

# ANNUAL REPORT

2023-24



## LAW Foundation

A Pathway to Justice



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2023-24

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# About Us

LAW Foundation is a non-governmental organization facilitating socio-legal aid services towards custodial population primarily belonging to the marginalized and vulnerable sections of the society, incarcerated in various prisons across Bihar, India.

The interventions of LAW Foundation aims to facilitate sustainable mental health services & social well-being to prisoners and marginalized communities apart from providing socio-legal aid services and counseling. The organization also collaborates with various key stakeholders, governmental and non-governmental organizations at the grass-roots level for making justice more easily accessible to people.

LAW Foundations does capacity building, conducts training programs, boot camps and field researches .

## Mission

To extend socio-legal aid to disadvantaged communities, groups, and individuals, enabling access to constitutional rights

## Vision

To end structural inequality towards the disadvantaged population and promote fair, just and inclusive society for all

# Core Interventions

## Socio-Legal Aid Services

Providing socio-legal aid to custodial populations is essential to address prison overcrowding. Our social workers offer counseling to prisoners, support their families, and assist with social protective schemes and emergency rations. Meanwhile, our legal team extends crucial legal remedies to inmates. This comprehensive approach aims to improve the well-being of both prisoners and their families.



## Sustainable Mental Health in Prisons and Communities

Our team's initiatives align with the mental health social work intervention framework within the criminal justice system, focusing on preventing and reducing mental health issues in prisons. By providing mental health support to prisoners and their families, conducting awareness sessions, forming peer support groups, and advocating for social entitlements rights, we aim to create a sustainable positive environment for mental health.

# Core Interventions

## Community Engagement

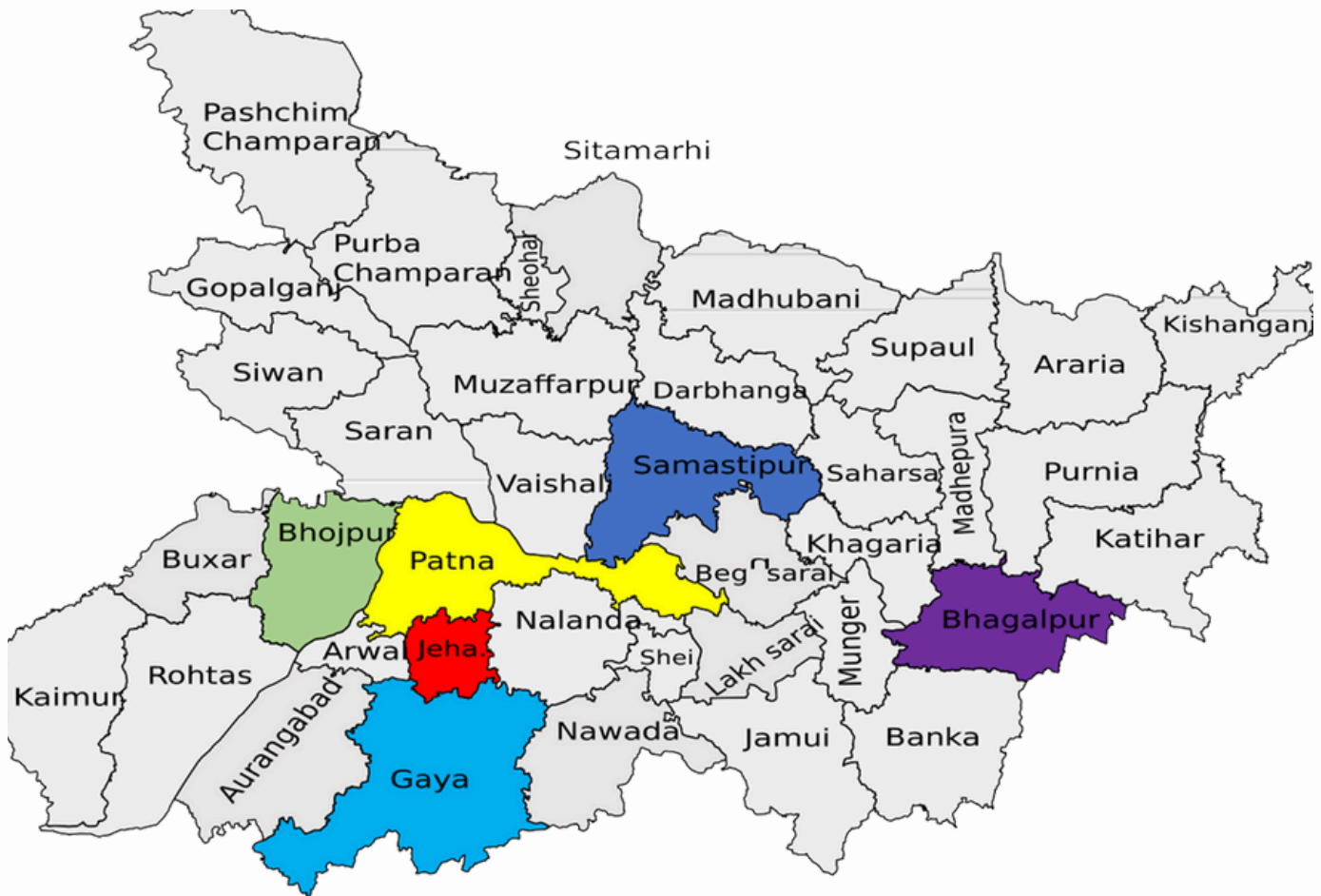
LAW Foundation is also working with a community in Jehanabad. We work with historically disadvantaged communities such as the Musahar community among others, it is one of the most deprived communities, known as 'Mahadalits' in the context of Bihar. As one of the poorest and most disadvantaged communities, the Musahars face significant socio-economic challenges. We intervene by providing social entitlement rights, legal awareness, and other essential support services to empower these communities.



## Social Re-integration and Livelihood

Social workers prepare rehabilitation and reintegration processes for prisoners to facilitate their smooth return to the community. This includes conducting follow-up visits, providing emergency support, and connecting them with livelihood sources.

# Our Outreach



- **PATNA**
- **GAYA**
- **JEHANABAD**
- **BHOJPUR**
- **BHAGALPUR**
- **SAMASTIPUR**

# Our Initiatives

**Jail Visits:** Our socio-legal intervention starts from prison. We visit prisons to identify marginalized, poor, and abandoned prisoners who are in need of our socio-legal assistance.

**Home Visits:** Once a person is incarcerated in prison, family ties break, and mulakaati does not happen. In such circumstances, the organization conducts home visits to guide and counsel the family in relation to various socio-legal issues that exist and their remedies.

**Legal aid:** We provide legal aid services to poor, abandoned, marginalized, and undertrial prisoners, in form of bail, trial, appeal, writs, and PIL.

**Counseling:** Long-term incarceration badly affects the mental health of prisoners in jail. By providing regular counseling, we help them in overcoming mental health issues which they deal with every day.

**Legal Awareness:** Disseminating information about legal rights, government policies, and other entitlements through awareness programs, seminars, etc.

**Community Engagement:** We engage in the community through providing social entitlement rights and legal awareness. Our aim is to empower the marginalized communities and the youth.

# Collaborations



## DISTRICT LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

The organization has organized 15 de-addiction sessions and 20 mental health awareness sessions, in prisons including Model Central Jail, Beur, District Camp Jail Phulwari Sharif, Sub-Jail Danapur, and Sub-Jail Masauri.



## SHELTER HOMES

In collaboration with shelter homes in Patna, the organization facilitates shelter to ex-prisoners who are destitute, disowned by family, elderly person, and persons experiencing any physical or mental health issues.



## INTERNSHIPS

We at LAW Foundation help students to explore the realm of working in a court structure, identification of cases, and community based advocacy. They also engage in research work. Students from different universities like CNLU, CUSB, NALSAR, Patna University, O.P. Jindal, NUJS, Symbiosis intern with us every year.



## UNIVERSITY OF PATNA

The LAW Foundation and Patna University's sociology departments organized a workshop with 48 students to emphasize social work's role in the criminal justice system.

# Collaborations



## JUVENILE JUSTICE BOARD

The organization partnered with the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB), Patna to address cases where juveniles were mistakenly remanded as adults and imprisoned in jail instead of being placed in an observation home.

## M POWER

In collaboration with M Power, the organization has conducted 14 mental health awareness sessions, including 9 sessions within prisons and 5 in the community, reaching a total of 572 participants.

## PRATHAM

The LAW Foundation recently collaborated with PRATHAM's team in Bihar to promote livelihood skills for families of prisoners and community members.



## DEPARTMENT OF PROBATION SYSTEM

On the occasion of International Prisoner's Justice Day at Central Jail, Beur, the LAW Foundation collaborated with the Department of Probation System to discuss the effective implementation of the Probation of Offenders Act in Bihar.

# Collaborations



## MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

The Ministry of Justice in collaboration with Bihar Institute of Public & Rural Development and Chanakya National Law University have initiated a pan Legal Literacy and legal awareness program under the DISHA scheme.



Adv. Shalini and Adv. Santosh Kumar from LAW Foundation was invited as resource person to provide training to 100 nyaya mitras in different parts of Bihar, on the topic Domestic violence and child marriage and Addiction with Special Emphasis on Alcohol Ban in Bihar.



## CHILD RIGHTS CENTER- CHANAKYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY

LAW Foundation partnered with the Child Rights Centre of Chanakya National Law University, Patna, for conducting a study on Children Incarcerated as Adults in Prisons across Bihar. The collaboration has been running since 2019 thereafter.



## CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH BIHAR

The collaboration between the Central University of South Bihar's pro bono club, led by Dr. Deo Narayan Singh, and the LAW Foundation was aimed at inspiring students to embrace pro bono principles within the criminal justice system. Mr. Praveen Kumar, Adv. Shalini, and Adv. Santosh Kumar, highlighted the practical aspects of legal aid and social work, fostering enthusiasm among students to learn more.

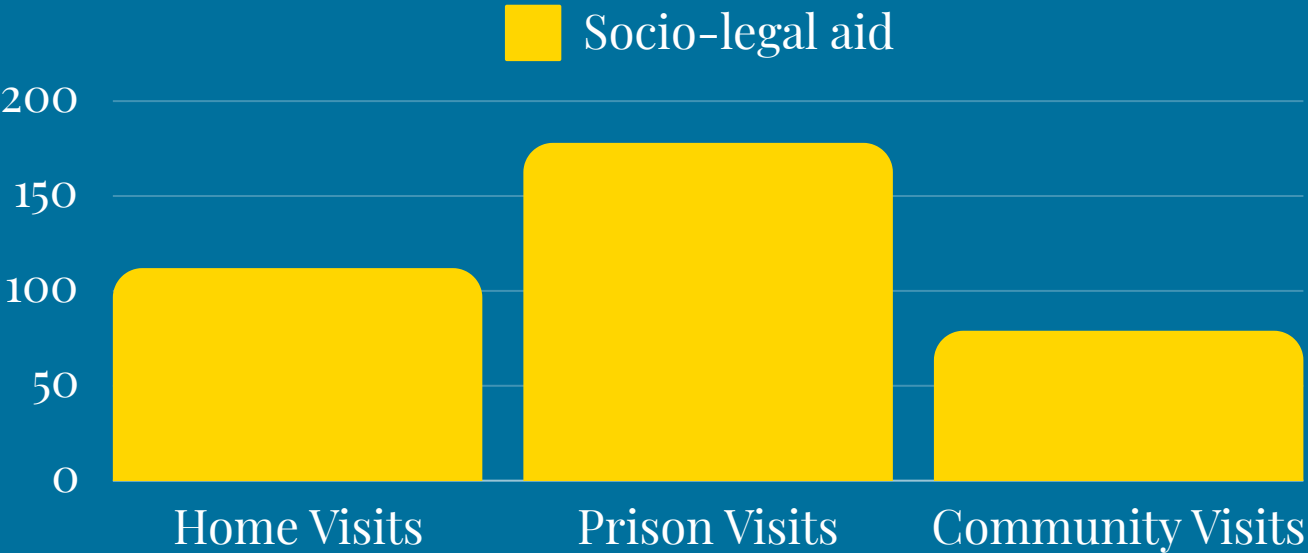
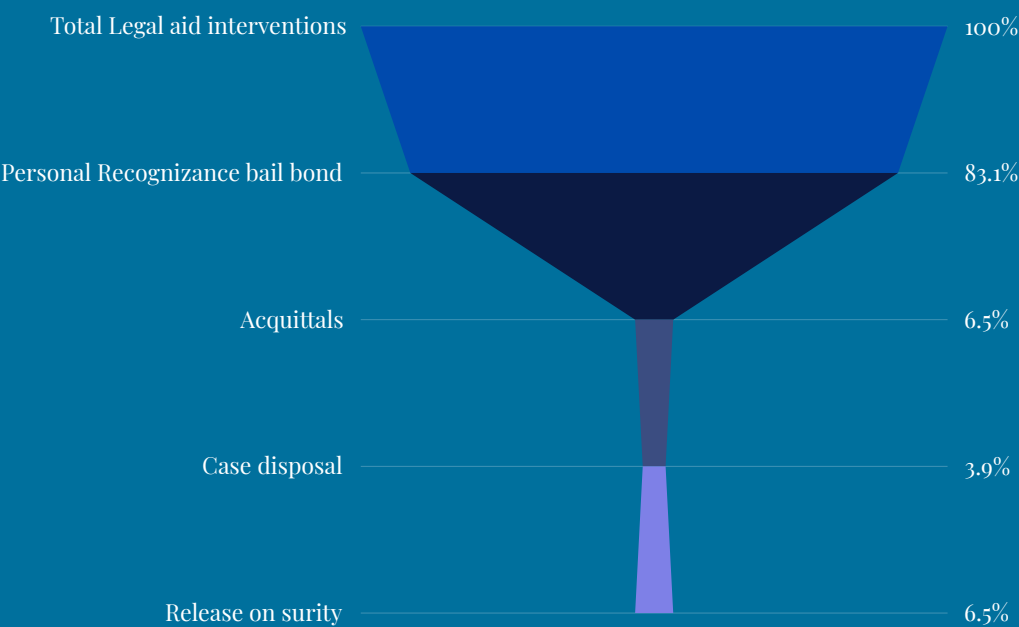
# Social Impact in Numbers

| Initiatives                             | Numbers |
|---|---------|
| Case Intervention                       | 204     |
| Personal Recognizance bail bond         | 128     |
| Acquittals                              | 10      |
| Case disposal                           | 06      |
| Release on Surety                       | 10      |
| Home Visits                             | 112     |
| Prison Visits                           | 178     |
| Mental Health Interventions             | 92      |
| Mental Health and De-addiction Sessions | 35      |
| Community Visits                        | 79      |

# Social Impact in Numbers

Socio-legal-aid is an intervention model that claims to restore the principles of Justice, Equality, and Equity in the Criminal Justice System in India. This Annual report, April'23 to March'24 represents socio-legal aid provided by LAW Foundation.

The graphical representation of the data is given below.



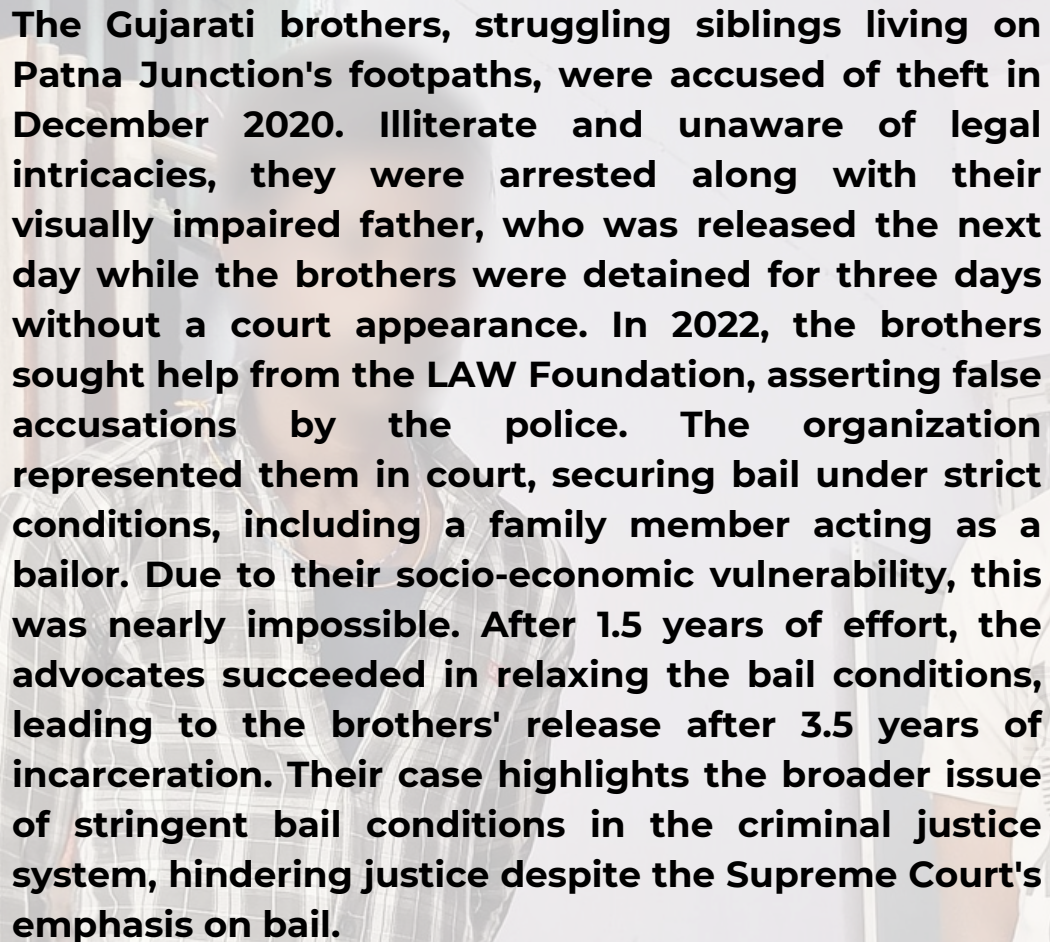
# Highlight

The organization has a set of two types of Para Legal Volunteers working towards empowering their fellows with legal rights, namely Jail Para Legal Volunteers (JPLVs) & Community Para Legal Volunteers (CPLVs).

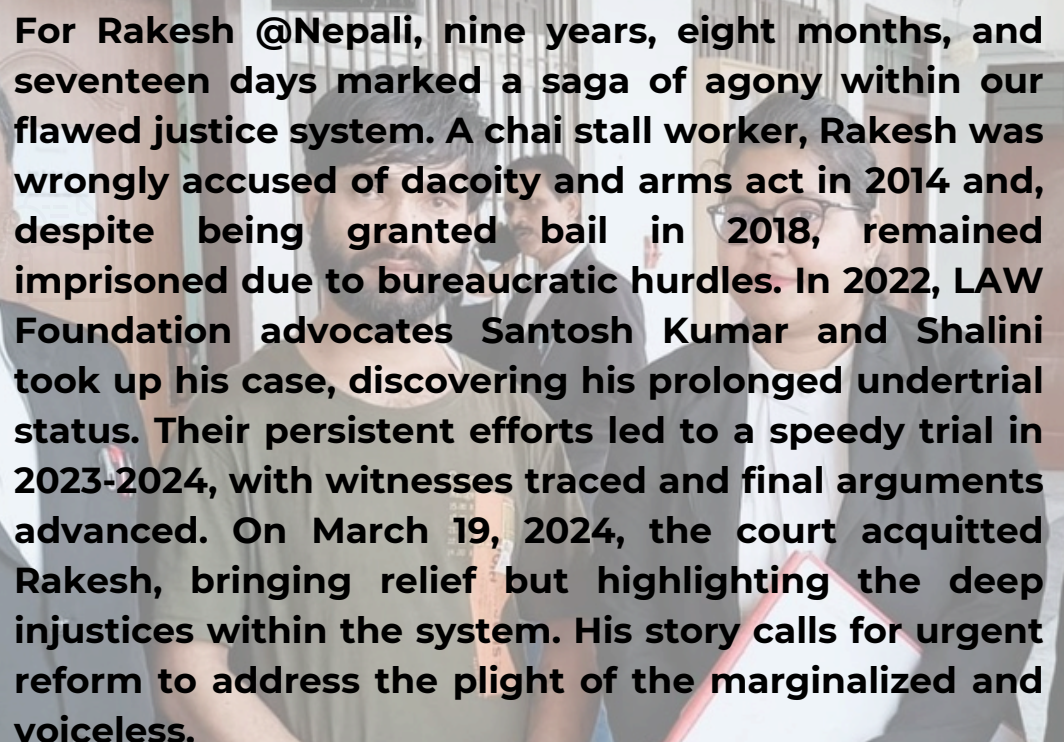
**Jail Para Legal Volunteers (JPLVs)** are convicted prisoners conscientiously trained by the legal team members and prison authorities. They are trained with basic legal knowledge including primary legal processes, identifying under-trial prisoners in need of socio-legal aid and orchestrating documents. The organization particularly trains JPLVs in writing legal applications, filling Vakalatnama, bail bond forms, preparing affidavits and writing Personal Recognizance (PR) bail bond applications. Moreover, they work to bridge the communication gap between DLSA members and concerned inmates. JPLVs act as a point of contact between prisoners and their lawyers.

**The organization was selected one among the finalists in the AGAMI Idea Prize for initiation of JPLVs concept.** JPLVs as a concept originated when the organization faced a difficulty of constant engagement with the prisoner because of the limited time and resources. Since they are convicted prisoners, they remain inside the prison and constantly engage with other prisoners that helps the organization to work effectively in limited resources. In the last year a total of 236 under-trial prisoners were identified by JPLVs who were in dire need of socio-legal aid services and were informed to the organization. As of 2023, LAW Foundation has a total of 12 JPLVs working with us in various prisons across Patna, Bihar.

# Case Impact Narratives




The Gujarati brothers, struggling siblings living on Patna Junction's footpaths, were accused of theft in December 2020. Illiterate and unaware of legal intricacies, they were arrested along with their visually impaired father, who was released the next day while the brothers were detained for three days without a court appearance. In 2022, the brothers sought help from the LAW Foundation, asserting false accusations by the police. The organization represented them in court, securing bail under strict conditions, including a family member acting as a bailor. Due to their socio-economic vulnerability, this was nearly impossible. After 1.5 years of effort, the advocates succeeded in relaxing the bail conditions, leading to the brothers' release after 3.5 years of incarceration. Their case highlights the broader issue of stringent bail conditions in the criminal justice system, hindering justice despite the Supreme Court's emphasis on bail.

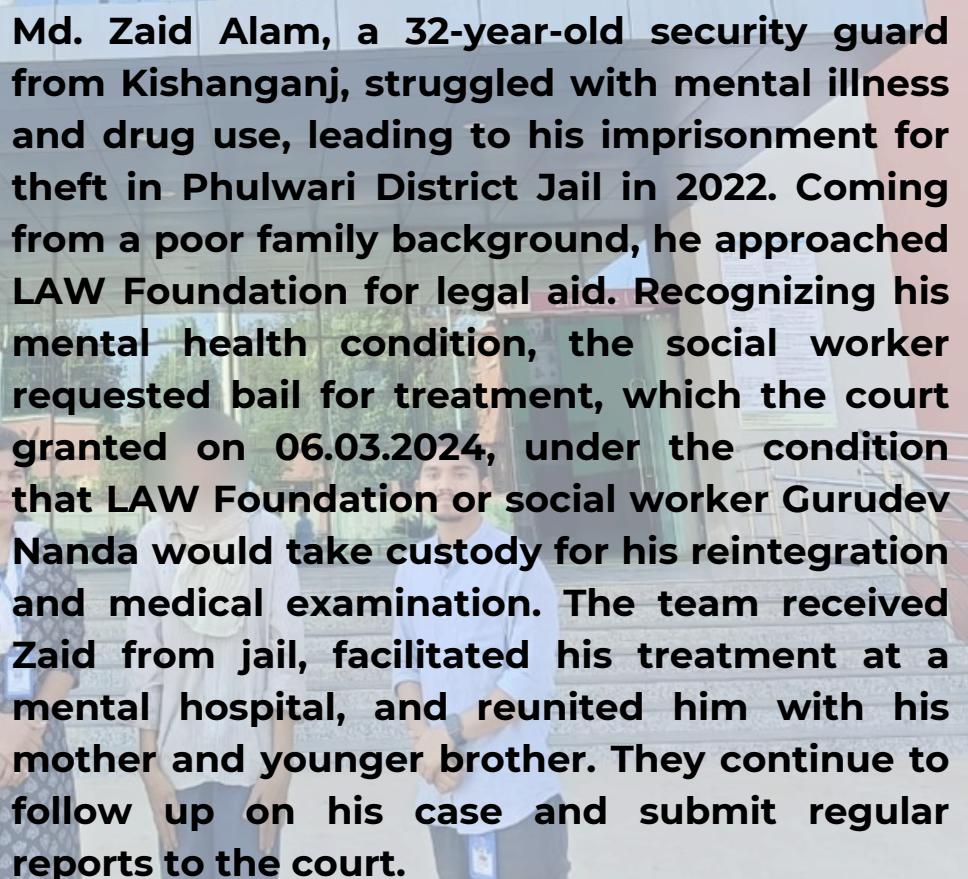


For Rakesh @Nepali, nine years, eight months, and seventeen days marked a saga of agony within our flawed justice system. A chai stall worker, Rakesh was wrongly accused of dacoity and arms act in 2014 and, despite being granted bail in 2018, remained imprisoned due to bureaucratic hurdles. In 2022, LAW Foundation advocates Santosh Kumar and Shalini took up his case, discovering his prolonged undertrial status. Their persistent efforts led to a speedy trial in 2023-2024, with witnesses traced and final arguments advanced. On March 19, 2024, the court acquitted Rakesh, bringing relief but highlighting the deep injustices within the system. His story calls for urgent reform to address the plight of the marginalized and voiceless.

# Case Impact Narratives



**Manash Kumar, a 20-year-old disowned by his family due to criminal activities, sought legal aid from LAW Foundation after being jailed for theft in July 2023. Despite a troubled past, Manash impressed the team with his politeness and intelligence. The social worker provided mental health and moral support, learning that Manash had not seen his mother in six years. The team located his mother, who initially resisted reuniting due to past financial losses caused by Manash. However, the team assured her of their commitment to his reintegration, supported by positive jail reports. Believing in his potential for change, the team continues to support his reformation and family reunification.**



**Md. Zaid Alam, a 32-year-old security guard from Kishanganj, struggled with mental illness and drug use, leading to his imprisonment for theft in Phulwari District Jail in 2022. Coming from a poor family background, he approached LAW Foundation for legal aid. Recognizing his mental health condition, the social worker requested bail for treatment, which the court granted on 06.03.2024, under the condition that LAW Foundation or social worker Gurudev Nanda would take custody for his reintegration and medical examination. The team received Zaid from jail, facilitated his treatment at a mental hospital, and reunited him with his mother and younger brother. They continue to follow up on his case and submit regular reports to the court.**

# Media and Publications



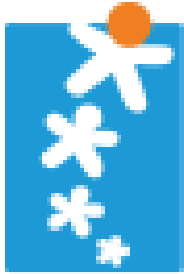
# Media and Publications





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# Our Partners



Azim Premji  
Foundation

