

नाना, तुझे प्रणाम



Memories of Nanaji

from Kantisen Shroff <kantisen@gmail.com>
to dridelhi1@gmail.com
date Mon, Apr 26, 2010 at 4:42 PM

Dear Virendrajeet Singh,
Thank you for your letter.

Because my Hindi is not very good, so please excuse me for expressing my memories in English. Since late sixties we were connected with the Sangh Parivar and as the years passed we got more opportunities to come closer. We came quite close to Nanaji when he used to meet us and our colleagues and share his thoughts on development.

Most inspiring were his words "Total transformation through people's participation" These words became our guideline for our work in Kutch. Every meeting with him was becoming source of inspiration. My brother Govindjibhai used to visit Delhi and often I accompanied him and together we used to meet him and share his vision.

J.P was also a good family friend of Govindjibhai and so many national issues used to be shared and views exchanged. The most important issue was their expectations from industry for nation building activities and what our company should do. Industry building a trusteeship role. The industry not just a funding agency but developing industrial excellence in rural areas, creating wealth generating models in rural area.

In Kutch we had our two organizations, Shrujan which My wife Chanda was running , it was for enhancing the income generating capacity of rural women of Kutch through their skills in embroidery, he used to show keen interest in their unique project. Second was Vivekanand Research and Training Institution in Kutch. Kutch is an arid area very often affected by drought.

Our work was mostly of building water harvesting structures and livestock management through involvement of the local community.

"Total transformation through people's participation" was a clear guideline all the while.

I got an opportunity to visit Jay Prabha Gram when he was working there; It was a great learning process.

Nanaji sent me to a number of villages for gaining first hand experience. When he started thinking of starting work in Chitrakut, he often used to meet Govindjibhai and shared his vision in details. On the occasion of celebrations of silver jubilee of Vivekanand Research and Training Institution in 1999 Nanaji came to inaugurate the function and spent two days with us and shared his thoughts with our team for the future.

Another idea of Nanaji was – the husband & wife team for rural work. The 'Chaturbhuj' impressed us very much but in Kutch we found it difficult to complement. Govindjibhai, his son Atul and daughter in law Shruti were very much connected with work in Chitrakut, but being thickly involved in Kutch we could only draw inspirations from him. The Shroff foundation trust in Baroda drew inspirations from Nanaji. As such all our rural work has drawn inspirations from his various works and we are very much indebted to him for all that he gave us.

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HARI SHANKAR SINGHANIA

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March 10 2010

Dear Shri Abhay Mahajan ji,
I am extremely saddened to learn of the passing away of our respected Nanaji Deshmukh on 27th February, 2010 at Chitrakoot.

I had the good fortune of knowing him for many years and was a recipient of his love and affection. He was indeed a visionary and always thought of helping the needy in whatever way he could.

Under his guidance and patronage, Gramodaya Vishwavidyalay, India's first rural university was established in Chitrakoot. Many such social projects were established by him and they will always remain fond memorials to him.

I pray to the Almighty to rest his soul in eternal peace. May God bestow His blessings on Nanaji's followers to carry forward the mission he left behind!

Yours sincerely,

Shri Abhay Mahajan
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(Hari Shankar Singhania)

