

America Witnesses Sai-nam Applause

Part – 2

Sincere devotion results in miracles and the same can be experienced in any corner of the world. Sai Baba's effective advice of only two words 'Shraddha and Saburi' have crossed international borders and has created a positive impact in an advanced country like America. Today one can witness many Sai temples and followers in America.

Minnesota State with a population of around 50 lacs is situated at around 360 miles on the western side of Chicago in west/central America. This state has around 35,000 Indians residing in St. Paul and various other townships. Sai-devotion was anchored in Minnesota in 2002 with a grand celebration of Guru-Purnima. The holy thought of having a separate place for Sai-devotion emerged from this celebration.

The 'Sai-Baba Prayer Centre' was set up in 2002 in a rented place on no profit basis. Shri. C.B. Satpathy, a staunch Sai-devotee and retired IPS officer (New Delhi) installed the first Sai-Baba marble idol in Minneapolis. This temple is open to devotees daily at all times and has become a centre for a virtuous get-together for devotees on weekends. Shri Ram-navmi, Gurupurnima, Sai Baba Punyatithi are being celebrated with great enthusiasm and devotion. Ram-Navami is especially celebrated with great zeal by organizing Sai-Palkhi and a flag procession.

This prayer center was converted into a permanent Sai temple in July 2006. This building was initially used by Swedish nationals as a church and later was occupied by Japanese nationals as a temple. This structure has a historic background as a devotion centre for different nationalities of different religions for the past 100 years. Sai-devotees installed an eye catching Sai Idol in July 2006 and subsequently got the building renovated. Now this temple has become a center for all the Sai-devotees. An independent Pujari was appointed in April 2007 to carry out routine puja and religious rites.

A Sai idol was reverently installed in this spacious temple under the guidance of Shri Satpathy and Shri Mukundraj (Chicago) on 15th September 2007, on the occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi in the presence of numerous Sai-devotees. In the days to follow, this Sai-Mandir became a center of attraction for all the Sai-devotees in Minnesota. Sai-devotees from nearby cities like Wisconsin, Iowa, South Dakota and North Dakota also started paying visits to this temple for Sai-blessings. Many social functions in the public interest such as free distribution of clothes and food to the poor people are organized. This temple also sends funds for needy people in India. Some of the prominent contributions towards the social causes were aid towards the Prime Minister's Fund in 2005 during the Tsunami disaster, funding Apollo hospital in 2005 for heart surgery on children and assisting the Red Cross during a severe earthquake in Haiti.

The temple's website is www.hamare.org You can read the experiences of devotees and various articles on Baba in the news release 'Sai Sandesh' release by the temple administration.

Shirdi Sai Center – Albany

Albany city is the capital of New York State. This city has a historic importance and is blessed by nature. This city is dominated by the Indian population and most of them are Sai-devotees. The only thing the devotees lacked in Albany was a separate place to perform Sai-puja.

But Sai-Baba as usual solved this problem and devotees rented a hall on 25th July 2010 (Guru Purnima). Now every Thursday Sai-Baba bhajans and artis are being performed.

The response from the devotees is overwhelming. Sai's reputation attracted lot of Sai-devotees from nearby cities. The celebrations on auspicious days like Ramnavami, Gurupurnima and Baba-Punyatithi attract a lot of Sai-devotees from far of places in Albany. This proves that irrespective of distance, Baba is always with the devotee.

Advancement in Information Technology has brought the world very close. Keeping this in mind, Shri Sai Sansthan Trust Shirdi has invested Rs. 25 Crores and has erected a project by the name 'Saitech'. The website devised by this project provides Sai-darshan, arti and information of accommodation. Lakhs of Sai-devotees all over the world avail this facility with the help of internet and Tata Sky. It will not be an exaggeration to say that Shirdi has already made its own place on the world map.

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Understanding Sai-Baba in the true sense

Don't leave your place

Lighting lamps with the help of water, the Ganga and the Yamuna emerging from the feet, blessing devotees through Ramrup or Vitthalrup, are among the countless miracles. It has become a common equation between Sai-baba and miracles. Cinema, serials and drama have also endorsed this image of Sai Baba. People have understood Sai baba as a creator of Miracles but nobody has noticed a hidden incomparable, matchless teacher in him. Hence, this is an attempt to understand Baba in a different role.

Ameer Shakkar is a highly industrious and staunch devotee from village Korhala near Shirdi. Amir was for name's sake a born butcher but never did this business in his lifetime. He was an active brother and had earned a respectable reputation in Bandra (Mumbai) where he operated from. Amir was considered as one of the high profile personalities in Bandra. But his destiny did not agree with this and Ameer fell sick. A disease like arthritis captured his body and the negative effect started showing its impact on Ameer's body very soon. Without any hesitation, Ameer decided to rush to Shirdi under Baba's shelter for remedy. Accordingly he made the necessary arrangements and rushed to Sai-darbar.

In Shirdi, he straightaway landed at Dwarkamai. He bowed down to Baba and appraised Baba of his problems. Baba had a very promising and assuring dialogue with Ameer:-

Ameer – Baba, you and only you can save me from this disaster.

Baba – Do not be afraid my child. This Dwarkamai solves all the problems. Your treatment starts now.

Ameer still had doubts about his recovery. Baba, understanding his dual state of mind, reassured him and said, “Look Ameer, luck favours those who take shelter in Dwarkamai. Do not worry, Allah, the Almighty will take care.” Overwhelmed, Ameer said, “You are a god sent Saviour.” Baba asked him to go and relax in chawdi and also warned him not to leave Chawdi without baba's consent. Ameer religiously bowed down and left for Chawdi.

Chawdi has its own identity in shirdi. You may call it a tradition or a practice, but every outsider entering Shirdi has to visit the Chawdi gram sevak, kulkarni or sarpanch, who conducts a basic preliminary enquiry of the visitor before he can proceed for his motive. Chawdi is located very close to Shirdi's main entrance. Baba visited Chawdi every alternate day for an overnight stay. Chawdi was the ultimate medicine for Ameer's cure. Ameer reached chawdi and was shocked to see its condition. The shabbiness in the place had attained its peak. Faded walls, with leakage in the ceiling; marshy floors run over by lizards, rats, scorpions and rare snakes; stray dogs enjoyed parties with the leftovers and scraps.

The first impression of Chawdi was very depressing and Ameer was no exception to this. He was confused and was in two minds, but faith in Baba overcame his all doubts and he settled in Dwarkamai. The stench of the patients nearby made his life miserable. Just then, a thought came to his mind, that it was the faith in Baba that had brought him to Shirdi instead of any doctors or hakims. This was the beginning of Ameer's stay in Chawdi. However, Baba's game plan was different. Baba had restricted him to Chawdi, to the extent that he was not allowed to step out and visit Dwarkamai for baba's darshan. But Ameer was fortunate enough that he could get baba's darshan every morning and evening during Baba's bhiksha rounds. Baba used to acknowledge his offerings. He used to have long chats with Ameer during his overnight stays.

Days passed by but Ameer was unable to get accustomed to this nauseous atmosphere. Depression was mounting on him every day. He was totally fed up with his life. He was utterly confused as Baba was not giving any medicine and had restricted him to Chawdi. Now Chawdi itself had become his medicine. The free atmosphere outside was tempting for Ameer. He waited eagerly everyday for Baba's invitation but in vain. Each day was just passing without any concrete results. Finally one day his patience collapsed and he decided to run away. But he was in a state of dilemma as Baba had warned him not to leave Chawdi without permission. However, one fine day, Ameer managed to overcome his dilemma and decided to run away in the night.

Ameer would not have dared had Baba slept in Chawdi, but fortunately for Ameer, Baba slept that night in Dwarkamai. Night was advancing very fast and the whole village was fast asleep. A leprosy patient next to Ameer was also snoring in deep sleep. Ameer gathered courage and stepped out of Chawdi. He virtually felt relaxed with the open and cool breeze outside, which he was deprived of for the last many days. He did not even dare to look at Dwarkamai in the shining moonlight. He started marching towards Koperagaon by whichever mode of transport he could get.

He reached a charitable Trust Rest House (Dharmshala) in the midnight. Ameer sat quiet for sometime and started thinking about his future plan. He had escaped from Chawdi but what next? His whole motive of taking treatment from Baba in Shirdi was defeated. His thoughts were slowly coming back to the right path. His chain of thoughts was broken off by a groaning voice. He walked towards the voice and saw a fakir groaning in pain, asking for water. Ameer felt pity and helped him to drink water. For a moment, the Fakir's eyes flashed with utmost satisfaction and within no time he died. Ameer was stunned and dazed as he was all alone in the darkness with the fakir's dead body. In no time he became aware that his staying back will invite all kinds of problems such as police enquiry, court cases, witnesses etc, and he will be trapped in a vicious cycle. He only could see one route to escape and that was Shirdi. Without giving any second thought he started running back to shirdi.

He was running as fast as possible as if the police was chasing him. Finally heavy exhaustion compelled him to halt and relax. Now he started analyzing the chain of events which had taken place. Now he realized, disobeying Baba's orders of not leaving Chawdi had almost landed him in deep trouble. He had considered Chawdi as a jail but running away from there could have landed him in a real jail. Now he started finding Chawdi with faded walls, marshy land and the company of rats, lizards, snakes as heaven. The most important thing was that all of them were safe and secure there under Baba's shelter. Finally he reached Chawdi. Chawdi had not changed but Ameer had changed totally. This atmosphere gave Ameer a sense of safety and security within no time. Ameer was fast asleep. Ameer then vouched to himself, "Never disobey a saint's order as it has a hidden motive in it."

With Baba's blessings Ameer recovered from arthritis and with his consent stepped out of Chawdi happy and content.

What happened with Ameer is not a story but a lesson to be remembered life long. This was something destined to happen. If you analyse the events in Ameer's life, it definitely conveys a spiritual message, for example Ameer falls sick in an advanced city like Mumbai, where he can avail of good treatment from expert doctors. But Ameer does not visiting any hakim or consult any doctor, and rather decides to rush to Shirdi under Baba's shelter. Normally, the general tendency of a common man is to surrender to the almighty only after he is defeated on all the fronts. But here it was Ameer's loyalty, faith and devotion towards Baba, which made him rush

to shirdi without any hesitancy. Ameer's fidelity towards Baba is worth admiring. This is called selfless devotion and dedication towards Baba.

Every event in Ameer's life conveys a spiritual message. Baba does not give any medicine to Ameer but instead makes him stay in Chawdi. Baba was fully aware that no sane man would love to stay in a place like Chawdi. Ameer, though unhappily, continues to stay in Chawdi, merely out of love and faith in Baba. Baba was trying to taste Ameer's patience. This story would have ended, had Ameer continued to stay till the cure. But here the story diverts when Ameer gets fed up and runs away from Chawdi, and lands up in a deep problem and only to return to Chawdi, to get out of this new problem. This mould in the story conveys many things to the readers.

In short, you have to sacrifice something in your life, to achieve something. People have spent many years in small rooms of 10 x 10 before shifting to spacious and luxurious bungalows. They have gone through all the disasters and insults in their past life. But they have considered all these as stages on the path to success. Baba in this story has conveyed to Ameer, to face any situation boldly instead of turning back, because this phase is temporary. Many people stop taking tablets prescribed by a doctor and start their own medicines only to face dire consequences. The same applies to Ameer, he disobeyed Baba's order and ran away to fall into a serious problem. Whatever elders say, though it is bitter it is in one's interest. Baba has worded this in three words 'Apna Takiya Chodna nahi'.

Do not violate the guru or saint's order; this violation can lead you to a serious disaster. Ameer's medicine was his 'penance'.

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True Experience A Surprise gift of Sai-Charitra

Shri Sai-Baba's pleasant face gives utmost and ultimate happiness and mental satisfaction. The innocent and selfless expressions of Baba reach straight to your heart. Sai-katha gives us mental and spiritual happiness. Baba reads devotees' inner mind and gives mental strength to achieve what you are longing for.

I, Mrs. Sharyu Ranjit Deshmukh would like to narrate my Sai-charitra Experience. For me, Sai-charitra is Kripa Prasad. Baba could virtually reach to me through Sai-charitra. Dreams are a common factor in any human being's life. But Baba's darshan in a dream was in a true sense a revelation to me. Baba told me to bring his padukas to my home and coincidentally the next morning my close friend Mrs. Savita Bhandari invited me for lunch with Sai-devotee Shri Ingle. Shri Ingle gifted me the most valuable and precious Sai-charitra. I will never forget that lunch and gift of Sai-charitra throughout my life. And to my pleasant surprise, my husband Shri Ranjit Deshmukh too received a copy of Sai-charitra by way of a gift.

The existence of Sai-charitra in our home itself is a certainty of happiness and prosperity. I often wished if I could climb up the chouthara and take Sai-darshan, but this was not possible. But Sai turned the impossible to possible by giving me darshan in my dreams the way I wanted.

My great grandmother Radhabai Deshmukh was a staunch Sai-devotee. You will find her reference in the 18th and 19th chapter of Shri Sai-charitra. She had made a resolution to herself to take guru-mantra from Sai-Baba. She observed a severe fast to obtain the guru mantra. Finally Baba gave her only in two words the guru-mantra, 'Shraddha and Saburi'. Today, these two words of Baba are famous all over the world as 'Sai updesh'. I consider my arrival in Deshmukh family and devotion and love over Baba as the next generation of my great grandmother in Deshmukh family.

Distance does not matter for Baba; he is always with his devotee. I often visit Shirdi for darshan; otherwise I visit the Sai temple every Thursday and take darshan. I forget all my grief, troubles and distress at Sai-Baba's feet.

The spiritual happiness which I derive from Sai-darshan is priceless. I once again bow down to Sai Baba.

Mrs Sharayu Ranjit Deshmukh
Sangamner

A false pride of a vow

It is very common that whenever you visit temples or saints for darshan and blessings, you should be particular to keep your footwear and ego outside before stepping in because we do not have anything to offer them. Whatever we offer by way of dhan and dakshina is a mere formality because we are simply returning a part of what the almighty has given us. The almighty or saints make you realize through the spiritual power the existence of false pride in you. A small experience of false pride is narrated below.

I was gifted my first baby girl in 1984/85. The family was not very happy with the birth of a girl. At the same time, I coincidentally happened to read 11 commitments/promises of Shri Sai-Baba. One of them is 'vow to me and I am there to fulfill all your wishes.' I got carried away and made a 'Navas' (vow) to Baba, that I will give you a shawl and silver padukas if you gift me with a baby boy.

As usual Sai-baba kept his commitment and I was gifted with a boy on 24/12/1988. The days passed and one fine day all of a sudden I remembered about my commitment (Navas) made to Sai-Baba. Subsequently we left for Shirdi by Shindkheda-Pune bus from Shindkheda District, Dhule. In the journey I was telling everyone that I am going to Sai-baba to present him whatever I had promised him in Navas. I really wondered about the false ego that I was obliging Sai by presenting him the promised articles.

We reached Shirdi at 1 pm with shawl and silver padukas. We reached the temple and the shawl was immediately offered to Baba by the pujari. We were told to deposit the silver padukas with the Sansthan office. Accordingly I approached the office and to my surprise, saw that so many valuables were offered by other devotees. In comparison, my shawl and silver padukas were negligible. I felt ashamed that all these days my ego had made me think in the other way. From the bottom of my heart, I requested Sai to forgive me, and we reached back to Shindkheda. Today my elder son Kunal is doing his B.A. while the young Lalit is studying B.E. (mech). My daughter is happily married and settled in Pune. I am a proud and loving grandfather today with two grand children Shruti and Sai. I have named my grandson as Sai simply out of gratefulness and priceless love over Baba. With Sai's blessings, we all are happy today.

P.B. Patil
87, Sai-Nivas,
Sakri Rd. Dhule

Baba's Words

● 'Oh, Shama, I tell you, further more, that whoever takes my name with love, I will fulfil his wishes and increase his devotion'

(Shri Sai Satcharitra- Chapter 3)

● 'Whoever sings with feelings of my life, eulogises my powers, virtues and excellences, I will protect him totally, by surrounding him.'

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Shirdi News

Shirdi Celebrates Ramnavami (101th Ramnavami)

Ramnavami has its own importance for Shirdi Sansthan and for Shirdi Village as well. The whole atmosphere is full of enthusiasm and exuberance, with village fairs and grand processions of flags and kavdis. To add to this, there is a feast of programs like wrestling competitions, Sandal and eye catching fireworks. Shirdi being Sai-baba's Samadhistan, many Sai-devotees also join the celebrations with the local villagers. The brain and idea behind this celebration was Shree Gopalrao Gund (a govt. officer). Taty Patil, Dada Kote Patil, Madhavrao Deshpande and others put in a lot of efforts to make this idea a grand success. Needless to say this was done with Baba's blessings and advice in 1897. Further, Shri K.J. Bhishma, Kakasaheb Mahajani and others took initiative to keep this tradition going. Year after year the enthusiasm, zeal and participation kept on increasing. Last year in 2011, Shirdi Sansthan and Shirdi Village witnessed the 100th Ramnavami celebration.

साईनाथ गुरु माझे आई । मजला ठाव द्यावा पायी ॥

दत्तराज गुरु माझे आई । मजला ठाव द्यावा पायी ॥

The procession with the Sai idol left Samadhi Mandir towards Dwarkamai Mandir in a royal fashion. Shri Kishore More, Executive officer (Sansthan) and Dr. Yeshwantrao Mane (Deputy executive officer) were with the Sai-idol while Sansthan Purohit Shri Narayan Bhise and Shri Vilas Joshi with Vina and Pothi respectively, participated in the procession. The procession received a warm welcome in Dwarkamai Mandir by worshipping Pothi, Vina idol followed by 'Maze Pandharpur' arti. Shri Kishor More (Executive officer Sansthan) marked the auspicious beginning of Parayan by reading out the 1st chapter of Shri Sai-Charitra. This was followed by Dr Yeshwantrao Mane (Dy. Exec.) by reading second the chapter. Shri Rajendra Gaike, Smt. Urmila Modi and Shri Umesh Rathi joined them by reading rest of the chapters of Shri Sai-Charitra. The recitation launched the beginning of the festival.

The Morning began with Shri Mangalsnan sharp at 5.20. Shri Kishor More and Sou. Manjushri More performed Padpuja at 6.15 am, followed by an afternoon arti at 12.30.

In the good old days Dasganu Maharaj celebrated Ramnavami festival. It is said that Shri Sainath himself encouraged Dasganu Maharaj to celebrate this festival. As on date the present generation of previous kirtankars (in the period of Dasganu Maharaj) performs the kirtans today. This tradition of kirtans has remained unaffected for years together. This year Shri Vikram Maharaj Nandedkar of Gorte and from Dasganu tradition offered his kirtan seva at forenoon Shri Dhuparti began at 6.30 in the evening.

Evening session began with a special musical program on a spacious stage (Swaramancha) erected on Sai Nagar ground. Shri P.B. Boravke (Sp. Exec. officer) and Shri N.K.Kulkarni (Admin, Head) performed Soo pujan and inaugurated the function.

Dr. Archana Laxmikant Sahakar Mumbai dominated the show with her melodious classical songs, bhajans and bhavgeet. Sou. Vanita Jitendra Mohite (Pune) presented an unforgettable Shahiri and traditional 'Zankar Maharashtra' program. The special attraction of this program was Dances, Gondhal, Powada, Kawwali, Jogwa performed by lady artists in traditional dresses. Shri Kishor Sasawade, a guest artist from Pravara Nagar attracted a special appreciation from the crowd for his Saibaba Powadas. Dwarkamai Mandir was kept open for full night on account of continuous recital. Shri Sai idol palkhi procession was at 9.15 am. This procession left Samadhi Mandir and reached Shirdi Village via Dwarkamai Mandir. Differan band, Lazim and Zanz squads presented their art in the procession. Shri Valunjar and Shri

Subhash Jakhadi welcomed the palkhi in the mandir by performing a bharud. Dwarkamai Mandir was kept open in the night for darshan and Sai-Charitra recital.

Sunday 1st April 2012 was the most auspicious day of festival. This day was a feast of various programs and processions. The day started with a farewell to the Sai-Charitra recital, followed by kakad arti. Then the procession of recited Sai-Charitra books began from Dwarkamai. On this occasion Shri Jayant Kulkarni (Chief Dist. Magistrate), Shri Kishor More (Exec. officer) and Dr. Yeshwant Rao Mane (Dy Exec. officer) with Shri Narayan Bhise (Purohit) participated with Shri Sai Charitra, Sai idol and vina respectively in the procession. This procession arrived in Samadhi Mandir via Gurusthan. Later as per the tradition over many years, devotees offered 'Ganga Jal' specially brought through 'Kavad' to Sai-Baba. Shri Jayant Kulkarni, chief District Magistrate and president of Sansthan Committee facilitated the first five 'Kavad carriers' by offering coconut. On this occasion executive officer, Dy. Executive officer and many Sai devotees were present. This was followed by Mangalsnan.

At 7.15 in the Morning, Mr. and Mrs Jayant Kulkarni performed Padpuja. Similarly at 8.30, wheat sacks kept in Dwarkamai were worshiped. Shri Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil (State Minister for Agriculture) with his wife Sou. Shalinitai Vikhe Patil did Padyapuja at 10.00 am. Shri Vikram Maharaj Nandedkar did a Melodious kirtan on Ramjanma. Little before noon arti, Nimonkar and Rasne families did Nishan (flag) puja followed by a huge flag procession at forenoon. Sharp at 5 in the evening, a rath procession was organized throughout the village. The rath procession was welcomed in the mandir with a bharud program presented by Shri Kishor Garge, Shri Subhash Jakhdi, Shri Sharad Pathare and Shri Ulhas Valunjkar. Shree was worshiped with dhuparti in Samadhi mandir.

On the same day at 9 am, 'Sandal' procession began from the late Abdulbaba's hut. Late Abdulbaba was a staunch Sai devotee is Sai days. The procession reached Dwarkamai at leisure. Here the sandal was removed and kept. Later a coating of pure sandalwood was applied on Shri Samadhi. A farewell was offered to the 'Sandal Procession' after offering a cloth on Shri Samadhi.

Evening 7.30 began with a musical concert 'Sonpaul' comprising of Ovi, Bhupali, Bhavgit, Gondhal and Dindi, presented by Suvarna Bhagvat Mumbai. Immediately after that, Sou. Joglekar and her co-artists presented Bharat Natyam Skills. Songs from film Natrang, Lakh lakh chanderi and the dances earned lot of appreciation from the crowd. In the night, 10.15 onwards various artists presented their skills on swaramanch. This program lasted till 5 am next morning, i.e. 2/4/12.

Samadhi mandir was kept open for darshan throughout the night on this auspicious day, and hence Shejarti and kakad arti could not be performed the next day.

2nd April 2012 – A day to bid farewell to this festival.

The day began at 5.15 with 'Maza Pandharpur Arti'. Dy. Exec officer Dr. Yashvantrao Mane with his wife performed padyapuja at 5.45. This was immediately followed by 'Rudrabhishek' at Gurusthan Mandir at 6.15 am. Vikram Maharaj nandedkar offered 'Kalya Kirtan' at 10.30 Dahihandi events was organized at 12 noon followed by arti. An unforgettable Sai bhajan Sandhya was presented by Smt. Medha Chandrakant Bhosle at 7.30 while Shri Kiran Kanhyialal Parikh performed 'Sai bhajans' at 9.30 on Swaramanch. A grand wrestling contest was jointly organized by the Sansthan committee and the villagers on farewell day. Shri

Samadhan Ghodke of Sholapur won the contest and was awarded Shri Sai Kesri, a medal and a cash of Rs. 1 Lakh.

Taking into consideration a continuous inflow of Sai-devotees, facilities like Abhishek Puja, Shri Sai Satyavrat Maha Puja, VIP Darshan and arti entrance pass were kept closed from 31st March to 2nd April 2012. The main attraction, like every year, was the decorated main gate and eye catching and attractive lighting done in the premises. Adequate arrangements for residence and food were taken care of by the Dwarkamai mandal. Additional arrangements were made for devotees who arrived for the Ramnavami festival. Various tents fully furnished with all necessities, occupying a huge area of 1 lac 54000 Sq. ft. were erected in the Mandir premises, Sai udyan, Sainath mangal Karyalaya, new and old Prasadalya, new Bhaktiniwas sthan and Sai Nagar Maidan. These tents also had temporary washrooms and toilets. In addition to this, 24 hrs security guards, water and electric supply was also made available.

Various tents of 1 lac 41000 sq. ft. with all adequate arrangements were set up on Mumbai-Shirdi road to accommodate padyatris with palkhi. All these tents were provided with 24 hrs water and electric supply. There were water tankers around and 40 social workers were deployed on this task. A mobile medical aid squad was active on Sinner Shirdi road. Around 200 quintal sugar loads were made available for Prasad. Voluntary organizations had made arrangements for food and Prasad for devotees in New-Bhakti –Nivassthan comprising of 500 rooms. On the 1st day of the festival, shira was served as a sweetdish with bhajanprasad, while jilebi on 2nd day and bundi on 3rd day. Many private TV channels and media companies telecasted live events of Ram-Navami festival. The names of the sponsors who sponsored free Prasad bhojan for devotees for all the festival days are as below.

1st day – Shri Buohmalji Surendraji Tulshiji Kamalji, (Jidgur-Kolkata) (2) Shri R.T. Khubahandani and C.S. Duggal (Delhi) (3) Sandhyarani Tridham (Sicandraboo) (4) Sona Novelty store (Kolkata)

Main day - (1) Chanchala Devi Bajaj (Shirdi) (2) Krishnakumari Madan (3) Shakuntala Bacha Bider, Anisha Bhambani (Peru-Lima) (4) Dr. Achyut Samanta (Founder kit-Bhuvneshwar)

Third day–(1) Shri Dhiraj Pawa (Gurgaon) (2) Smt. Manisha Sandip Mishra (Balaghat) (3) Shri Deepak Patel (Surat) (4) Shri Amarjeet (Mumbai), (5) Shri Kashiram Dalmiya Trust (New Delhi) (6) Shri Bharat Patel (Surat) (7) Shri Rajesh Dhake (Mumbai) (8) Sai Baba Auto dye casting (Aligadh), (9) Shri Ashok Kumar Bhatnagar (Delhi)

Shri Jayant Kulkarni, Cheif Dist. Magistrate, Shri Sanjiv Kumar Collector, Shri Kishor More Exec. Officer, Dr. Yeshwant Rao Mane Dy. Exec officer supervised and offered valuable guidance. All administrative officers, Branch heads and all the staff members took special efforts to make this festival a grand success.

●●●

Highlights of the festival

- **Lakhs of devotees avail of Sai darshan.**
- **Attractive flower arrangement done in Samadhi Mandir premises through a donation by ex-Trustee Smt. Rimple Lohiya.**
- **1, 32,063 Padyatris with 162 palkhis arrive in sainagar shirdi for Ram navmi festival.**
- **A staunch Sai devotee from Delhi donates a gold mukut of 600 gms costing Rs. 16 lacs on the farewell day.**
- **Around 1, 86,932 devotees avail of Prasad bhojan while 35,150 breakfast packets and 3**

lac 750 laddu (prasad) packets sold.

Shree Ramnavmi Utsav 2012 Highlights (Page No-31 Photo Caption)

- Vikrammaharaj Nandedkar engrossed in kirtan on Shri Ramjanmotsav.
- A grand flag procession
- Eye catching Shri Sai Palakhi Shobhayatra.
- Sai Baba in a Rath-Procession
- Chief Dist. Magistrate Mr. and Mrs. Jayant Kulkarni worship Sai with offerings of wheat.
- Dy. Executive officer Dr. Y. Mane and Mrs. Daivashala Mane. Perform Rudrabhishek at Gurusthan.
- Ending and Farewell of 'Sandal' 'Procession'
- Devotees celebrate Dahi handi.

Ramnavmi Special

Dwarkamai Mandal's dedication towards Main gate (praveshdar)

When Baba gives something to his devotees, it is simply unlimited and unimaginable. But poor a devotee cannot return anything, except for love which ever devotee does spontaneously and with full devotion. Baba, despite being a fakir, never refuses this valuable gift of his devotees. Dwarkamai Mandal is one such example of down to earth devotion and loyalty towards Baba. For the last so many years, they have been decorating the Sai Mandir premises with attractive lighting. They also erect a temporary but spacious and royal gate near Gurusthan in the mandir premises.

This year Dwarkamai Mandal erected a huge maingate (Praveshdar) measuring upto 60 ft length, 18 ft width and 45 height. This was a classic example of Rajasthani and South Indian architecture confluence. The paperwork for this erection starts from January, while the physical erection process begins in the Month of March. This praveshdar was made of wooden planks, Devdar plates and plaster of Paris. Around 70-75 skilled carpenters and moulders had put their heart and soul to erect such a masterpiece. In normal course the wages of these skilled workers range from Rs. 950 to 3500 per day. But here they put in all their skill and art only for Rs. 1 and a coconut. This is a unique example of selfless devotion and dedication.

This main gate looks entirely different and attractive with the decorated lighting at night. Every Sai devotee stands here amazed, salutes the workers' skill and then proceeds.

Flag (Nishan) Procession. Tradition of 100 years

रामनवमी - वार्षिकोत्सवीं । मोठीं दोन निशाणें नवीं ।

निघती मिरवीत शिर्डी गांवीं । आहेत ठावीं तत्रस्थां ॥२०॥

त्यातील एक निमोणकरांचें । दुसरे या दामूअण्णांचें ।

नेम हे त्यांचे कैक वर्षांचे । भक्तिप्रेमाचे अव्याहत ॥२१॥ - अ.२५

Every Ramnavami, a flag procession is organized. This tradition has a 100 year-old history. Shri Damodar Sawlaram Rasne alias Damushet, Deshpande (Nimon) and Shri Shankarrao Raghunath alias Nanasaheb Nimonkar are the brains and the creators of this flag (Nishan) tradition. Today the third and fourth generations of these families are religiously continuing with this flag tradition.

The flag procession starts at forenoon. Before the procession and after Ramjanma Kirtan and arti, both the flags (Nishan) are placed on Baba's Samadhi. Here both the nishans are worshiped very religiously.

The preparations for the procession were made at Kondya, the carpenter's house. From there, the flags are carried in a procession with the reverbrations of the musical instruments

Shri Saisatcharit Chapter 25

Shri Vithal Chandrabhan Bhalerao Paints and decorates wooden sticks of flags. This honour of painting and decorating flag sticks has come to Bhalerao family from his forefathers. The procession leaves at forenoon from Samadhi Mandir and goes to Bhalerao's home. Here the nishans are worshiped with full devotion and loyalty. And now in the real sense the flag procession begins. The colourful flags are waved to the dance tunes. Looking at the colourful flags wavering up in sky, the mind slowly drifts into past old Sai days. And one gets a feeling, he is in old Shirdi.

This Procession via Maruti temple arrives at the village fence. Here the rath with the Shri idol is ready to depart. Nishans are placed before the rath and the procession begins. Nishans

accompany the rath procession upto Mhalsapati Samadhi chowk from here nishans return back to Dwarkamai. Later they are fired on Dwarkamai temple.



Inside page captions (Front Back Page)

श्रीरामनवमी उत्सव २०१२

- पोथी के कार्यक्रम में सहभागी साईबाबा संस्थान व्यवस्थापन समिति के अध्यक्ष व मुख्य जिला न्यायाधीश श्री जयंत कुलकर्णी, श्रीमती अनुराधा कुलकर्णी, कार्यकारी अधिकारी श्री किशोर मोरे व उपकार्यकारी अधिकारी डॉ. यशवंतराव माने.
- श्री की चरण वंदना करते हुए महाराष्ट्र के कृषि व विपणन मंत्री मा. ना. राधाकृष्ण विखे पाटिल व श्रीमती शालिनीताई विखे पाटिल.
- पत्नी सहित श्री की चरण वंदना करते हुए साईबाबा संस्थान व्यवस्थापन समिति के अध्यक्ष व मुख्य जिला न्यायाधीश श्री जयंत कुलकर्णी, साथ में उपकार्यकारी अधिकारी डॉ. यशवंतराव माने.
- द्वारकामाई से श्री साई सच्चारित के अखंड पाठ का श्री गणेश हुआ. प्रथम अध्याय का वाचन करते हुए कार्यकारी अधिकारी श्री किशोर मोरे.
- पत्नी सहित श्री की चरण वंदना करते हुए कार्यकारी अधिकारी श्री किशोर मोरे.
- पत्नी सहित श्री की चरण वंदना करते हुए उपकार्यकारी अधिकारी डॉ. यशवंतराव माने.

Inside page captions (Back Back Page)

Shree Ramnavmi Utsav 2012

- Smt. Archana Laxmikant Sahakari Mumbai presents melodious music concert.
- Sau. Vanita Jitendra Mohite Pune present shahiri, Lokkala folk dance in traditional Dress.
- 'Saonapaule' comprising of Ovi, Bhuapali and Dindi was presented by Miss Suvarna Bhagvat Mumbai.
- An example of classic 'Bharat Natyam' performed by Sou. Prajakta Joglekar and Co-stars.
- Smt. Medha Chandrakant Bhosale and Chorous Pune snapped during 'Sai-Bhajan Sandhya'
- Shri Kiran Parekh Kopargaon presents 'Sai-Bhajan Sandhya'