

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

VOL. XIV. No. 35

AHMEDABAD — SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1950

TWO ANNAS

## NAVAJIVAN BUILDING OPENING CEREMONY

When Gandhiji undertook to conduct the *Navajivan* and the *Young India* and started the Navajivan Press in 1919 his object was to serve the people. Hence he likened the Navajivan institution to an ever growing tree. That small plant planted by Gandhiji himself has passed through many vicissitudes, has weathered many a storm and has grown into the big tree that it is today. It was Gandhiji's wish that the institution should have its own buildings for its offices and press and its workers be housed in the vicinity forming a colony. His wish has been fulfilled today to some extent. The Navajivan Trust has been able to construct its own buildings for offices and press and quarters for nearly forty of its workers. The opening ceremony of the new NAVAJIVAN building will be performed by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, 31st October. This is an occasion for joy and thankfulness for us. But the thought that the Father of the institution, and Mahadevbhai, who contributed so much to its growth and development, are no more with us physically, adds poignancy to the feeling of joy. We hope and pray for their blessings.

JIVANJI D. DESAI  
Managing Trustee

## NOTES

### Sardar Vallabhbhai's Birthday

Sardar Vallabhbhai completes 75 years of an eventful and brilliant life at the end of this month. Age has necessarily affected his physical capacity and hampered his movements, and to that extent he is prevented from functioning as fully as before. But the mind is as alert as ever, and quick in making decisions and solving complicated situations. The quality of kindly love increases with age, and every one who finds a chance of going near him experiences the parental tenderness in his words and movements. His opponents fear him; his followers respect him and obey him unreservedly; and those who enter his family circle not only respect and obey him, but do so with love and filial affection. He is needed by the country. May he remain long with us in a fit condition to render service to the nation!

Wardha, 16-10-'50

## Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande

Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande completed 80 years in the beginning of this month, and Poona paid a fitting tribute to him in appreciation of his services to Maharashtra and Karnatak. Originally a loyal follower and colleague of Lokamanya Tilak, after his death he attached himself to Gandhiji, and during the rest of his active life dedicated himself to his cause. He was until lately a good orator with a stentorian voice, and during days when there were no microphones, he could make himself heard with ease in large open-air meetings of five to ten thousand people. As his words always come from the heart, they move the audience deeply. He got the title of *Karnataka Kesari* — the lion of Karnatak.

Age has told upon his health and power of hearing. Younger workers have relieved him of his former worries, and for some years he has been leading more or less a retired life.

Most people, as they grow old, feel that the world was going from bad to worse; and every succeeding generation was inferior to the one to which they belonged. This makes them take a pessimistic view of the future of mankind, and feel worried and nervous. Shri Gangadharrao is not quite free from such moods, but his faith in God sustains him, and a lion-hearted fighter that he has always been, hope never forsakes him completely. He has taken an active part in the shaping of Maharashtra and Karnatak, in particular, since 1903, and knows the various stages through which the country passed. In spite of various periods of depression, the picture from 1903 to 1947 is on the whole one of an ascending graph — a picture starting from the Darbar of an Imperial coronation to the abdication of that Imperialism, and the birth of Independence. If the present condition seems depressing and worrying, it can be only a temporary phase like one of the several which came over during the last 45 years.

Shri Gangadharrao is a witness to all these ups and downs, and knows that the country has successfully got over them. It will do so again. May he see the country take a turn towards recovery and progress!

Wardha, 17-10-'50

K. G. M.

## Medium of University Education

### Regional Languages should be the Media

The medium of instruction in a University should, in my opinion, be the regional language, loosely called the mother-tongue of the area served by it. The national language should be a compulsory subject for all in all stages. To facilitate the exchange of professors and to enable them to serve the whole country, they may be allowed to give lectures in the national language if they do not possess sufficient command over the local language. I think this will satisfy the demand for maintaining the unity of all-India and also the claim for the mother-tongue as the scientifically correct medium of instruction.

### The Shadow of All-India Unity through English

The mother-tongue as the medium should be introduced immediately and should cover all education within a period of 5 years. More advanced languages like Bengali and Marathi should operate fully in 2 or 3 years. But these very people and those of south India are mad after the English medium. Some Maharashtrians think that they lag behind others in all-India leadership for want of mastery over English. They do not realize that the unique place in all-India which Shivaji Maharaj attained was not due to his knowledge of Persian. The position of Lokamanya Tilak as the foremost all-India leader was not the result of his mastery over English; scores of people had possessed a greater command. None can deny the importance of the English language in the international field. But the insistence on English as the medium of instruction is extremely short-sighted.

I hope our leaders and savants will not fall a prey to this irrational idea.

(Translated from Hindi

*Sarvodaya*, Sept. 1950).

## Sale of Mill-cloth by Khadi-lovers

Q.: Will it be improper for a *sarvodaya-sevak* to accept a post of responsibility in a multi-purpose society selling mill-cloth? I think that so long as mills and factories are extant and vast numbers of people dependent on them for their food and clothing, rendering them suitable help cannot be a breach of *khadi*-faith. What is your opinion on this point?

A.: In our methods of doing public service we should take a long-range view. When immediate and urgent help is called for and exceptions are made to meet trying situations, the long-range principles and views should not be abandoned. Our Government regards *khadi* to be an almost impracticable proposition. If we also think likewise we can think of running mill-cloth shops under multi-purpose societies. *Khadi* is not regarded as untenable under the *Sarvodaya* thought. It is therefore my definite opinion that the votaries of *Sarvodaya* should regard mill-cloth as forbidden and should apply themselves whole-heartedly to *khadi*.

(Translated from Hindi

*Sarvodaya*, Sept. 1950)

VINOBA

## Blind Customs

It has become a blind custom with many of our people to throw coins, flowers, *kumkum*, *halad* etc. into our sacred rivers. The throwing of coins, at any rate, helps neither the fish nor the poor. On the Coconut-day some people reverently throw coconuts (sometimes even made of gold or silver!) into the sea. Once, when travelling, I observed that from my own

third class compartment about 15 coconuts and a change worth a rupee or two were thrown into the sacred Tungabhadra river. On an average each coconut costs four annas. Thus, supposing that during a year, in the whole of India, about 10,000 coconuts are thrown into the sea and sacred rivers, it amounts to about Rs 2,500 and adding to this the amount of cash, we get a considerable amount which could be well utilized with much greater benefit to God's creatures.

Similarly in public functions, where a symbolic garland would be sufficient, we observe instead hundreds of individuals and organizations wasting a lot of money on garlands sufficient to bury our leaders under flowers. On *Holi*, *Deepavali* and other festive days huge amounts are wasted on crackers, colours etc. By all this I do not mean that the great enthusiasm of our people should in any way be curbed in the least but *it requires to be moderated and properly regulated*. Pomp and enthusiasm are good and constructive only within certain limits; else they become destructive as in the West. What an amount would be saved if only our leaders, in the same way as Gandhiji did, refuse to have any thing but hanks of hand-spun yarn, and collect grains, cash, yarn etc. instead of perishable flower garlands, each costing at least a rupee, or sometimes even ten rupees.

R. CHIDAMBARESH

## KASTURBAGRAM

[Speech of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at the Foundation Laying Ceremony of the Kasturbagram, on *Gandhi Jayanti*, October 2, 1950, at Ralamandal near Indore.

— M. B. J

Rajpramukh Sahib, Brothers and Sisters,

Today's auspicious day will be written in letters of gold in the history of Madhya Bharat. When I laid the foundation of Madhya Bharat State, I had great hopes and aspirations. I have not abandoned them yet. We are all children. We make mistakes and learn from experience. We are still infants in the realm of democracy. We shall, I hope, be able to run after tumbling down now and then, and will not lag behind other countries. After all, Bapu gave life to a dead country. He breathed a new spirit into a lifeless body. Ba lent him a helping hand in that great task. Let the picture of both of them be constantly before our eyes. We may commit errors. They will always be there to take our account. We were all soldiers in their camp. I have been referred to as the Deputy Prime Minister. I never think of myself in these terms. Jawaharlal Nehru is our leader. Bapu appointed him as his successor and had even proclaimed him as such. It is the duty of all Bapu's soldiers to carry out his bequest. Whoever does not do so from his heart in the proper spirit will be a sinner before God. I am not a disloyal soldier. I never think of the place that I am occupying. I only know this much and am satisfied — I still am where Bapu posted me.

It passes my comprehension how people are allured by the posts of Prime Ministers and Chief Ministers. I pity all those who think in terms of these. It is all an empty show. The opportunity for service which Susheelabehn or Shyamlal will get here will never occur to a chief Minister or a Minister. The intoxication of power affects authority, and people go astray from their path. If today Vijayavargiya steps down from his seat, I shall congratulate him. If somebody else comes in his place, I shall extend to him my sympathy.

Today, I see before me the whole picture of life ever since I joined Bapu's army. The love which Ba bore to me, I never experienced from my own mother. I was not lucky to have experienced my own mother's love; Ba more than made up for it. Whatever paternal love fell to my lot, I got it from Bapu and Ba. I feel, therefore, so proud today to have to preside over the Trust which Bapu made and lay the foundation of its centre.

As I told you before, I laid the foundation of Madhya Bharat some time ago. I am today laying the foundation of this centre. I am happier today than ever before, because all this has a lesson for us. We all get involved in petty things and lose sight of the bigger perspective. We fight for such a small thing as the capital of a State. We do not consider for a moment the fact that we have selected Indore as the centre of a great all-India institution. This is a great Trust in the whole of India. After all, India resides in villages, and today we are laying the foundation in Indore of an institution whose main concern will be to serve men and women, boys and girls of the rural areas. It is a matter of great honour and prestige for Indore that it was decided to establish this centre here, and we have done so relying on the people of Indore and this area to give us every help and assistance. I would ask you not to think in terms of narrow parochial loyalties. When we took this decision, we did not think in terms of Indore or Gwalior. We only thought in the interest of this institution. It is only when we think of India as a whole and not in terms of smaller units, when we make no distinction of caste or creed, between the ruler and the people, between the rich and the poor, and when we consider all land as the land of Gopal and all men as the children of Rama, then alone shall we be able to establish *Ramaraj* which was always the dream of Gandhiji.

This is the line on which we have to work in order to fulfil Gandhiji's mission in life. When this Trust was formed I was in jail. When I was released, Gandhiji told me that he had kept a place reserved for me and invited me to take it. I told him that my work was in another field and begged him to excuse me. I also told him that this was a work far beyond me. I told him that my business lay in humbler spheres. I told him that the Trustees were going to create a new world and I felt myself too small for this huge task. But when Gandhiji died, Dadasaheb Mavalankar asked me to join the Board of Trustees as its Chairman. I pleaded my inability and ill-health, but he would not listen. He told me that he only wanted my name and general guidance and that they would do the rest. I could not refuse him. Dadasaheb has proved true to every word that he said. He has borne the main brunt of all this work. He has spared me all the trouble that would have otherwise fallen on me as its Chairman, and has worked heroically, conscientiously and with all his heart to discharge the trust that has fallen on us all. But when the question of laying the foundation stone of the centre came up, he came to me and apologetically told me that this was a work from which he could not spare me, as he had to go abroad. I told him that if I were alive I would do it and I am very glad that I am able to fulfil the promise.

As I was driving to this place, somebody shouted that I should live a thousand years. I felt rather embarrassed. I was wondering what I would do with such a long life. Bapu did want to live 125 years, but a shameful deed on the part of a misguided fellow put an end to his dream and desire. Nevertheless, if he has died, he has not gone altogether from our midst. I have always been thinking since then that his real work has begun after he has gone. Great men seldom achieve their mission in their lifetime; in fact, they live more gloriously after their death. Bapu accomplished a great deal during his lifetime. He gave us our freedom and created men out of straw. Like other great men he will live with us. If we commit mistakes, we shall always look to him

for guidance. Sitting above us, he will take a kindly interest in us. We need not, therefore, feel so much grief at his absence, because he is always with us in spirit. We should only bear in mind the ideals for which Bapu and Ba stood and the principles which they practised.

Like me, Ba was also uneducated. She could not read books, nor could she give lectures; but she was the very embodiment of all that is best in our culture. She belongs to that long line of women of fame and virtue like Sita, Damayanti, Ahalya and others whose achievements adorn the pages of history. It was the good fortune of India that in this *Kalyuga* a woman of her virtues and attainments was born. We who are now establishing this centre have a great responsibility in that we have named it after her.

The centre will be established here, but its branches will spread all over the country. It is a huge undertaking. Some say we are sitting tight over the money that we collected and do not let others work. But they seem to forget that caution and circumspection in matters of money were Bapu's outstanding characteristics. He kept watch over every pie that he received. That is how the Trustees are working and ought to work.

Susheelabehn (Pai) has just now told you in brief what we have done, but the real work is to begin now and it has to be done by you all. We have amongst us His Highness the Rajpramukh. I am sorry His Highness the Maharaja Holkar is not here, but I am sure, if he were here, he would also extend his help and sympathy. We can look for co-operation from these two and also from other princes. The Government of Madhya Bharat has made a gift of this land, situated in beautiful surroundings, with a hillock in the centre where we are sitting, a lake on one side and smiling fields and a beautiful jungle on the other. We could not have chosen a better site.

Now it only remains for you all to nurse the child that is being born today. You have to nurse it with love, devotion and unselfish labour.

I am sorry that Thakkar Bapa is not with us. He would have come if I had not asked him not to, because I knew that, if he did, he might not be in a fit condition to return. Even without his presence, however, he is with us. Who can miss him in a gathering where we are thinking of the relief of the poor and afflicted? You have also listened to messages from our leading men. All of us have their blessings in this beneficent enterprise, but the real blessings we have yet to earn—and they will come from those small men and women who will benefit from our work. You are also lucky in that Sushila Nayyar has been able to attend this function. She had been a daughter to Ba and has just returned from America. I had almost given up hopes of her return on this occasion; but this is her responsibility and she will shoulder it. As a matter of fact, all of us will have to share the burden and help the growth of this infant child. Yesterday, the local Mill Owners' Association gave me a sum of Rs 40,000 for a prayer hall. I thank them for this gift. I hope the centre will be financed thus by people belonging to this area and the Trustees will not have to spend anything on its upkeep. That is the basic principle of an institution like this which not only inculcates but lives on self-help.

Nature has been kind to this area. The land is fertile, water is abundant. Only by service, however, can you make it yield fruits which you and the generations to come will enjoy. If we follow in the footsteps of Bapu and Ba we shall have all served humanity in a manner that will redound to our credit. On this day, when I am laying the foundation of this huge undertaking, I cannot do better than ask you to remember Bapu and Ba, to follow them and to put into practice what they preached and practised in their own life.

VALLABHBHAI PATEL

## HARIJAN

Oct. 28

1950

## CONTROL OF GUR

Several correspondents have drawn my attention to a notification of the U. P. Government imposing restrictions on the manufacture of *gur* in the areas where sugar-cane is produced. While the sugar-cane season lasts, the Governor of U. P. has been pleased to order that the crushing of sugar-cane in *kolhus* or power-crushers etc. and the manufacture of sugar-cane juice, *gur*, *rab*, *khandsari*, or crystal sugar in an open-pan factory is prohibited except under a strict licensing system. The order has come into operation from October 10th.

I tried to understand the rationale behind this order. It seems obviously against the interest of small-scale village industries, and the needs of the poor people. It also appears, *prima facie*, to be against the known laws of political economy.

It appears that, though the order is worded "the Governor is pleased to", as a matter of fact the U. P. Governor had no choice in the matter. The Governor, or rather his Government has issued it under the policy dictated by the Central Government. It further appears that even the Central Government is not quite free in the matter. It, in turn, has issued it on the demand of the sugar industrialists, who seem to have notified to the Government that unless they are enabled to buy sugar-cane at rates cheaper than what *gur* manufacturers pay to sugar-cane growers, they would not be able to manufacture the quantity of sugar expected of them.

In order, therefore, to oblige the sugar industry, the cane-grower is to be compelled to sell it at a lower rate than what he would be able to get in a free, open and competitive market. Since sugar-cane must be sold off before it becomes dry, by preventing a sufficient number of purchasers from entering the market, the grower is to be compelled to part with his produce to a favoured purchaser. If selling at a very high price is direct profiteering, buying at an unfairly low price is indirect profiteering.

In support of the order we are told that owing to the dearth of sugar, the demand for *gur* and *khandsari* has increased so much that their prices are even higher than the control price of sugar. Hence there is a boom in the manufacture of these village products. If these village industries are allowed to thrive, the middle-class urban population and the confectioners, who cater for the middle-class, cannot have sugar in sufficient quantities, and they will get dissatisfied. Hence the increased manufacture of sugar must be ensured anyhow.

It is pointed out to them that sugar is an item of only secondary importance and to only a few thousands. For want of it, as several Government spokesmen have themselves often pointed out, no one dies. *Gur*, on the other hand, is an essential carbohydrate in the poor man's diet. In view of the poor quality of his food, it was so even before. Since for some years past there has been a continuous deficit of cereals and oil in his diet, it has become even more essential to him now. The natural way of meeting the increased demand for *gur* and of reducing its price is to allow, not to say encourage, its manufacture to its fullest extent. By imposing restrictions on its manufacture the price of *gur* would shoot still higher up, thus making it even more difficult for the poor to get it. It is robbing the poor, in order to manufacture an article, at best, of secondary importance to a few well-to-do.

But the controlist mind seems to run in a direction contrary to that of natural economy. It seeks remedies for the difficulties created by itself by inventing further controls. And so, *gur*, *khandsari* and village-made crystal sugar are also now brought under the system of controlled prices.

And with all these complications what is the guarantee that adequate supplies of sugar will be available at a cheap rate? The sugar industry is not a nationalized industry, run like the Post Office or Railways as a public utility service, or like the Charkha Sangh, as a charitable organization. Nor is it the case that the sugar-industrialists do no other business than the manufacture of sugar. This industry forms only a part of their various commercial activities. And the greatest of their activities is speculation. Speculation includes various tricks; e.g. cornering any commodity whatsoever; combining together for maintaining a particular price; at times even reducing the price temporarily to drive out from the market the small manufacturer who does not fall in line with them; bringing about quick fluctuations in prices to pocket differences; gambling in the guise of forward contracts etc. A sugar-industrialist is under no pledge not to speculate in *gur* and *khandsari*, or not to obtain a license for manufacturing it through another concern under his control.

If it were only a question of regulating two industries of the same genus, with the help of an honest administrative staff and impartial and expert advisers, it might be possible to plan a well-ordered system of production, distribution and consumption so that both sugar and *gur* might thrive and benefit society. But the problem before us is not one pertaining to industrialism. It is a problem of a vicious system of commercialism. There is hardly any big industrialist as such in our country. Those who have assumed that title are almost all of them commercialists. Their main concern is not to make

a particular industry successful, but to make their commerce in it successful. And commerce is looked upon as successful when it brings the largest amount of profit in the speediest manner possible. If the manufacture of sugar will do it, they will make sugar; if its retardation, destruction, cornering, smuggling, forward-contracting and payment of differences without delivery, alteration of sugar into alcohol or charred carbon, or declaring a lock-out will bring speedier profits to them, they will resort to such courses. If *gur* will pay better they will divert their energies and capital to that channel, if the imposition of controls will be profitable to them at a particular stage, they will manoeuvre to bring about that; if lifting them will suit them better, every thing will be done to convince the Government of the necessity of doing so.

How does the present system of controls curb this commercialism? The Government is at the mercy of Commerce and is controlled by it, rather than in a position to plan and control production, distribution and consumption of articles necessary for life.

A small artisan like a weaver or a tanner, and a small-scale industrialist like the manufacturer of *gur*, *khandsari*, *ghee* etc. have each only one source of livelihood — namely the particular craft or industry of each of them. Any interference with it in a wrong manner spells utter ruin to that artisan or manufacturer. Not so with the so-called industrialist. To him industries are like so many items of sale in a grocer's shop. The sugar-industrialist does not depend upon the manufacture of sugar only. It is not necessary that he should know even the rudiments of its manufacture. What he cares to know and understand is its commerce. Within 48 hours, the U. P. sugar manufacturer might transfer his investment in sugar to that in *gur* in Kolhapur, *vanaspati* in Madras, race-horses in Bombay, or petroleum wells in Persia.

If the industrialists can be restricted to invest all capital they possess in one particular industry, and asked to pledge themselves to devote all their energies to the development of that one alone, it would change the face of the country altogether. This is a control which deserves to be brought about. Is it possible for the Government to do that? If it cannot do so, let it at least resist being controlled by commercialists, particularly when the system runs counter to the interests of the villagers and the poor.

Wardha, 13-10-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

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### HANDCUFFS, PARADES AND DETENTIONS

The Bihar Government is reported to have started taking strict measures against black-marketeers. This is commendable, provided the method of administering the laws is without fear or favour. But it is further reported that after the alleged offenders were arrested, they were handcuffed and publicly paraded through streets. This seems to be quite uncalled for. Whatever be the offence, handcuffing should be resorted to only in case the arrested person is of a violent character, or there is a likelihood of an attempt being made by his friends or a mob to overpower the police to bring about his release. If there is no such apprehension, there is no justification for handcuffing or tying with a rope even a burglar caught red-handed. Parading such arrested person through streets must also be considered a display of barbarity and low taste. If he is handcuffed or tied because there is a danger in taking him merely in token custody, obviously the best thing is to take him to the lock-up by the shortest route in a closed vehicle. The parading shows that, after all, his arrest is not attended with any risk to the police officers. This means that the handcuffing was unnecessary.

An arrested person is not a convict. To insult him in the public — which handcuffing and parading involve — is a punishment meted out to him before he is convicted. I should think that this is an unjustifiable infringement of human rights, and must be prohibited.

I can understand lovers of stern measures providing, for setting examples, such punishments as parading a convict through streets in an insulting manner, public flogging, or even the public hanging of a particular type of offenders. Such punishments are indicative of a spirit of gross violence; but even then such punishments should follow conviction. To treat him so in advance is to prejudge him.

I hope legislators and judges will condemn such acts.

It is also reported that the Bihar Government has enacted an ordinance empowering it to take into detention black-marketeers without trial. I understand that similar measures are contemplated by other Governments also. I do not know if this is in accordance with the Constitution. But whatever may be the law, it seems to me unjustifiable that persons should be detained in prison without trial for acts, which cannot be regarded as endangering public peace or the safety of the State in the ordinary sense. If there is reliable evidence, such person should be proceeded against in a regular manner. If the evidence is shaky, but there is a strong suspicion, a strict watch should be kept over him and, as is often done, he should be trapped. But his detention without trial appears to me to be empowering the Executive to punish a person,

whom a Court of Law may not find guilty. It would be far better to enact a new Evidence Act, with less stiff rules of evidence and procedure than empower the Executive to be both the prosecutors and the Judge, and that too without trial. Detention without trial should be allowed only during an emergency and under circumstances, when those who can give evidence of the offence are likely to be placed in danger of losing their life, or whose identity cannot be safely revealed to the public or the friends of the detainee. Can this be said of a black-marketeer?

This is by no means to justify black-marketing or to have a soft corner for such people. But if such powers as these are exercised by the Executive, the difference between tyranny and democracy is liable to be annihilated.

Wardha, 14-10-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

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Shree T. S. Pai, Kodiyalbal	101	8	0
Shree Ghanshyam Panigrahi, Manpur	5	0	0
Students of the Harijan Udyogshala, Delhi	144	0	0
Workers of the Harijan Udyogshala, Delhi	79	8	0
Staff of the Navasari Taluka Co-operative Purchasing Sangh Ltd. through Chhaganlal Z. Shah, Navasari	38	4	0
From Dholera — Rs 19: Workers of Dholera; Rs 5 each: S. K. Thakkar, Doctor B. S. Giri; Rs 2: H. B. Shah; Re 1 each: I. O. Thakkar, D. D. Khoja, S. K. Thakkar, M. V. Thakkar, Chhaganlal Velsibhai Compounder, S. D. Vaidya, Vakhatsingji Gabhrubha, J. N. Patel, L. A. Thakkar, Ishwarbhai Kalyanbhai Mistri, G. V. Thakkar, P. D. Shukla, Jahurhusanbhai Alimia, M. J. Soni, R. B. Patel, Popatlal Nathabhai, B. C. Shah, M. C. Thakkar, Dahyalal Hiralal, G. S. Rathod, Madhavji Mohanlal; 8 As each: Nandlal Narottamdas, Rustomshah Noorshah, Bhimji Bhecharbhai, Balvirsingh Ratansingh, Madan Lakhabbhai, Narayanbhai Hirabbhai, G. A. Kadipurwala, Chhotalal Virjibhai, Balubhai Madhuji, Narsiram Jinabbhai, Godbbhai Bawaji, Rupsing Desalbhai, Bhogilal Thakarshi, P. M. Soni, Prah-lad Gagjibhai, K. S. Marai, Ibrahimbhai Mohamedali, Nazarali Ismailji, Muljibhai Galubhai, Sarfuali Chandjibhai; 4 As each: Bhikhabhai Compounder, Gordhan Kooberbhai, Hirachand Laxmichand, Taiyabali Hus-sainbhai, Manji Popatbhai, Himatlal Devi-das, Chimanlal Harjivan Mistri, Talaksing Becharbhai, Prabhubbhai Bhimbhai, Mathur-bhai Motibhai, Manchharam Bodarmal, Mohanlal Gandabbhai, Vrajilal Bapubhai, Pranvallabh Chunilal, Chhaganlal Harjibhai, Vijubhai Jethalal, Dhanabbhai Devabbhai, Nandlal Dhanjibhai, Talaksi Devchandbhai, Ratilal Kalidas, Jashwantlal Vrajrai, Kanji-bhai Koovarji, Harjivan Ambaram, Bhaga-wandas Mojiram, Babubhai Diyalbbhai, Naraindas Pitambardas, Shivabbhai Deva-bhai, Tulsibhai Sodabbhai, Chandulal Dharsi-bhai, Jadavbbhai Nanji Khoja, Chaturbhuj Maganlal, Balchand Purshottamdas, Gulab-chand Bhudarbhai, Dahyabhai Devchand, Khushalbbhai Ujamsi, Zaverbbhai Nathubhai, Harilal Purshottam Soni	71	4	0
Kadod High School, Kadod	80	9	0
Shree Kesharbehn Zaveri, Palanpur	71	0	0
Sum already acknowledged	13,448	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,768</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

## THAKKAR BAPA LEPROSY RELIEF WORK

Jaunsar-Bawar is a partially excluded area in the Dehra Dun District of Uttar Pradesh, with a population of about 60,000.

Polyandry is prevalent in this area. Doubtless, it is due to economic reasons. Only a small area is suitable for normal agricultural purposes, the rest is forest land, uncultivable without joint family agriculture. Raising of cattle is not possible in these parts. The people believe that their economic necessities could be met only if the brothers remained joint also in marriage.

The people are very primitive. Until recently they rarely went far from their homes and hardly any outsiders visited this secluded area.

The Ashok Ashram has been doing uplift work in these parts for the last eight years.

At present there are 150 primary schools, 5 middle schools, one female dispensary and 6 other dispensaries. The local people have now given up their old habits and started mixing with the outside world. Friends from outside areas have also begun to pay visits to these parts.

**Venereal Diseases and Leprosy:** During British rule troops were stationed at Chakrata and they spread venereal diseases amongst the aborigines. Leprosy is an old disease here. The two have now spread all over the area. If these diseases are not checked, it is likely that in course of time all the local population may become extinct. It is necessary that leprosy patients must be free from other diseases. Venereal disease is widespread, polyandry being the chief cause of it. Therefore, to cure leprosy, it is necessary to cure venereal diseases also. This means more expense, for it is very difficult to cure venereal diseases.

**Treatment of Leprosy:** Leprosy patients are not segregated but live with the family. There is so much poverty that they cannot afford even to keep separate utensils and clothes. In case any person is told that his disease is in the first stage, he and his family are offended, thinking that they may be segregated. They hide the disease, because they have a common wife and if she comes to know of the disease, she would shun this husband of hers instead of nursing him. In these hilly tracts there is a great scarcity of labourers. If the other members of the family tell him that he is leprosy and requires to be segregated, he would refuse to work, and the family would lose valuable assistance.

**Lota Nimak:** In several parts of India, oaths are taken in the *panchayat* by holding a *lota* of the Ganga water in hand. A *lota* of water is kept before the *panch*, and the person taking the oath puts a little salt in the *lota*. It is believed that if a person took a false oath, he would melt like the salt in the water by becoming leprosy. This belief has a psychological effect on the people. It is universally believed that leprosy is a punishment for the sins of past lives. Therefore people hate leprosy patients and if any one sympathizes with them he too does not find favour with the public.

**Sufferer's Sacrifice:** It is a belief amongst the people that if a sufferer from leprosy were to jump into the Jamna, his family members would become immune from the disease. In the advanced stage when pain becomes unbearable, the sufferer calls a *panchayat* and asks its permission to jump into the river Jamna. This request is readily granted. A day is fixed, generally during the rainy season. Friends and relatives meet at a place. They bring sweets in one hand and stones in the other. They all go accompanied by musicians to the bank of the Jamna.

Here they make him 'drunk' and give him sweets to eat. Every one wants that he should partake of his sweets, believing that if he accepted his sweets his family would be immune from the disease. After this, he is asked to jump into the river. In case he refuses to do so, he is stoned to death and thrown into the river.

This step is taken because they believe that if he came back from the river bank, his whole family and all

the inhabitants of his village would suffer from leprosy and die.

If any *sayana* (the headman of the village) becomes leprosy, at first, he hides the disease and keeps inside the house. But when the disease spreads, he also follows the custom mentioned above. His friends and relatives take him in a palanquin to the bank of the river. They make him drunk and willingly bid him good-bye with folded hands. He wishes them good-bye and willingly jumps into the river and relieves himself from this painful life.

**Hygiene and Poverty:** From my personal experience, I believe that owing to poverty and want of knowledge of even elementary rules of hygiene, people have contracted unclean habits; most of them rarely bathe, and wash their clothes. Mutton is stored and often eaten after months of negligent storage, when it is in decayed condition. Dead goats and sheep are not thrown away but retained for food. The dead are generally cremated on the river bank. But before the body is fully burnt up, the remains are thrown into the river. Fish eat up all this at once. One of the Ashram workers, Kaliram, a Jaunsari, says that his neighbour once caught a big fish and when it was cut open, a human arm was found in the stomach! Fish is universally eaten and they feed on such decayed matter.

**Ayurveda:** The common food of the people in these parts is *sati*, maize bread, rice etc. But during marriage parties, after drinking hard, guests eat all sorts of foods such as fish, milk, *ghee*, honey, curds etc., simultaneously. Drinking and eating goes on throughout the night. Some begin vomiting owing to over-eating.

In *Ayurvedic* treatment, it is believed that eating certain mixed foods such as fish and milk, *ghee* and honey etc. causes leprosy. But these people do not care anything about what they eat. It is possible that such mixed food may be the cause of the spread of leprosy.

**World Health Organization:** I know that leprosy and venereal diseases are two different kinds of diseases. Venereal disease is most common and almost all the sufferers from leprosy also suffer from venereal diseases. My request is that the World Health Organization should start some relief work in these parts amongst the venereal-disease patients. It will facilitate handling leprosy patients.

**Want of Funds:** The work suffers for want of funds. I approached the Central Government in the matter. They showed their sympathy but declined to offer help saying that it was the work of the Provincial Government. I corresponded with the Uttar Pradesh Government. It too, is unable to help me financially at present and I shall have to renew my request after a year or two.

**Gandhi Memorial Fund:** I informed Shri Thakkar Bapa that there was a great urgency to do leprosy relief work in this area. He sent my letter to Shri T. N. Jagadisan, Honorary Secretary, Hind Kushta Nivaran Sangh, Madras, and to the Gandhi Memorial Fund. By the kind efforts of Thakkar Bapa, the Gandhi Memorial Fund gave Rs 1,200 for six months, i.e., from July 1950 to December 1950.

**Ashram:** The Ashok Ashram Executive Committee in their meeting held on 19th April, 1950 passed a resolution to start leprosy relief work in this area under the name of "Thakkar Bapa Leprosy Relief Work" and to send its own doctor. For want of funds, I wrote to my friend Shri Bhagirathji Kanoria of Calcutta, who obliged me by immediately sending medicines of Rs 450. A tin shed was constructed from the Ashram funds, and the work was started from 18th May, 1950. During the period when there were no medicines in stock, the Ashram doctor and a worker toured this area, explaining to the people that leprosy could be cured. They explained to these people simple rules of hygiene, exhorting them not to hide the disease. The few medicines which were available in the Ashram dispensary were distributed.

**Chillion:** At the Ashram headquarters in Chillion village leprosy patients are given injections once a week

and medicines for a week. At Sahuja, 12 miles from the headquarters, another branch has been opened a few weeks since. Here also injections are given once a week. There are no indoor patients for want of a building and funds to control this dangerous disease. It is necessary to start propaganda to teach the people ordinary principles of hygiene, rules of diet and to remove all the patients to a selected place.

The Ashok Ashram is doing propaganda work. Workers go to villages explaining to them the usefulness of cleanliness and segregation. Soap is distributed free where necessary.

Owing to monsoon the progress of work is slow. But after the rains we wish to extend our activities.

DHARMADEV SHASTRI

### LEATHER v. RUBBER

Shri Tandonji declared preference for rubber and/or canvas to leather shoes and articles. He did not altogether condemn the use of the latter, but advised all those who were opposed to animal slaughter to take care to see that if they did make use of leather articles they purchased those made from non-slaughtered animals only. He also pointed to the difficulty of obtaining the latter. As in *khadi*, so in the manufacture of leather articles, much fraud has been practised by dishonest manufacturers, and there is no easy test for distinguishing the leather of a slaughtered animal from that of a naturally dead animal, particularly if the animal was of a tender age.

The subject has to be considered from three points: *ahimsa*, village industries, and *swadeshi*. The questions that arise are: to what extent have we stopped and shall we be able to stop the slaughter of animals? The utmost Hindu demand goes to the extent of prohibiting cow-slaughter. Cow does not include even the she-buffalo with some; much less the he-buffalo, which is sacrificed or systematically allowed to die even by Hindus. With regard to the still lower animals, like goats and sheep, and to hunted animals, like the deer, the tiger, the reptiles and the like, there is no serious proposal to ask for the prohibition of their slaughter. What shall we do with the hides of all such animals who are thus allowed to be killed? Shall we ask our own village-tanners or city-industrialists to tan them and turn them into articles of use, or shall we export them to other countries as raw materials?

Gandhiji discussed this subject with the workers, and ultimately the conclusion reached was that the scope of *ahimsa* in respect of hides must be confined to not making use of hides of slaughtered cows and buffaloes (both sexes) only. As the field of our activities was among villagers and confined to methods of village industries, it was possible to advise village-tanners and shoemakers not to use the hides of slaughtered cows and buffaloes, even if available. Generally, these animals are rarely slaughtered in villages, and in actual practice village artisans have rarely any occasion for using such hides. But it would be neither practicable nor in the interest of the village artisan to advise him not to tan skins of slaughtered goats, sheep and other animals. To advise so would amount to giving permission

either to their tanning and manufacturing by city tanneries, or to their export abroad.

Since it was not thought advisable to allow village *chamars* (tanners) and *mochis* (shoemakers) to be deprived of a substantial part of their trade, a model tannery meant for them could not also refuse to teach and make improvements in the manufacture of such hides. This led to the inclusion of skins of non-bovine slaughtered animals in the Goseva tanneries. Of course, it was open to individual consumers to restrict themselves to purely non-slaughtered hides. This some of us did in the same way as Shri Tandonji.

But as between leather shoes and rubber or canvas shoes, from the point of view of village industries and *swadeshi*, the preference of the latter to the former is, I feel, not commendable. Shoes are not the only leather article, used by modern people. Ladies' bags, money-bags, portfolio bags, suit-cases and so many other articles are used by them without enquiry. Since they are indifferent about *ahimsa* in making their purchases, I should say that it would be far better for them to use village-made shoes from even slaughtered animals than to use factory-made rubber and canvas ones, except, for special reasons.

The result is:

(a) those, who wish to avoid hides of slaughtered animals altogether, should not use leather articles in which the skin of a goat, sheep or any other slaughtered animal is used. They should take care to have their articles made from the hides of naturally dead cattle only;

(b) those, not so particular as above, should take care to avoid articles in which hides of slaughtered bovine-animals are used, but may not be particular about other animals;

(c) those who have no sentimental objections on the ground of *ahimsa*, but who are lovers of village industries and manual handicrafts, should prefer non-factory leather articles to factory articles whether made of leather, rubber or canvas;

(d) the use of rubber and canvas shoes, except for special reasons, is not desirable, as the raw material used in the manufacture of the latter is generally foreign.

Wardha, 26-9-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

CONTENTS	PAGE
NAVAJIVAN BUILDING	
OPENING CEREMONY ... JIVANJI D. DESAI	289
KASTURBAGRAM ... VALLABHBHAI PATEL	290
CONTROL OF GUR ... K. G. MASHRUWALA	292
HANDCUFFS, PARADES AND DETENTIONS ... K. G. MASHRUWALA	293
ASSAM EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND ...	294
THAKKAR BAPA LEPROSY RELIEF WORK ... DHARMADEV SHASTRI	295
LEATHER v. RUBBER ... K. G. MASHRUWALA	296
NOTES:	
SARDAR VALLABHBHAI'S BIRTHDAY ... K. G. M.	289
SHRI GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE ... K. G. M.	289
MEDIUM OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ... VINOBA	290
SALE OF MILL CLOTH BY KHADI LOVERS... VINOBA	290
BLIND CUSTOMS ... R. CHIDAMBARESH	290