harnessing the healing power of art for mental well-being. Spearheaded by keynote speaker Gayatri Joshi, the gathering united individuals passionate about leveraging creativity to navigate emotional challenges. Representatives from Prayas, shared insights and personal anecdotes, fostering an atmosphere of empathy and resilience. Through engaging conversations and artistic expression, the event fostered therapeutic outlets for inmates, instilling a sense of hope amidst adversity.

## ***"Finding Serenity Behind Bars: Holistic Wellness Initiative at Talaja Central Prison"***

A transformative mental health and holistic activity was organized within the confines of Talaja Central Prison to uplift the spirits and well-being of the incarcerated individuals. The program integrated physical activities such as yoga and meditation, offering holistic approaches to alleviate stress and promote overall wellness. Overall, the activity offered a pathway toward inner peace, resilience, and holistic well-being amidst challenging circumstances.



### "Empowering Rehabilitation: Prayas Bharuch Unit Hosts Legal Aid Program for Prisoner Reintegration"



Prayas's Bharuch Unit prioritizes empowering marginalized individuals post-incarceration through free legal aid. A recent program focused on the crucial role of legal aid panel advocates in prisoner rehabilitation, drawing participation from 34 advocates from DLSA Bharuch. By sensitizing legal professionals to the rehabilitation needs of prisoners, Prayas continues its mission to ensure equitable access to justice and support for reintegration into society.

### "Toy Distribution at Kalyan District Prison: Spreading Joy and Smiles"

Prayas, in collaboration with Whistling Woods International, orchestrated a heartwarming toy distribution event at Kalyan District Prison. The initiative exemplifies the power of collective generosity in brightening lives and fostering positivity in challenging circumstances.



### "Rebuilding Lives: The Gender Caring Project's Journey Towards Rehabilitation"

Over the past three years, Prayas has been diligently working with young men and boys who have encountered the justice system due to various crimes. Our unique initiative offers them a chance at rehabilitation and a fresh start. Our "Gender Caring Project" delves into the intricate relationship between gender, masculinities, and crime, aiming to sensitize participants through workshops and theatrical interventions. Encouragingly, many are beginning to recognize the detrimental impact of toxic behaviours on their lives. We thank MAVA, Samyak, and dedicated individuals like theatre activist Dinesh Shetty for their invaluable support and Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies for their generous backing of our vital work.



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## **"Empowering Women: Prayas Celebrates Resilience and Rehabilitation on International Women's Day"**

Prayas celebrates Women's Day with a powerful reminder of resilience and rehabilitation at TISS campus, in Mumbai. Through a thought-provoking short-film and engaging activities, over 75 women clients embrace their strength and recommit to their journey towards a brighter future. Together, they inspire and empower each other to move forward with courage and determination.



Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar Central Prison and Thane Central Prison Commemorates International Women's Day with Inspiring Event. The event showcased resilience and talent within the incarcerated community, featuring speeches and cultural events. It served as a testament to the transformative power of solidarity and support in fostering positive change. Thane Central Prison showcases the talent and resilience of incarcerated women, with art, poetry, games, and music highlighting their creativity and determination. The event fosters a supportive atmosphere of empowerment and solidarity, reaffirming the prison's commitment to rehabilitation and self-expression. Thane Prison inspires hope for a brighter future beyond incarceration through such initiatives. An orchestra was arranged to mark the occasion for the prison staff and their family members also at Thane Central Prison.



## **"Empowering Tomorrow's Mechanics: Hands-On Drum Brake Workshop at Dongri Children's Home"**

An automobile repairing course practical class inside Dongri Children's Home. The practical session equips students with the skills necessary for diagnosing issues and conducting maintenance. Through the initiative of Prayas, the inside CCL (Children in conflicts with the law) are engaged and now getting opportunities to learn different types of skills.



### Warli and Kalamkari Painting

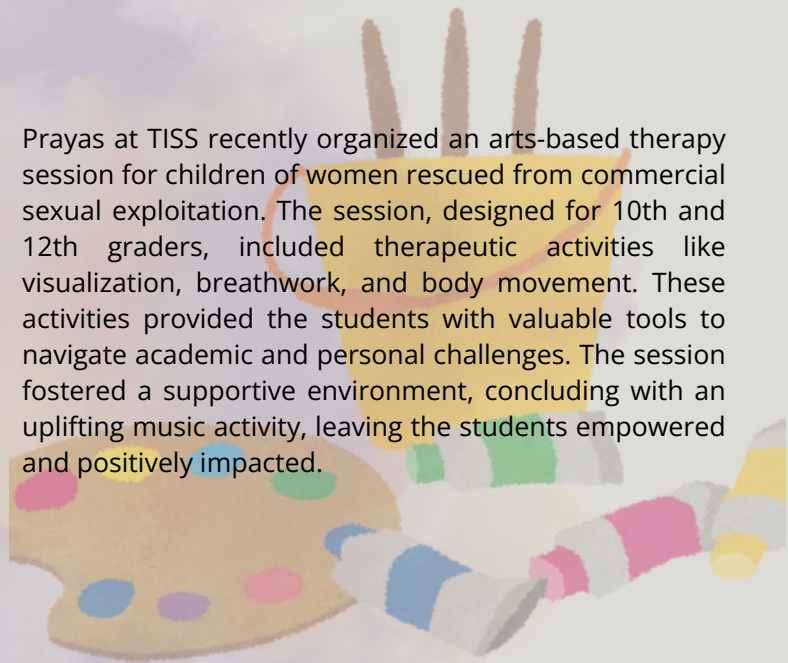
Prayas hosted a transformative training session on Warli and Kalamkari painting techniques at Navjeevan Mahila Vastigruh. Over three enriching days Participants delved into the intricate world of traditional artistry. Guided by expert instructors from C. B. Kora Kendra, Mumbai, participants honed their skills and explored diverse avenues for creative expression. The event culminated in a heartfelt certificate distribution ceremony graced by esteemed officials, whose inspiring words fueled the participants' artistic fervor. Feedback from attendees echoed their deep immersion and gratitude for the invaluable knowledge gained, underscoring the event's profound impact on their artistic journey.



### Arts-based therapy



Prayas at TISS recently organized an arts-based therapy session for children of women rescued from commercial sexual exploitation. The session, designed for 10th and 12th graders, included therapeutic activities like visualization, breathwork, and body movement. These activities provided the students with valuable tools to navigate academic and personal challenges. The session fostered a supportive environment, concluding with an uplifting music activity, leaving the students empowered and positively impacted.



### **"Prayas Hosts Citizenship Rights Awareness Session"**

Aadhar card update camp in the 3rd week of January at Election Card Office, Mankhurd to update Aadhar card-related issues like change of address, mobile number, etc. The process involved filling of the requisite form with the guidance of Prayas social worker and submission of the form to the authority.



Prayas held a citizenship rights and documents awareness session for children in conflict with the law and youth from the aftercare hostel. Sixty-six participants engaged in interactive workshops and informative discussions, learning about their rights and the importance of essential identification documents like birth certificates, Aadhar cards, and Voter ID cards. The session emphasized access to education, healthcare, and legal representation, fostering empowerment. Prayas aim to break barriers and support their integration into society as responsible citizens by providing knowledge and resources. This initiative is vital in enabling these youths to access crucial services and opportunities.



Prayas arranged a Voter ID Card Camp for the clients at TISS. Many clients had their voter ID cards updated or created after Election Commission representatives visited the camp and discussed the significance of the voter ID card in the electoral process. He emphasized voter ID cards, which are essential for preserving the integrity of the election process and supporting an open and equitable electoral process.



### ***A Day of Learning and Joy: Educational Exposure Visit***

In January 2024, the educational exposure visit of women residents of Kasturba Mahila Vastigruh was a remarkable experience. The visit provided a unique opportunity for the participants. They had a great time, playing enjoyable games, and dancing together. It was a day filled with learning, laughter, and celebration, leaving a lasting impact on those who attended.



Prayas income generation unit staff and clients went for an exposure visit to Bhuj in Kutch Gujarat to learn about the work being done by organizations with women engaged in traditional crafts and embroidery work. The team visited three organizations - Khamir, Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan, and Shrujan.

Prayas organized an illuminating exposure visit to Vision Rescue, Chheda Nagar, Chembur, with women trainees. This visit proved transformative as participants, hailing from the Prayas NGO placement program and Himmat Mahila Bachat Gat, experienced firsthand the invaluable kitchen and culinary skills course offered by Vision Rescue. Through 12 comprehensive sessions, they mastered the art of crafting diverse biryanis and perfected the delicate craft of cake baking. Culminating in well-deserved certificates, this journey underscores not just culinary prowess but also the journey of self-empowerment and skill refinement.



### ***A step towards literacy***

**Prayas assists CCL with exam preparation and the distribution of hall passes.**

Hall tickets were distributed by Prayas among CCL appearing for the board exams.

Pens and examination pads were distributed among 10th and 12th-grade students of Prayas, with the support of Lion's Club marking a significant step towards facilitating their academic endeavors. Intending to support their educational journey, the initiative provided students with essential writing tools, ensuring they were equipped to excel in their examinations.



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### **"Legal Literacy for Parents: Empowering Families Through Knowledge"**

A legal awareness session organized by Prayas at the premises of Dongri Children's Home provided a platform for parents of CCL. The gathering aimed to empower parents with knowledge and resources concerning their rights and responsibilities in the context of child welfare and legal proceedings. Through interactive discussions and informative sessions, parents gained insights into navigating the legal system to safeguard the best interests of their children. The event fostered a supportive environment for parents to address concerns, seek guidance, and advocate effectively for their children's well-being within the framework of the law.



### **"Enhancing Access to Justice: Strengthening the Legal Aid Unit in Vasai"**

The legal aid unit of the District and Sessions Court in Vasai has been strengthened by the recent sessions organized by Prayas. Through these meetings, legal aid lawyers have received information and suggestions, that will help increase access to justice. With more resources and knowledge, the legal aid system can help those who need legal help more effectively.

### **Report release - A state Consultation Report on Social Re-integration of Women Exiting Commercial Sexual Exploitation**

The Women and Child Development Department (WCD), Government of Maharashtra, and Prayas had also organized a State Consultation on Social Re-integration of Women Exiting Commercial Sexual Exploitation on September 26, 2023. Suggestions pertinent to social re-integration and future pathways emerged through the discussions at the Consultation.

Hence, at the March 20, 2024 programme, The Women and Child Development Department (WCD), Government of Maharashtra, and Prayas released the Consultation report.



### **"Prayas Extends Lifeline to Family Struck by Tragedy"**

In the face of adversity, Prayas has stood as a beacon of hope for a client and her family, offering crucial support during their darkest times. Following a devastating fire that consumed their home, leaving them homeless, Prayas swiftly mobilized resources and launched an appeal for donations. Thanks to the generosity of compassionate donors for the reconstruction of their house. Special gratitude is extended to Mr. Thyagarajan, whose unwavering support has been instrumental in connecting Prayas with vital donors over the years. Together, we are rebuilding lives and restoring hope for those in need.



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## "Empowering Youth: Exploring the Journey of Personality Development"

Prayas organized a workshop at the Youth Development Centre on personality development. The youth who are part of Prayas rehabilitation were the participants of this workshop. These self-development initiatives include the gradual development and improvement of one's social skills, emotional intelligence, self-awareness, values, beliefs, and habits. It is a lifelong process that can be influenced by various factors such as upbringing, education, environment, experiences, and personal choices.



## "Prayas Trainees Excel in Advanced Para-Professional Social Work Course"

Prayas, trainees who had attended the Prayas para-socio-legal training went for an advanced para-professional social work course and completed their advanced para-professional training from a professional institute.



## "Fostering Sustainability: Supporting Our Clients for a Greener Future"

We empower women prisoners, released women prisoners, and women exiting commercial sexual exploitation by providing them with training to create high-quality cloth and jute products. Through this initiative, these women gain valuable skills and the opportunity to earn a sustainable livelihood. Our program not only helps them reintegrate into society but also promotes their financial independence and self-worth. By purchasing our products, you support their journey towards a brighter future, fostering resilience and hope in their lives. Join us in making a meaningful difference and building a more inclusive community.



**For inquiry/purchase, kindly contact: Mr. Sadanand Dalvi – 9969769893 / 9221244948**

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## **Acknowledgment Notes**

***We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our esteemed partners and funders for their unwavering support and belief in our mission. Your generosity serves as a beacon of light, empowering us to continue our work with conviction and dedication.***

***We deeply appreciate the support from individuals who have shown exceptional commitment to our cause:***

***Your belief in our work fuels our passion and dedication.***

***We also acknowledge the valuable support and guidance provided by organizations and individuals that have significantly contributed to the well-being of our clients and their families.***

***We are immensely grateful to the organizations and individual donors who play a critical role in providing financial assistance for cash bail, helping those who are otherwise unable to afford it***

***Your contributions ensure that financial insufficiency does not become a barrier to freedom and justice.***

***Each of you plays a crucial role in our journey. Your generosity and support not only provide resources but also inspire hope and confidence in our shared mission. Thank you for standing with us and making a profound impact on the lives of those we serve.***

