



The METAMORPHOSIS

A bulletin on the changing lives in the Correctional Homes of West Bengal

Issue:21

From the Editor's Desk:



Festive season in Bengal rings the bells of joy and galore in the life of inmates of the Correctional Homes. This is also a good opportunity to show case the productivity activities going on in the Correctional Homes. In tune with the festive mood, an exhibition-cum- sale “*Sharad Mela*” was organized at Alipore Central Correctional Home with participation from all Correctional Homes. More such exhibition-cum-sale on other festive occasions will add to inspirational incentive value to the Jail Industries. We have appealed to different Government Departments to procure items from among the wide range of our Jail products. In response, the West Bengal Police Recruitment Board placed a huge order of “Kit Box” which was delivered in time. We also received similar orders from Kolkata Police and West Bengal Police.

We care for the lives in our custody. A long pending demand of Welfare Board of different Correctional Homes is the supply of potable water at Warder Barracks. To address this issue, inmates of Presidency Correctional Home have made 'Bio-Sand Water Filter' which is sufficient to meet the necessity of filtered water of all inmates and staff of all the Correctional Homes of the State. We are equally concerned in generating income opportunities of our women inmates through the way of ensuring their personal hygiene. The first ever sanitary napkin production unit takes off from Burdwan Central Correctional Home.

But the most gorgeous event of the year was the first ever Prison Fashion Show, where we all were left spellbound to watch the city celebs glorifying the ramp in dresses designed by Avishek Dutta and tailored by the inmates. Later the products of Presidency Correctional Home Fashion Unit travelled to Tihar fest. The flair of the dresses dazzled the fest and was greeted by the audience with the round of applauds. Tihar fest also marked the participation of prisoner painters and sculptors of Alipore Central Correctional Home.

Along with revamping the production oriented projects, we have put emphasis on infrastructural and administrative upgradation. To handle the increasing inmate population at the Correctional Homes of Northern Districts, Balurghat District Correctional Home has been upgraded to Central Correctional Home. Also Serampore Subsidiary Correctional Home has been renovated and its registered capacity is increased considering its importance in the South Zone. To deal with the life-convicts, possibility of one more open Correctional Home at Midnapore is under consideration.

We will share more such progressive endeavours with you in coming months.

Arun Kumar Gupta

OSD & Ex-Officio DG & IG, Correctional Services, WB

In Another Camp

Six convicted prisoner painters and sculptors represented West Bengal Correctional Homes in a National level art workshop at Tihar Jail, New Delhi under guidance of eminent sculptor Sri Chitta Dey in August, 2017. The artifacts prepared by prisoners participated in the workshop from all over the country were exhibited at Lalit Kala Academy during Tihar Fest.





Midnapore

Krishnanagar

Sharad Mela



Fragrance of new dress, aroma of delicacies remind us that the festive season is here again. In Correctional Homes the prisoners celebrate almost all festivals with great enthusiasm. Whether the Durgapuja or Eid, Raksha Bandhan or Janmastami, all the inmates come together, work hand in hand and enjoy the occasion. We are beyond the barriers of all religions. This time we organized a pre-puja exhibition-cum-sale at Alipore Central CH premises to display the correctional home products. The programme was an immense success by participation of the civil society.



Howrah



Alipore

Berhampore

Presidency



Suri

Dum Dum

Coochbehar

"It is said that no one truly knows a nation until one has been inside its jails. A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but its lowest ones."
- Nelson Mandela

Divine Adobe.....

Renovation of Sri Aurobinda Cell

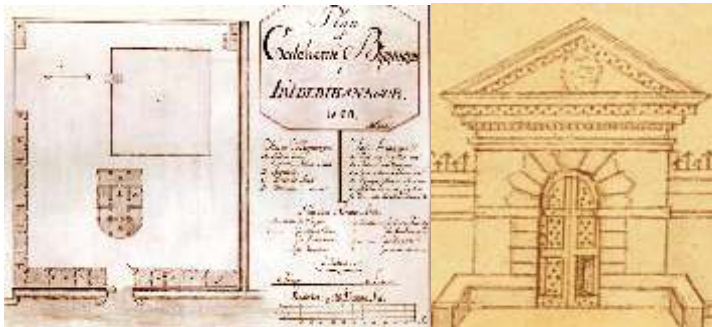
In this hallowed Cell of Presidency Jail (old Alipore Jail) Sri Aurobindo lived about a year (1908 - 09) as a prisoner for freedom's cause, meditated on Life Divine and had his Divine Darshan. This cell is worshipped as a holy and pious pilgrim by devotees of Sri Aurobindo. Followers from all over India come to pay homage here. Recently, touch ups have been done to restore this heritage site.



Danish Mark

Renovation of Serampore Sub CH

Erected in 1803, Serampore Sub Correctional Home is one of the oldest living jails in the world. It retains its importance in the present days. The Serampore Catherri, as was the nomenclature in Danish period, it still holds equal importance in administration in housing noteworthy criminals. Despite renovations and reconstructions done over years to upgrade the jail it still bears the marks of Danish architecture.



After remaining closed for about an year, Serampore Sub Correctional Home has started again with enhanced registered capacity on 27th July, 2017.



Considering its importance this Sub Correctional Home deserves administrative upgradation along with infrastructural development.

केन्द्रीय कारागार पेल बालुरघाट

उत्तर प्रदेश • कलकत्ता

२८ अगस्त : उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार के द्वारा नया केंद्रीय जेल, पेल बालुरघाट का उद्घाटन किया गया। इस जेल में २००० कैदियों को रखा जा सकेगा। इस जेल का उद्घाटन उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ ने किया।

In view of creating a new administrative circle for better prison and prisoners management, the Government has upgraded the District Correctional Home at Balurghat to a Central Correctional Home by a Notification dated 18 August, 2017. It may cater to the prisoners of Uttar Dinajpur and Maldah District apart from the Dakshin Dinajpur. Such step would also help in minimizing prisoners population in the Correctional Homes of Jalpaiguri, Berhampore and Malda.

STARS TOOK THE RAMP FOR A SPECIAL SHOWCASE BY ABHISHEK DUTTA



After having made a small start with a shed and a handful of people, Abhishek Dutta's designing unit inside the Presidency Correctional Home now occupies 12,000sq ft, done up with up-to-date infrastructure, with 45 jail inmates working in various services. If the manufacturing and stitching unit is producing in full swing, a bags and shoes unit has just been set up and the first sampling started. An embroidery adda, too, has been set up with full-fledged embroidery work happening.

The most challenging part is to keep them motivated," says Abhishek. "They get paid for each piece they produce, and if they work well they also get parole every month to meet their families," he adds.

For further motivation, 12 of the best workers were rewarded by Abhishek at a fashion show put together by the department of Correctional Services and the designer at Utlisma in Alipore on July 22. The show saw well-known faces from different fields walk the ramp in clothes produced by the jail unit — a light and easy line of prêt garments. And then the 12 inmates walked the ramp before



(From top) Abhishek Dutta; inmates of Presidency Correctional Home on the ramp at Utlisma

Gaurav Chakrabarty and Ritihima Ghosh made a cute pair on the ramp. "It was great... it wasn't about the glamour this time, it was about the clothes. I felt privileged to be associated with a cause like this where the inmates stitched the clothes. I think it's a great initiative and I'm sure it's a great motivation and inspiration for them," said Ritihima.



Paayel Sarkar

Swastika Mukherjee was easy breezy in this floral dress. "It was an eye-opener for everybody. Whenever we hear about inmates the only thing we are reminded of is their criminal identities. There is so much talent in there. They are getting the opportunity to nurture what their passion is. There are super-level cooks, painters, artists... This has been a huge motivation and inspiration for them," said she.



Paoli Dum looked ravishing in red. "It was a great initiative. I learnt from Abhishek that the person who I handed over the prize money that had stitched my garment... it was so nice! The colour was awesome, red is my favourite... the embroidery, cut... it was great that they got to do something creative. And the whole thing was more like a family affair," said Paoli.

Abhishek took the bow. The show was sponsored by Kutchina Foundation and Audi Kolkata. "All the celebs who walked left genuinely for the cause. Swastika even visited the jail unit with me a day before the show. I have got great support from everybody, even people who couldn't come for the show congratulated me later," says Abhishek.

Appreciation for the show has gone beyond boundaries. The DG of Tihar Jail has expressed interest in Abhishek putting together a show at a national correctional homes festival to be held in Delhi end-August. 12 wishes Abhishek all the best!

Smita Roy Chowdhury
Pictures: Radheshari Das



Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury



Principal secretary (correctional administration) Shivaji Ghosh (left) and DG & IG (correctional services) Arun Kumar Gupta

Manoj Tiwary



Koneenica

Ushoshi



Soham



Nigel Akkara



Indrasish



Pinky Kanworthy choreographed the show. "Great initiative to teach the inmates the skills they can use later in life. I loved the garments and it was a pleasure meeting the men who worked so hard to create them," said Pinky.



Bickram Ghosh & Jaya Seal Ghosh



Sourendro & Sourmyojit



The ramp show was accompanied by live piano by Jennifer Heemstra



Alokansha Roy



Mr



From Prison Camp to Ramp

Incarceration strips a person off every other thing including his dream for a free future but longing for a life with family keeps him alive. To utilize this period of incarceration gainfully and to channelize their energy, the Correctional Services authority has initiated the joint venture of a fashion apparel production unit at Presidency Correctional Home led by eminent fashion designer Shri Avishek Dutta. Shri Dutta is the costume designer of several box-office hits including the National Award winning film Autograph. His creations have clad cricket star Kapil Dev, film star Irfaan Khan and many more youth icons. While launch of the project was graced by very popular Tollywood actor Shri Parambrata, the collection was unfurled on a ramp by a galaxy of personalities from film, music, sports, art and media, Manoj Tiwary, Mir, Swastika, Soham, Gaurav, Riddhima, Kaninika, Paoli, Bikram Ghosh, Jaya Shil Ghosh, Alokanda Roy, Shubhparasanna to name a few. The fashion show was enjoyed over live music on piano by the august gathering. Collection of apparel was appreciated as the manifestation of labour put by the inmates to keep alive the love for life amongst them. Efforts made by the inmates created ripples nation-wide. The product range was displayed in the fashion show at Tihar Fest-2017 in Delhi. First ever such show by correctional home inmates.



“ Not all those who land up in a jail are criminals or anti-socials, many of them are victims of circumstances or maybe who have committed a crime on the spur of the moment... many of them have forgotten why they are here I decided to start this Fashion Laboratory in Tihar because I thought fashion is very important in the jail setting, I have heard of an old saying that if you look good you feel good. We want to prepare them for a life when they are out of the jail setting, when they can get over the trauma of being in jail and start leading a normal life. I would like to thank Abhishek Dutta for the great work that he is doing. He in fact beat us to it by doing a show with the works of jail inmates in Calcutta before we could do one — **Sudhir Yadav, DG of Tihar jail**



It was an absolute honour and privilege to showcase at the Tihar Festival and it's absolutely beautiful to see the inmates create those attires and wear them so confidently. In fact, they had pushed their own boundaries for good reason. To contribute to the society and make a difference in someone's life is a surreal experience and am lucky to be a part of it — **Abhishek**



From the silver screen !!!

Famous Bollywood actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui visits Fashion Unit at Presidency Correctional Home on 12 August, 2017 to encourage the prisoners in productive works.





In Safe Hand

In view of ensuring safe drinking water for inmates and staff in correctional homes, an advance level training programme was organised at Presidency Correctional Home in collaboration with 'A G Care' for fabrication of Bio-Sand Water Filters. 17 inmates were trained under this programme and 50 pieces of water filters have been manufactured at the first phase. Thus by gainfully engaging the inmates we have ensured safe potable water for staff and inmates in one hand and also been able to save huge amount in Government exchequer.

So far manufacturing of Kit Boxes by Jail Industries was limited to meet the demand of guarding staff of West Bengal Correctional Homes. Since the emphasis has been given in reformation and rehabilitation of inmates in Correctional homes through various productive works we have approached several Government organizations to procure the suitable quality material from Jail Industries. In response to our appeal we received a huge order of supplying Kit Boxes from West Bengal Police Recruitment Board (WBPRB) and we were able to supply 800 G.I. Kit Boxes to WBPRB at very competitive rate, much lower than the market. The completion of assignment within a short span by the 27 inmates engaged in manufacturing at Presidency Correctional Home is praiseworthy.

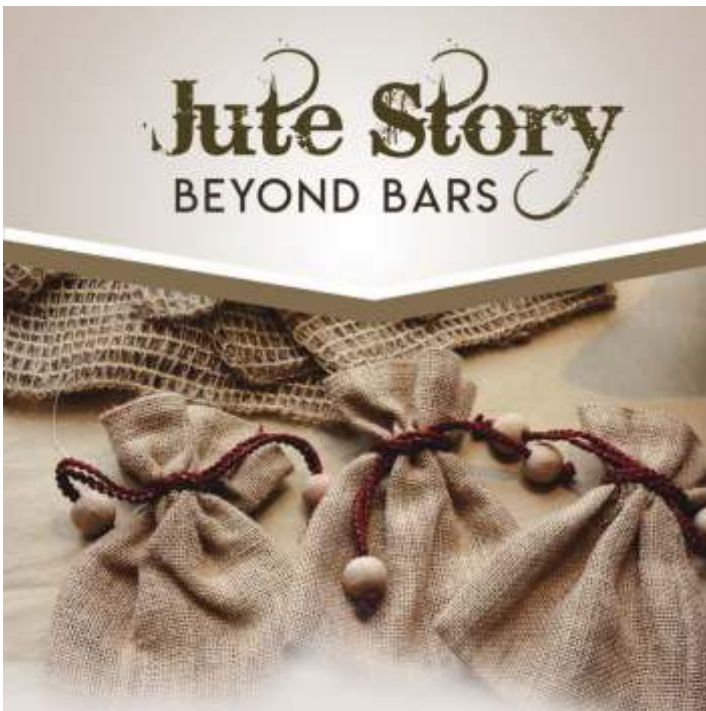
Pack Your Kit



Shedding Inhibitions

A manufactory unit with the capacity of producing 2,500 sanitary napkins a day has been set up at Burdwan Central Correctional Home under the supervision of Apostolic Carmel, an NGO, where 15 women prisoners are trained in the first phase. The number can increase up to 25 inmates at the present set up. The pilot project is nested as a training unit for the inmates from other Correctional Homes. This initiative will not only work as an income generation scope for the inmates but has come as a gift of health and freedom to them. Sri Arun Kumar Gupta, DG & IG of Correctional Services, West Bengal commissioned the new unit on 20th July, 2017 in presence of Senior Zonal Officers of West Bengal Correctional Services and Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, Burdwan.





The fibres tell the story of the maker. Each fibre has its own story - a unique one. As each human being differs from one another, so are their lives. The variety is portrayed through the fibres. Rainbow of stories transforms the simple fibre of jute into a palette. Jute items made by inmates of Dum Dum Central Correctional Home is an unadverted scrap book of hearts languishing within boundaries longing to be heard by the society beyond the bars. We appreciate the patient efforts put by Rakshak Foundation to give the world an opportunity to listen to the untold stories.



A project of production of Brown Rice by the convicts of Bankura District Correctional Home using 'Motorized Dhenki' has been taken up for developing their skills of husking brown rice through proper training. A replica of motorized dhenki has been handed over to the Superintendent, Bankura District Correctional Home on 19 September, 2017 by the Bankura Unnayani Institute of Engineering on its 20th Foundation Day.

A 'Skill Development Training on Garment Making' has been initiated for the female inmates of Bankura District Correctional Home has been initiated by MANT, an NGO working in the Western Districts of West Bengal. A small production unit has also been established in female section of the Correctional Home. The female inmates in embroidery has attained a considerable height in skill within a month and half.



04.09.2017 : A new Bakery Unit has been set up at Jalpaiguri Central Correctional Home. An initial three months training is going on with the help of Tarai Food Products Limited in collaboration with Assembly of God Church.



A training programme on "Livelihood Generation Training through Horticulture" for the prisoners of Raghunathpur Sub CH was organized in assistance with Deptt of Food Processing Industry & Horticulture.



23.07.2017 : A Pediatric Health Check Up camp for children accompanying their mothers in Correctional Home was organized at Alipore Women's Correctional Home.

23.08.2017 : A Health Check Up camp for Women was organized at Alipore Women's Correctional Home by Associated Charitable Trust.





Warm Felicitation

A number of twenty-two student-children of Correctional Home inmates and Correctional Services Staff of West Bengal were felicitated by the Department through a programme at the headquarters of Correctional Services on 28 August, 2017 in presence of Sri Ujjal Biswas, Hon'ble Minister-In-Charge of Department of Correctional Administration and Sri Sivaji Ghosh, IPS, Principal Secretary of the Department.



They neither have valid visa, nor they have valid passport - they are in prison of a foreign country. Still, prison is such a place where there is hardly any discrimination on the basis of nationality. In our prison a foreigner can cast vote in Prisoners' Panchayat Election; neither there is any law to bar them from participating in prisoners' football team.

FACES



Buddhadeb Mete a village guy from Labhpur, Birbhum when committed to jail was 29 only. As a family tradition, he used to participate in the musical shows with his elder brother since the age of 10. He made a group of 12 singers and used to present Bolan songs from one village to another in his boyhood. Though he had to work in a rice mill in his early youth, he always tried to find the opportunity to explore himself through his passion of Bengali folk music and even shared the stage with reputed Baul singers. Imprisonment couldn't seize his love for music and this attracted the attention of renowned theatre personality Pradip Bhattacharya during his theatre workshop for prisoners at Berhampore Central Correctional Home. Since then Buddhadeb is the lead actor in all his productions. His acting skill in 'Taser Desh', 'Tota Kahini', 'Jakkhapuri' left the theatre lovers and critics mesmerized all over the State and beyond. He has achieved recognition for his cultural activities on several occasions. We wish for more feathers in his cap.