

WHAT MAKES patriots have such deep love for their country and abiding affection for their countrymen? It is not known what alchemy moulds their noble mind. But in the case of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya there might be a significant explanation. Deendayal Upadhyaya was born in the sacred region of Brij. Was it because of this association with the holiest spot in holy Bharat that his mind was filled with pristine patriotism? Whatever the truth, his life was one magnificent tribute to the motherland, which he served with the completest dedication for fifty short years.

Deendayal was born in the family of Pt. Hariram Upadhyaya, a well-known astrologer of village Nagla Chandrabhan in Mathura district. The astrologer's grandson Bhagwati Prasad was employed in the railways and his job kept him out most of the time. His wife Rampyari was a religious soul.

On Monday September 25, 1916, in the light of the rising sun, she gave birth to a son. The child was named Deendayal and fondly called 'Deena'. An astrologer who studied his horoscope predicted great things-that the boy would become a great scholar and thinker, a selfless worker, and a leading politician-but that he would not marry. There was joy in the family for the great qualities that were predicted for the child. But also some sadness that he would not continue the family tree.

A little while later came another son, Shivdayal ('Shibu'). Shibu was hardly six months old when Bhagwati Prasad sent his wife and children to her father's place. Grandfather Shri Chunilal Shukla and uncle Radha Raman were both in the railways. The family was big and Deena had cousins for playmates.

Suddenly one day a piece of sad news came. Bhagwati Prasad was no more. Deena was then three years old and Shibu one year. Her husband's death struck Rampyari with such grief that her health deteriorated and she contracted T.B.

Days passed. Deena was now seven and Shibu five, but because of the worries of the elders at home no regular arrangements could be made for their education. And then came a cruel day when Rampyari too died, leaving two orphans behind. The father's death had not made much impact on the two children, as they had been too young then, but the mother's passing away affected them deeply.