

EXPERIENCES and THOUGHTS...

This incident took place in October 1917, when, due to some special reason, my friend and his wife could pay their obeisance in Sai's *Darbar* for the second time in the same week.

Since there was no place in Dixit's *wada*, Sri Balabhau Chandorkar offered his stock room next to the boarding house for their stay. Unfortunately, the abundant termites in the room bit them day and night and made their lives miserable.

My friend was sure that if he spread Baba's *Udi* around the sleeping area, they would be able to sleep comfortably; but he did not feel it appropriate to put the *Udi* to this use and so they both bore the discomfort.

One night, when my friend could not sleep, he thought, 'Sai loves me dearly. He takes care of all my worldly troubles. Though I constantly realise this, I am not doing any *seva* of Sai. In 1911, Baba gave me a special blessing which I insist on being fulfilled in this very life. This makes it impossible for Him to leave His body. My mental demand thus causes His body great anguish. My unbreakable bond with Sai is for this life and for all lives gone and yet to come. So, why should I enforce Him to keep my vow ? It is not my wish to be legendary. Since Sai is taking care of me in this life, why should I bother about future lives ? Why should I worry about life and death ? When I have such a loving and caring mother in Sai - The Mother of the world - why should I be apprehensive ?'

So, in his mind he lovingly made a pledge - 'Baba, my wish to fulfil Your blessing in this very life is improper for a mere mortal like me. Kindly fulfil Your blessing in whichever birth You may desire it to be accomplished. Henceforth I will not hanker for it.' He made this mental promise and went to sleep. He did not tell his wife about it, lest she changed his mind.

The next morning, when he reached for *Sai Darshan*, Sai said to Dixit, "Kaka, this Bhau has flung what I gave him on my face ! He wishes to go down in the doldrums ! What can I say ?"

Dixit did not understand anything. When he came to know the whole story from my friend after the *Aarati*, he felt sad.

When they both went for *Sai Darshan* in the afternoon, Baba said to my friend, "You should read some spiritual books !" 'When there is a walking - talking book in front of me, what can I read ?' thought my friend and smiled. Sai looked at him and smiled lovingly. Seeing the benevolent smile, my friend got rid of any ifs and buts in his mind and with tears flowing from his eyes did *Abhishek* on Baba's Feet. Sai placed His hand on my friend's head and blessed him.

When they returned, Dixit asked, "So what will you read ?" My friend replied, "Ask Baba !" Dixit had great regard for my friend and he was curious. In the evening, he asked Sai, "Baba, what should he read ?" Sai said, "What about him ? We'll see !"

The main reason for writing this story is that, wherever we may be, all our actions and thoughts are perceived by Sai even after leaving the mortal world. All that we think or do is not without His knowledge and we devotees should always remember this.

Just like Sai during His first *Darshan*, and later time and again said, "I am keeping



REMINISCENCE

an eye on everyone !" Sri Krishna too has said in the *Bhagwad Geeta* – "Not only do I keep a loving eye on people from all walks of life – but even people far and wide !"

Sai Baba left this mortal world ! Sri Krishna left this mortal world ! How will They keep a loving watchful eye on all of us ?

We should think of this not in terms of Their *Leelas*, but in terms of the *Ashwath Vriksha* within us.

The star of our solar system – the sun, on whom all the visible and invisible things on earth are dependent, itself, is moving with all the planets in our solar system revolving around it.

The innumerable stars we see in the night sky are themselves enormous suns. We cannot fathom how many earth-like planets may be revolving around them. They are so far away, that even with the immense speed of light some of them are more than 10,000 light years away ! It means light which left some of them even before the Mahabharat, is reaching us now ! The expanse of the universe is mind boggling !

How can we cross such vast distances ? With the power of our thoughts ! The speed of thought is much more than that of light. We can think and our thoughts can reach across the sun – its heat cannot burn them, diffuse them, stop them or break them. Isn't it amazing ?

Thoughts good and bad, are like eddies in the water. They leave a human mind, travel all over the universe and come back to the same mind ! Bad thoughts make a person to be born again and again. Good thoughts help a person stabilise his mind and attain self-enlightenment.

Auto-suggestion helps to stabilise the mind. The wisdom of the saints, divine knowledge and spiritual study as well as *Nam-jap* or chanting the name of an *Ishta Devata* brings a person closer to attaining enlightenment. Of course, this depends on the person's mental preparedness.

Ultimately this leads to complete self-realisation with the blessings of a *Sadguru* and taking birth becomes a matter of choice.

Great souls like Shri Sai Baba, Who outwardly look like you and me, are enlightened souls who are in complete alignment with the seen and unseen world. His words and thoughts are reverberating throughout the entire universe and these same words help us ordinary men and women attain salvation.

Thoughts are part of our mind. Intelligence, mind and soul are intertwined and blend into each other. Great saints have written about this and it is my sincere and loving effort as Baba's devotee to establish how western science is in tune with it.

Old Man

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Translated from Marathi into English
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Shirdi is the Mahabaleshwar Gokarna !

“... as the soil of Shirdi was trodden by Sai Baba’s Feet, it attained extraordinary importance. As Dnyaneshwar elevated Alandi, Eknath did to Paithan, so Sai Baba raised Shirdi. Blessed are the grass-leaves and stones of Shirdi, for they could easily kiss the Holy Feet of Sai Baba, and take their dust on their head. Shirdi became to us, devotees, another Pandharpur, Jagannath, Dwarka, Banaras (Kashi) and Rameshwar, Badrikedar, Nasik, Tryambakeshwar, Ujjain, and Mahakaleshwar or Mahabaleshwar Gokarna.”

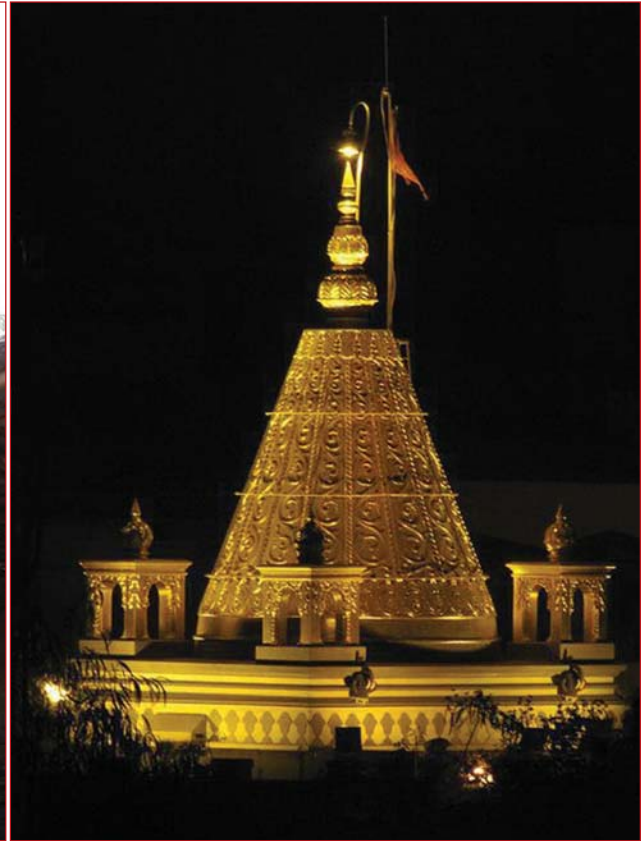
- Shri Sai Satcharita, Chapter 4, English version by Sri Nagesh Vasudev Gunaji

regarded as one of the seven *Mukti Sthalas* of Karnatak. The other six *Mukti Sthalas* of Karnatak are Udupi, Kollur, Subramanya, Kumbhashi, Koteswar, and Shankaranarayan. All these shrines are also known as Parshuram *Kshetras*, created on the land reclaimed from the sea by Rishi Parshuram. The six foot tall *Shiv-lingam*, enclosed in a square Shaligram *Peetham*, can be seen only once in 40 years, when the *Ashta-bandhan Kumbhabhishekam* is performed. A golden *rekha* on the *Peetham* and a small hole in its middle permit devotees to have a glimpse of the top of the *Aatma-lingam*. It is customary here to have a dip in the sea and then



Mahabaleshwar temple at Gokarna

The Mahabaleshwar temple is located in Gokarna. Gokarna is located at a distance of 170 k.m. from Manglore. It is a sacred pilgrimage site in the Uttar Kannad district of Karnatak, enshrining the *Aatma-lingam* of Lord Shiv. It is



Samadhi Mandir at Shirdi

worship a *Shiv-lingam* made out of sand, before worshipping at the temple.

There is legend is that Ravan’s mother Kaikaya was a great devotee of Lord Shiv. She



Ravan's mother Kaikaya worshipped a new *Shiv-ling* every day.

worshipped a new *Shiv-ling* every day. One day, she could not get a new *Shiv-ling*. Fearing that her 'vrat' would be futile, she prepared an earthen *ling* and began to worship it with devotion. ('Vrat' is a Sanskrit word, that means 'to vow' or 'to promise'. In the context of Hinduism and Hindu mythology, the term 'vrat' denotes a religious practice to carry out certain obligations with a view to achieve divine blessing for fulfilment of one or several desires.)

Seeing this, Ravan asked her, what she was doing. She said that she was worshipping a *Shiv-*

ling. Ravan said, "Mother, shame on me! You, being my mother, should worship earthen *Shiv-ling*. But, by the way, what do you intend to achieve by worshipping Lord Shiv this way?"

Kaikaya replied that she would thereby get a place in Mount Kailash - the abode of Lord Shiv - after her death. Thereupon Ravan said, "Why do you take so much trouble? I shall bring Mount Kailash itself to you."

Saying this, he went to Mount Kailash, and began to shake it violently with his 20 hands; and finally lifted it up with all his might. Parvati went to Lord Shiv with fear and said, "What has happened to Mount Kailash today? Everyone is feeling terribly panicky. But, You seem unconcerned, my dear Lord! Please do something before a disaster strikes."

Lord Shiv said to her, "You need not be anxious. Ravan is one of my fervent, ardent and passionate devotees. Just let him have his fun."

Parvati entreated, "Kindly protect the Gods Who are under terrific dread."

Lord Shiv couldn't sit to wait any longer. He pressed Ravan's 10 heads and 20 hands underneath heavenly Mount Kailash.

Finding himself in distress, Ravan uttered 'Shiv... Shiv' and prayed,

"O Lord! I own up to the fact that I have made a fearful, unpardonable mistake and I am truly deeply sorry. Forgive me and show mercy to me. Give me refuge; take me under Your protection! Do not kill me, I beseech You! I am Your humble devotee."





Ravan performed *ugra tapasya*

Ravan said, “O God of Gods ! I have come to take away Mount Kailash with me as my mother has undertaken a ‘*vrat*’ to worship You daily. Kindly fulfil my mother’s desire !”

Lord Shiv said, “If your mother wishes to worship me, what is the necessity of taking Mount Kailash to her. I shall give you *Atma-ling*, which will fulfil all her desires instantly. It is just like my soul.”

Lord Shiv gave him the *Atma-ling* with the condition that it should never be placed on the ground till he reaches the place, where he wanted to install it. If the *Atma-ling* was ever placed on the ground, it will be attracted by mother earth and even Lord Shiv can’t move *Atma-ling* from that place. Ravan at once started his journey to Lanka with *Atma-ling*.

Sage Narad, who came to know of this incident, apprehended that Ravan might become invincible with the *Atma-*

Ravan then performed *ugra tapasya*; cut his head, turned his hands into violin, and attached his intestines to serve as musical wires. He began to chant *Sam Ved* and sing other *ragas* on the tune of this musical instrument. He praised Lord Shiv in nine *rasas* and thirty-six *ragas*.

His prayer pleased Lord Shiv. Thus being satisfied and happy by Ravan’s performance at great personal sacrifice, Lord Shiv appeared before him and said, “I am much pleased. Ask for whatever you desire !”





ling and create havoc on earth. So, he approached Lord Vishnu to retrieve it.

When Lord Vishnu heard from Narad that Ravan will become all powerful by worshipping the *Atma-ling* and menace to the world, He devised a plan to stall Ravan's mission. He thought that Lord Ganapati was alone capable of executing this plan. He revealed His plan to sage Narad in strict confidence. Accordingly, Narad approached Lord Ganapati, and reminded Him that Ganesh is always invariably worshipped first before starting a mission thus :



*Vakratunda Mahaakaaya
Suuryakoti Samaprabha
Nirvighnam Kurume Dev
Shubha Kaaryeshu Sarvadaa*

[O Lord Ganesh,

Who possesses a large body
(*mahaakaaya*),

A curved trunk (*vakratunda*),

Who shines with the brilliance of a
million suns (*surya koti*) !

Please make all my work free of
obstacles, always !]

Narad also told Lord Ganapati that Ravan achieved *Atma-ling* from Lord Shiv without first worshipping Him; and requested Him to prevent the *Atma-ling* from reaching Lanka. Narad also confided the 'strategy plan' to Lord Ganapati. Lord Ganesh willingly gave His full consent to play His part in the divine drama.

As Ravan was nearing Gokarna, Lord Vishnu blotted out the sun to give the appearance of dusk. Ravan now had to perform his evening rituals; but was worried because with the *Atma-ling* in his hands, he would not be able to do his rituals. At this time, Lord Ganesh in the disguise

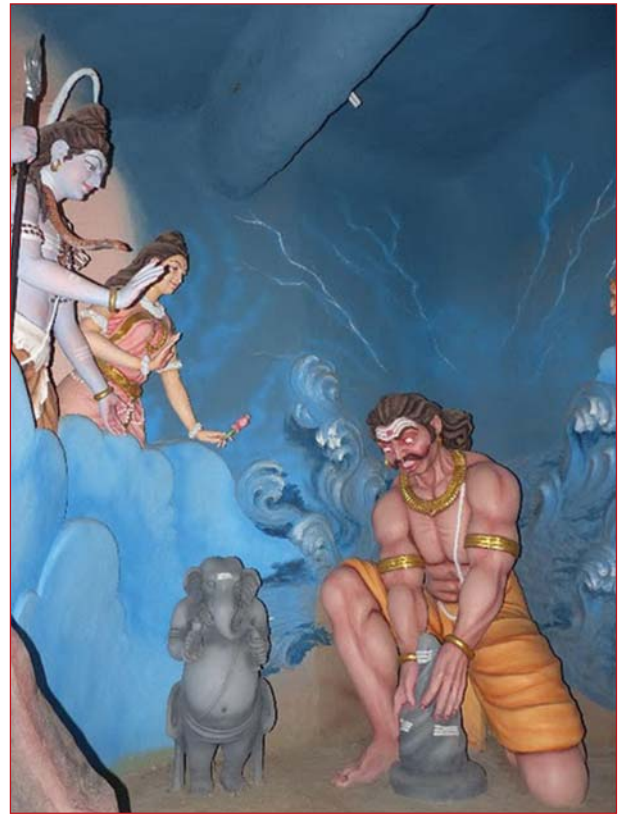


of a cowherd boy accosted him. Ravan requested him to hold the *Atma-ling* until he performed his rituals, and asked him not to place it on the ground. Thereafter the cowherd boy said with hesitation, "I am an ignorant boy. I won't hold this *Atma-ling* in my hands, as it may be heavy." Still Ravan persuaded and induced him to hold the *Atma-ling*; and he proceeded to observe *sandhya* on the sea shore.

The cowherd boy warned him, "Mind, as soon as I feel the *Atma-ling* heavy, I shall place it on the earth." The boy took the *Atma-ling*, saying

that he would call Ravan thrice, and if Ravan did not return within that time, he would place the *Atma-ling* on the ground. All the Gods had assembled in the sky and were witnessing this event.

When Ravan was offering *arghyas* (water ablutions to Fire God), the cowherd boy recollected Lord Vishnu's 'strategy plan'. He soon started feigning feeling of fatigue and exhaustion, and called out, "Ravan, Ravan, Ravan!" Ravan made signs by hand and asked him to wait for a little more time. But, the boy put



the *Atma-ling* on the ground in the presence of all the Gods in the sky. Ravan rushed and returned with a mumbled curse.

The full force of Ravan's anger was now directed on the child. "How dare you keep the *Atma-ling* down!" he cried; and with his fist, hit the cowherd boy on the head! Suddenly, in place of the cowherd boy, there stood Ganesh. Ravan at once understood that this was all the doing of the Gods.

Ravan then tried to pull the *Atma-ling* out. However, it seemed to have grown roots instantly; and no matter how hard Ravan tried, he couldn't pull it out. Under the full force of Ravan's strength, the *Atma-ling* twisted. It now resembles the ear of a cow. That is why it is known as Gokarna. Ravan called the *Atma-ling* *Mahabal* (too strong). From then that place is being called **Mahabaleshwar Gokarna**.

The legend of the installation of the *Atma-ling* at Gokarna by Lord Ganapati is analogous to the installation instance of the *Pindi* (an image of Lord Shiv) near the big picture of Sai Baba in the *wada* at Shirdi by Lord Sai Himself. - Shri Sai



Chapter 28, Shri Sai Satcharita



Satcharita, Chapter 28, English version by Sri Nagesh Vasudev Gunaji

Megha of Viramgaon was a simple and illiterate *brahmin* cook of Raobahadur H. V. Sathe. He was a devotee of Lord Shiv and always chanted the five syllabled *mantra* '*Namah Shivay*'. Sathe told him that Sai Baba of Shirdi was the embodied form of the Lord Shiv and made him start for Shirdi. Megha gradually began to look upon Sai Baba as an incarnation of Lord Shiv. In order to worship Lord Shiv, *bel* leaves are required, and Megha used to go miles and miles every day to bring them and worship his Lord Shiv (Sai Baba).

Megha worshipped Sai Baba in two places - in the *Masjid* he worshipped Sai Baba in person, and Sai Baba's big picture in the



wada. This he did for an uninterrupted period of 12 months. Then, in order to appreciate his devotion and confirm his faith, Sai Baba gave him a vision. Early one morning, when Megha was still lying down on his bed with eyes closed, but internally awake, he saw clearly Sai Baba's Form. Sai Baba, knowing him to be awake, threw *akshata* (rice-grains marked red with *kumkum*) and said, "Megha, Draw a Trident!", and disappeared. Hearing Sai Baba's words, Megha eagerly opened his eyes, but did not see Sai Baba; but saw only rice grains spread here and there. He then went to Sai Baba, told Him about the vision and asked permission to draw Trident. Sai Baba said, "Did you not hear my words asking you to draw Trident? It was no vision, but

direct order and my words are always pregnant with meaning and never hollow." Megha said, "I thought, You woke me up, but all the doors were closed; so I thought it was a vision." Sai Baba rejoined, "I require no door to enter. I have neither form nor any extension; I always live everywhere. I carry on, as a wirepuller, all the actions of the man, who trusts me and merges in me." Megha returned to the *wada*, and drew a red Trident on the wall near Sai Baba's picture. Next day, a devotee named Ramdasi came from Poona, saluted Sai Baba and offered Him *Pindi* (an image of Lord Shiv). At that point of time Megha also turned up there. Sai Baba said to him, "Look here, Megha! Lord Shankar has come. Protect (i.e., worship) Him now!" Megha was surprised to see *Pindi* following Trident immediately. Then, also in the *wada*, Kakasaheb Dixit was standing with a towel on his head after having taken his bath, and was remembering Sai. At that point of time, he also saw a *Pindi* before his mental vision. While he was wondering about this, Megha came and showed him the *Pindi* presented to him by Sai Baba.

Dixit was happy to know that the *Pindi* exactly tallied with the one he saw a few minutes before in his vision. **Sai Baba installed the *Pindi* near the big picture which Megha was worshipping.**

Baba's Divine Act of installation of the *Pindi* at Shirdi makes **Shirdi** the **Mahabaleshwar Gokarna**.

- Dr. Subodh Agarwal

'Shirdi Sai Dham',

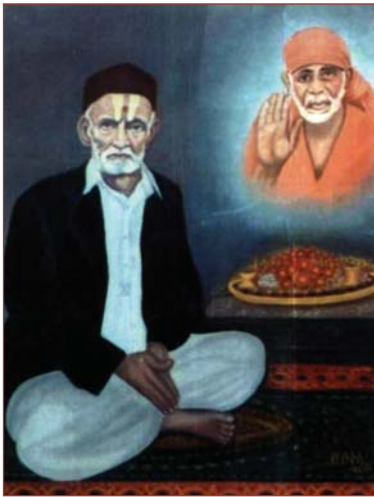
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MADHAVRAO ADKAR

(Contd. from Sept.-Oct. 2011)

Second Innings

Towards the latter part of his life, Madhavrao was immersed in the love for the Almighty. He was keen to visit Pandharpur, bathe in the holy river of Chandrabhaga, avail the *darshan* of Lord Pandurang and stay there for some time. He conveyed this to Swami Rangacharya Maharaj who was residing in Ram Baug at Pandharpur. After getting his consent, Madhavrao stayed there from May 1944 till June 1953.

In this stay of about 10 years, he also stayed in Ram Baug. During this period, he was engrossed in only one subject – Lord Pandurang. His daily routine consisted of three times bath in the river Chandrabhaga, *seva*, *aarati*, *upasana*, *darshan* of the Lord and a walk around the town.

He also regularly performed *kirtans* and *pravachans*. There is a mention that, in the Das ganu's *wada*, Madhavrao delivered an *aakhyan* on saint Damajipant. During his stay in Pandharpur, Dasganu would invite him to participate in the observance of saint Dnyaneshwar Maharaj's *punyatithi* (death anniversary). Till his last in 1953, the people felicitated Madhavrao during this function.

Even if had to travel to some other place, he would come walking back to the town. While



In Sai's Proximity

undertaking one such journey, he met some *warkaris* who were on their way to Pandharpur. They began persuading Madhavrao to accompany them. Madhavrao said, "I have just come back after completing a long journey. I will need some rest. I suggest that you people carry on as per your plan. I will catch with you at village Chaufala at 9 am." Adhering to his request, the other members of the group left the place early in the morning and saw Madhavrao was fast asleep. On reaching Chaufala, they were surprised to see that Madhavrao was waiting for them there.

Madhavrao was a pillar of strength for many. Many villagers, who were facing difficulties or problems, would come to him for advice or help. He would suggest ways of mitigating their woes – like recite the name of the God, observe fast on a Thursday, perform *abhishek* and the like.

Let me and other devotees rest at Your Feet

In December 1953, Swami Rangacharya

Maharaj sent a word to at village Loni to Madhavrao's son Ramachandrapant that his father was seriously ill. He immediately rushed to Ram Baug at Pandharpur and brought his father to Loni. There Ramachandrapant's wife Mrs. Mathurabai and other family members took good care of Madhavrao.

Several relatives visited him there and enquired about his health. Madhavrao's younger brother Shri Ganpatrao also came and stayed with the family. Everyday minimum 3-4 letters wishing his speedy recovery arrived. Around this time, he also received money orders from Dasganu and G. T. Karnik. And then he received a very valuable audio record from His Master's Voice Company. It was the record of 'Aarati Sai Baba' ! His joy cannot be described in mere words.

His physical strength had weakened. Food intake also had gone down. When one enquired, "Do you wish to eat anything in particular ?" He would reply, "Are, I am totally satisfied and immersed in the thoughts of Baba."

On 18th November, 1955 he set for his heavenly abode from village Loni, taluka Paranda, district Osmanabad. While describing the events of the day, Janardanant says :-

As per usual practice, Madhavrao's granddaughter Mandakini went to him in the morning carrying tea for him. He enquired, "Has Ram gone to school? What is Mai (Mrs. Mathurabai) doing? Where are the children?"

Generally, he never made such enquiries.

Around 1 pm. in the noon, Ramchandrapant asked, "Tell us what you wish!" Madhavrao replied, "Light a *samai* (a type of lamp) before Baba. Light *dhoop* (a type of incense) and sing 'Aarati Sai Baba'. Thereafter, first read chapter 15 from Geeta and then begin recital of 'Vishnusahasranam' !"

His these wishes were fulfilled. Ramachandrapant recalls "Anna's (Madhavrao's) feet were gradually turning

clammy and cold. My recital was going on. I did not realize when he breathed his last. We performed his final rites at Pandharpur. Thereafter, I went to meet my *Guru* Dasganu. He was overcome by emotions and said, 'He has achieved the goal in his life. He laid down his body with a very contented mind. Therefore, do not rue about his passing away.' I returned to Loni with a heavy heart."

At village Dhanore, there is a *samadhi* (a tomb) of Madhavrao's ancestor Swami Yogiraj. It was Madhavrao's wish that the *samadhi* be preserved. His grandson has maintained it accordingly.

With an objective of cherishing the memories of Madhavrao, Ramachandrapant has established a charitable trust 'Aarati Sai Baba Rachanakar Madhavrao Adkar Trust'. The villagers of Loni have donated a plot admeasuring 2 acres to the trust. Ramachandrapant has put in his lifetime savings and with additional help from his sons a total amount of about Rs. 8 lakhs has been spent in constructing a Shri Sai Baba temple.

Ramachandrapant

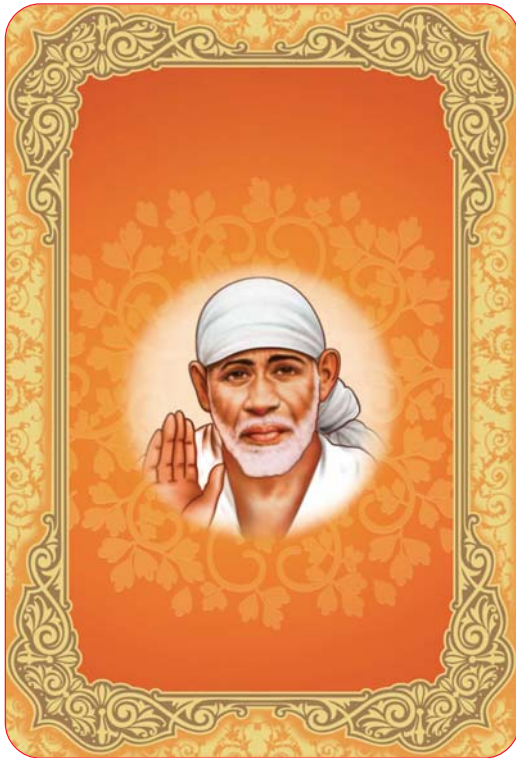
In the year 1937, Madhavrao requested Dasganu to grant *anugraha* to his only son Ramachandrapant at Pandharpur.

He is presently 94 years old and resides at Pune. He and his wife Mrs. Mathurabai have undergone many transitions, ordeals, trials and tribulations in their long life. However, with the blessings of Baba and the *punyayee* (good deeds done in the earlier births) of his father, they have sailed smoothly through all the difficult times.

In 1958, Baba appeared in a dream and blessed Mrs. Mathurabai saying - 'The Goddess Laxmi will shower Her blessings on you and your family.'

Around 14-15 years back, some unknown persons attacked Ramachandrapant with

(Contd. on page 52)



❀ Sai Experiences ❀

Shri Sai Baba inspires His devotees...

Shri Sai Baba has urged His devotees to serve the society through building a temple, school, hospital, etc.

He bade Shamshaad Ali Baig to write a book, which she did in 2006, which is called 'Sai Katha Sagar', which is very well received by the readers. And with Baba's grace very soon she will be launching the second edition of the book keeping the international devotees in mind.

In 2011, Shri Sai Baba inspired her to spread His Utterances through Blessing Cards (like Tarot Cards) on Sai Baba. But, thinking, how she can do it, where is the money for printing, any way, who will buy such cards, etc. But, the inspiration would keep on re-surfacing.

Finally in May 2012, she was participating in Divine Healing Hands Soul Healer Programme by Master Zhi Gang Sha and on the last day of the programme, she saw Shri Sai Baba standing on the stage and urging her : 'Why do you worry about the finance ? Everything will be taken care

of... Don't worry, you just start, I am there to support you.' After this, she stopped worrying and started working.

Her job was to keep on becoming empty so that she could connect with Baba and do His bidding. She selected 60 Utterances of Baba, Suresh Das, a visualiser started working out the designs.

There are innumerable *Leelas* of Baba guiding her throughout this project.

The major one was the printer, who took up the work with an advance of just Rs. 10,000 and some post-dated cheques.

The second, she remember very vividly - when the first rush of prints came from the printing press, everything was fine - except for one picture which was technically not matching the original colour tone. She knew that such a minor error, nobody would really notice, as they had not seen the original image and its colour tone. But, she was beset with feelings of guilt and sought Sai Baba's guidance.

She brought the issue up with the printer's staff; he shrugged and said that nothing can be done about that particular card. Just then, the press production supervisor, Darshan arrived and she informed him. He said, "We can better this quality." He went and fixed a few knobs and soon reams of fabulously printed sheets started coming out !

Shamshaad was only going to give two pamphlets on how to use the deck; but Baba inspired her to pen a guidebook, while the printing was on. And while she was writing the guidebook, another of her niggling worry was resolved by Baba. She would often think, how can Baba's philosophical Utterances ever resolve the devotees' questions regarding finance, career, marriage, etc. ? *Baba in His infinite wisdom guided her that, when the question is posed to Him, He will guide the seeker through the image or message on the card or through a thought, image, sound, feeling, etc. that will arise in that moment of 'Communion'.*

These are not prediction or astrology-based

cards. These are guidance cards. For e.g., it is mentioned in the step by step guide book, how to still one's mind, how to shuffle the cards, how to connect with the Divine, etc.

Even the technique of asking questions is given - You can ask, 'What is it that I need to know the most now?' Or formulate a question, that results in 'yes' / 'no' or asking a question that could be requesting for further guidance.

For e.g., 'Baba, should I apply for xyz job?' Or 'Baba, I want to apply for xyz job, what it is that I should know now?'

As she went ahead with the project more clarity came in, her question about, why these Blessing Cards, was further clarified to her - today the people are going through the most turbulent times in the history of humanity and Baba want the people to pass this trying phase with His teachings of 'Shraddha' and 'Saburi' (Faith and Patience).

In spite of all the miracles all the way, Shamshaad was still doubting Baba's *Leela* called - Shri Sai Baba Blessing Cards, and again Baba came to her aid and helped her boost her confidence. On August 12, 2012, Shamshaad was participating in a spiritual retreat and two young women - Renu Chawla and Geeta Bodwani, whom she did not know then, came to her. Geeta had seen the cards in a friend's hand and was curious to know about them. She handed them the one box which had arrived from the printer to them. They were ecstatic seeing the Blessing Cards. Geeta said, she wanted one box and Renu said, she wanted four boxes. Shamshaad just could not believe them.

But, since she has gone through so much failure (perceived failure) in life, she thought Baba is showing her a carrot by sending these two women, and her doubtful mind said, 'let me see if these cards really sell.'

In fact, Shamshaad was so skeptical of the cards selling that she felt, she will have to give away the 500 decks as gift to friends. But, gradually one or two orders started coming.

As usual Baba has His own way of reaching

His people. There are over 700 people on Shamshaad's facebook account, so even if she modestly say only 20 percent are reading her statuses, yet she got order from only four people. The rest of the people who ordered them, she doesn't even know them, nor do they know her. She sometimes feels, He calls or writes to her placing order for His Own Cards.

Complete strangers write to her and say, how Baba is guiding them with the help of these Blessing Cards.

Some write to her and say how Baba came ceremoniously to them, after they had concluded the *Aarati* at their home, and the courier person just appeared to hand over their parcel. Some stay at far off destinations and they have been eagerly waiting for days, and when they get the parcel it is on a Thursday, which many consider as Baba's day.

Parvez J Daruwala is a beautiful soul and a friend of her. One day, Shamshaad felt like gifting him a box. So she sent him the box without informing him, and he was simply amazed; because his friends were planning to go to Shirdi and he could not go because of some work. But, when the unexpected box of cards reached him, he felt Baba has Himself come to him. He now carries the pack wherever he goes on tour out of Mumbai. Some weeks later, he happened to speak with the friend, who was to organize the trip, and was amazed to learn that they did not go to Shirdi. So they could re-plan a trip together. Another of Baba's *Leela* !

Three months after the launch of the Blessing Cards, people are using the Blessing Cards for various purposes -

- * Healing and Blessing Tool
- * Tool to divine answers/ solutions
- * Meditate

People have noted that these cards of Sai Baba's Utterances provide clarity, courage, peace and joy.

- Sendur Nagarajan

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Sai miracles... from my birth to now !

My parents had three daughters and they yearned for a son. Seeing this, a Sai devotee advised them to visit Shirdi and pray to Baba. My parents did as suggested to them and reached Shirdi and earnestly prayed for a son, and I was born on June 10, 1963.

My parents were staunch devotees of Baba and remained so till their last breath. With Baba's blessings we have a comfortable life. I am working in Central Railway, and right from receiving the call letter, interview, medical test to the appointment day, were all Thursdays ! My wife is working as a beautician. Our only son has appeared for the exam of his last year BE.

In fact, it is again Baba's blessings that my son has appeared for the exam of his last year BE. My son had failed in Std. 9; because I was going through an adverse period, because of which he too got affected. At that time my father was 82 years old and passing through the last days of his life. He called me and told me to make my son appear for Std. 10 privately, instead of making him sit for Std. 9 again. He urged me that since, there was no engineer in our family I should see to it that my son becomes an engineer. My son after his SSC did polytechnic and scored 78 percent in his final year, and got direct admission in BE second year with the blessings of Baba.

There is a Sai Baba temple in my building compound, which I would visit regularly. 2005-06 were the worst years of my life (*Sadesati* period), I lost my father, my son failed, I was beleaguered with - depression, weight loss due to stomach and intestine problems, cough, ear whistling, sleepless nights, fear of death, etc. During this phase I had lost faith in Baba. This was one of the most unforgivable mistakes, but Baba is merciful, humble, loving God, and He forgave me.

In 2008, I had a flash in front of my eyes, where I saw *Gurusthan* and words to this effect 'come here on Thursday and Friday and light *dhoop - agarbatti* (incense stick) all your illness will be cured'. I tried reading it once more, but they disappeared.

Next month I went for Baba's *darshan* and lit a *dhoop - agarbatti* at *Gurusthan*, and Baba's blessing started flowing into my life.

It is the unbelievable Sai Baba's *Leela* - I have been receiving Baba's messages and was helped in many situations in my life.

I remember vividly, on October 15, 2008, I received this message: 'Whenever there is a conflict between the heart and mind, let the heart be followed.'

The *ayurvedic* medicine I was taking for my intestinal problem was not working; Baba helped me by sending me this message: 'Never go to a doctor's office whose plants are dead.' I presume plants must be *ayurvedic* medicine, so I stopped taking the medicines.

I had bought some *hing goli* (asoefotida balls) from a hawker on the road; but due to depression, was not taking it. Then on December 24, 2008 the message was: 'Have faith in the *Guru's* words and work. If you have no *Guru*, then pray to God with a longing heart, He will let you know what He is like.' I started taking these *golis* and it worked for the ailment with the blessing of Baba and today I have no health concerns.

Today the happiness, peace and prosperity that I and my family are experiencing are because of Baba's and my parents' blessings.

Bow to Shri Sai Baba !

- Manoj S. Joshi

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Sai showers His mercy...

I am a devotee of Shri Sai Baba and am experiencing His grace continuously.

I had read many readers' miraculous experiences of Sai Baba; so went to Sai Baba's temple in Shibpur (PS Nakashipara - 741 191, Dist. - Nadia, West Bengal.) on December 11, 2010.

I too had several miraculous experiences, which go beyond the rational thought.

Before I left I had gone to purchase two *chhaddars* to be presented to Baba - one from me and my mom; when the shopkeeper came to know the purpose, he not only gave me a discount, but also gave a *chhaddar* of his own for offering.

Shibpur is a quiet village, which is about 60 k.m. away from the nearest town. The original fibre statue of Sai Baba is housed in a very charming thatched structure at the rear end of the compound. This statue of Baba is lovingly called 'Bade Baba' and faces the gate. The entire compound has a very charming ambience with its temples and garden. There is also cement structure to house the '*Dhuni*' which was to be lit shortly, another thatched cabin which serves as the office and an open round thatched roof structure used as the visitor's room.

The marble temple facing the gate houses the 'Bade Baba' marble statue which bears a striking resemblance to the statue in the *Samadhi Mandir* at Shirdi.

I believe Sri K. V. Ramani who donated the statue was told by Baba in a dream to donate a statue exactly like the Shirdi one. Below the Neem tree near Ramdasji's old *Mandir* is a slightly smaller statue of Baba.

I took *Darshan* of Bade Baba and handed over all the *chhaddars*. However the thatched Shibpur Sai temple was closed and Sri Amit Kumar Biswas, grandson of Ramdas Biswas (who built the original temple) and chairman of Nadia Shibpur Sai Sadguru Samiti asked me if I wanted my *chhaddar* to be draped on Baba during my visit. I replied that it was up to him.

I had also carried some poster size photos for Sri Amit – images of Vitthal-Rakhumayee, Swami Samarth and Tulja Bhavani goddess. I was stunned when he said, "*Aapko Baba ne hee bheja hai. Main yahee photos dhund raha tha, jyon ki yahan nahee miltee*". (Baba has sent you; I was looking for the same photos and was unable to find them.) Strange indeed are the ways of our Sai. The thought came that if he wishes to make me an instrument of his divine will, it is a great blessing.

The *Aarati* began in the thatched temple and the group then moved on to the original brick structure in which Ramdas Biswasji prayed 150 years ago, then, the *Gurusthan* and finally the Bade Baba temple.

After the evening *Aarati* and *Bhog*, I got a chance to sit before Baba alone in the thatched hut. The atmosphere seemed so peaceful and divinely charged, the room being lit with only a lantern. I sat there for almost half an hour pouring my heart out to Him. There was a piercing gleam in Baba's eyes. Occasionally His eyes seemed to be darting across the room, here and there. When I got up to leave, there was an indulgent smile on Baba's face. I distinctly felt, Baba telling me that I should come here more often and should come here periodically just the way I go to Shirdi.

Next morning I rose early for the morning *Aarati* and joined the group at the Bade Baba temple. It is the marble statue which is bathed (*Abhishek*) and dressed every day. Amitjee told me that there are specific instructions from Sai Baba not to bathe the fibre statue.

After the *Aarati* I was thrilled to see Sai Baba dressed in the *chhaddar* I had offered. I had not even told them which *chhaddar* was from whom.

The temple has a very interesting history - it is said that one day a *fakir* came and told Ramdas Biswas, a wealthy villager of Shibpur village of Nadia's Nakashipara to build a temple and pray. In the middle of the 19th century, he established a temple in the compound of his house to offer daily *Pooja*.

It can't be established whether Ramdas set up any idol of Shirdi Sai Baba (as Baba was alive then).

But, so far the information available is that the daily prayer was stopped in the temple around 1920, the reason behind this is unknown.

Slowly after the *Pooja* was stopped the temple became the home of venomous snakes, while dense bushes and cobwebs surrounded it. The local residents never dared to go near the temple because of the snakes and it was eventually abandoned.

Strangely in 1992 a Neem tree sprouted out of the dense bush adjoining the crumbling structure of the temple. Even more surprising was the fact that the snakes started fleeing after the Neem tree started growing. Since, the snakes made their exit, the villagers cleared up a part of the area and a green field was cultivated in its place, where children could play safely. An entrance to the temple was also eventually discovered. The villagers took this incident lightly until 1999 when during *Gurupournima* Sai Baba appeared in the dream of Sri Amit, and ordered him to construct this temple and said that He will arrange all means required to get this temple constructed.

Sri Amit narrated the dream as follows, "I saw in my dream a bright illumination of lights... as if thousands and thousands of neon lamps were lit. I was bewildered. Then I heard a voice saying 'I am Sai Baba, your great grandfather used to worship me in this temple every day for hours together. I was very happy with him. After his demise no *Pooja* was conducted. I am longing for devotion and *Pooja* to begin once again.'

So I have planted the Neem tree there to eradicate all evils."

In that dream Baba also promised Sri Amit that in the next 11 years Baba would perform over 1000 miracles through the Shibpur temple. On December 15, 2010, the 1000th miracle took place. Sri Amit has chronicled all the miracles in his diary. The following is the breakup of miracles that took place :

- 245 cases of sickness were healed. Some illnesses cured were cancer, paralysis, hysteria,

leprosy, psychiatric disorders etc.

- 363 prayers for children were answered.

- 113 miracles were recorded, in which Baba provided timely help to resolve business issues.

- 87 cases of miracles are noted, where Baba has provided assistance to devotees in securing a job, getting a promotion and other service related pleas.

- 78 marriage related issues were solved by Baba for His devotees who prayed.

- 114 requests of solving family issues and disputes were granted by Baba.

- Amita Sawardekar



(Contd. from page 35)

sharp weapons. However, he loudly chanted Baba's name and miraculously survived the attack. The deep scars could be seen on his belly.

Ramachandrapant's three daughters are happy in their families. His sons are well educated. His one son was an officer in a well-known nationalized bank, while his second son is a civil engineer.

Ramachandrapant and his wife are a rare link to the glorious past. By nature, both are calm, quite and contended. The writer of this article was fortunate enough to be able to spend some time with them.

Their bungalow is adorned with a 5' portrait of Dasganu, as well as portrait of Madhavrao (drawn by famous artist Shri D. D. Rege who had received blessings of Dasganu). These two paintings are a continuous source of blessings for the family !

(Contd.)

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Translated from original Marathi into English by

Sudhir





Shirdi News

Sai Ashram : An exemplary devotion to Sai Baba by Sri K.V. Ramani

Sri K. V. Ramani, Founder and Managing Trustee of Shirdi Sai Trust, Chennai is another exemplary move of serving Sai Baba with *tan*, *man* and *dhan* (body, mind and money) has completed Sai Ashram project at Shirdi, which will provide accommodation for 14000 devotees.

On October 24, in a simple ceremony after the noon *Aarati* in the *Samadhi Mandir*, Sri Ramani handed over the documents of the completed project to Hon. Chief District Judge

(Ahmednagar) Sri J. M. Kulkarni, Chairman of Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust, Shirdi. M. P. and Ex Executive Officer of the Sansthan Sri B. R. Wakchaure, Executive Officer of the Sansthan Trust Sri Kishore More, Sri. J. M. Sasane (Former Chairman of the Sansthan Trust) who initiated the Sai Ashram Project and other dignitaries were present.

Sri Ramani informed that this charitable service project was voluntarily taken up by Shirdi Sai Trust, Chennai to provide good and affordable accommodation to devotees coming to Shirdi for Sai Baba's *Darshan*.

The MoU for construction of Sai Ashram Project was signed with the Sansthan on February 4, 2006, for providing accommodation for about 10000 devotees in an estimated area of 6 lakh square feet at a cost of Rs. 25 crores, to be completed in 18 months. Sansthan gave 19.68 acres land for the construction of Sai Ashram, in two locations in July 2007.

Shirdi Sai Trust started the project in September 2007 and has now handed over the completed project, where Sai Ashram 1 has 1536 rooms (out of this 384 rooms are air-conditioned) and Sai Ashram 2 has 192 dormitories to accommodate 14,000 devotees in a total constructed area of about 9.60 lakh square feet at a total cost of about Rs. 110 crores.

