

Ramate Ram Aayoji Aayoji, Udiyan ki Goniyan Layoji...



Reference is found in **Shri Sai Sat Charita** that whenever fancy took Sai Baba, He used to dance around, clapping His hands, and sing in mellow tuneful voice this *bhajan* - “*Ramate Ram Aayoji Aayoji, Udiyan ki Goniyan Layoji...*”, i.e. “**Shri Ram has come, O! He has come during His wanderings. And He has brought bags full of Udi.**” (Chapter 33)

No doubt, this *bhajan* is with reference to the *Udi*.

The divine worth of this *bhajan* is that Baba is invoking Lord Ram to come to Shirdi, equipped with innumerable number of bags, containing *Udi*. Since Ram is the embodiment of judgment (*Vivek*), asceticism (*Vairagya*), discretion, prudence, sense, wisdom, and discernment, the *Udi* brought by the Lord would naturally be the manifestation of all these virtues.

The celestial truth of this invocation is that Sai Baba Himself is Lord Ram; and thus, the practical implication of this *bhajan* is - **Sai Baba’s Dhuni has produced so many bags of Udi that no one has been able to count them. Such is this most auspicious Udi.**

Sai Baba lived in Shirdi continuously for a period of 60 years before He took His *Mahasamadhi* in the year 1918, and kept His *Dhuni* always burning during His six decades stay at Dwarkamai *Masjid*. And unlimited quantity of ash thus produced, would be then given to the devotees as sacred *Udi*.

Sai Baba’s *Udi* is the manifestation of judgment (*Vivek*), asceticism (*Vairagya*), discretion, prudence, sense, wisdom, and discernment; and breeds enduring spiritual appeal.

Udi is nothing but dust. All things, whatever they may be, that have a name and a form, will, in the end, go the same way (i. e. reduced to dust). And, from the unchanging everlasting property of

the dust, we realize the truth that the changes and modifications that things undergo in this world, are only for the name's sake. By the spiritual implication of His *Udi*, Baba taught that the visible phenomena in the universe are as transient as the ash.

Baba's *Udi* breeds asceticism (*Vairagya*). *Vairagya* is the real wealth for an aspirant. It helps him to do real *Sadhana*. It makes the mind introvert. *Vairagya* puts a brake to the extrovert tendency of the mind. Even if the mind runs towards objects, at once *Vairagya* will point out that there is pain there, that sensual enjoyment is the cause for rebirth and intense suffering. So the mind is bridled, and gradually through intense practice, it is established in real, lasting, sustained, intense *Vairagya*. (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapters 16-17)

Vairagya is the opposite of attachment (*Raga*). *Vairagya* is dispassion. *Vairagya* is detachment. *Vairagya* is indifference to sensual enjoyment here and hereafter.

A man of *Vairagya* has no attraction for the material world. So *Vairagya* is a supreme, inexhaustible wealth for spiritual aspirants. *Vairagya* aids concentration of mind (*Samadhan*) and generates intense longing for Liberation or Emancipation, or Release (*Mumukshutwa*).

Vairagya is of two grades : *Para* (supreme) *Vairagya* and *Apara* (relative) *Vairagya*. *Para Vairagya* comes after one attains Self-realization. The whole world then appears like a straw. This gives intense spiritual strength.

Without *Vairagya* there cannot be any real spiritual progress. In *Vedant* it is the only vital, fundamental *Sadhana*. If we have *Vairagya*, all other virtues will come by themselves.

Patanjali Maharshi says :

Abhyasa vairagyabhyam tan nirodhah -

(Patanjali *Yoga Sutras* 1.12-1.16)

“The mind is controlled by meditation or *Sadhana* and *Vairagya*.” They are the two wings of the aspirant to soar high into the realm of Immortal Abode.

The same thing Lord Krishna also says :

Abhyasena tu Kaunteya,

vairagyena cha grihyate -

(Shrimad Bhagvad Gita 6.35)

“The mind is controlled by practice and dispassion and intense detachment.” By *Vairagya*, the mind is detached. He who works in a detached way is not bound by *Karma* (action). So it is the aspirants' duty to cultivate this one virtue, or *Sadhana-anka-Vairagya*.

Vairagya is born of asceticism (*Vivek*), or discrimination between *Nitya* and *Anitya* (Eternal and non-eternal), *Sat* and *Asat* (Real and unreal), *Tattwa* and *Atattwa* (Essence and non-essence). (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapter 10)

Vivek comes through selfless service done in several births and through *Pooja* and *Aradhana* (worship and adoration of God), and through the Grace of the Lord. From *Vivek* is born *Vairagya*. It gives spiritual strength.

Discretion is another virtue that Baba's *Udi* generates. Discretion allows one to deliberate well by separating, distinguishing, or discerning; then to ultimately make a good and responsible decision. (Shri Sai Sat Charita, Chapters 16-17)

As a virtue, discretion is closely related to the cardinal virtue of prudence, as it takes prudence to distinguish, discern, deliberate, and decide well.

Discretion perfects reason and is a salt that preserves life. For example, when Shakespeare writes in Henry IV, that "Discretion is the better part of valor," he is implying that it is regularly good to think very attentively, before doing something that you will regret later in the future. The discreet person will possess the ability to distinguish between the virtue of courage and the vices of either cowardice or recklessness in making a decision. Discretion empowers us with the ability to find the golden mean, the virtue of courage, and not deviate either to the vice of deficiency (cowardice) or the vice of excess (recklessness). This implies that the prudent and discreet persons will employ good sense in carrying out the affairs of their everyday lives. They will have the good sense to distinguish when to speak and when to be silent, to decide when and how to act and when to do nothing at all.

We can picture discretion as the safety guardrail on the highway of life. If we are prudent, we will exercise discretion every day. We will be wisely cautious in avoiding mistakes and learn from our own and other people's mistakes as well. We will employ practical wisdom and not be rash in exercising judgment. Often times we will be road makers and not map readers; we will not simply follow the crowd. Discretion will often manifest itself in one's words of speech and other outward acts. Its presence usually gives testimony to the fact that the person who displays it, does possess an inward life and prays. A person's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is to his credit that he ignores an offence.

Baba's *Udi* also induces quality of discernment, sense, and wisdom. Discernment combined with sense and wisdom is the ability to grasp, comprehend, and evaluate clearly. It means we can see the true nature of things; it allows us to distinguish between what is real and what is imitation. This is one of those intangible qualities that cannot be taught, but can be developed and improved upon over time.

- Dr. Subodh Agarwal

'Shirdi Sai Dham',

29, Tilak Road, Dehra Dun - 248 001,
Uttarakhand.

Mobile: (0)9897202810

Tel. & Fax: 0135-2622810

E-mail: subodhagarwal27@gmail.com

In Sai's Proximity

DADA KELKAR – RAOBAHADUR SATHE – SHIVBHAKTA MEGHA

Other experiences

Sathe's son-in-law, Joshi and other family members were also Sai devotees. Their experiences were noted by Sathe and are worth reading.

Once, after taking Baba's *Darshan*, Joshi asked Him for some *Udi*. Baba said, "You will get it later." When he sat in the train, a fellow passenger offered him Baba's *Udi*.

Another time, his brother Hari Joshi and another fellow went for Baba's *Darshan*. Baba was in a foul mood. So they did not approach Him. Later, when Baba calmed down and was leaving for *bhiksha*, He said, "Hey, you killed that old man and came here?" Kaka Maharaj Puranik had just passed away.

Baba usually left for Lendi Baug between 8.30 and 9.00 in the morning. One day He slept near the *Masjid* wall till past 10.00 a.m. It so happened that Gajanan Maharaj had just left his mortal coil.

Baba narrated many stories whilst conversing with His devotees. Sometimes they were contradictory and inconsistent. But, His words were never false and one should not assess their worth.

Extremely lucky

Sathe was extremely lucky that Baba made him build the famous *wada* around the Neem tree. The Neem tree had an underground tunnel. Baba often said his *Guru's Samadhi* is in there. Once in a while, talking to Sathe, He said, "This is my *Guru's Samadhi*. His name is..." and He uttered something which Sathe deciphered as a word ending with a 'sha' or 'sa'. Could be Venkusha!

Baba blessed Sathe by revealing his innermost thoughts to him.

Examples of some stories

Sathe noted :-

1. When I was young, I used to sell shawls. My father was so happy with my work that he gifted me Rs. 5/- for it.
2. Once I stayed on the East coast.
3. What can you tell me of Akbar? I have protected him when he was a child.
4. I knew that *Brahmin* (Eknath Maharaj) from Paithan. These days such excellent *Brahmins* are nowhere to be seen.
5. Chand Bhai Patel came and asked me where I had driven his horse? I said, "Go and see for yourself. Your horse is grazing in the meadow nearby."

Sathe says he heard this from Baba. Rest, he wrote the Sainath Katha Karandak from his imagination. It was written without Baba's permission. His stories were brief and sometimes



unfinished. The language of the book is the way Sai Baba used to speak. Today this book is no longer available.

Sainath Katha Karandak

Raobahadur Sathe compiled a collection of Sai Baba's stories as He narrated them. It was earlier published in a book called 'Sainath Katha Karandak', by Dakshina Bhiksha Sanstha, of which Sathe was a founder.

These stories were reprinted in Shri Sai Leela issues with his permission. The language therein was as Shri Sai used to speak. The story reproduced below illustrates Sai's manner of speech and will be useful for readers who never met Sai in person.

Stories from

Sainath Katha Karandak

Author : Sai Samartha's devotee

After completing His daily routine of asking for *bhiksha* in one or two houses early in the morning, Sainath Maharaj has His breakfast. Then He sits in the centre of the *Masjid*. Some devotees surround Him and do some *seva*. Sai Samarth then narrates some stories which though confounding, always have a moral. May the readers gain from the wisdom therein, is the fervent appeal to Sai Samarth.

Sai : I used to stay with a *Brahmin* in Paithan. I used to work with him and eat some *bhakar* too. He was a very noble, virtuous man and always blessed me. There are no more people like that. Everyone has become materialistic.

Some devotee inquired if the *Brahmin* was still there.

Sai : This happened over two hundred years ago. How can he still be in Paithan? May be somewhere, *Allah Mia* would know.

Devotee : If You are telling a 200-year story, why don't You tell where he is, what's his name and what is he doing today?

Sai : *Allah Mia*'s will. What have we got to do with it?

Devotee : But, You said You were there then. Do you still remember everything?

Sai : I have been there for a thousand years before that. What do you know? Something amusing happened when I was in Prayag.

Devotee : Unless You tell us, how will we know? Please tell us.

* The story of Mukund Buva

Sai : I was smoking *chillum* under a tree in Prayag. A *Brahmin* arrived with a huge *veena*, singing *bhajans*. Saying *pranam* to me he said, "A *Brahmin* called Mukund is doing *japa* nearby. Tell him he will soon reap the fruits of his *japa*. So he may conduct the '*udyapan*' ceremony and remain calm and collected.

I said, "Who's bothered? I don't want to get involved. You tell him yourself!" But, the *tamborawalla Brahmin* would hear none of it! He said, "Maharaj, this work has to be done by You! Your current appearance is to fulfil this job." I said, "*Allah Mia*'s wish! I will go and do the needful." Hearing this, he said *namaste* and proceeded on his way, singing *bhajans*. The *bhajans* were really melodious, and the *Brahmin* was a man of great integrity.

Devotee : What next?

Sai : Then as per the *Brahmin*'s instructions, I went to Mukund's dwelling. It was just as far as Nimgaon from here (almost a mile). As soon as I entered, Mukund Buva got up and said, "Beware! Don't enter! I am doing my *anushthan*! Get out!"

I muttered to myself, "What nonsense is this? The *tamborawalla Brahmin* tells me one thing and this one another! What should I do? *Allah Malik!* *Allah* knows everything!" As I said this, Mukund got up with a start, prostrated at my feet, did a *namaskar* and mumbled something to himself. With *Allah*'s grace, I understood what he meant by telepathy, so I too communicated what I had to say (*Allah*'s orders) in a similar way and vamoosed.

Soon, one of his disciples came running towards me and said, "Sai Maharaj, What did you tell our Mukund Maharaj? As soon as you left, he lit the *Dhuni*, jumped in it and turned to ashes! What should we do now?"

I said, "So be it! *Allah* will take care." The disciple was beside his senses when he heard this. "Now all Mukund Buva's disciples will immolate themselves and the sin will be yours! Get it?"

I said, "*Allah Malik!*"

As soon as the disciple left, I quickly left the place and took the road to Umarkot.

* The story of Akbar's birth

Two days later, I reached a wasteland. There I found a nobleman sitting and next to him lay a lady craving for water. There were a few attendants; but they just stood there. The nobleman asked me if I had any water. "Even a sip is enough! My queen is very thirsty and since she is expecting, she cannot take even a step further!" As he said this, I put some water from my tumbler in her mouth. She immediately straightened up and as soon as she saw me, she placed her head on my feet. I blessed her and told all of them to proceed to Umarkot.

Observing this, the nobleman kneeled and stretching his hands heavenwards said, "Baba, what will happen to us now? What should we do? Where should we go? Who will give us shelter?" As he spoke, there were tears in his eyes. I placed my hand on his head and said, "Do not weep. *Allah* will bless you. All of you go to Umarkot now. You will get a safe haven there and this lady will deliver a baby boy. He will be a great *Badshah*. I will follow you to Umarkot. Your journey will be peaceful. Come on, get up and go!"

I left that place and after wandering for two days I reached Umarkot. When I inquired about those people, I came to know the lady had delivered a baby boy. I went to see the baby and blessed them all. They named the boy Jallaludin Mohammed. He later came to be known as Akbar the Great. This is all *Allah Mia*'s benevolence.

How Sathe met Megha

When Sathe was District Controller of the Viramgam area, he got acquainted with Megha – a pious and simple Gujarati *Brahmin*. He was an ardent devotee of Lord Shiva. Sathe liked his devotion and pure mind. Since Sathe too was a pious man, he readily agreed to teach the Gayatri *mantra* to Megha. Until then, Megha did not know the various ways of *bhakti* as per the scriptures. He worshipped in whatever way he could.

Sathe stuck staunchly to the scriptures. After teaching the Gayatri *mantra* to Megha, he appointed him as a priest @ Rs. 8/- per month in a Shiva temple at Bharuch. Both respected each other's devotion, and so whenever he had time, Megha attended *satsang* at Sathe's. Once, while talking about the importance of his *Sadguru*, Sathe thought Megha's soul would greatly benefit from

visiting Baba. He directed Megha to go to Shirdi and give *Gangasnan* to Baba and thus fulfil his ardent desire.

"There is no better way for self-fulfilment. I have no doubt that Sai Baba is the Lord Incarnate", said Sathe.

A place established by a Muslim!

Megha happily took leave of Sathe to go to Shirdi. But, on Bharuch station, someone told him that Sai Baba was a Muslim. His orthodox mind would not agree to go down at a Muslim's feet and he returned to Sathe, and told him not to send him there. But, Sathe would have none of it. He said a *Sadguru* had no caste or creed and to attain salvation, one must have *Sadguru*.

Megha was in a dilemma; but he ultimately left for Shirdi as he had no other alternative. Sathe gave a letter to his father-in-law Dada Kelkar to personally guide Megha to Baba.

Thinking that Baba may fathom what is going on in the orthodox *Brahmin* Megha's mind, Sathe thought it prudent for Dada to accompany him. And, that is exactly what happened. As Megha climbed the steps, Baba got extremely livid and picked up a stone as if to hit him. "Beware! Don't climb the steps! You are a high caste *Brahmin* and I am lowly Muslim. You will be defiled. Go away! Throw this rascal out, someone!" He shouted and at the same time blamed Sathe for sending such an immature person to him.

Witnessing this fearsome *Avatar* of Baba, Megha started trembling. As Baba moved forward to hit him, he moved backwards. He stayed in Shirdi for a few days, but was not convinced. His faith was on tenterhooks. How can I bathe this Muslim *Aulia*, he doubted.

Sathe says, one day Megha left Shirdi and went to Trimbakeshwar. After staying there for about a year and a half, he returned to Shirdi. There at the behest of Dada Kelkar, he was blessed with *Sai Darshan*. Then he stayed in Shirdi. Baba did not give him any *mantra*, but changed his outlook with His various *leelas*.

As per Krishna Jageshwar Bhishma's account, Megha fell ill. Very ill. When he recovered, he went to the Shiva temple. There instead of the *Lingam*, he saw Shri Sai Maharaj. It was then that he returned to Shirdi. Baba told him to do 'Gayatri Purashcharan' (Gayatri *mantra japa* for a specific number of times), so that all of his sins were absolved. Sai blessed him on completion.

Once in Shirdi, belief in Baba made him an ardent devotee and Sai became the only God for him.

Sai Shankar hymn

Megha worshipped Sai as *Shivaswaroop*. Chanting Shiva Shankar's name, he did *archana* and *pooja* to Baba. He sang *bhajans* as though in a trance.

Baba admired his devotion. Baba decided to free him spiritually. He has no worldly ties as it is. Baba gave him the honour of performing all three *Aaratis*.

What all he did for Baba! Lord Shankar likes the leaves of the Bel tree. There was no Bel tree in Shirdi. So every day he walked 13 miles to get it. Then he performed the *pooja* of all the Deities in the village. After that he came to the *Masjid* for Baba's *pooja*.

* Once, there was a break in this ritual as the doors of the Khandoba temple were closed. He came to the *Masjid*. Baba said, "You have worshipped all, but one! Go and do that *pooja* first!" Megha told him the door was closed, so he came away. "Go and see now! The door is open," Baba said. When Megha returned after completing Khandobaraya's *pooja*, Baba allowed him to do His.

* Once, on a Makar Sankranti day, Megha desired to give Gangasnan to Baba by bathing Him with the waters of the river Godavari. Since Sai was his Sai Shankar, he pestered Baba for permission. At last Baba said, "Do as you wish!" Megha informed everybody he was going to bathe his Sai Shankar the next day. He left barefoot at mid-night, walked about 16 *koas* (1 *koas* = 2 miles) to and fro, and reached Shirdi with the pot full of the waters of the Godavari. He did not worry about the trouble. After the noon *Aarati*, Megha hastened to finish the bath.

He completed all the preparations and tried to seat Baba in place. "Why are you giving *Gangasnan* to a *Fakir* like me? Are you mad?" Baba tried to dissuade him; but Megha would not listen. The only thing he knew was that his Lord Shankar loved *Gangasnan*. He said, "Baba, today is a very auspicious day!" Seeing his pure devotion, Baba relented and took His seat. "Just a little water Megha! The head is the most important part of the body; so sprinkle a little on it and that will be enough to fulfil your *Gangasnan*." "Okay! Okay!" said Megha, but overturned the entire pot on Baba's head! "Har! Har! Gangey! My Shankar had a complete *snan*!" He danced with glee.

He never realised he had emptied the entire pot. But yet, only Baba's head was wet. Baba did not wish Megha to have any spiritual pride. He wanted to imbibe the fact that even in your *karma*, you will find indications of His presence, and your pride will disappear - the essence of true *bhakti*.

Draw the *Trishul*

NanaSaheb has given a big portrait of Baba to Megha who lived in one corner of Sathe wada. Every evening Baba's *Aarati* was performed there. Once, Megha saw Baba standing in front of him in his dream. Baba tossed some *akshata* on the bed and said, "Megha, draw the *Trishul* (trident)!" Then He disappeared. When Megha opened his eyes, Baba was nowhere to be seen. When he narrated this incident to Baba in the morning, Baba said, "That was not an illusion. Did you not hear my words 'Draw a 'Trishul'?' "But, the door was closed; so I thought ..." Megha mumbled. Baba said, "But, I do not have a definite form. Am I not all pervading? Whosoever trusts me with his burden, I take care of all his bodily needs!"

Megha returned to his room and drew a red *Trishul* near Baba's portrait. There was a miracle the very next day. A Ramdasi arrived from Pune and offered a *Lingam* to Baba. Megha happened to be there at that moment. Baba gave him the *Lingam* and said, "See, your Shankar has come, take care of him!"

Seeing the *Lingam* following the *Trishul*, tears of joy welled up in Megha's eyes.

When he left with the *Lingam*, Kakasaheb Dixit was praying to Sai after his bath. When Megha showed him the *Lingam* Baba had given, Dixit too got emotional, as he too had recently experienced another *leela* of Baba. In this way Megha's faith in Lord Shankar was strengthened.

Honour of performing *Aarati*

three times a day

What can one say of Megha's great good fortune? He got the honour of performing Baba's *Aarati* three times a day. He performed the *Aarati* standing on one leg, just as he did in Bharuch while performing Shiv Shankar's *Aarati*.

Babasaheb Tarkhad describes Megha doing the *Aarati*:

Many people have witnessed Megha doing the *Aarati*. When rotating the noon *Aarati* around Sai, he stood on one leg, supported by the other leg bent at the knee. The *Aarati* went on for about 45 minutes and everyone marvelled at Megha standing still.

As per Sai's instructions, he did Sai's *Aarati* only after doing *pooja* at all the temples in the village. While the *Aarati* was in progress, Baba raised His right hand and index finger and rotated it in a circle. Megha bent his head, nodding in affirmation. Sometimes this happened three times. Then Baba stopped rotating His arm and showed a steady hand to Megha. Megha again bent his head and nodded in affirmation. After that Baba looked at Megha and everyone present with a smile and thus made everyone happy. When asked about the signs, Megha said the first one meant 'Did you perform *pooja* to all the Gods in the village?' The steady hand with a raised index finger meant all the Gods are manifestations of Lord Shiv Shankar.

Even amidst the clanging of gongs and bells, Baba made people realise the ultimate truth according to their devotion. Megha ultimately realised that Shiv Shankar was in all the Gods and that all Gods are one.

Baba never said 'An-al-Haq' (I am God); but He always said 'Yaad-e-Haq' (I remember God). That is why Baba let Megha do His *pooja* only after all the God's *pooja* was done. He strengthened the faith of all His devotees in their '*Ishtha Devata*' by demonstrating to them that Sai and their God was one and the same.

Commencing of the *Aarati*

Nobody knows when the first *Aarati* of Sai was performed by Megha. But, before that there was no practice of doing the *Aarati* three times a day. In fact, Baba never let anyone conduct such rituals. The first *Aarati* allowed by Baba was the one done by Tatyasaheb Noolkar in Dwarkamai, but not three times a day.

The first mention is found in a letter written on 9th November 1910 by Madhavrao Deshpande alias Shama to Kakasaheb Dixit, where he describes in detail the elaborate procedure, but not who performed it.

The first indication of Megha performing the *Aarati* comes in December 1911 in Dadasaheb Khaparde's diary.

(Contd.)

— **Mrs. Mugdha Sudhir Divadkar**

61, Hindu Colony, 1st Lane,
Dadar (E), Mumbai - 400 014.

E-mail : mugdha54@rediffmail.com

Mobile : [\(0\)9323971117](tel:(0)9323971117)

Translated from original Marathi into English by

Jyoti Ranjan Raut

8/A, Kakad Estate, 106, Sea Face Road,
Worli, Mumbai - 400 018.

E-mail : jyotiraut15@gmail.com

“Sai Grace changed my life...”

Ex-Chairman of Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust, Shirdi

30th March 2012 is the luckiest day in my life.

I never dreamt of becoming Chairman of Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust, Shirdi. In January 2011, I was posted as Principal District and Sessions Judge at Ahmednagar and was to take charge on 24th January 2011. I reached Ahmednagar on 22nd January 2011 from Pune and joined Baba's *Shejarati* with the intention of getting Baba's *Darshan*. At that time I apologised to Baba that it may not be possible for me to come for *Darshan* frequently. At that time, it did not occur to me that I will have to come to Shirdi again and again.

In the first year of my tenure as Principal District and Sessions Judge at Ahmednagar I had been to Rahata and Kopargaon on number of occasions for court inspection and other administrative work and had been to Shirdi also; but I could not take *Darshan* at that time. I had been to Shirdi only once during that time, when Hon'ble The Chief Justice of Bombay High Court had been to Shirdi for *Darshan*. Considering the crowd of devotees I thought it was impossible for me to have a *Darshan* through a queue and therefore, I avoided it.

I lost my mother in 2008 and thereafter father in 2010 and felt a tremendous gap in my life and as life events took shape, this gap was completed by *Guruji*. After coming to Ahmednager I came in contact with one saint-like personality of Nagothan, Dist. Aurangabad, viz. Bhau Kulkarni alias *Guruji*. My daughters were attached to him and he too treated them as his granddaughters. Six months prior to taking charge of Chairmanship of Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust, Shirdi, *Guruji* told me that I will come in contact with some spiritual Trust i.e. *Devasthan*. He also told me that, I will not get that post easily. Whatever he said came to be true as initially District Judge, Kopargaon was to be the Member of 'Three Member Committee' and it was also published in the newspaper. But, ultimately the Hon'ble High Court appointed Principal District and Sessions Judge, Ahmednagar as a Chairman. I am sure that, all this happened because of Blessings of Sai Baba.

After taking charge of Chairmanship of the 'Three Member Committee', my entire life changed. I noticed lot of difference in my attitude before and after becoming Chairman of the Committee. Earlier when I visited Baba's Shrine I had some selfish goals to be fulfilled, but after taking charge as a Chairman that selfishness vanished completely. After that it never came in my mind that I should pray for myself or my family. Thenceforth, I was continuously thinking of devotees' and their welfare. I used to think as to how *Darshan* can be satisfactory, peaceful, safe and without hurdle for all devotees and particularly for old and handicapped devotees? While leaving Shrine I used to involve in some thoughts and Baba's Blessings remained to be taken.

As a Chairman I used to receive number of phone calls, applications/complaints. I used to take cognizance of the suggestions positively. Initially I could not sleep at night, continuously thinking about the devotees' get hassle free *Darshan*. In no time my life was occupied by thoughts of Sai Baba.

It was not easy to administer the working of Sai Baba Sansthan Trust as I was already over occupied by the administration of Ahmednagar Judicial District which is having 15 *talukas*, 80-83 Judicial Officers and about 975 employees. However, the other members of 'Three Member Committee' such as Sri Sanjeev Kumar, Collector, Ahmednagar and Sri Kishore More, Executive Officer, Dr. Yashwant Mane, Deputy Executive Officer and other officers, wholeheartedly co-operated with me and it is only because of their untiring efforts that 'Three Member Committee' could manage the administration successfully.

Because of the Blessings of Shri Sai Baba I was able to administer the Trust activities. In the morning and when time permitted, I viewed Live *Darshan* of Shri Sai Baba. I noticed that the priests used to stand near *Samadhi* and some of them used to cross *Samadhi*. I immediately directed them not to stand near the *Samadhi* as the devotees were finding it difficult to view Sai Baba from a long distance. I also gave them directions, not to cross over *Samadhi*. I used to direct the employees to behave politely with devotees, especially ladies, old and infirm devotees. I also directed them not to allow anybody to enter the Shrine from backside gates etc. etc.

I noticed that the devotees used to stand in a queue for *Darshan* and thereafter again queue up for purchasing *Prasad laddu*. I thought that it will be in the interest of devotees to distribute free *Prasad laddu* to them in the queue itself and other committee members also supported my view and thus, the free *Prasad laddu* plan came to be implemented.

While reading Shri Sai Sat Charita, it came to my knowledge that Baba used to distribute food to all the devotees and in order to continue that task we planned free *Prasad* meal as far as possible on every day. In 2013 free *Prasad* meal was distributed on 180 days. The said free *Prasad* meal scheme was well managed and organized in 2014 in such way that we have received donation for free *Prasad* meal for 210 days.

During my surprise visit to Prasadalya, it was noticed that *Prasad* meal was being served without considering whether the person receiving the meal was young or adult. Directions were, therefore, issued to Prasadalya department to save food and to the greater surprise of everybody we could save 1000 kg. meal per day. The head of Prasadalya was directed to keep account of wastage of food every day and to take efforts to reduce the quantity of food wastage.

In order to facilitate the accommodation of devotees in Sai Ashram, the rates of non-A.C. rooms were reduced from Rs. 500 to Rs. 200 and that of A.C. rooms from Rs. 900 to Rs. 500. This has resulted in 90% occupancy and the Sansthan has benefited financially and the devotees are also benefitting as they get accommodation for reasonable amount.

The Three Member Committee took cognizance of the fact that some devotees walk long distance along with palanquins and come to Shirdi. Considering their plight, it was decided to accommodate them free of cost in Sai Ashram – 2 and to provide facilities like tea, breakfast, free Sansthan buses to take them to Prasadalya and temple premises.

It was noticed that the relatives accompanying patients who used to be admitted in the hospitals run by the Trust were finding difficulty with accommodation, therefore, it was decided to allow such relatives of patients to stay at Sai Ashram – 2 free of cost. They were given facility of free conveyance through Trust buses to the hospital, Prasadalya and Shrine and vice versa.

As per Baba's guidance from *Makar Sankrant* of 2013, mobile ambulance started visiting remote areas on four routes serving patients. One medical officer, staff nurse, ward boy and other staff accompanies ambulance on different route every day and poor patients from remote area are given medical aid and free medicines. Till today not less than 60,000 patients have been benefited by this scheme. The Trust is thinking of expanding this scheme through the whole district and the active steps are being taken to that effect.

The Committee noticed that VIPs visiting the Shrine has increased day by day. Such VIPs are visiting on the recommendation of the members and officers from earlier committees, etc. At least 2,000 to 3,000 VIPs visit Shrine every day. During my visit to the Shrine I noticed that number of devotees stand in queue for the whole night to attend *Kakad Aarati*; but even the first person in the queue would not get *Aarati* as more than 300 to 350 VIP devotees used to be ahead of him. Moreover, the VIPs would request participation in all the *Aaratis* - *Kakad Aarati*, *Madhyanha Aarati*, *Dhuparati* and *Shejarati*. In order to give justice to the devotees standing in the queue, the Committee decided to have a paid passes for all the *Aaratis*. The reservation for online pass was also kept limited. The result was that those VIP devotees' who used to ask for all the *Aaratis*, started attending one or two paid *Aaratis* and as a result the devotees standing in a queue for *Aarati* could attend various *Aaratis* in large number. This has not only eased the working of the administration but also benefited the Sansthan financially. We have started this scheme from 18th November 2013. Till today the Sansthan could get the income of Rs. 1,80,41,900/- . Income from *Aarati* passes is being utilized for providing free medicines to poor patients and also for providing free *Prasad* meals.

Number of schemes were in mind, which are necessary to be implemented for the pleasant *Darshan* of devotees. The *Darshan* Queue Complex is under active consideration and the scheme is that minimum 25,000 devotees will be accommodated in the *Darshan* Queue Complex and they will get facilities such as canteen facility, toilet, etc. in the waiting hall. It was in my mind to have a residential school for four categories of children such as physically handicapped, mentally handicapped, child labour and juvenile offenders. I was in search of donor who can donate us at least 5 to 10 acres of land so that such school can be started. The plan is to make at least 10,000 such boys and girls every year as ideal citizens. The said scheme, however remain to be implemented.

There are number of miss-concepts about Sansthan. All devotees feel that Sansthan is having so much money, still Shirdi village is dirty and Sansthan is not doing anything. It is also expectation of the devotees that

Sansthan should construct good roads, etc. However, as per Act, the powers of Sansthan are very limited. Sansthan can do whatever it can for the devotees in temple premises only. It has even no power to remove encroachment on road outside the Sansthan and the local bodies are not co-operating with Sansthan to that effect. Number of schemes for development of Shirdi are pending with the Government for permission, but development permissions are awaited.

During my tenure as a Chairman, I could notice that Sai is in everybody and therefore, I started searching Sai in devotees visiting Shrine. I feel that we are unnecessarily searching for Sai elsewhere. A very nice and appropriate Hindi *Bhajan* in this regard will prove this fact :-

जरा तो इतना बता दो साईं
लगी ये कैसी लगा रहे हो
मुझी में रह कर मुझी से अपनी -
ये खोज कैसी, करा रहे हो।
हृदय भी तुम हो, तुम ही हो प्रितम
प्रेम तुम हो, तुम ही हो जीवन
पुकारता मन तुम्ही को
फिर क्यों
तुम ही तो मन में, समा रहे हो।
प्राण तुम हो, तुम ही हो स्पंदन
नैनं तुम हो, तुम ही हो दर्शन
तुम ही को लेकर, तुम ही को ढूँढ़ू
ये रीत कैसी चला रहे हो।

The said *Bhajan* means :-

*Oh Sai, please tell me
What type of involvement is this?
You are getting Yourself searched
Through me, thought You are within me
You are my heart
You are my lover
You are my love
You are my life,
Still why the mind is
Calling You even though
It is fully occupied by You
You are my breath
You are my heartbeat
You are my eyes
You are my sight
You are within me and
Still I am searching You
What type of customs
You are continuing with?*

The ‘Three Member Committee’ from 30th March 2012 till my tenure i.e. 20th March 2014 has taken number of decisions which are in the interest of devotees, poor patients. Some of them are as follows :-

- (1) Distribution of free *Prasas laddu* – each devotee visiting Shrine through queue will get two *Prasad laddu* of 50 grams each, from 15th August, 2013
- (2) Construction of food quality control laboratory
- (3) Publishing advertisements through Government rates

- (4) Paid passes for *Aaratis* every day
- (5) Free medical treatment and medicines for mentally retired boys and girls throughout life
- (6) Publication of ‘Sai Stavanmanjiri’ in Tamil, ‘Bhakta Lilamrut’ in Hindi language, translation of book of Dasganu Maharaj in Marathi into Gujarati and other languages
- (7) Darshan Queue Complex is in final stage
- (8) The system of obtaining advance while taking rooms in Sansthan, has been cancelled.
- (9) Use of plastic bags and polythene cups is banned in Sansthan premises.
- (10) Steps are taken to have a security of Idol/Shrine.
- (11) Provision of free medicines for patients of snake bite, dog bite etc.
- (12) Free food to the various institutions meant for religious education, blind, handicapped, mentally handicapped, deaf and dumb
- (13) Conducting of various free camps on various diseases from Sai Baba Sansthan’s hospital
- (14) In both hospitals of Sansthan, patients from weaker section are examined in OPD free of costs.
- (15) Basic health check-up camps are being conducted for old citizens.
- (16) Mobile clinic for the patients residing in remote areas
- (17) Free cataract camps
- (18) Free camps for examination of diabetes and medical treatment
- (19) Free camps for cross eyed persons
- (20) Free camp for sklerotherapy
- (21) Free camp for artificial bone grafting
- (22) Free camp for Jaipur (artificial) foot
- (23) Camp for awareness of cancer
- (24) The committee has made it compulsory on the Medical Officers to recommend generic medicines. Sansthan has purchased the generic medicines only and thereby people could save at least 40% amount on the expenses of medicines, which is given to poor patients. The Sansthan, therefore, could save at least 73 lakh rupees.
- (25) The ‘Three Member Committee’ has started E-Tendering process, for the first time in all transactions, which has brought transparency.
- (26) The ‘Three Member Committee’ is providing free education to the children from weaker section of society.
- (27) Beneficial steps have been taken for the benefit of employees.
- (28) Rajeev Gandhi *Jeevandayee Yojana* has been implemented.
- (29) Sai Ashram – 1 and Sai Ashram – 2 have been constructed and thereby 1530 rooms have been made available in Sai Ashram – 1 and 192 dormitory halls each having 18 beds have been made available in Sai Ashram – 2 with the help of Sai devotee Sri K. V. Ramani. Because of this accommodation for devotees to the extent of 11,776 has been made.



(30) Free accommodation has been made available to the relatives of patients, who are being admitted in the hospital.

(31) In respect of Dasganu Maharaj, who has written number of articles on Sai Baba, Stavanmanjiri *Pathan* has been initiated on the day of death anniversary i.e. *Punyatithi* of Dasganu Maharaj.

(32) Blind and physically handicapped devotees travelling on foot have been provided free accommodation, *Darshan* and meal.

(33) From Ramnavami festival of 2014, it has been decided to distribute free meal to all devotees and villagers on three main occasions such as Ramnavami, *Gurupournima* and Dassera festival by Sansthan on behalf of all devotees.

(34) *Aradhana Vidhi* of Sai Baba on Dassera will be arranged in such a manner that it shall be viewed by all devotees and villagers who used to attend it and it will be telecasted largely.

(35) Hon'ble President of India Sri Pranav Mukherjee had paid visit to the Shrine and I got an opportunity to welcome and felicitate him. Similarly, I got an opportunity to welcome Hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra Sri Prithviraj Chavan, on the auspicious occasion of inauguration function of Sai Ashram buildings. An amount of Rs. 25 crores has been handed to Scarcity Chief Minister Fund.

I got retired from the post of Principal District and Sessions Judge, Ahmednagar on 20th March 2014 and Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust has given me sendoff on 1st April 2014. I know that number of things which are required to be done remains to be completed. I have tried my level best to perform my duty for Sai Baba and Sai devotees. I could not give full devotion because of my other occupations. However, I am fully satisfied with the little work which I could do. I could perform *Aradhana Vidhi* of Shri Sai Baba for two years and I know such *Vidhi* can be performed only by a son. I think myself to be the most luckiest person in the world, in this regard. I know that I may not be able to serve Baba the way I did for last 2 years. I remember one Hindi *Sai Bhajan*, which describes my view as regards my life without Baba's service :-

गीत जैसा मैं हूँ निराश्रित,
तुम्हारे सुर बिना,
साईं तुम्हारे सुर बिना।
प्रीत जैसा मैं हूँ अकेला,
तुम्हारे संग बिना साईं,
तुम्हारे संग बिना।
मन जैसा मैं हूँ खामोश,
तुम्हारे स्वप्न बिना साईं,
तुम्हारे स्वप्न बिना।

(Contd. from page 15)

भुले जैसा मैं हूँ दिशाहीन,
तुम्हारे संकेत बिना साईं,

तुम्हारे संकेत बिना।
समय जैसा व्यर्थ है जीवन,
तुम्हारे भक्ति बिना साईं,
तुम्हारे भक्ति बिना।
कागङ्ग के फूल जैसा हूँ मैं,
तुम्हारे सुगंध बिना साईं,
तुम्हारे सुगंध बिना।

The said *Bhajan* means :-

I am unprotected like song
Without Your note in music
I am alone like Preet
Without Your company
I am silent like a mind
Without Your dream
I am directionless traveller
Without Your guidance
I am useless like time
Without Your worship
I am like a paper flower
Without Your scent

- Jayant D. Kulkarni

Ex. Principal District & Sessions Judge and
Chairman, Managing Committee,
Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust, Shirdi,
Dist. Ahmednagar.



Shirdi News

*** Public Relations Publicity Section ***

Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust (Shirdi)

- Translated from Marathi into English by **Vishwarath Nayar**

E-mail : vishwarathnayar@gmail.com

Free Medical Service To Every Home Through Mobile Dispensary Extended

Looking at the response to the free medical service at every doorstep through the mobile clinic started by the Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust, Shirdi on experimental basis last year, the Sansthan's Executive Officer, Sri Ajay More recently informed that the said service is now being extended to more villages.

Sri More informed that it was decided by the Three Member Managing Committee of Shree Sai Baba Sansthan to start a mobile clinic to reach medical service to every patient at the doorstep in the hamlets, settlements and villages in Shirdi, who could not come to the hospital, as also those patients deprived of treatment due to economic condition or superstition. Accordingly, the said service was started from January 14, last year, on the auspicious occasion of *Makar Sankranti* and initially this service was started on the Nandurksi Khurd – Ves – Bahadarapur – Ranjangaon Deshmukh – Kakadi villages on an experimental basis. Citizens from all sections of the society greeted this free medical service initiative of the Sansthan. 28,343 needy patients availed the benefit of this service from January 14, 2013 to December 31, 2013. Due to the overwhelming response to this service, it has been extended to more villages. Having extended this service to four villages on every road, this service has now started on four routes. The said service has been

started on rotation basis mainly to the 16 villages, that include, Nandurkhi Khurd, Valki, Ves, Bahadarapur, Pimpalas, Kelvad, Kakadi, Ranjangaon Deshmukh, Nirmal Pimpri, Morwadi, Cholkewadi, Ranjangaon Khurd, Napawadi, Rampurwadi, Ekrukhe and Ganesh Nagar. The process for the purchase of a new well-equipped mobile van, due to the growing response, is in the final stages, and soon, a second mobile dispensary (van) will be introduced on this route. Sri More has hence appealed that more and more, poor and needy patients avail the benefit of this service.



Overwhelming Response From Sai Devotees For Free Prasad Meal!

A scheme to serve free *Prasad* meal in the Sai Prasadalya to Sai devotees by philanthropic Sai devotees has been initiated by the Shree Sai Sansthan Trust Management (Shirdi). The Sansthan's Executive Officer Sri Ajay More informed that under this scheme free *Prasad* meal was served to all Sai devotees on 204 days out of 365 from January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013.

Providing further information Sri More stated that the Sansthan has carried forward the *Annadan* work started by Sai Baba unceasingly. To enable devotees to avail the *Prasad* meal conveniently, the Sansthan has erected a grand Prasadalya on the Sansthan – owned 7 acres land in the Nimgaon – Korhale jurisdiction. A grand hall that can serve 5000 devotees at a time has been built in this Prasadalya. 35,000 devotees avail the *Prasad* meal every day in this Prasadalya and during crowded days the number goes upto 85,000 each day. Apart from maintaining the best quality of *Prasad* meal, the Sansthan diligently ensures cleanliness in the kitchen, dining area, employees' uniform and the Prasadalya premises. For this the Sansthan spends Rs. 60 crore annually.

Sai devotees get tasty and likeable *Prasad* meal, without waiting, in a clean and all – equipped environs of the Prasadalya. Therefore, Transpacific Certification Limited (TCL) has certified the Prasadalya ISO – 22000 – 2005 (Food Safety Standard) compliant on September 30, 2013 for three years. The central non-conventional energy ministry has also honoured the solar steam cooking project, functional in the Sai Prasadalya as the biggest project in the religious sector doing commendable work, for the modifications carried out as prescribed by the Indian Boilers Act.

The free *Prasad* meal scheme for Sai devotees introduced by the Sansthan's managing committee is evoking huge response from philanthropic Sai devotees. 326 philanthropic Sai devotees donated Rs. 5,11,88,812/- from January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013 under the scheme, thus providing free *Prasad* meal to Sai devotees for 204 days.



63 Patients Treated and Operated at Free

Kidney Stone Camp

Free treatment and surgery was done on 63 patients at the free kidney stone camp organized at the Shri Sai Nath clinic, run under the auspices of Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust Management, from October 4 to 8, 2013 with the co-operation of the renowned lazer ray expert Dr. Ketan Shukla from Ahmedabad.

Various camps are organized year long at the Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust Management run Sai Baba hospital and Shri Sai Nath clinic. These include, artificial lens implant camp, Jaipur foot camp, plastic surgery camp, homoeopathic camp, arthritis camp, non-invasive surgery camp for women, all ailments check-up camp, endoscopy camp, cancer detection camp, cataract camp, squint eye check-up camp, kidney stone camp and other camps.

At the recently held kidney stone surgery camp, 1 to 1 ^{1/2} cms. sized stones in 28 patients were treated with sound waves (lithotripsy). Surgery was successfully performed on 35 patients with large sized stones through Percutaneous Nephrothotomy (P.C.N.L.). For this the famous lazer ray expert Dr. Ketan Shukla from Ahmedabad, Gujarat, and his associates brought their ambulance theater van and all other equipments to Shirdi and did free treatment and surgery.

The general surgeon of Shri Sai Nath hospital Dr. Ram Naik, Dr. Reddy and expert doctors and other staff assisted them in this work. This surgery would have cost Rs. 25,000/- to Rs. 30,000/- for each patient in a private hospital. But, in the Sansthan's Shri Sai Nath hospital this service was provided free of cost and the patients at the camp were also provided free meals and tea two times.

Special efforts, for the successful conduct of the kidney stone surgery camp, were put in by Sri Jayant Kulkarni, Chairman of the Three Member Managing Committee of the Sansthan and Principal District and Sessions Judge (Ahmednagar), Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, Committee Member and District Collector (Ahmednagar), Sri Ajay More, Executive Officer of the Sansthan and Deputy Divisional Officer (Shirdi, Ahmednagar) and Sri Appasaheb Shinde, Deputy Executive Officer of the Sansthan and Tehsildar (Rahata taluka, Ahmednagar) and under their guidance Dr. Kaushik Makwana, Medical Director, Dr. Sanjay Pathare, Medical Superintendant and medical officers and employees.



Solar Steam Cooking

Project In Sai Prasadalya Awarded Largest Project In Religious Sector



The central non-conventional energy ministry has honoured the solar steam cooking project, functional in the Sai Prasadalya of Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust Management (Shirdi), with the award, as the biggest project in the religious sector doing commendable work.

On July 30, 2009, Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust Management (Shirdi) inaugurated the biggest solar cooking project, erected in the Sai Prasadalya for cooking *Prasad* meals for Sai devotees, to save on daily energy cost. An average 260 kg. of gas is saved every day due to this project, which amounts to a saving of Rs. 21000/- daily on energy cost as per the prevailing rate today. Since the project became functional till date the cost of gas saved amounts to Rs. 39 lakh as per the prevailing rate and the energy cost saved is increasing daily due to the increasing cost of gas day by day.

Having recently completed the modifications in this project as prescribed by the Indian Boilers Act, in-order to ensure that there were no shortcomings of any kind, from the safety point of view, valuable guidance was received from the project advisor Dr. M. G. Takawale (Kolhapur), Sri B. N. Wakchaure, Sri Badhe, Sri G. T. Chougule, Sri Bhokare, Sri Mankar, secretary – energy ministry Sri Tarun Kapoor, U.N.D.P. project manager Dr. A. K. Singhal, secretary – Central Boiler Board Sri T. G. Narayan and other dignitaries.

Having declared the said project as a unique demonstrative project, the central non-conventional energy ministry, government of India has sanctioned a grant of Rs.13,30,000/- for this project. For making the biggest solar steam cooking project in a religious sector functional, the central non-conventional energy ministry honoured the

Sansthan on December 17, 2013 at a function in Hotel Ashok with an award presented by the Union Minister for non-conventional energy, Dr. Farook Abdulla. This award was accepted by the Sansthan's head of the mechanical department Sri Amrut Jagtap. The chief secretary of the non-conventional energy ministry Dr. Satish Agnihotri, joint secretary Sri Tarun Kapoor and other dignitaries graced the occasion.

Sri Jayant Kulkarni, Chairman of the Three Member Managing Committee of the Sansthan and Principal District and Sessions Judge (Ahmednagar), Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, Committee Member and District Collector (Ahmednagar), Sri Ajay More, Executive Officer of the Sansthan and Deputy Divisional Officer (Shirdi, Ahmednagar) and Sri Appasaheb Shinde, Deputy Executive Officer of the Sansthan and *Tehsildar* (Rahata taluka, Ahmednagar) congratulated the administrative officer of the Prasadalya department Sri Uttam Gondkar, head of the mechanical department Sri Amrut Jagtap and the employees for this award to the Sansthan.

Noise Pollution – Ban

The Sansthan's Executive Officer, Sri Ajay More informed that the Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust Management (Shirdi) has banned the playing of any kind of musical instruments and bursting of crackers by the *padayatris* (devotees arriving on foot), accompanying the *palkhis* (palanquins) to the temple and temple premises as also the region from the new Bhakta Niwas (500 rooms) to the Shirdi police station, from the security and noise pollution point of view.

Talking about this vigilance, Sri More stated that the glory of Shri Sai Baba has reached far and wide, not only in the country, but all over the world. Therefore, Sai devotees come, from all over the nation and the world, to Shirdi for the *Darshan* of Shri Sai Baba's *Samadhi*. Even the number of *padayatri* Sai devotees, accompanying the *palkhis* for Shri Sai Baba's *Darshan*, being very high, the number of *palkhis* too, are increasing day by day. Earlier the *palkhis* came only during festival days. But, now the *palkhis* keep arriving throughout the year. Sai devotees coming with the *palkhis* bring along various kinds of musical instruments. These devotees play loud music with musical instruments like DJ and burst crackers on arriving in Shirdi. These loud sounds cause noise pollution and the crackers cause air pollution on a large scale. This affects the weak and elderly. And, with the traffic raise security issues too.

Therefore, taking into account the growing crowd in the present times and to avoid any untoward incidents, from the point of view of security, the playing of any kind of musical instruments and bursting of crackers should be avoided by the *padayatris* (devotees arriving on foot), accompanying the *palkhis* (palanquins) to the temple and temple premises, as also the region from the new Bhakta Niwas (500 rooms) to the

Shirdi police station. Appealing to Sai devotees for co-operation in this matter, Sri More informed that failing this, the Sansthan will be compelled to take legal action.

DECLARATION

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I, A. S. More, hereby declare that the particulars given above the true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

A. S. More

Executive Officer, Shree Sai Baba Sansthan Trust (Shirdi)

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