



# KAASH KONNECT

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AN INITIATIVE BY



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## KRITAGYA: HONOURING THE ANGANWADI SEVIKAS OF VIKRAMGAD

by Yashodhan Deodhar

Manusmriti 3:56 says, 'yatra naaryastu pujiyante, ramante tatra devat:' i.e. 'where women are honoured, divinity blossoms'. Since ancient times, women have received tremendous respect in India - be it religion or mythology, education or social life. In present times, the 8<sup>th</sup> of March is celebrated to honour the contribution of women to our lives, and to acknowledge their continued struggle and the support they require in the fight for equality and gender sensitization.

'Kritagya' or gratitude is the flagship event of KAASH Foundation, to further this noble cause. This is an annual attempt to celebrate women who have distinguished themselves in various fields, and are survivors of a variety of crimes. It seeks to recognise their efforts, and to act as inspiration to the next generation of change makers and leaders.

The first iteration of Kritagya was launched in an online mode on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021, which was attended by over 300 enthusiastic participants. It witnessed the participation of Honourable Member of Parliament Smt. Supriya Tai Sule, Superintendent of Police Ms. Mokshada Patil, I.P.S., as well as the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of the BMC Dr. Gomare, who headed the successful vaccination drive in Mumbai during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The second edition was held offline in the Hindu Gymkhana, near Marine Drive (Mumbai), on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

### KAASH FOUNDATION MUMBAI

(Registered under Bombay Trust Act, 1950 and NITI Aayog, Government of India)



### KAASH FOUNDATION'S FLAGSHIP PROGRAM

कृतज्ञः Kritagya

is here for the Fourth Consecutive Year



This one's truly special as we will be felicitating the Anganwadi Sevikas who have relentlessly supported our project in Vikramgad

Theme for IWD 2024  
Invest in Women:  
Accelerate Progress

Date: 8th March 2024  
Venue: Vikramgad Panchayat Samiti, Vikramgad, Palghar District, Maharashtra

To know more about us, kindly visit our website: [www.kaashfoundation.org](http://www.kaashfoundation.org)

Dignitaries included Dr. Katke, a famous gynaecologist from Mumbai, who formerly served as the Medical Superintendent at Cama Hospital and is currently the Head of Department at J.J. Hospital. Also gracing the event were entrepreneurs Ms. Kavita Kapoor and Arjuna Awardee Ms. Shivani Parab (in the Mallakhamb category). The function was attended by over 45 women of the KAASH Foundation Family.

The third edition, in 2023, was held at a resort in Virar, exclusively for the women of the KAASH Family. The special guest for this event was Ms. Sneha Jawale, an activist of international acclaim and a survivor of domestic violence. Having been set on fire by her own husband, she





survived to become a renowned activist, whose active opposition to atrocities against women is known to many. This day-long event witnessed the participation of over 20 members.

The fourth and the latest edition in 2024, worked to promote the welfare of *anganwadi sevikas* in the Vikramgad taluka of the Palghar district of Maharashtra. The Foundation was working towards this over the last three years, identifying *anganwadi sevikas* whose dedicated efforts had led to exemplary results. These women, hired on a contractual basis with meagre wages and no employment benefits, often work in adverse conditions. They are responsible for the health quotient of toddlers and children below five years, looking after their education and recording their scale of malnutrition. Often, their work demands long distance travelling and engaging with family members to prepare a database for the government to introduce various schemes.

The event was held in the Kattarpada Primary School, facilitated by Ms. Geetanjali, an *anganwadi sevika* herself. 50 *sevikas* from 20 centres such as Khadaki, Jadhavpada, Mahalpada, Saarshi, Jhadpoli, etc. were invited to the event and share their experiences and views.

The event consisted of three activities:

**Activity 1:** Addressing everyone present on the importance of Women's Day, introducing the Foundation's activities, and recognizing the challenges that *anganwadi sevikas* encounter while performing their duties.

**Activity 2:** A variety of games geared towards team building, decision making, and uncovering inner potential were organized. A small quiz competition highlighting prominent female personalities was also held. Winners received awards to encourage them to read and learn outside of their regular scale of work.

**Activity 3:** Each *sevika* received a beautiful designed bag for her regular use. They were also encouraged to provide feedback on the event and assure us that they would excel in their roles as *anganwadi sevikas*.

As these *sevikas* do not receive any pension, knowledge of financial literacy and investment planning are essential for them. To address this concern, the Foundation



Ms. Preeti Parmar, Member, KAASH Foundation and Dr. Renuka Vyas, Joint Director (Health), KAASH Foundation, paying tribute to Smt. Savitribai Phule, one of the first female teachers of India, a social reformer, and poetess



Anganwadi Sevikas present at the venue to celebrate Women's Day



Dr. Renuka Vyas addressing the anganwadi sevikas on the significance of Women's Day



Ms. Preeti Parmar presenting a token of appreciation to an anganwadi sevika for her excellent performance at the quiz competition conducted by KAASH Foundation



Dr. Renuka Vyas presenting a token of appreciation to an anganwadi sevika for her excellent performance at the quiz competition conducted by KAASH Foundation



Mr. Parmar, Member, KAASH Foundation, presenting a token of appreciation to an anganwadi sevika for her excellent performance at the quiz competition conducted by the Foundation



Mr. Vedic Parmar, Youth Brigade Member, KAASH Foundation, presenting a token of appreciation to an anganwadi sevika for her excellent performance at the quiz competition conducted by the Foundation



Mr. Mehul Parmar, Member, KAASH Foundation, presenting a token of appreciation to an anganwadi sevika for her excellent performance at the quiz competition conducted by the Foundation



plans to organize a financial literacy camp, to help secure their vulnerable future. KAASH Foundation was extremely honoured to celebrate this event in the tribal areas and felicitate these unsung heroes of the society, who work silently and diligently in one of the most remote parts of Maharashtra. The reward of all the efforts was the happiness on the *anganwadi sevikas*' faces, and their pride upon getting acknowledged.

One of the *aanganwadi sevikas* mentioned, "This event further strengthened our belief in performing our duties with increased dedication and honesty." Another honourable *sevika* expressed, "All these years we didn't know that there is any special day dedicated to the women, and it makes me too proud to be a woman and that I am contributing towards the betterment of our society." Many of them were overwhelmed by this celebration organized for them, there was a sense of pride and motivation that 'our efforts are not overlooked by society and we are also equal stakeholders in this world.'

During the course of this event, valuable assistance was lent by the Integrated Children Development Scheme (ICDS) of the Government of Maharashtra, as well as its supervisor in-charge, Ms. Suvarna, who certainly deserves a special mention.

This event was a grand success, and KAASH



Dr. Renuka Vyas presenting printed design bags to anganwadi sevikas for their participation in the event



Ms. Preeti Parmar presenting printed design bags to anganwadi sevikas for their participation in the event



Foundation could make a difference in the lives of the *anganwadi sevikas*, and could bring them in touch with the society they

serve so nobly. A grand salute, indeed, to them and all the women of the world, for making this a wonderful planet.

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*"Life is not easy for any of us. But what of that? We must have perseverance and above all confidence in ourselves. We must believe that we are gifted for something and that this thing must be attained."*

**-Marie Curie,  
Physicist**

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## EDITOR'S DESK



Women nurture not only the health of young children but also their minds. The caring and secure environment given to young minds goes on to shape the mindsets, behaviors and actions as we prepare them to be the future leaders. Our Angawadi Sevikas spend their lives caring and nurturing young children which, in turn, allows their parents to peacefully work and earn an income for the family. It was time to honor these dedicated helpers of our society. On Women's Day, KF held a daylong event to respect and compliment them. The joys and happiness reflected in the faces of these young Sevikas, as they received the token of appreciation, just endorsed the fact that we are on the right path.

It was also the time to renew our commitment towards looking after our young wards at Vikramgad. Our young members, Lipika and Mayank Podar chose to celebrate the first birthday of their first child with our adopted children. What better way to receive blessings of the Almighty! -when you share your most precious moment with the lesser halves of our society. It also reflects the ethics and integrity of our members who are ready to share the goodness to spread more joy around.

We also bring you our plans that we have charted for the year to take you along our journey to the future. Wishing all our readers a Happy Reading.

## FOUNDER'S DESK



This year, KAASH Foundation celebrated its annual Women's Day event, 'Kritagya' for the fourth consecutive year and offered tribute to the strongest being on the planet. As rightly stated by Anna Quindlen, an Author & Journalist: After all those years as a woman hearing, 'not thin enough, not pretty enough, not smart enough, not this enough, not that enough,' almost overnight, I woke up one morning and thought, 'I am enough'.

The foundation has a strong women workforce and their dedication and commitment to the cause is inspirational. The celebration should not be just confined to metropolis, and so we took a step forward to go amidst the unsung and unrecognised heroes of the tribal areas in the interiors of Maharashtra. The event was celebrated with the Anganwadi Sevikas who diligently work and offer their best service even under the adverse conditions. The activities of distribution drive was part of our Rural and Tribal Community Outreach Program wherein we offered nutritional hampers to the children in the tribal areas of Vikramgad, Palghar. We have been working on this project for more than two years now and have a commitment to upgrade the health index of these malnourished children. As Kofi Annan, Seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations expressed rightly: "Extreme poverty anywhere is a threat to human security everywhere."

## KAASH KONNECT TEAM

**Founder :-** *Dr. Avkash Jadhav*  
**Editor-in-chief :-** *Dr. Geeta Ajit*

**Designer:-**  
*Sahil Jahagirdar*

**Senior Reporters:-**  
*Pamela Dhonde (Head)*  
*Pranati Trivedi (Senior Reporter)*

**Junior Reporters:-**  
*Yashodhan Deodhar*  
*Varsha Prasad*



# DISTRIBUTION DRIVE AT VIKRAMGAD

by Varsha Prasad

Life's most persistent and urgent question is, "What are you doing for others?"

- Martin Luther King Jr.

KAASH Foundation believes in keeping its promises and honoring its word. In November 2021, KAASH Foundation had pledged to make every effort to eliminate malnutrition among the poor rural children at Vikramgad. In continuation of its promise, on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2024, KAASH Foundation organized a Distribution Drive for these children at Vikramgad. The Foundation was able to cater to over 70 malnourished children during the event. This was also a special occasion since the Foundation's youngest member Prisha Mayank Podar celebrated her first birthday. Prisha is the daughter of the Foundation's Advisory Committee Member Mr. Mayank Podar and Program Director of Vikramgad Ms. Lippika Mayank Podar.

As part of the drive, nutritional essentials like *chikkis* and *laddoos* made of millets, groundnuts, dry fruits, and *rajgira* were distributed. Milk cakes in the form of *pedhas* were specially ordered from Kutch and distributed. These *pedhas* were carefully prepared with high quality ingredients to ensure a delightful taste and texture. A

peculiar sweet called *mohan thal*, which is made of *gram dal besan* was also distributed. As the children enjoyed these tasty treats, they had a glimpse of the passion and affection that KAASH Foundation showers on them.

It has been three years since KF began this project by adopting 150 children from the village and since then, it has been relentlessly continuing its efforts to address the problem of malnutrition amongst them. It is indeed heartening to see significant improvements in their health indexes.

A special thanks to this year's drive goes to the Podar family, who decided to celebrate their only daughter's first birthday with the children of Vikramgad. While blessings and happiness were showered on little Prisha, she extended it to those who otherwise lived on bleary days. The young couple has carved out a new path in this materialistic world where new parents celebrate the birthdays of their offsprings in pomp and grandeur within the higher echelons of society. Mayank and Lippika, through this, have laid new paradigms in hope that many more young parents will follow suit.

The joy and happiness on the faces of the children of Vikramgad as they partook in



**KAASH FOUNDATION MUMBAI**  
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**KAASH FOUNDATION IS ORGANIZING A  
DISTRIBUTION DRIVE  
for the  
Malnourished Children of Vikramgad**



**Date: 9th March 2024**  
**Venue: Vikramgad Panchayat Samiti,  
Vikramgad, Palghar District, Maharashtra**

**This is also a very special day as our  
youngest member, Prisha Mayank  
Podar will celebrate her 1st birthday  
with the tribal kids at Vikramgad!**

To know more about us, kindly visit our website: [www.kaashfoundation.org](http://www.kaashfoundation.org)

the birthday celebration of little Prisha will be etched in the memory of all those who were present there!

KAASH Foundation once again extends a heartfelt gratitude to Mayank and Lippika for this decision!



Children & their mothers present for the Distribution Drive



Dr. Avkash Jadhav, Founder-Trustee, KAASH Foundation, addressing the children & their mothers





Mr. Mehul Parmar and Ms. Preeti Parmar, Members of KAASH Foundation along with Mr. Vedic Parmar, Youth Brigade Member of KAASH Foundation arranging snacks for the children present for the drive



Dr. Renuka Vyas, Joint Director (Health), KAASH Foundation, distributing snacks to the children present



Dr. Renuka Vyas is joined by Mr. Mehul Parmar in the distribution drive



Dr. Avkash Jadhav and an anganwadi sevika participate in the distribution drive



Ms. Preeti Parmar participating in the drive



# KAASH CREATIVE CORNER

## ECHOES OF SILENCE

BY SABEEH AKHTAR (TYLLB, GOVERNMENT LAW COLLEGE, MUMBAI)



Darkness accompanies silence  
Sorrow, regret and lament  
Unfortunately this repeats  
With every sunset

Where one must find peace  
When heart bleeds deep  
Fears constrain wings  
Chained and trapped is life

Cannot quench thirst  
Since rivers dried  
And rains faded  
It's silence giving darkness

All lone the road  
Beneath a light  
But with no use  
I just cry and write





# EUPHORIA

BY JINISHA KOTI (TYLLB, K.C. LAW COLLEGE, MUMBAI)





# BIRTHDAY WISHES

**Samiksha Singh**  
17th January



**Rehan Ansari**  
5th February



**Nandita Moitra**  
5th February



**Alpa Mehta**  
27th February



**Pooja Malkar**  
17th February



**Vijayalaxmi Jadhav**  
4th March



**Anuja Augustin**  
3rd March



**Jinansh Dugger**  
25th March



**Maria Noronha**  
28th March

