

India

Tinka Tinka Foundation

Tinka Tinka Foundation is a Public Charitable Trust constituted to work on prison reforms by encouraging inmates to reform through art, culture, literature and media and celebrate the progress made by them. It aims at joining dots by connecting jails and subsequently inmates, to each other.

Prison Radio is one such important tool of communication that is conceptualized and executed by Tinka Tinka in several jails in India.

Dr. Vartika Nanda is the founder of this Trust. Being a former journalist who was the first woman to head a crime beat on Indian Television as well as the founder member and first Executive Producer of Lok Sabha TV (lower house of Indian Parliament) and now head of Department of Journalism at Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University, she is attempting to make use of her journalistic, academic and literary background towards the enrichment of the lives of inmates.

PROGRESS

- 2019: 31 July: Tinka Tinka Foundation started its first prison radio in District Jail Agra, situated in the largest state of India, Uttar Pradesh. This jail is one of the oldest surviving prison buildings in India. Inspired by this initiative, jail radio was started in other prisons in the state.
- 2021: January- April: Tinka Tinka started the first prison radio in the state of Haryana and radios were started later in six other prisons of the state. Tinka Tinka played key role in all the stages of prison radio from the beginning till execution, including shortlisting and audition of inmates, training, dry run, final selection of programmes, content creation and getting on air.
- First Prison Radio of the state was inaugurated in District Jail, Panipat by the Jail Minister of Haryana. Prison radios in the second phase were inaugurated by the Additional Chief Secretary (Home & Jail Department), Government of Haryana & Director General of Prisons, Haryana.
- As a rare initiative, seven prison radios were launched in a span of four months starting from January 16 to April 29. Haryana state has 19 prisons in total, out of them seven now have stations. Other five are in development.
- 47 inmates have been trained in the first two phases.
- This was completely done on an honorary basis.

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IMPACT

- 1. Reduced Stress and Depression:**
Feedback clearly indicates that those inmates who were directly associated with Jail Radio reported reduced level of depression.
- 2. Increased self-confidence:**
Participants shared that they have gained immensely in terms of confidence, exposure and skills due to the training received by them for prison radio. Their levels of stress have fallen and confidence has improved. The launch of the radio has positively impacted both the listener audience as well as the jail staff. Jail officials have witnessed a fall in incidents of aggression and indiscipline in jail.
- 3. Increased interest:** At least 30 new inmates have expressed the desire to be radio jockeys. New inmates have come forward to participate in the radio as singers.

- 4. Tool to communicate:** Prison radio has helped inmates speak about their concerns related to Covid-19. Jail radio is the tool which has helped them deal with difficult circumstances during the pandemic. Inmates have started using radio as an important instrument of communication, especially in the absence of visitations / mulaqats.
- 5. Art and creativity:** Jail radio has helped them bring out their creativity in varied forms. Sheru, a Tinka Radio Jockey, lodged in Central Jail, Ambala sang a song on Covid-19 which was released on May 22. This song was retweeted by the Union Health Minister, Government of India which served as a morale booster to both inmates and the jail staff.

- 6. Local language and dialect:**
Inmates have expressed their happiness on being given the opportunity to use their mother tongue / local language.
- 7. Raising awareness on Covid-19:**
Prison Radio has emerged as a major tool to raise awareness on news, information and support related to Covid-19. It is working as an internal communication system.
- 8. Useful in providing legal aid:**
Prison radio is being regularly used as a channel of communication by legal authorities during their jail visits. Legal representatives make use of the prison radio frequently to answer queries of inmates. This has rendered the legal aid process safer and convenient during the pandemic. The Chief Judicial Magistrate of Ambala has confirmed that she would like to continue making use of prison radio in the future as well.

