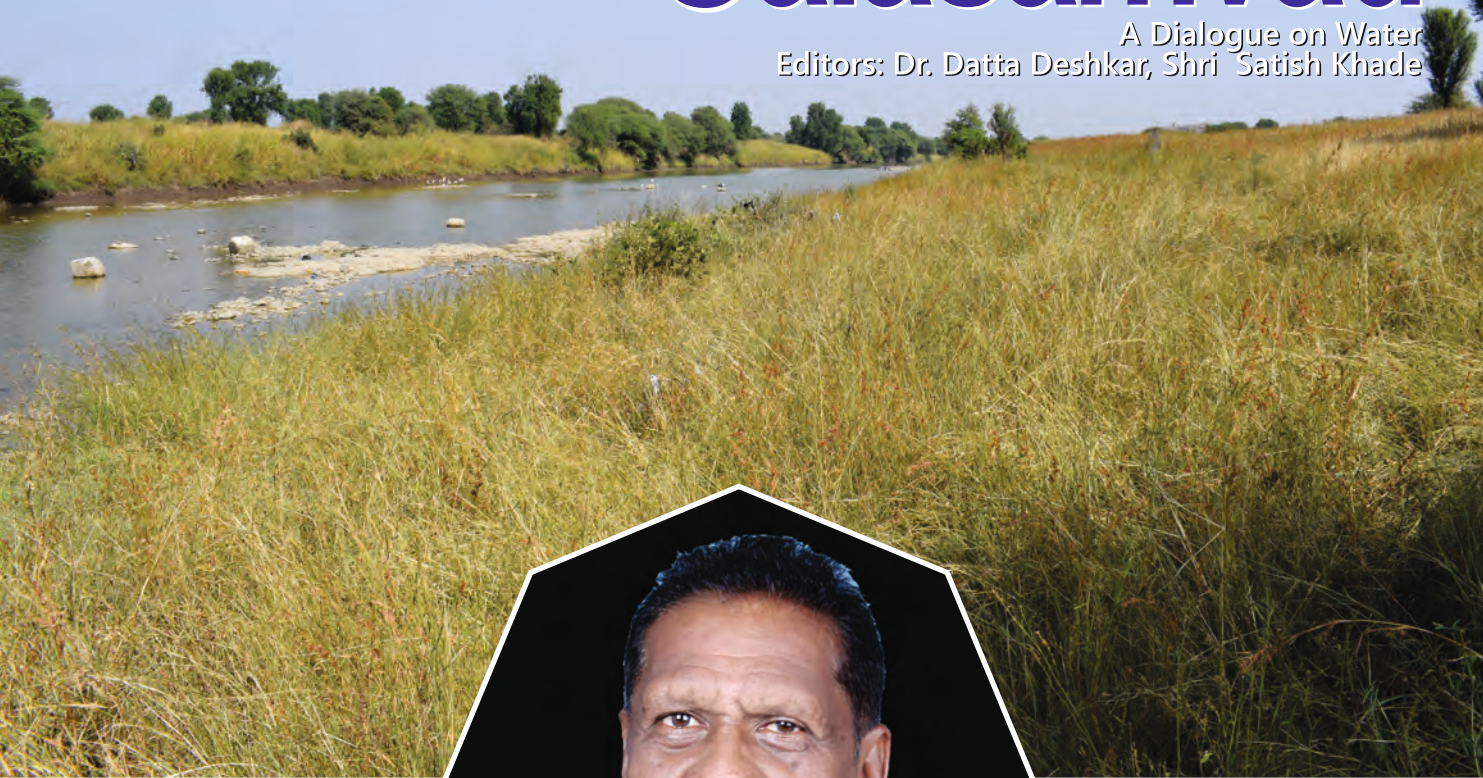


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# Jalasangvad

A Dialogue on Water  
Editors: Dr. Datta Deshkar, Shri Satish Khade



**Chairman  
Shri Jayaji Paikrao**

**Mentor of  
Ugam Gram Vikas Sanstha  
Umra, Taluka : Kalamnuri  
(District : Hingoli)**



## Selected photographs showing the work of Shri Jayaji Paikrao



Jaladindi Organised by Shri Sushant Paikrao



Jalasaaksharata Yatra at Hingoli



Jaladindi



Jaladoots



Farmers and students measuring rainfall



Jondhali Grass and its cultivators



Visit of Pani Foundation team



Shri Vikas Kamble receiving Shikshan Ratna Puraskar at the hands of Shrimati Sindhutai Sapkal

# Jalsamvad



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### Mouth Piece of Bharatiya Jala Sanskriti Mandal

■ January 2022

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## Editorial .....

When will we change our glasses?

Those who give words to the pain of famine are also appreciated ...

The poem of sympathy for the pain is also exalted...

The writer, who writes a novel on drought, also gets fame...

The novel, written on the issues of farmers, also gets Sahitya Academy award...

But...

Who cares about those who are looking for answers on drought, water scarcity?

Who is reaching out to them? Who cares about their existence?

When will all those, who successfully try to resolve the water issues, be brought to light?

And who will take care of this ?

Who will evaluate their work?

When will we call them great?

When will the media see Maharashtra beyond Mumbai and Pune?

Forget about the names of noted social activists in Vidarbha, Marathwada, Konkan, Khandesh to come in limelight at the level of world, country or state. But, when will they come to known at least on the regional level?

When will the media people in Marathwada talk about the prosperity of Marathwada along with the drought?

When will the innovation be acknowledged instead of the blame game?

When will sociology and politics go hand in hand with science and technology?

Who will take the initiative of shaking these hands?

Even politicians must be held accountable, but when will the administration be held accountable?

When will our universities become accountable?

Let that all be, but, first ask ourselves, as to when will we be responsible?

When will these greats come in limelight, who found the answers by stopping the outcry of injustice and backwardness and giving thoughts and actions of rejuvenation to the society?

When will we be able to overcome the situation and bury the problems and follow the path of development and then follow the path of those who build these highways?

Shall we not ever call them our 'celebrities' to these leaders in conservation of water, nature and biodiversity?

When will we change our glasses?

That way, many have been successful on the topic of water and environment.

Through the Journey of dialogue as started by Jalbiradari in Maharashtra one and a half year ago, has introduced many activists and organizations in this topic to one another. It was realized and revealed in Marathwada that there are individuals and organizations who are working for comprehensive, substantial and sustainable development of the region. One of the leading names in this is Shri Jayaji Paikrao and his organization Ugam. We are very much pleased to have a special issue of Jalsamvad on him.

May the god give shri Jayajirao Paikrao a long life for his work!! And many congratulations for his inspiring work, as well!!

**Satish Khade, Editor**

## Guest editor's Forewords...

If somebody asks me where is 'Ugam' located, I will straight way answer that it is located in the hearts of Jayaji Paikrao, 'JP', as he is fondly known by this name. Everything is really astonishing about this man and his organization 'Ugam'. In Marathi language, meaning of 'Ugam' is 'an origin of something'. For eg, a river originates from a spring in the mountains and then gradually keeps expanding, as number of, streams and small rivers join to it in its journey. At the origin, it happens just to be a small streamlet and gradually it becomes a very big flowing water body. In its journey, as it expands, the people on its banks, get flourished, as their farm lands get irrigated, civilization and industries get happy, as they get required water; and in this way, it becomes a lifeline of the people there.

In the same way, JP's 'Ugam' was originated as a small activity and in the course of time, it has picked up shape of a river now. The under privileged are getting benefits of the activities being carried out by Ugam in those regions in a big way. The articles on various topics inside this volume, would tell everything that I want to say here.

This man, who works as a labourer at a younger age and later the same person plays a major role through his passion, becomes a cause of providing employment to thousands of people. Isn't that really astonishing?

He has done an incredible work in the fields of sustainable agriculture and organic farming as well as water, grass development, forest and also for well being of people and animals in whole of Marathwada region. He has an excellent rhetoric and work style and also made his whole family indulged in the social work with an inter-village coexistence. Besides this, he has truly adopted a professional and scientific approach in the working of his organization.

Not only this, he has also tried to reconcile the families of many who were on the verge of collapse. He has helped many people in various ways, such as socio-economic, educational, cultural, giving them a new energy to live.

The most special thing I found in his working style is that he has been constantly trying to figure out as to how to involve others in all the areas of Social work, initiated by him, not just thinking of his organization or his family only. In this way, many new activists have been developed under his guidance for helping in the social cause.

Many foreigners specially come for visiting Ugam for understanding its achievements and it's style of working. Of course, their main interest happens to be meeting its originator, Mr. Jayajirao Paikrao and understanding his magic work through his own mouth.

Jayajirao has been so passionately involved all these years in his objectives of upliftment of the underprivileged and the neglected in the rural society that he did not find time to look into some small aspects like creating literature in languages as well about his work. It was realized that there is no enough literature available about his incredible work in other foreign languages for the information of the outside world. So, it has left a sort of lacuna in understanding his glorious work. I am sure, this effort, will minimize this gap a little bit.

As a guest editor of this issue, I enjoyed an immense pleasure in doing the editorial task for 'Jalsamvad' magazine, as well as translating all the articles in English. I hope, I will be excused for the mistakes it may have left, as the total task had to be carried out in a very short span of time.

I thank, Dr. Datta Deshkar, Chief Editor of Jalsamvad mazine, for providing this opportunity to me. I am sure; this issue will be liked by one and all.

**Gajanan Deshpande, Guest Editor**

## Jayaji Paikrao - The Shining Star Behind The clouds

Shri . Satish Khade

( M ) : 9823030218



(An English Translation By Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

I will not die unless the river Kayadhu is revived!! If people's minds are cleared, it will not take long for the river to go alive!! Saying that the revival of Kayadhu is now my life goal... This is the goal of this youth who is moving through his seventies...

He worked as a labourer at a young age and later the same person played a major role in providing employment to thousands of people. As a child, this man, who used to sell bundles of wood all day long, did significant and pioneering work in maintaining biodiversity. Not only this, but, he is the one who developed the world's first pilot plan to revitalize the river through employment guarantee scheme and enriching the entire river basin with water through public participation and also got approval to this plan by the rulers.

This shining star is none other than Mr. Jayajirao Paikrao. Although a star, he never lives in lime light as if hidden behind the clouds. He comes from the district of Hingoli, which is ignored not only in Maharashtra but even in Marathwada.

A Seed germinates on the rock... a Seedling grow on it...it became a tree in many adversities...in the same manner, in spite of facing adversities from birth in every aspect like economic, educational, social, and progressive thinking etc, heaps of work for the welfare of the underprivileged has been done by Jayaji Rao and his organization, which is very significant. It is also different in many ways... especially it has achieved meadow conservation and water conservation as well.

Jayajirao was born in Kanjara village in Kalamnuri taluka of Hingoli district (formerly

Parbhani district) to working parents from a deprived group. Even today, that part of district is far away from civic life. It was a period of the fifties and sixties, when thoughts of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had sparked minds of people all over Maharashtra and India. Due to that spark and the strong will of Jayaji's parents, he came on the path of education.

While studying in a boarding school in Nanded, his sweet nature, cleverness and diligent preparedness in studies won the hearts of the teachers. He had to struggle to make money while in the fifth and sixth summer vacations of the school. For this, he used to go to work as a labourer and sometimes he used to cut wood and sell the tied bundles in market. Later, during vacations, he travelled from village to village selling ice fruit candies.

In the next phase, he did the business of renting loudspeaker during the 10th vacation. It is worth noting that he timely understood the issues pertaining to scarce availability of various needs of the society and feasible solutions for it, while undergoing school life itself. He was the only student in college to participate in both NCC and NSS. He was ahead in all three leads i.e. study, community activities and social service. He organized blood donation camps in large numbers during his college days and implemented the idea of making a list of blood donors.

These and many other social activities were well covered and published in the local newspapers. Due to these and many other brilliant works, he not only got acclaim in the society, but also got their companionship and guidance. It included the people like Narhar Kurundkar sir,

Dr.Venkatesh Kabde and Principal G.R.Mhaisekar. Jayajirao was simultaneously participating in the activities of 'Yuvak kranti Dal', 'Rashtra Seva Dal'. From this, he also became a journalist for the local newspapers of Nanded.

As a journalist, he felt the fervour of the renaming movement of Marathwada University. From this he realized that only economic structure can advance the society beyond the question of identity. Therefore, he went to T.I.S.S. (Tata Institute of Social Sciences) in Mumbai, for study. He was the first student from Marathwada to pursue post graduate studies from TISS. For that, he had to pay Rs. 25,000 to the college as a deposit that time, which was paid by persons like Dr. Kabde and Dr. Wankhede. Isn't this an acknowledgment of the trust and respect that a student has earned in the minds of socialites? In TISS, he was mentored by luminaries like Medha Patkar and Dr. Panvalkar.

Jayajirao did his final year project of the course in the infamous Lal Dongar settlement, situated in Chembur, Mumbai. Jayajirao worked with the slum dwellers and helped them get all the facilities like roads, water, toilets and ration card from the Mumbai Municipal Corporation.

Instead of simply working as part of the curriculum, he had done the work that was actually useful for the society, which not only rewarded him the 'Best Student' award; but also got wonderful felicitations from the slum dwellers for the first time in his life.

After completing his education, living up to his promise, he returned to his hometown of Kanjara, with a determination to bring improvement in the society, leaving behind the opportunity of a good government or a private job. Some of his contemporary students went into government service and later reached the posts of Secretary of Social Welfare Department. One can realize the value of Jayajirao's sacrifice from this.

**Work done through Kayadhu Pratishthan:** As per his resolve, Jayajirao, who did not fall prey to the lure of a well-paid and well-rounded job, set up the Kayadhu Gram Vikas Pratishthan in 1984 with eminent personalities from Nanded. Jayajirao

started looking after all the field work there. He was also the secretary of that establishment. In the taluka of Kalamnuri, the welfare work started from the office built of wooden planks.

Kindergartens schools, health and employment schemes for women were started there. During the drought of 1985, two important things happened due to Jayajirao's efforts. There was extreme famine that year and nothing was grown in the fields and so, no work was available for the people and so, the hunger was rampant. In such a case, the government should have come forward and started some works of employment guarantee. But, no one was paying attention towards this. The Paikrao couple came ahead in this dire situation and addressed the people the need of dragging attention of the government towards this. For the purpose, they planned activities like taking a bicycle march in all villages. On the given day, thousands of people from all over the taluka came for the march. Due to this people's march, the govt. started works under the employment Guarantee Scheme immediately in all villages.

To cope up with the drought situation, another important thing Paikrao's Kayadhu Foundation got was the work of project 'Food for Work' from the social organization 'Catholic Relief Services, Nanded' for implementation,. Under this project, farmers used to get wheat and sweet oil for own farm work. This grant was received for two and a huge 50,000 man days, the benefit of which was taken by thousands of people. This included repairing the wells and removing the silt from the wells. Also, agricultural dams and water works were carried out through this. As a result, water conservation improved considerably in the area and many crops were grown well in the next monsoon. That way, this was a big success. Due to the diligence of their method, this was the first major project to be successfully implemented. They kept a close eye on every drop of grain.

Later, while doing many other works, Jayajirao realized that water scarcity is the root of all problems and water availability is the only answer to many such problems. Then he decided to

work in a scientific way. For that, he felt it necessary to seek expert help. He then set up 'Marathwada Eco Group' with like-minded social activists from Marathwada.

Along with Jayajirao, Ramakant Bapu Kulkarni (Parbhani), H.D. Kulkarni, Vishwanath Todkar (Osmanabad), Eknathrao Awhad (Beed) and many other were with him. Various training programmes were conducted under the guidance of Dr. Mukund Ghare of 'Afarm', Pune and various watershed development works were carried out. These scientifically done works are still in good condition and giving good results in water conservation.

Thirty years ago, Kayadhu Pratishthan got funds of Rs 2 crore for carrying out the watershed development works. Through these funds, development work of small watershed in Sonwadi village was done. Poverty and water scarcity from that area could be successfully eradicated through these efforts. Ajit Fadnis of DROP helped a lot in this work. It should also be mentioned here that Oxfam's state coordinators Anil Shidore and Vinita Tatke tried their best to empowering the organizations working for water and public welfare in Marathwada.

Due to such successful initiatives, Jayajirao had been appointed on various committees of the government, as of today he is appointed on 21 such committees.

**Works Done Through Ugam Foundation:** Later, through Ugam, he has developed two small watersheds at Telangwadi in Kalamnuri taluka and Amdari in Aundha Nagnath taluka and has created prosperity through water in four villages. During this periods civil engineers, agriculture officers and health officers were appointed in his organization. Through them, the work of comprehensive service for the deprived continues even today.

**Water conservation through meadow conservation:** A very important work, different from the works as discussed above, has been done by Jayajirao through Ugam is conservation of meadows; and from which they achieved conservation of water, conservation of biodiversity

and ultimately it resulted in people's economic upliftment.

Hon'ble scientist and environmentalist Dr.Madhav Gadgil undertook revival of rare and neglected ecosystems in India, especially in Maharashtra in 2008. For that, he travelled a length and breadth, met a lot of people and organizations. He convinced the people that due to environmental protection 1) forest 2) Meadows, 3) Local crops (seeds), 4) Animals 5) Freshwater Aquatic 6) Sea water Aquatic etc eight major ecosystems are protected and nurtured.

In many parts of the world and even in Maharashtra as a whole, grazing lands have come under cultivation and grass has reduced and therefore, biodiversity is declining. But the problem is not only the loss of biodiversity but also the long-term adverse effects on agriculture. This work was to be done to study whether farmers can reap the emergency and long term benefits of grassland diversity, under the 'Maharashtra Januk Kosh' program jointly by the Government of Maharashtra, Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Commission and Indian Institute of Science Education and Research.

Madhav Gadgil was looking for organizations and individuals in Washim and Hingoli districts to work on development of grass and meadows. At that time, he got to know about shri Jayaji Paikrao and his organization Ugam. After getting convinced about their ability, he assigned the task of conserving the ecosystem to Ugam. Of course, such things are optional in life. However, Ugam accepted the task as a challenge. Jayajirao meticulously planned and handled this work well. In the next phase, activists of Ugam shri Vikas Kamble and shri Dhananjay Padghan took the work forward.

Jayajirao was involved in social work from his college days. Since he has been living life among the people for thirty years now and so he very well knows the psyche of the people. The issues of ecosystem, environment and its protection are not very accustomed to the people. He was very sure that if they succeed in convincing the people that



with the conservation of meadows, people will economically get benefitted from it.

For this, a five-year program was drawn up. It consisted of various activities in which Jayajirao and his organization trained the people on the scientific knowledge and also on the aspect as to what has to be done. Various activities were carried out for the awareness of farmers, pastoralists, goats, shepherds and mainly students, and ingenuity was used for this. Also, the first to seventh grade children of the primary school played a very important role in the conservation activities near this meadow. There is a separate article in this issue with colourful graphics on how they did this.

Through public participation, conservation of meadows and consequently water conservation has become a guiding project for Maharashtra, India and the world as well. That work has given different dimensions to social work. These stages, if we want to describe briefly, are firstly the mind conservation, then the knowledge conservation and also weed conservation.... soil conservation... water conservation ... pasture conservation... animal husbandry conservation.... biodiversity conservation ... and so on. Such a large chain of conservation has been developed. To sustain biodiversity and rare ecosystems, Jayajirao has created this highway involving the common man and the results are long lasting.

**Providing water cisterns for animal:** Discussions on the conservation of biodiversity have raised the question of the need to provide drinking water to wild animals. Human settlements are usually located near water sources or water sources are located in or near the villages. Therefore, wild animals often come to drink water at night there. But, the dogs stop them from coming near the village settlement. As a result, there is a great hardship for the deer, rabbits, peacocks, foxes and other wild animals in getting them water for drinking.

As a solution to this, water tanks were constructed in the forest and mountains for facilitating the animals get necessary drinking

water. They also involved people's participation in this. Someone gave the farmland and on the other hand someone took the responsibility of releasing water in the tank every day. Many of the villagers voluntarily did hard labour work for constructing the tanks. In the first phase, 15 tanks were constructed in 15 villages at the request of the people.

Now, during the day, domestic animals and grazing cattle drink water from the tank and wild animals at night. During the day, birds in big numbers are also seen drinking water from there. In this way, a sensible man Jayajirao and his organization Ugam, have contributed in the conservation of grass as well as wildlife in a big way.

**Conservation of water through organic farming:** In 1995, in response to the call and collaboration of Dr. Daniel Alexander, a pioneer of the organic farming revival, Jayajirao started and nurtured the organic farming movement in backward district of Hingoli. Now it is well off. The Green Revolution gave rise to an abundance of wealth; but, at the same time, an excessive use of pesticides, hybrid seeds and chemical fertilizers was cursed.

Scholars like Dr. Daniel Alexander brought this paradox to the fore in the eighties and nineties. The greatness of organic farming is now being sung by all, but in 1995 it was really a big challenge to make it understand and bring it down to the poor farmers of Hingoli. However, Jayaji comfortably succeeded in that. He set up women's groups, taught them the importance of organic farming and also provided training. Going further, he helped in creating smaller markets for organic goods.

In Hingoli town as well as at taluka places, he sent the dwellers in the residential colonies of government employees and spread the sale of organic produce and gradually started small markets in or near by this colony. Out of all this, came a chain of buyers and sellers. Now, it can be said that the organic farming movement is well settled in Hingoli. Organic farming is closely linked to water conservation. Organic manure is a decomposed biomass. This keeps the ground covered, reducing evaporation considerably.

Biomass increases soil water holding capacity also. Due to both the reasons, comparatively organic farming requires less water. Also the water supplied to the crop, lasts for a long time, as the water evaporates less. Due to earthworm and use of earthworm manure, the number of earthworms in the soil increases. The land becomes porous due to movement of earthworms there. This increases the water absorption capacity of the soil. When it rains a lot, the water seeps into the ground instead of flowing away. Indirectly, this is the work of water conservation.

To date, tens of thousands of people have been trained in organic farming. About five hundred women have been working in the field of production and sale of organic agricultural produce for the last ten years.

#### **Big dream... Concept within reach ... Feasible solution...**

After successful development of four watersheds, they undertook pasture conservation works on 317 ha with public participation. Due to these efforts of water conservation, it became possible making water enrichment in 15 villages, what an achievement! Jayajirao's enthusiasm is really ideal for the youth even in his seventies.

He has deamed and committed to reviving the entire 99 km long Kayadhu river; that too without doing any work in the river bed. Due to the water shed development works in the sub nallas of river, the springs will go alive and water will start oozing from them and they will continue flowing through streams and meet the river and as a result, the river will become alive and will flow perennially for twelve months. There are many benefits of reducing the intensity of flood and several benefits will be received out of this. As more water will be percolated in the ground, the flood intensity will be reduced considerably.

For this, it was necessary to work on three lakh hectares in the whole watershed area. A study was undertaken regarding these works and also for obtaining other information for the purpose. Jayajirao's word is so valued and respected that the

company 'Idalgive' provided CSR funds for the pre-survey of the project. Spending money on a survey or study through CSR funds is a rare example.

Meanwhile, Jayajirao had met Dr. Rajendra Singh at a certain function. Rajendra Singhji asked him to circumambulate the river before undertaking the revival work. Jayajirao took this suggestion to heart and marched for ten days with his co-workers along the river Kayadhu and also in the riverside 154 villages of the catchment area of the river. The march included more than a hundred activists under his leadership. He gathered prominent citizens and farmers of each village and conducted a thorough study through the length, width and depth of those villages along with them. They also inspected well and bore wells and noted the types of rocks of the nallas in the village. He created a new plan by re-arranging the facts they had studied. This joint march provided an opportunity not only to survey but also to educate the people about the causes behind the drying out of the Kayadhu River and the treatment to be given to it by the general public and others now. It is also important to note that the things as heard, the things found on paper and the things that actually happened seemed to match in some places and contradictions were found in some other places.

Many observations were noted regarding unauthorized abstraction of sand and soil from the river bed, village sewage flowing to the bore wells, disposal of hazardous wastes in the river, encroachment of agriculture in the river basin etc. It certainly benefited from the ingenuity of the planning. The then District Collector and the then MP of Hingoli shri Rajiv Satav also took notice of this march.

According to this study, it had been worked out that the complete revival of the Kayadhu River will cost up to Rs 350 crore. Now, it was simply impossible to raise money through any means. This was not even possible through government funding, CSR or any other means.

Jayajirao is a genius person who has tremendous experience in various life aspects. He sold ice candy to earn money when he was just in

his fourth standard, helped hundreds of families and provided them ways to survive in Mumbai while doing a project as his college curriculum, provided employment to thousands through many schemes like organic farming, watershed development etc. With so many years of his vast experience, he had an answer ready for most of the questions.

He immediately recognized that, through MGNREGA scheme (Mahatma Gandhi Gramin Rojgar Yojana), people from villages, labourers can be given daily wages work in the watershed development work of the village. In this way, by completing the watershed development works in all these villages together, it would be possible to achieve the watershed development of the whole Kayadhu river basin.

Hon'ble Shri Nandkumar, Secretary, MGNREGA, Maharashtra State heard of this thought put forth by Jayajirao in a conference. He was very impressed with it. He picked up the idea. For this, some discrepancies were removed in the government policy and some clauses were added anew.

Now, the Kayadhu River Revitalization Project, the world's first sustainable, glorious project through the hard work of the natives of Kayadhu under the leadership and management of Jayajirao and his Ugam team will soon commence the work with financial support of the Government. No doubt, it will succeed. Jayajirao says, his commitment to self will definitely be fulfilled in his life time. Looking at Jayajirao's journey of forty years, anything does not seem impossible to those who know him.

**Land Rights Movement and Anik Finance:** Jayajirao carried out an important work for the prosperity of the society with the like-minded activists. We should note one thing about agriculture and its economics. At the request of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar in 1947, the last Nizam issued a decree granting ownership rights to the deprived community of villages in Hyderabad State and asked the then village administrators to implement it. But the transfer were not so easy. The

established people were not ready to give possession of gairan lands to anyone. A lot of struggle was done to get control of these gairan lands. However, the lands they were cultivating, were still not in their names even after forty-fifty years. As a result, these people were deprived of many government grants and facilities. They were again dependent on local moneylenders and other large farmers, where they were too much exploited by them. This issue existed in almost every village in all the districts of Marathwada. Jayajirao, along with Vishwanath Todkar, Osmanabad, Ramesh Bhise, Parbhani, Eknathrao Awhad, Beed worked on this issue and formed a rights movement for getting the ownership rights to the dispossessed in many districts including Hingoli and helped them gain back their ownership rights.

Not only that, Anik Finance Company Limited was set up parallel to the bank to provide crop loans and other business loans to these land holders. The company has made available loans to these people through self-help groups. The turnover of this organization has gone up to fifteen crore in ten years due to its discipline and adherence to the rules.

Although Jayajirao's wife, Mrs. Sushilatai is simply educated up to 10th standard. After getting married, she trained herself in the topic of women's empowerment. It is worth mentioning that she is a determined social worker and an independent personality as well as a strong activist of Jayajirao's thoughts. She is also included in the second level potential leadership. Sushilatai is a great reader and also a poetess. Her collection of poems 'Ranbhajya' has become famous all over. Moreover, their son, Sushant has also completed his training from TISS and devoted his life for the cause of social welfare in Hingoli district through Ugam. There are rare instances of passing on the vow of social service to another generation, but even in this rarity, there is Jayajirao !!

This article is only to make the star behind the cloud visible to the people!!

\*\*\*\*\*

## Jayajirao - A Guiding Leader of Village Development

Dr.Vyankatesh Kabde



(An English Translation by Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

In a remote village in Hingoli district, a small plant grown on rocky ground, facing all the stormy winds and today, I am fortunate to see it transformed into a banyan tree. This banyan tree is none other than the JP of Kayadhu - Shri Jayaji Paikrao. Jayaji Paikrao has been working tirelessly for the last 3-4 decades to uplift the lives of many poor, neglected people in the tribal-dominated taluka of Kalamanageri.

Born into a very poor family, education turned Paikrao to gold. While in elementary and secondary school, he helped his family and also in his education by doing small chores such as selling wood bundles in the market on holidays and other leisure time, also selling ice candies.

He earned his degree M.Com. from the People's College Nanded, which has produced many activists like Jayaji. As the current president of this institution, I am, of course, very proud. After M.Com., he later completed his MSW from the renowned Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai. For the next one year, he implemented schemes to uplift the living standards of the poor in Raigad district through an organization working for the workers and laborers.

By staying at the Tata Institute, he could have implemented many projects with a good salary. But, he chose his birth place for that after having a thorough consultation with the scholars like Shri P.D. Joshi, Subhash Patil, Dr. Venkatesh Kabde and others. He especially chose the tribal division of Kalamanageri taluka as his area of work and after interacting with his well-wishers, he established Kayadhu Village Development Project

in Kalamanageri in 1985.

Through this organization, various schemes were started in the underdeveloped tribal areas of Kalamanageri taluka. In the early days, work was started for the farmers and people in the villages of Jamgavhan, Rajdari, Kanjara, Tembhorni, Sonwadi etc. He also involved the youths by starting games like volleyball, Kho-Kho, Hututu, Basketball for the youth and organized the youth in the villages. Organized inter-village sports competitions for the youth, also kept prizes for it. It was a fun and exciting start to inter-village coexistence.

I got the opportunity to participate in all these rural development movements for whatever reason. That wonderful time is still before my eyes. I used to get off at Nandapur station at 4 in the morning by baring and ignoring the smell of tobacco, toilet, etc. in the third class passenger train and ignoring the stench of sweat suffocating in the coaches filled with laborers and farmers from Nizamabad and other places.

In the dim light before dawn, I used to walk along the railway tracks for about 2 km from Kanjara. There was no station at that time. Paikrao's small house was right next to the railway line. Paikrao and his couple of colleagues used to wait there. After tea, we would leave for Rajdari village from the embankment of Tembhorni Lake in the morning. There used to be farmers of the village and some youngsters near the temple. We used to have a lot of conversations with them.

We had a talk and discussions regarding development, local problems there in the village. Various events were organized for young people. From there we used to go on our way to Sonwadi. In

fact, there was no constructed road to Sonwadi, it was just a 6-7 feet natural path filled with stones. We were walking the 1-2 km long road by balancing ourselves. Then you would see a small village situated deep in Sonwadi valley. A small stream used to flow in the hills from all side, a few leafy houses at the top, huts, trees on the side, a small Gram Panchayat building on the other side and a small open field. It was such a tribal village nestled in the midst of nature.

There were self-help group meetings and discussions were taking place with the youth, health check-ups and distribution of some medicines, discussions on government schemes, road repairs and other development issues. In the evening, we used to walk 3-4 km again to reach Bolda railway station and wait for the train. When a passenger train arrived, it would reach Hingoli. Then I used to travel from Hingoli to Nanded and reach Nanded at 8-9 pm.

This village visit program lasted for many years. Although there was no rural development plan at the beginning, tribal farmers and people from rural areas joined us and happily participated in all the small village development programs.

Over the last three decades, Paikrao has acquired numerous schemes from government and charitable organizations and implemented them for the upliftment of villagers and farmers. Today there are many organizations that are run professionally. But, Paikrao worked very hard for fulfilling the basic objective and getting its benefit to the concerned. He not only trained 30,000 farmers in organic farming, but also ran organic vegetable and sales centers to provide markets to the farmers.

He successfully developed watershed area in a Bottom to Top principle in 10 villages. An ambitious project for the revival of Kayadhu River is being launched under the guidance of world renowned water expert Rajendrasinhji by organizing a chain of 40 NGOs. Meadow area development in a 317 ha and also a biodiversity conservation project is coming up with a brand new concept. Toilets for 1400 families in rural areas,

solar lights in 8 villages, toilets and urinals in 8 ZP Schools have been constructed. He also implemented innovative and useful projects like complete digitization of schools, forming skill groups of 200 youths etc.

Through 450 self help groups, small businesses were set up through women in many villages. For e.g. Tribal Navjivan Samiti, Mahatma Gandhi Tantamukta Samiti, Adarsh Arogya Village Selection Committee, Educational Evaluation and Conservation Committee, Kovid Widow rehabilitation committee etc. He has been appointed on several committees of Government and Zilla Parishad for implementation of above projects. He has got invaluable support from his hardworking and loving wife Mrs. Sushilatai, and their virtuous sons Prashant, Sushant, Dishant and daughter-in-laws and also numerous loyal co-workers.

Jayaji Paikrao has won many awards in the past. Among them are Pramilitai Bhalerao Award, Sant Kabir Award and Padma Vibhushan Govindbhai Shroff Award. For all his tireless and consistent efforts, I congratulate shri Paikrao and Sushilatai Paikrao and also to his co-workers from my bottom of heart. I pray that, with his inspiration, an army of heroic activists working in the field of rural development should be formed and the work of rural development should continue uninterrupted. May their health and that of their family be safe, this is a prayer to God.

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The most  
expensive liquid  
in the world is a tear.  
It's made up of  
1% water & 99% feelings.  
Think twice before  
you hurt someone.

## The Object of Environmental Education -

### An Initiative of "Ugam"

Shri. Satish Khade (M) : 9823030218



(English translation By Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

In 2007, senior environmentalist honourable Dr. Madhav Gadgil started working for the revival of rare and neglected ecosystems in India, especially in Maharashtra. For that, he traveled a lot and met many people and visited many organizations. He says - protecting environment in true sense is the protection and conservation of seven key elements within it.

1. Varied crop varieties 2) Grass regions 3. Freshwater Biodiversity 4. Sea sponges 5. Rare plants in Sahyadri 6. Forest Area revival and Biodiversity 7. Animal diversity.

While Dr. Gadgil was in search of organizations and individuals who could be of help in his research work on grass and meadows in the districts of Washim and Hingoli, he got to know about Shri Jayajirao Paikrao and his organization 'Ugam'. He then entrusted the task of cultivating a grass belt to Ugam. Although, this was optional, Ugam accepted this task as a challenge. Grass and meadow areas were reducing year by year, as it was being brought in to cultivation under other crops. As a result, biodiversity started declining. However, the problem here is not just the depletion of biodiversity, but it is creating long-term adverse effects on agriculture. So, it would be interesting to study as to whether the grass in this meadow strips could provide emergency and long term benefits to farmers while maintaining biodiversity. To study these aspects, an initiative was taken under the Maharashtra Genocide Program in collaboration with the Government of Maharashtra and other related organizations.

Numerous efforts are being made at the senior level to inculcate many excellent policies in the education system - like environmental education, hands on work experience, value education, constructivist education, grading system etc. But as much as copying in exams has become a common place, the behavior of most schools and teachers has become in defiance of common or goal-oriented policies. It is an educational policy for school children to do some projects that suit their class. In urban and semi-urban areas, educated parents complete all the projects for their children. (Parents even do homework like writing essays and drawing pictures for their children). The basic objective behind this is to develop the imagination and thinking power of the children. However, it is very unfortunate that the parents think, the marks are more important for the children than this.

In rural areas, one can get readymade projects in the bookstores for copy pasting. The schools knowingly remain blindfolded towards this. The teachers also give them ample of marks and by managing the education officials, the constructivist education system gets successful with all such dusting in eyes.

But here in Kalamnuri town, the opposite happened. The strengths of the children were put to good use and from that they developed. All these initiatives have two main objectives - to increase awareness regarding environment and its conservation in children and thereby conserving the biodiversity and meadows long lasting and sustainable.

The 'Ugam' organization worked hard for this, especially the highly educated dedicated

workers like Vikas Kamble and Dhananjay Padghan. They received training from Environmental Education Center, Pune. They planned the work keeping in mind two factors viz: adults and students. Because, they wanted to work on a raw pot as well as on a solid pot. The raw pot, means the mind that can be turned as required - that is the student. The environmental work they have got done by the school children is very interesting and influential. They initially focused on elementary school boys and girls aged between seven and eight. They effectively carried out educational environmental activities. What else can be expected from children of 1st to 7th class? However, in fact what they actually did was amazing.

**The activities they carried out were :**

- 1) Collecting seeds within the village area
- 2) What's on my plate? 3) How many kg of grass grows in an acre? 4) Seed germination capacity check 5) Creating a biodiversity map of village 6) Measuring the rainfall in village 7) Pata methods

**Activity No 1 : Collecting Seeds in the Village:**

They asked the children to bring all kinds of seeds from grain to mango and from neem to Sagargoti. The children took part in it very enthusiastically. The children were busy collecting seeds and bringing them to school. From this, many kinds of seeds were collected. It was learned from this activity that when the children went in search of seeds, they got physical education from their efforts, when they started counting seeds - they



acquired knowledge of mathematics, from the shapes of seeds - they learned geometry, from the place where these seeds were found - they understood the geography of village and while searching for the answer as to when these seeds are obtained - they learned classification of seeds from the relationship with the season. Information about the seeds came from the family - and so they could know the plants. They also got to know that the same seed was known to have different names, which enhanced their knowledge of language. This greatly increased the children's interest in education. Students got the interest in collecting seeds. During the summer, students used to collect seeds and plant those seeds in the school backyard during the rainy season. Due to this activity, even the initiative shown by the back bencher students in the school, was extremely pleasing.

**Activity No2 : What's on my plate?**

The children required to do this activity by interacting with their grandparents and parents. They took notes on what their grandparents used to eat when they were 15 years old. It was noticed that grandparents used to eat legumes like soft sorghum, pellet sorghum, bitter (yellow) Sorghum, Caraway, lentils, Hudson, Kartule, Tarota, rice etc. However, what kind of food do kids eat now a days? They eat Chocolate, chips, crisps,



crumbs, spicy packaged stored food, etc.

When the students sat down with grandparents and had an analytical discussion with them on the variety of foods, it was understood that, although, they ate food of the forest - they lived life of 100 years. They used to carry home a load of 100 kg on their head from the field.

Even when they broke their arm, it was healed just with the application of Hudson vegetable. They did not suffer from joint pain, heart disease or high blood pressure, as they used to eat lentil chutney and did not suffer from diabetes because of the yellow sorghum. So they didn't even get to hear about diabetes. On the other hand, today's children buy readymade food from the shops and eat. But, they do not even get all the nutrients they need. So the children get more frequently sick than their grandparents used to. So, their family has to spend money on illness. And because children eat these foods, they do not get all the nutrients, they need. The activity also concluded that the diet has an effect on health, age and strength. Therefore, the students need to take some food items from the grandfather's plate. Appetite of students for such activities increased considerably and many children, who were away from school and study, felt that they were participating enthusiastically.

### **Activity No 3 : How many kilos of grass per acre ? :**

The next activity turned to grass. We working to eradicate weeds from our fields. But, people did not agree that it was harmful to both, the environment and the economy. Ugam found a very nice answer to that. Ugam started an activity with the children of primary and secondary school viz: The mathematics of grass money i.e., the economics of grass! For this, the children were explained the action in this activity and the



teachers used to look at it only as an observer. A group of three or four children were asked to select a square meter of grass field. Dense, medium and sparse grass types were selected in that area. Now, they were asked to weigh the grass in the selected square meter area. They weighed up to an

average of 650 grams of grass. The average weight of a straw bunch is 800-900 grams. One acre covers 4096 square meter, of which we get 3500 to 4000 pieces. The next step is to calculate the market value. The price of grass in November was Rs. 28000/- (In four months of season). In March-April, the price of straw bunch is 10 to 12 rupees. At that time you get 35 to 45 thousand rupees per acre. If you get a price of Rs 15 to 17 in July, you can get Rs 52 to 60 thousand from it. This entire math was done by the children themselves. Then they sat face to face with their parents and the women farmers of the village. The farmers were convinced that this information was given to them by their own children instead of teachers or Ugam activists. This convinced them that grass yields more than other crops and that drought and unseasonal rains do not cause any damage. It was also learned that heavy rains, pests and diseases do not occur in some types of grasses. Out of this, came the grass farming. From this came the expanded meadows and from it came livestock, milk, dairy, food, and flow of money in the pocket.

### **Activity No 4 : Testing of germination power of seeds :**

It was a simple but very important undertaking. Fifteen to twenty days after sowing the seeds in the field, one fully understands whether the seeds are of good quality or weak. Well if germination is good, otherwise, if it is not





germinated, then farmers lose full season. If the farmer is a dry land farmer, the whole year is wasted. For this, if the germination capacity of the seed is checked before sowing, this loss can be avoided. But, nowadays 99% of farmers do not know this. This initiative was implemented with the intention that if the children are taught and explained, the knowledge will reach to the farmers. The aim was also for the students to learn the percentage and understand the condition of the crop. So, the children were asked to bring seeds of cereals like soybean, mutton, green gram, wheat from home. They were asked to bring exactly hundred seeds and then wrap them into germination test paper. After keeping the paper in moist condition for four-five days, the paper was opened on the fourth day and the sprouted seeds were counted. If 60 out of 100 seeds got the sprouts, then they have 60 per cent germination capacity. And, in this way, the germination capacity was tested up to 70 to 80 per cent. The students were made aware of the various agriculture activities and skills through the campaign. Of course, this reached out to everyone in the family. Therefore, the message of sowing only those seeds which had good germination capacity was properly conveyed through action.

**Activity No 5 : Creating a Biodiversity Map :**

An initiative that would be very important and pioneering was implemented there. That was to create a biodiversity map of the village. The topic of biodiversity was presented to the children in the school in a very interesting way. A lot of curiosity

was created in the children. Map of own farm, its soil type, watersheds, water bodies, streams, crops, fruit plants, forest plantation, animals, birds etc whatever one could think of, was included in the map. The children learned to read the village map and fill in the information in it. The village on the map slowly inculcated in to mind. They also understood as to what kind of trees are there in other farmer's fields, as well as on the far side of the village. Then, they started feeling that they should also have some of those trees. They worked hard to plant them in their farms. Likewise, many of the people wanted to have the farm nuts planted in their farms. The bird that one saw was not yet known to the other. So the other was eager to see that bird. With the knowledge of shrubs, butterflies, insects, types of snakes etc; they started getting knowledge of variety of grass, its places of growth etc. In this way, they had done enough study, observation and knowledge. The students who were lagging behind in their studies and also the school dropouts, came forward a long way and participated in the campaign very scrupulously. The project sparked students' interest in history, environment, birds and biodiversity. This same interest was proved to be helpful in deciding as to which branch to take after passing their 10th.

**Activity No 6 : Measuring rainfall in village :**

The rain gauge shows how many millimeters of rain have fallen in the village. However, the students were taught with a demonstration as to how many liters of rain has fallen. If one mm of rain falls on one hectare area, then how many liters of water can be obtained from it? How many





liters of water are carried away over the slope in the village? If less than 2.5 mm of rain falls, it is assumed that it did not rain that day. These matters were explained to the students. While they were learning basic mathematics like multiplication, division, addition and subtraction etc, the children were now looking for many questions and answers on how many days it rains and how many days they use that, through these activities.



**Activity No 7 : Pata methods :**

Each student there is given a packet of mixed pata. It contains 22 types of food. The parents are asked to plant this Pata in their fields. Planting pata in the field gives different vegetables to eat every month. Nowadays, hemoglobin levels in the blood are declining due to daily routine of Pohe dish in the breakfast and Tur dal for dinner. However, now it has been observed that hemoglobin level is increasing due to consumption of different vegetables. Also, school children go to the fields to eat cucumber, chawli, sand, green gram, udid and corns. Now, they developed a passion for agriculture, by studying honey bees,

butterflies, insects, crops, trees, vines and birds.

Vikas Kamble and Dhananjay Padghan are both highly educated and dedicated activists. They suggested many concepts and took charge of the activities. These initiatives have met the expectations as shown for the school teachers and students and beyond. Vikas and Dhananjay's ingenuity, perseverance and love for the subject made this venture a success. Jayajirao, himself, says that these two activists, who are very humble, very studious and hardworking, are the main pillars of the success of the activities of Mind conservation, Water conservation and Gass conservation. Vikas Kamble was given the Sahyadri Shikshan Ratna award at the hands of smt.Sindhutai Sapkal, a senior social worker.

'Ugam' has given the whole of Maharashtra and India the idea that nature conservation can lead to sustainable prosperity of the society. Salute to Dr. Madhav Gadgil for all the efforts, his profound knowledge of nature, knowledge of present and future environmental issues and its solutions and initiatives he suggests for it, his constant struggle to make it a success.

In what words should we express our gratitude!



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## Revival of Grass Ecosystem

### A Novel Storey of Prosperity Through Water Conservation

Shri Satish Khade ( M ) : 9823030218



(English Translation By Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

All this is so surprising to hear! Every aspect of it is filled with a novel idea here. It has been heard and experienced earlier everywhere about the importance and major role of dams, barrages, watershed development, reservoirs, recharging of wells and water conservation till this day. But, to hear that the grass plays a major role in water conservation is a real surprise! People here, allow grass to grow in their fields like any other main crop in the farm ...this is another surprise! ... And grass brings prosperity ... what an amazing thing! Isn't it? First, it was made realized by the children of primary school.....then the economics of grass was explained by them to their parents.... and that too in such an effective way that parents put it into action and started growing grass as a regular crop ... really surprising! This is a miracle created by none other than shri Jayajirao and his organization 'Ugam', located at Taluka Kalamnuri of Hingoli district in Maharashtra. In fact, all this was not so easy to happen like a miracle. For that, Ugam had to invest its huge efforts in study, training of workers and activists and also in ingenuity and time.

During 2008, world renowned passionate environmentalist Dr. Madhavrao Gadgil was working on the revitalization and conservation

of rare ecosystems in Maharashtra. Getting public participation in this initiative was very necessary. In fact, it is simply impossible for any ecosystem to flourish without public participation. If we need people's participate enthusiastically in any endeavor, systematic efforts are necessary. For this,



public education is the first important stage. Now, the ecosystem of grass and meadows is to be taken care of and the importance of food chain be emphasized among the people. However, persuading the people for it was

not an easy task at all. For that, it was necessary to make them educate and understand first about the economic benefits of pasture conservation. This was, in fact, the main challenge before shri Jayajirao and his organisation, which they accepted it bravely and achieved a great success in that endeavor.

For this, selected activists of Ugam were given training on the scientific knowledge of grass from some expert institutes. There were also some interactions about public participation. After that, they went to the field to get factual information, had discussions with the people, recorded their observations and planed further activities based on it. Accordingly, the activists started working under the guidance of shri Jayajirao.

While starting the work on the field, the meadow belt of Kayadhu river in Kalamnuri taluka, which is mainly Ugam's jurisdiction, was selected.



Of course, it was a meadow belt alongside the river banks for ages. But, recently, there has been cultivation of other crops, by replacing lot of grass from that belt. Kayadhu is a tributary of river Painganga. Its length from source to confluence is about 99 kms. Out of this, a portion of 17 km of length of the river flowing through 12 villages was selected by Ugam for conservation and development of meadow's ecosystem.

The information that was received as soon as the work started on the field was very valuable and equally shocking. In many places, instead of meadows along the river bank, there were farms. The grass was vanished from there. As a result, the soil on the river banks was being washed away in the river year by year while it was flooding. Whenever the flood water was entering in the fields, the whole farms were carried away in the river and the width of the river was increasing in every rainy season. The silt on the banks of river that was being washed away in the flood was being deposited behind the embankment of barrages. The river bed was getting shallower and the water storage capacity and water percolating process was getting greatly reduced. The dams were getting less water and more silt.

The rapid depletion of soil fertility meant that it was no longer just a matter of saving the ecosystem; but it also became a very important and serious issue for humans as well. Until twenty-five to thirty years ago, there was plenty of grass by the river banks. There were vastly spread meadows. Hingoli district, the earlier eastern part of Parbhani district, was a huge producer of grass. Hingoli had

supplied grass to the entire Marathwada during and after the drought of 1972. Due to this, there was a lot of livestock and milk business in Hingoli in the past and so, the Government of Maharashtra had also established its bull breeding centre in Hingoli district.

**The role of grass in water conservation :** Let's see first some important and interesting information about grass-

About 25% of the world's land area is grassland. Grass plays a vital role in the evolution and development of not only the human beings, but also all living things. Grass has existed for over seven and a half billion years before human habitation. There are more than twelve hundred grass species in India, while 815 species of grass have been found in Maharashtra so far. It includes more than a hundred types of nutritious fodder grass. A few species of grass are also used medicinally. From lions, elephants to rats, as well as reptiles - the future of all these animals was decided and shaped by grass. The birds have a rational relationship to the grasslands, which are the largest source of food and breeding ground of birds and their sanctuary. The same is true for insects and microorganisms. Grass provides 80% of human needs. All kinds of grains that we eat are types of grass. Bamboo and sugarcane are also types of grass. Countless microorganisms grow along the roots of grass and help other plants grow.

While many types of grass help retain soil on the land, some types of grass prevent soil erosion caused by air. Grass stops soil erosion. Had the grass been not there, a valuable layer of soil on the land would have been washed away by rainwater. In this way, grass plays an important role in protecting the environment here also. The grass grows widely from the roots. It can protect itself from flood, fog and fire. Grass is resistant to floods and in fact, it helps a lot in absorbing floods.

Grass spreads in the soil and also increases in height. Although, the soil depth of all types of grass roots is not more than four to five inches, its net formed beneath the ground is strong and dense. Some types of grass grow up to seven

feet in height when fully grown. When it rains, the water first falls on the grass and due to this the velocity of water decreases till it reaches the ground. This allows the water to enter in the soil and into the grass net and then slowly percolates. No matter how intense or speedy the rain fall is, the water falling on the grass percolates to its maximum in the ground due to grass. With this process, the soil on the ground is held tight by the grass, which protects it from washing away. In this way, soil protection and water conservation, both things are done effectively and simultaneously.

Likewise, when flood water spreads beyond the river banks and through to the agricultural land along the river, the same phenomenon occurs. The water percolates into ground and at the same time the soil is also not carried away. It is therefore, needless to tell that the ground water level increases due to the water percolation action. The rate of evaporation of water on and below the ground also reduces considerably by the virtue of grass and therefore, water seeps into the soil before it gets evaporated.

However, what was happening here on the banks of the Kayadhu river was that the land with grass was declining. The reasons were not one, but many. The first reason was the fragmentation of agriculture farm land. Consequently, the agriculture land remained in possession of most the people was very little. So, people's eye turned to the grasslands which were neglected for years. Without considering grass as fodder, people started cultivating the grassland for other crops by removing grass from it.

Other crops were mainly soybean, cotton and mug. Chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides were widely used for soybean and cotton. The pastures began to run out due to this. Tractors were used for plowing. They caused the grass to run out. This led to the gradual depletion of livestock. Then a vicious circle started, since there was no need for grass as no livestock was there and vice versa. How to take care of livestock if there is no grass? People even used to let their cattle grazing in the areas and fields where grassland was

still in existence and that too when the growth of grass in the rainy season was good. This used to cause lot of damage to the grass.

Against this backdrop, to make the people turn to grass cultivation again, was truly a challenge. However, the confidence and perseverance of Ugam workers was upbeat.

After the training of the workers, obtaining basic information from the people was the second stage of the activity. It was necessary to get and give in-depth information about Pavana, Marvel and Jondhali grass. As more and more people came in contact, new varieties of grass became known. In a short span of time, 35 new species were introduced. Upon further inquiries, it was discovered that Marvel was thriving in black cotton soil. But, it is a dominant specie. So, it does not allow any other plant or grass to grow. However, this Marvel grass satisfies the appetite of animals even if eaten in small quantities. It also increases the milk and also the viscosity of milk.

Animals are very fond of weeds (Jondhali grass). This dried grass also tastes good to the animals. Windy grass (Pawana grass) grows very well in light soils. The milk of cows and buffaloes which eat grass is special and has a lot of lubrication. Here, the wrestlers prefer Pawana milk and ghee for body building. In fact, the famous phrase 'Pawana wrestler' is derived from this. Knowingly or unknowingly, lot of information like this was obtained about biodiversity from there.

Now, the next step was to invigorate the people in grass conservation! When they started talking to people on this topic, people used to laugh and counter question them 'Why do you want to keep grass?' When the workers went to the river for study, people would either try to drive them away indirectly or they would just leave. People did not cooperate at all. Attempts were made to communicate with people by having a walk along the river banks in twelve villages, but, it was vain. As a solution to this, GPS and other satellite images were used to compile the first report by measuring and locating the river and meadow belts.

People were not ready to even listen to the information in various ways about grass. But, then Ugam decided to come up with a new solution. They decided to create awareness and curiosity in school children and to inculcate the subject of grass conservation in their minds. Then various activities were implemented for the purpose. Activities under environmental education were carried out in groups. These activities and their success are the topics of a separate article. (This issue also contains an article in detail on activities of children.) By giving age-appropriate topics and projects, they taught the children about the need of environment in an interesting way and also taught, how they should respond to nature. It is ingrained in their minds that knowledge of nature and proper response to it enriches both, the life and environment.

The children then interacted with the parents on the same topics through group discussions. From this, people understood the environmental and practical importance of grass and pasture; mainly its commercial significance. That was the beginning of the response from people.

The most important was the comparison of profit from grass on one hand and profit from soybean, cotton and math on the other hand. People appreciated it, as this comparative study was done by their children themselves. During the discussion with the children, the soybean yield was calculated. For this, the cost of ploughing and other things like tillage, seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, medicines, weeding, harvesting, threshing machine, transportation to the city, haulage, brokerage were all covered by the farmers. Now, the cost of grass was worked out and put up before them. The cost involved was only for the items like removal of thorn bushes and shrubs, cost of biological or barbed wire fencing and harvesting of grass. When the comparative study was completed, the analysis revealed that the cost of cultivating soybean crop was very high and if it was deducted from its sale price, one acre of farm yielded 15,000 to 20,000 rupees. This does not

include farmer's own cost. Whereas grass yielded up to Rs. 15,000 as net profit per acre without involving any cost. Soybean and other crops are also affected by drought, disease, and heavy rains, whereas, grass has no effect on it by any of these. When this was explained to the farmers, positive thinking started in their mind.

After that, Ugam activists started marching in 12 villages again. There was a good response to the financial and practical explanations and layout. People started coming forward now. Out of this effort, 565 farmers were involved in this initiative. Almost all farms along the river were connected with the initiative. Now, the grass wealth began to flourish. However, the complaints of theft of grass from people's fields started coming now. As a solution to this, Ugam decided to increase the scope and quality by working in an organized manner. They formed a group consisting of women and men among these farmers, which was named as 'Participatory Guarantee Group'. 112 such groups were formed. Instead of the ego and misconception spreading traditional posts like 'Chairman and Vice-Chairman', they created 'Grass Conservators and 'Co- Conservators'. Protecting each other's interests was the core objective of these groups. One can call it a "Group farming" of grass! This might be the first such experiment, not only in Maharashtra but also in India or even in the world!

Economical Evolution of Environment is a priority topic of discussion for scholars of both economics and environment. Creating new examples of how people can achieve economic prosperity through a prosperous environment and at the same time bringing the existing examples before the people is the highway to save the environment. Only if we could protect a little bit of the environment and the ecosystem, it would be saved.

Now, Ugam reached on the next stage of this grass group farming. They established 'Grass Protection Committees' and 'Biodiversity Committees' in villages. In this, they gave place to the cowherds also along with the farmers, because

they knew a lot of things while roaming in the forests. Herbalists who treat patients with herbs are also included in that. This committee also involves knowledgeable and elderly people in each village. Grass cultivation has now started in all the three seasons of the year. A trade of grass seeds has also grown. Moreover, a sprinkler system is also being used in so many grass fields. More and more water is saved for the production of grass. The number of cows, buffaloes and oxen is increasing rapidly in villages. More and more milk collection centers are now being set up in villages.

Although this work is going on in twelve villages, farmers from other surrounding villages have also turned to grass and animal husbandry. Farmers in these villages are becoming prosperous. Now, they have started blocking water in the river and streams. Forest dams are also being constructed for blocking water in it. As a result, water has become available for grass and other crops in Rabi season also. Initially, barrages built across the rivers and streams for blocking water were broken by the sand mafia for facilitating the sand removal work. So, all the stored water was carried away leaving behind no water. However, after realizing this, the villagers have started patrolling the embankment. So now, the dams have stopped breaking and sand theft has also stopped. There is so much of awareness about water among the people now.

There is a gradual increase in biodiversity. Insects, reptiles are especially prevalent in grass ecosystems. Insects provide food

to lizards, birds, and frogs which in turn provide food to the snakes, Peacocks get food in the form of snakes. Rabbits, goats, deer - foxes, wolves come to eat them because of the grass. Bees and butterflies are also on the rise. Hopefully, this biodiversity will continue to prosper.

**About water conservation :** Despite an average rainfall of 700 to 900 mm, farmers and common people in Hingoli were living in poverty. Although the rivers were flooding, all water was being carried away. They also carried large quantities of soil from the edge fields. Groundwater level went up to 400 to 600 feet. Hingoli ranks fourth in Maharashtra in Human Development Index. But, now the grass has saved the river bank. Agriculture has survived. The falling rain spreads on the grass, percolates more in the ground and so flows away less. Ground water Level is therefore, increasing. The water level of the wells is indicative of that. Many streams and rivers began to come alive. Water is oozing from the ground in streams and rivers. In the last three years, the river flow period has increased by one and a half months. If this happens although slowly but, continuously, it could become perennial if properly managed. As a result, the water ecosystem will stabilize and one day it will prosper. But for that, not only in twelve villages, but also in the area from the source of Kayadhu river to the confluence, development works in watershed area and also the development of grassland needs to be done.

The importance of grass for water conservation was learned by the famous "Pani Foundation" and they set up a nursery of Marvel grass at Hingoli. They also made planting of grass mandatory for the head work done by the foundation and kept marks for that in their evaluation.

Jayajirao expresses his immense optimism, believing in his action plan that "I will not die until the river Kadayu comes to life again". He is fighting for it even in his seventies. Vikas Kamble and Dhananjay Padghan are the leading commanders of Jayajirao's brigade. Heartfelt salute to all of these warriors!

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## Glimpses of a Flourished Social Work -

### The Magic of Paikrao

Smt. Medha Patkar



(An English Translation by Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

While doing social work, there is a mountain of experiences standing through many ups and downs. All this must become a saga. The essence of the thought in it is worth thinking for the other activists and organizations as well. However, in the stress of sustaining and carrying on the work, it is almost impossible to take all the notes from childhood to the stage of flourished work, and therefore, if a co-worker does this task, then a bright personality and accomplishment also comes to the fore.

Shri Durgadas Rode has written a brief biography on the life of Shri Jayajirao Paikrao, the one who was born on the banks of the river Kayadhu, raised in a Dalit-Buddhist family. Jayajirao had to strive hard for his success and achievement in his mountain of social work. Of course, the graph of Jayajirao's work goes on and on, reasonably linking his childhood with his parents, agriculture, hard labor, education, and equality in humanity beyond dalitism, which itself proves the theory by deriving an analysis from the description.

Jayajirao, is the first matriculate and first graduate of the Buddhist community in Hingoli taluka. He reached the Tata Institute of Social Sciences and came before us as a student. He was known for his confidence and outspokenness. He came to be known as a successful student, working with a social commitment. He has a deep compassion for the deprived in his heart.

While working in the poor slums of Shivajinagar, it was realized that his anti-inequality sentiments were alive and also showed that there was no need to master the English language. At the

same time, it was clear that he would use his social work education only for the farmers and agricultural laborers in Marathwada who were suffering from all kinds of deprivation; he even presented it before all many times.

After that, he set up a social organization with the help of many activists from Nanded town and carried forward Maaher's work with his wife Sushila. From that, many came to realize their potential and also the place of women in holistic social development and their contribution. Of course, he suffered a lot while working in that organization, and Dr. Rode did not hide it, this is special. But more than that, the work set up by Paikrao, has gone from a women's self-help group to the revival of the Kayadhu River and the conservation of its natural biodiversity. What more can be done than this by a social organization? Many astonishing details come to the fore.

Today, social organizations are rampant in the country and in Maharashtra as well. Large funding for the work is also available from a number of sectors, but, for certain organizations only. However, a few organizations only move forward on the basis and support from the public participation, and only then the work comes to fruition and the donors also then show faith in them. It seems that the political and government officials, who have appointed Paikrao on various committees, are convinced and feel it to be worth to give and take support from him.

His work in the context of his childhood darling river Kayadhu, is truly admirable. In Maharashtra, which suffers from both drought and floods, especially the Marathwada region, he realized that it is not possible to resolve the



problem through large dams.

This is why Paikrao and his colleagues thoughtfully have taken up the task of water shed development in head-to-toe manner along with decentralized water conservation, integrated river basin development including all its resources like grass to seed preservation and its conservation, which is now going forward through the organization 'Jal Biradari Manch'.

The vision behind all this and the work of Paikrao couple, that emerges from it, cannot be derived from today's valueless politics, so it will inspire the youth who are vowing for social change and put forward the real path, no doubt.

Let this great work come in limelight as a guide for all. I wish, the intellectuals to carry it forward many miles through their writing! Many best wishes to all!

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जलसंवाद हे मासिक मालक, मुद्रक व प्रकाशक डॉ.  
दत्ता देशकर यांनी श्री.जे. प्रिंटेर्स प्रा. लि, दत्तकुटी  
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केले.

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राजाबाई पाईकराव



पुरभाजी पाईकराव



## **An Acquaintance with Jayaji Paikrao And His Work**

**Shri. Ramakant Babu Kulkarni**

**(M) : 9881700332**

(An English Translation By Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

Some people's works are so multifaceted that when tried to bind them in words, words fall short. Something similar happened to me while writing this. My acquaintance with Paikrao is since the year 1988. Paikrao was then the head of Kayadhu organization. At least that was what I knew of him that time. The office building of Kayadhu was located at a distance of 4-5 km from Kalamnuri town on the Hingoli Road. His work was going on from there. This organization was well known as Paikrao's Kayadhu Sanstha.

He was known as a social worker who did a very good job on the ground itself and that identity is still intact till this day. He had taken his organization to a different level in the topic of rural development. At that time, I had just started working as a social worker in Parbhani district. Since Paikrao's Kayadhu organization (before formation of Hingoli district ) was then located in the Parbhani district, I attended a couple of programs arranged by his organization.

I saw Paikrao for the first time there. I found him to be an ideal symbol of a social worker who worked on the ground. Marathwada Eco Group was established in 1990-91 under the guidance of Dr. Ghare of Afarm organization. Paikrao and I were both included in this group. Under this group, we started working with the objective of watershed development, meant for eradicating drought from Marathwada, region through the drought action program, we had initialized.

During this programme, Paikrao was extraordinary in his work. It should not go wrong to

say that Paikrao is a spring of enthusiasm. At that time, he was very keen and focused on the watershed development. He also used to present his work in group meetings very enthusiastically.

While Paikrao's organization, Kayadhu was in full swing, it was suddenly heard that one fine morning Paikrao left his well-known organization and came out by handing it over to the management. But, he never stopped. A hardworking social worker, who is constantly addicted to working among the people on the ground, will never sit quiet hand folded. Of course, Paikrao did not sit quiet.

He then started another organization called Ugam. In a short period of time, the organization was well established and got fame. Further, the name 'Ugam's Paikrao' was bestowed on him by the volunteer community in Maharashtra for its excellent work. He also did a very good job at women's self help groups with Marathwada Development Board. He also became the chief of that board.

Let that be an issues of making a living for backward castes, nomads tribes and tribal, be that an issue of bringing women in the mainstream and assuring a place for them in the decision making process through self help groups or be that watershed development, water literacy or conservation of traditional indigenous grasses in the Kayadhu river basin - Jayajirao made the novel information known to everybody in the volunteer world whole heartedly. While implementing many such projects, he never gave up his focus on Kayadhu River. It is nature's gift Jayajirao that he is bestowed with overflowing enthusiasm and being smiling in any situation.

Organic farming is one of his favorite topics. Not only did he make people produce organic grains and vegetables, but also arranged for the weekly markets at various places to facilitate its marketing. Forest vegetables and Dashparni vermi compost is the topic of his special interest even while talking normally. He also organized exhibitions of forest vegetables to introduce it to the rural and semi-urban communities.

A person, who came in his association, never left him. This is an important feature of his nature. When you call him on telephone and say 'Namaskar' (hello) to him, you will hear a reciprocating word 'Saprem Namaskar' (hello with love), a very enthusiastic and happy sentence which connects you with him with a very warm affection. At the end of the conversation, the person talking to him becomes his man. This is because of the uniqueness of his nature. So, he probably became very close friends of mine. At one book launch function, he made me one of the chief guests of that function, which strengthened our relationship even more.

It should not be wrong to say that Paikrao is a source of tremendous excitement and enthusiasm. That is what we have experienced in a foot-march campaign viz: " Let's end the drought, let's save the people " arranged for eradication of drought.

Although Paikrao's organization was not a participant in the PACS program, he had voluntarily accepted the local planning of their ten-day trek in Hingoli district. Whenever Paikrao takes over the responsibility of an event, his planning is always jumbo type and glorious as well. To bring that plan to fruition, he goes to great lengths and make it successful. It is in his blood.

He never thinks about how much he will have to incur from his pocket for a social cause. We experienced this during this foot-march. Not only did he arrange for a ten-day stay and a walk, but also planned different events in different villages during the stay. He seemed to be obsessed with how to make each event different. That's why we got to see and experience something different in

each of their villages.

Once he had arranged program of a folk artist called Giri in his village; and for that he made sure that the entire village remains present for that program. At the same time, he had invited veteran artist shri Satyapal Maharaj to the village and arranged a gathering of two and a half to three thousand people from surrounding villages on that day. Satyapal Maharaj had already prepared background of foot-walk and its objective. I was also given the opportunity to express my views as a representative of the foot-marchers in front of those three thousand people.

Paikrao had invited Hon'ble great leader of Gandhian thought and Sarvodaya, shri Ganga Prasadji Agrawal to a village. Ganga Prasad Agarwal was a state-wide personality of Sarvodaya and Gandhian thought. He attended the walk for two days. It was historic to have a walk with him, however, the knowledge gained from his speech enriched us even more.

From time to time family members participated in village marches in Hingoli district. This showed the difference in his working style. During these ten days, with the help of the women of the self-help groups, he had arranged for our stay in villages very well. With his method of involving public participation in every work, we got to see and experience the popularity of Paikrao. The march to end the drought in Hingoli district and save the life of the people was carried out in a very beautiful manner and with excellent planning.

Social workers gets recognition from people for their excellence, however, the difference in the way Paikrao works is that he also gets recognized by the administration. Although, the organization Ugam belongs to Paikrao, it also belongs to the Collectorate, Zilla Parishad, Panchayat Samiti as well. Paikrao has mastered the art of making the relations intimate and cordial with the administrative system at all levels. Ugam is not required to solicit any government project. The administration calls them because they want Ugam to do this for them. This is his uniqueness and he has maintained it well.

It has been in the minds of Paikrao, who grew up on the banks of the Kayadhu river, to do something good about the Kayadhu river for quite some time now.

Paikrao and his team marched through 100 villages in the Kayadhu valley. Stay and food arrangements were done by local people's representatives and volunteers. Through this, Paikrao has already started the Mahayagnya of revival of Kayadhu river. As a first step, they prepared a report and brought it to the fore the fact and their present condition of government works carried out at the micro watershed in one hundred villages of this river valley.

They submitted this report to the administration categorizing those which can be repaired, those that cannot be repaired and those which are in good condition. By studying the finer details of the revival process, the project report has been prepared in a very scientific and technical manner.

Considering the new law on employment guarantee and the changed role of the administration in implementing it, it is planned to carry out all the works of micro-watersheds in Kayadhu River valley through employment guarantee Scheme and get the required public participation. He is meeting with the donors who are able to support for completing the work. He is currently engaged in preparing the schedule. In a sense, it should not be an exaggeration to say that he is completely immersed in the work of reviving the Kayadhu River.

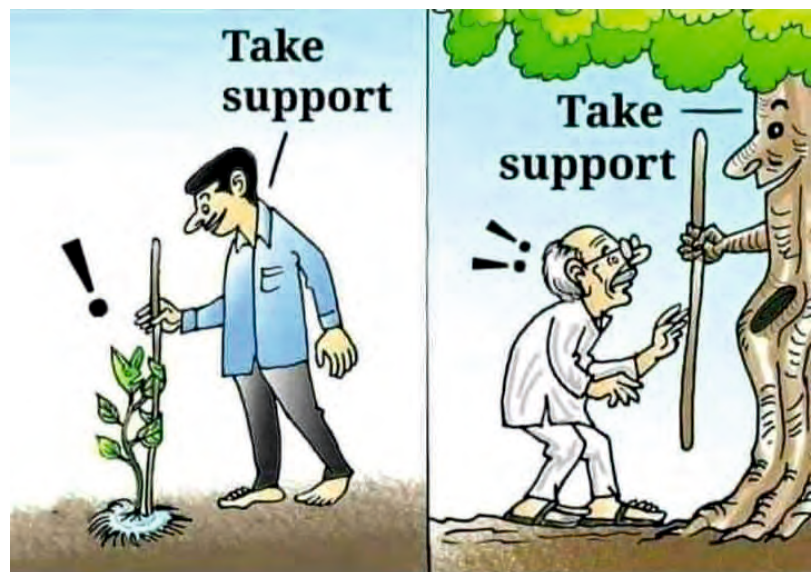
He is associated with 40 NGOs for the revival of this river. He has also put together a very good combination of people's representatives from hundred villages, EGS scheme, water resources department and irrigation rural development system. The Kayadhu River Renaissance is not just a movement but a truly inclusive people's

movement. It brings together people, NGOs, the administration and local people's representatives. Paikrao leads it unilaterally, that's all.

In the rising graph of Ugam, Mrs. Sushilatai, wife of shri Paikrao, has the lion's share in its team. Although, Sushilatai may not be highly educated, but still, she has earned knowledge through practical experience and also training along with the workers through the practical work on the ground, which makes her equivalent to a social science graduate. Owing to this, her world of experience is much flourished. We get to know the same while roaming around her.

In general, the success of Ugam belongs to this duo, but more than that, it is the success of the team of Ugam as a whole. The hard work, dedication and the culture inculcated in the team Ugam, is beyond dispute. I have promised Paikrao on my behalf, that wherever I can contribute, I will give it in the process of reviving the Kayadhu River. On this, he said me, 'Bapu, you are an integral part of this process'. In fact, I have hardly done anything for this process, but Paikrao's technique of connecting people and making them part of the process does not go unnoticed without underlining the distinctive features of his nature and mindset of functioning.

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## Jayajirao Paikrao - Mentor of 'Ugam'

Smt. Sharda Kamble

(An English Translation by Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

I am Sharda Kamble. I live at village Sirsam (Bu), located on the border of Hingoli district. I am a small land holder and doing dry land farming for one season only. Rains are not guaranteed here and therefore, we are never sure whether we will get good crops any year. I, therefore do cultivation for one season only and then migrate for outstation seasonal work of sugarcane cutting every year in different districts. The same routine happens every year.

When there is migration, it is winter season and we have to stay day night in the open field for sugarcane harvest. On cold days, life at night is very hard due to the bone freezing cold temperatures. Secondly, the issue of health and hygiene is very big in migration days. There are no closed and clean bathrooms or toilets there made available for the workers. Everything has to be done in open. In such a pity situation, I always kept thinking on this issue and wondered whether anyone would think of this issue seriously?

Sirsam is in a rural area. The number of toilets in the village were very less. In such a situation, Ugam Grameen Vikas Sanstha took an initiative to work in our village and held women's meetings to provide information on the importance and use of toilets. They also came to my house and invited me for the meeting. I went to the meeting, we were informed about the necessity and hygienic importance of toilet for health.

The government has also emphasized on using toilets and launched a special scheme "Use

Toilet and earn Reward". Therefore, those families, who were interested in it, were provided with financial assistance through Ugam organization. However, Ugam has very clearly told people that there is no need to come forward just because of the financial support, but everybody should understand its true importance and necessity. Therefore, I decided to construct a toilet at my house and accordingly, enrolled my name with Ugam. Out of 750 families who enrolled for the toilet, 500 families were provided help through this initiative of Ugam. Besides this, 100 families were helped to recover from the damage caused by the hailstorm that year.

Through Ugam Grameen Vikas Sanstha, 50% toilets were constructed in the village and awareness was created for its proper use. Once upon a time in the village, the citizens who had the mentality that there is no toilet in the village because of the crisis of water, now they have started using toilets in large numbers and also informing and motivating others. I was also one of the motivators.

When we were regularly using toilet, other women started coming to me and asking if they also could get the financial help from Ugam? I informed about this to Ugam. However, Ugam had provided financial assistance to the pre decided no of families within their financial limit and they made it clear to us that it was not possible for them now to help the other families in that respect. I then informed this to the women. However, they keep pressing their demand for toilet more and more assuring me that they would build a toilet from the government grant and return it back again to the

government. All the women were approaching to me as if I were the representative of the Ugam and shared their thoughts with me, since, I was well acquainted with the importance of toilet. Now, I decided to come myself ahead and help them.

I discussed at home that women need financial help to build toilets. While discussing about Where they can get the help from, we realized that it could be obtained from sugarcane cutting labor contractor. But, once you take money from them, you have to go for the work of sugarcane cutting compulsorily. But, the work there is very hard and if it becomes impossible to work there, then you have to run away back to home. Even if you run away safely, you have to pay back the money you have taken and if you are caught fleeing, you will be severely beaten. So, it is very difficult to advise a family to take money from the contractor.

Another option was a bank. When we asked the bank for help, they asked for a mortgage, and then, we had to get even this matter out of our head. The women were removing everything out of their heads, but, the subject of the toilet was still intact in their heads.

Women made me a leader in this work and this change happened so suddenly for me. Before I joined Ugam, only a few women knew me. But, with the initiative I was taking in the meetings, I did not get to know as to when the women handed over the leadership to me. Then I decided to sell my Mangalsutra neckless chain, so as not to erode the trust of women and sold it the very next day and handed it over to a woman to build a toilet. The woman built the toilet without delay and even started using it. I was very happy to see her joy and even I was excited for that.

There was a lot of discussion in the village about whether the toilet is more important than Mangalsutra neckless chain. Journalists, dignitaries and others started asking me about this. And I told them that, I did, what I thought important. The matter came to the notice of Ugam and also to 'Habitat for Humanity Trust'. They complimented me and chose me as the Habitat Champion. For

this, Ugam and I were felicitated at New Delhi and the award was also given there to us. On this occasion, we got a chance to travel in the aero plane which we had only seen in the picture or in the sky. I felt it like an award too. Guardian Minister smt.Varshatai Gaikwad felicitated me by organizing a women's meet in my village, Sirsam. The fair was attended by all the district and taluka level officials, representatives and 5000 women.

Further, women's expectations of me began to rise. However, I began to live up to their expectations. But, afterwards these expectations from women increased so much that they elected me as the president of a dispute free village. There was widespread opposition from citizens to make the woman president. But, the women did not give up and elected me. Not a single woman has become the president in the entire Maharashtra in a dispute free village, as yet. But women gave me this first honor. This issue was picked up by the newspapers.

I have never seen the face of Gram Panchayat ever before. But, the women showed a lot of faith in me and made me stand for Gram Panchayat elections. The picture was already formed that I would lose against the strongest candidate because of the politics. But the women elected me with a majority, showing faith and unity. There is no doubt that this victory will be unforgettable for me. The whole journey seemed like a dream. I did not believe that I, who used to go for sugarcane cutting as a labor, would now sit in the Gram Panchayat. This happened only because of Ugam Gramin Vikas Sanstha. My life was transformed by the inspiration I received from shri Jayaji Paikrao and the guidance of Chhayatai Padghan. So, I will always be indebted to them.

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## Revival of Kayadhu River

### People's Participatory Movement - A Dream

Shri. Prakash Ingole (9373963035) - Vikas Kamble (7722048230)

Water is said to be life and it is said that World War III would be caused by water. It is feared that water will pose a problem before human being for survival. However, no proper action is seen from the people to save water. So, it may not take long for disputes over water in different communities; which may result in erupting war.

2500 years ago, there was a big conflict between the two kingdoms of Shakya and Koliya for the water of Rohini River. However, Yuvraj Siddhartha had avoided war by leaving home to prevent genocide. Even now, we see that if water from a dam in some district is released into another district, there is an outbreak among the citizens. Conflicts are also seen in the states for the sharing of river water. The River Brahmaputra, which flows through China and Bangladesh, is a source of quarrel between the two countries.

There is an acute problem of water availability in Hingoli district. The only river in the district is river Kayadhu, which flows only during monsoon. Recognizing this problem that has arisen in the district, a thought as to whether this problem could be resolved by making the Kayadhu a perennial river, as it used to be many years back. The issue was raised on the platforms of "Ugam Gram Vikas Sanstha". With the objective of bringing prosperity in the 200-250 villages on the banks of Kayadhu river, shri Jayaji Paikrao, the president of Ugam, started thinking seriously over this and put



his efforts. He met number of experts of the calibre like smt. Medha Patkar, the leader of "Save Narmada Movement", Paniwale Baba - Dr. Rajendrasinh Rana and Dr. Dwarkadas Lohia. They were briefed about the current status of Kayadhu River. Further, they all were invited to visit the district for seeking their guidance. With their inspiration, a process of organizing various events for awareness of people was started in their presence.

Hingoli district is known for its backwardness in all respects at the government level. Due to low human development index of the district, the government is trying to overcome various issues in the district by implementing numerous programmes, such as Human Development Mission, Backward Areas Grant Fund, Drought Prone Area Development Program, and Integrated Watershed Management Program.

The root of all this is the lack of irrigation in Hingoli district; especially in talukas of Hingoli, Sengaon, Aundha Nagnath. The Agriculture in Kalamanageri taluka is dependent on only rain water.

Kayadhu River, known as the main river in Hingoli district, is dry. Although, Kayadhu flows close to the villages in these four talukas, the riverside villages face perennial problem of drinking water.

In such a scenario, Mr. Jayaji Paikrao, president of "Ugam Grameen Vikas Sanstha" and also a

dedicated social worker, came up with an idea of reviving the dry Kayadhu River. For the purpose, he started social activities through an organization called "Kayadhu Gram Vikas Sanstha". He says, he shares a special emotional relationship with the Kayadhu River, as it has been in his life since his childhood. His birthplace, then in Kalamanuri taluka and now at Kanjara village in Aundha taluka, is situated on the banks of Kayadhu. This river is mostly dry now. In monsoon also, the water does not flow even knee high in the river. Mr.Paikrao finds this situation to be terrible and so his organization "Ugam" has launched a campaign for reviving this river.

On behalf of Ugam Grameen Vikas Sanstha, an awareness programmes were organised in many of those villages. Well-known social activists, Dr. Rajendra Singh and Dr. Lohia. were invited to address the people and the initiative got a good start there. As a first measure, watershed development works on the streams flowing from the head to the foot of hills in Amdari and Telangwadi villages on the banks of the Kayadhu, were undertaken and they were successfully revived. Over the last two and a half years, the watershed works have been completed with the active participation of Ugam and the villagers.

As a result, rain water percolated in the soil and the streams began oozing from ground. Realising this, the same experiment was now to be carried out successfully in other villages too on the



banks of the Kayadhu. So, it was now felt necessary to gather all the necessary information and scientific data of the Kayadhu river. The survey for this was undertaken immediately in the area and completed by the end of October 2017. Initially, there were 30 people involved in the survey and afterwards it was resurveyed again with the help of 15 technicians.

The survey work was going on for seven continuous months. This survey was done in a total length of 80 km. which included villages Agarwadi, Kakkarwadi and Sengaon in Risod taluka of Washim district where the river originates and villages Datada (kh), Datada (Bu), Sengaon, Hingoli, Aundha Nagnath and also in Kalamnuri talukas. Survey of nallas and streams, in 155 villages, connected to this river was carried out measuring their length, breadth and depth in a total distance of 11775 kms. All the aspects, as to how be the condition of the water source, how much water is flowing, how much water is being blocked, have been recorded for study.

The survey has shown that at present 40 watersheds have been identified. Village wise records have been taken as to how many Cement Nalla Barrages, Earth Barrages, Continuous Charis (CCT) are there in these 155 riverside villages. In view of revival of Kayadhu, how many Cement bandharas, CCT, Gabion wears and other structures need to be constructed in the watershed in 11775 km of nallas of these 155 villages and also how to repair existing sources, were properly recorded with the concept of head-to-toe flow.

The survey revealed that the catchment areas of the river were mainly destroyed which resulted in narrowing of the basins. So the streams were flowing elsewhere instead of flowing through the river. The survey shows that the existing 276 cement nalla barrages and the old 454 earthen nalla barrages in the area needed to be repaired and silt in it be removed.

Given the current state of the river Kayadhu, which has historical and religious significance, it was a shame to all citizens of this district. The Kayadhu River has a unique



significance throughout India. Although, this river originates from Vidarbha region, it is important for Hingoli district.

There is an anecdote as to why the river was named as Kayadhu. It is directly related to the Puranas. The name of the mother of 'Bhakt Pralhad' and the wife of 'Hiranyakashyap'



was Kayadhu. According to ancient sources, the river was named Kayadhu after an incidence. A well known recognition of this river is that there is the birthplace of Rashtasant Namdev Maharaj at village Narsi (Namdev). It is said that Namdev Maharaj also lived for some time in premises of this river. You can find an ancient temple of Namdev Maharaj in the Narsi village on the very bank of this river.

Also, on behalf of the Sikh community, who consider Namdev Maharaj as their Guru, a grand Namdev Maharaj's Gurudwara has been constructed at Narsi. Since Namdev Maharaj and Narsi are mentioned in the holy book of Sikhs 'Guru Granth Saheb', thousands of Sikh brothers and sisters from all over the country visit Narsi. Also, ashes remains of human bodies are immersed in the holy river bed at Narsi Namdev, as religious sentiments of people are involved in it. In recent years, ashes remains of late Balasaheb Thackeray and late Vilasrao Deshmukh have been immersed.

Hingoli is the district headquarters located on the banks of river Kayadhu. There is holy saint Khaki Baba monastery in Hingoli since 100-150 years ago, located on the banks of Kayadhu. Khaki Baba resided in this monastery. The Kayadhu River, which has such a historical and religious identity, is currently in dire state. If this river stops flowing, it will also not take long for vanishing the identity of 155 villages along this river, including Narsi Namdev and Hingoli.

Now, that the survey is over, a meticulous planning is being worked out on what actually is to be done on the field. A crisp solution has been found out as to how to revive the river again. That is, every drop of rain that falls on the ground be absorbed in the soil and rain water of every village be absorbed in the same

village and when the water saturates there, should again come out and reach the river through the streams, nallas, channels and panand roads. And in this way, when the water from the village will reach the river, the dry Kayadhu will become live and again start flowing.

In medical parlance, now angiography of the Kayadhu River and its catchment and then angioplasty was very much required. This means that the blood vessels of the watershed connecting this river are currently blocked. In order to re-establish the blood vessels of the river, it is necessary to carry out all possible activities from 155 villages on the banks to stop the flowing rain water from the hills to river.

Although, Ugam has a dream of reviving the Kayadhu River, nothing can happen alone by the organization and it is not even in the interest of the organization. Nowadays, the work of a charitable organization is said to be just a show of activities, taking photos and submitting a report and grabbing handsome funds; the equation is so simple. So the attitude of the people towards the work of the NGO is sceptical. It was now needed to change this approach for making the Kayadhu alive. This initiative is a matter of concern to the entire district.

Every citizen of the district especially every farmer, men, woman, youths from 150 to 200 villages on the banks of this river and in the vicinity are important in this endeavour. Until the people feel from within that Kayadhu should become live

and flow again, it will not regain its splendour. The work is theirs and till they do not know that this work is very much needed and nothing would be achieved till then. Therefore, this campaign should be truly a people's movement. This requires active participation of the people. This dream will come true only when people will change their attitude instead of thinking that this is an organization's work and the organization is getting something out of it. However, they should realize that this work is theirs and the organization has become a beacon for their work and it is working for their wellness. Everyone is worried about the experience of last 20-25 years of the Kayadhu River, but, nothing will happen just by worrying and chitchatting. Now is the time to act.

The organisation will not stop just after the survey work. The work that the organization has started for the last 2-3 years elsewhere, will continue here as well. The organization has initially undertook a pilot project in villages Amdari and Telangwadi, in a similar manner, it has now selected seventeen villages on the banks of the



river for starting developmental work. This work will be tackled in three clusters. There will be 5 to 6 villages in a cluster. In this task, the work will be done at different levels and efforts will be made to form a people's movement by undertaking following activities.

**Creating Awareness among people :**

Before starting the actual work, the organization is trying to create awareness among the people by organizing programs through different mediums for the revival of Kayadhu River, so that they should realize that this work is theirs and it is for their need.

**Organization's role in developmental works :**

If there is reasonable awareness among

the people, they will understand that this work does not only belong to the government or certain organization, but, they themselves owe it. Understanding this, if they take active part in the work to help the organization, then it will be a real campaign and helpful for evolving a people's movement through it.

**Women's active participation :**

While starting the work in the first 17 villages selected by the organization, it was decided that first of all women will be actively involved in this campaign. Women are directly related to drought, water scarcity and agricultural matters. They are also well versed in water conservation and planning, as they all take care of water required for their house. They fetch water on their heads during

droughts. They also work on the farm for agriculture. Therefore, the women's self-help groups and women's farming groups in the village will be involved in the campaign.

**Public Participation and Establishing Working Groups :**

It was decided to involve everyone from the riverside and

adjoining villages in this work, as their participation was necessary. This was to be done by setting up various committees consisting of women self-help groups, women farmers, men, youth groups, village level NGOs, Gram Panchayat members, Sarpanch, Panchayat Samiti members, Zilla Parishad members, leaders of various political parties, caste and religions and in this way, this movement was to be carried ahead by delegating responsibilities to them.

**Obtaining Guidance of Senior Citizens and Experts:**

Nowadays, people are obsessed with various social media and television. As a result, their communication with the family, senior



citizens, and knowledgeable persons is getting broken. Their knowledge and wisdom is not being used properly. Now, it has to be used extensively in this work. In the past, grandfather used to tell about the immediate cure for many ailments and diseases, the village doctors used to teach their children and relatives how to use their herbs. Likewise, many of the things in Grandma's bag are still effective today. However, no one is ready to use the traditional wisdom available with these seniors. There are many elderly persons in the society, who with their experience and traditional wisdom, tell where to dig bore wells to get good water. Such useful wisdom for searching availability of water is also not sought from such knowledgeable people. Therefore, in this campaign, with the help and guidance of old and knowledgeable elders in the village, efforts will be made to revive nallas and streams where water used to flow in the past.

#### **Involving genius native officials :**

Many genius natives of Hingoli district are performing their duties on various administrative posts like district Collector and above. Likewise many experts are working in their respective fields. Their involvement and guidance will be sought to make the campaign a great success. Like Mr. Pandurang Pole, a resident of the Aundha Nagnath taluka and currently working as a District Collector, is conducting a water conservation campaign in his native village through Naam Foundation. Such people will be taken along to revive the Kayadhu River.

#### **Preparing Water Balance Sheet :**

Ugam has initiated the work of reviving Kayadhu River in a planned manner as mentioned above. With the participation and guidance from all these people and a people's movement is formed, the people of the village will be taught the maths and techniques of water use. Unless this water balance is known to the people, importance of rain water will not be understood to them.

Rain gauges will be installed in the selected 17 villages and also in other villages along the river to measure the rainfall for understanding how much water is falling in that village and the average rainfall would be worked out, which will then be compared with the actual water needs of that village. For that, an estimate of water requirement of that village will be prepared. This will include per capita daily water needs for drinking and other purposes, water needs for cattle, animals, birds and also for irrigation purpose.

Accordingly, water planning of the village will be done, considering the total water required for the village against the total water receipts of that geographical area. After this planning, the technique of how to retain maximum water in their village area will be taught to the villagers. The need of villages is to undertake various activities like construction of loose boulder barrages, farm ponds, CNB etc. for retaining and absorbing water in a "head to toe" principle, as used in the pilot project. That is the need of hour and we have to do that. When everyone will understand this, they all will join this movement.

#### **Teaching Water Use Techniques :**

Once everyone knows how to block and store water, the techniques of how to use ground water efficiently, will have to be taught to all. Hingoli district and the selected villages are drought prone areas. Therefore, it is advisable to avoid crops like sugarcane and banana, which require more water. The farmers will then be given proper guidance on the crops that produce more in

less water and also on how to avoid wastage of water from wells, borewells, farm ponds and other places. They will also be taught to use the latest technology of irrigation such as sprinkler and drip irrigation systems.

#### **Dream - Ambitious, But Not Impossible :**

Although, the dream of 'Ugam Grameen Vikas Sanstha' to revive the dried up Kayadhu River is very ambitious, it is not that impossible. But, it will cost money as well as participation of all to carry on these works. Even so, not depending on others, the organization has decided to do all that they have planned in the survey by participating in the government oriented programs of water conservation and environmental protection like 'Jalayukta Shivar Yojana', 'Four crore tree planting scheme', 'Magel Tyala Shet-Tale' scheme etc. in selected villages for revival of Kayadhu river.

#### **Excessive Greed Does Not End :**

We see that human needs can be met even with meagre income. However, the greed of human beings does not end till death. Water may still be available to meet the needs of the farmers but the farmers are getting new bore holes in their fields every year due to the craving for water. At present, we see that huge water abstraction is being carried up to a depth of about 800-1000 feet.

The underground water, we are using now, is stored there for 200-300 years ago. However, the ground water extraction is so fast, that it is being exhausted in a few years now. So the water level is getting deeper every year. Normally this ground water level is going down by 5 feet every year. But the amount of rainwater that seeps into the soil is not equally proportionate. There is a drought almost every year and so the rain water has not a chance to seep into the soil at all.

If we study the soil and rocks and the rainfall in this area and the current system of rain water harvesting, we find that the water is absorbed only up to a depth of 15 feet. If rainwater is to be pumped deep into the ground, you will have to recharge the dry and closed bore holes in each village. By taking a borehole nearby a C.N.B. and making a soak pit near the borehole, the water can

be pumped into the soil up to 100 feet deep into the ground and up to 200-300 feet from a bore recharge.

In this way, efforts will be made to recharge water into the soil and increase ground water reserves through this campaign. When the river is revived, then water will be sufficient for meeting the needs of the people and as the awareness of people grows and they understand the importance of water, there will be a curb on excessive water abstraction.

#### **Inspiration of Dr. Rajendra Singh more than Amir Khan :**

Due to the current drought situation, many initiatives like water conservation, river cleaning, river joining is being implemented in different parts of the country through different individuals and organizations. Celebrity Aamir Khan's Water Foundation is rewarding some of the villages with one lakh to one crore rupees, if they work for water conservation. People or the villagers who are driven by the lust or the goal of getting the prize, work in that campaign and also get the prize money. But, after the prize is received, the work stops. This is happening in almost every reward scheme. Check out the 'Nirmal Gram' award winning villages under 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' or villages under 'Mahatma Gandhi Tantamukta Gram Yojana's.

In the beginning, everyone worked hard in these villages, and when the village got the award and celebrations started. however, as these joyful celebration were over, the work also got a full stop. In comparison to this, Dr. Rajendra Sinha's concept is much better and lasts forever. Because, all the activities from water planning to water use management are done through people's participation in Dr. Rajendra Sinh's concept and so, they get a success. The work they carry out is lasting forever. That is why Ugam has adopted Dr. Rajendra Sinha's concept and initiated the works accordingly. It is the only organization viz: Ugam who has taken an initiative on that concept. Now, this initiative will be driven forward by Ugam, with the help of various NGOs, government

organizations, people's representatives, senior citizens, women, youth and eminent persons from all walks of life.

### **Benefit, if the river doesn't flow ?**

At present, Ugam has taken up the task of reviving Kayadhu in Hingoli district. As a result, some have started having stomach aches. Ugam's work and goal is big. While doing all this, many feel that in the current situation, any layman is coming ahead and constructing barrages on the river, digging the river deeper. Some feel that Ugam will also work in the same way. But, nothing of the sort will happen, as Ugam has cleared it before initiating the works that it will not even touch the river bed of Kayadhu.

We have all experienced this year's monsoon (2017). We have seen the entire rainy season from June to August. During these three months, the river Kayadhu was never flooded to its full or we have not experienced that the water is flowing through any of the streams. This is indicative of the whimsy nature and also an indication of more terrible times ahead.

Therefore, Ugam is not so sure that constructing barrages on the Kayadhu River will resolve the problems. So, it will also not build barrages across the river. Of course, there will be it's active participation and support to the work being done by the government or the people's representatives. Given the above situation, if Kayadhu is not flowing, will the barrage solve the problem of drinking water and irrigation of riverside villages in future? Answer is 'No'. It will not be solved just by constructing dams on the river. For that, first we will have to do joint efforts to make the river flow. Ugam has undertaken long lasting remedial measures in this direction to make Kayadhu River flow, and then all the nallas and streams will come live and meet the river and this nature circle will continue for years to come.

Ugam is doing rural development work in Parbhani and now in Hingoli district for the last 20-25 years. This campaign as started here by Ugam through people's movement and participation will be an ideal model for the whole nation.

Ugam did not start with a idea that one should gather four relatives and form an organization. The founder of the institute, Jayaji Paikrao, is a student of the renowned Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. He started his social work under the guidance of the great social activist smt.Medha Patkar in 1981 by completing his post graduation in MSW.

Ugam came in direct contact with women, farmers, self-help groups and farmers in agricultural development including organic farming and labourers in rural areas. Shri Jayaji Paikrao, president of the organization, who was very upset to see the rising number of farmer suicide cases in the district in the last 10-15 years, the family's turmoil after the family head commits suicide, and the plight of the bereaved family. He immediately recognized that all this is happening because of drought conditions, which is directly related to water scarcity and irrigation. Agriculture is dependent on rain water which is very unsure here and there are no irrigation facilities in Hingoli, Kalamanuri, Aundha Nagnath and Sengaon talukas.

The river Kayadhu flowing through these talukas, has dried up. So for the last several years, Paikrao has been looking for a permanent solution to the problem that has arisen. Through his experience in various activities carried out by the organization earlier and also through various positions held by him on various governmental committees, he discovered ideas of reviving the river Kayadhu and started the work on the basis of knowledge he had acquired. He did not imitate other's work blindly, but, initiated the work with a different technique and wisdom.

We have examples that people started some works by choosing one or two villages, some by deepening the river and some by cleaning the river, constructing barrages on the river. But the work that will be undertaken through Ugam is to develop the watershed of 155 villages along the Kayadhu river.

It was first decided to revive about 11775 km length of watershed in 80 km length on the banks of river, streams, gullies, channels flowing

through the geographical area of these 155 villages. While doing this, the erosion of the river and stream banks needed to be stopped; only grass, trees and fruit trees be cultivated and planted in the area so that the soil is not washed away along with the water. Efforts will be made to increase the dairy development in the area by cultivating Marvel, Pavana, Jondhali and Gondali grasses along the river.

In general, these 255 villages, including 155 villages along the Kayadhu river and 100 other villages in the area, should become self-sufficient by eliminating the problem of drinking and irrigation water for the population of 2, 42,512, which included 48,332 families. Efforts are on to develop agriculture and organic farming, as well as to increase livestock required for organic farming. If livestock increases, dairy production companies

for women and men farmers, companies producing pulses, rice mills, flour mills etc. will be started, at the same time efforts to increase poultry and goat rearing industries in this area will be on its way.

This people's movement started on behalf of Ugam will be a long term and sustainable solution plan. Proper planning will be done with the participation of all the people in a pure manner, by conserving rain water, by allowing the water to percolate deep in the soil, thereby making the streams, nalas, ohals and the river alive. Therefore, it will be a different model for whole of India. It is hoped that this area will pick up good shape in the next 4 to 5 years and there will be a sustainable development in this area. For that, cooperation and support from every walk of life will be required.

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## JP of Kayadhu - A Book Review

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Prof. Vandana Chakrabarti

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(An English Translation By Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

The book, 'Kayadhuche JP' (JP of Kayadhu) is an autobiography on the life Shri Jayajirao Paikrao. The book is really readable one. There is a nice spontaneity in the autobiography written by Dr. Durgadas Rode that touches the mind. There is no flair in the description of any occasion. This book takes into account a personal and functional journey of an activist who has immersed himself in the work of social change. This book will be a guide for readers who are involved in the field of volunteerism. I am sure, it will be definitely a must read to anyone who is interested in social change.

Paikrao's struggle for education and his journey from a 'Firewood seller to Loudspeaker agent' touches the heart. Many get motivation from this biography to help Paikrao in his social work by reading about the difficulties he encountered while enrolling in the Tata Institute of Social Sciences and the sincerity expressed in his demeanor and the enormous passion for social work. The friends and friendships he has particularly maintained, is his true treasure. Every time people are seen standing with him to overcome difficult situations. It is overwhelming to see his fond love for the people in different walks of life. His has tremendous people's following, which is definitely overwhelming.

In every phase of his life, Paikrao worked tirelessly. While working at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, he used to go to Laldongri for taking actual field experience. There, he played a major role in the challenging task of providing basic necessities to the inhabitants of that area by giving priority to regularization of encroachments in the settlements. This experience in student life later came in handy while working in Marathwada. Today's students will definitely get an idea of what

they can achieve in social service in their current student days, through this book.

In the book 'Kayadhuche JP', the civility of his private life and the journey with his wife Sushilatai is equally interesting. It is a matter of great fortune that Paikrao has a companion like Sushilatai as his wife whom he shares his joys and sorrows, who takes care of family responsibilities and also gives priority to his social service. Facing poverty, grief over the loss of a newborn child, sorry feeling over being away from family and many other issues, Paikrao was also paying attention while he was in his studies. Even after graduation, Paikrao did not forget his commitment of using his education to overcome the backwardness of Marathwada.

The journey of Paikrao's working life is presented in this book very thoughtfully and honestly. This can be a separate topic of study for social service students. A well-established organization gets sometimes plagued by misunderstandings, doubts, mistrust and the promoter of the organization himself has to leave the organization. But even with such big shocks, Paikrao does not get discouraged. He takes on new tasks with renewed vigor and build stronger institutions than ever before with the help of the people. As institutions mature, the scope of their work grows and the people connected to the organization also develop. The details of this journey are really dazzling to the reader.

Paikrao is doing remarkable work for environment, agriculture, women empowerment, sanitation and social development through his organizations namely Kayadhu Gram Vikas Pratishthan, Maaher, Ugam Grameen Vikas Sanstha, Aanik Financial Services, Mahila Bank, Savings Group etc. People who are willing to work for the society from different countries, from

different fields come to Paikrao's institutions for taking experience. The students of MSW and MA courses of S.N.D.T. Women's University stayed at Ugam Gramin Vikas Sanstha for two weeks to experience rural development. This experience taught them a lot.

I am sure that people who study rural society, who are interested in social work, who are involved in NGOs and who are interested in social development as a whole, will welcome this book

and read it carefully.

The work of Paikrao is in full swing. Now, his well educated next generation, has also come forward and involved in his social work with full dedication. I, sincerely wish a great success to his various projects as well as his future plans for overcoming the backwardness of Marathwada.

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## Life Acquaintance of Shri Jayaji Paikrao

**Dr.Durgadas Rode**

(An English Translation by Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

Kayadhu, a tributary of Painganga River, flows through Aundha, Kalamanuri, Sengaon and Hingoli talukas of Hingoli district of Maharashtra. It is the main river of Hingoli district and is the lifeline of the district. Kanjara is a village in Kalamanuri taluka on the banks Kayadhu. Jayaji Paikrao was born in 1956 in this small village to Rajabai and Purbhaji Paikrao.

His grandfather's small business was to make string ropes of "Taag" from buds of Boru and Ambadi and sell it in the market. For that, he was required to do some process on the raw buds of Boru and Ambadi plants by keep soaking them in the river water for a few days to make "Taag" strings. For that, he used to construct a small earthen bund in the Kayadhu River bed to get water pounded up to a certain height, so that he could soak Boru and Ambadi buds in that pond. After its sufficient fermentation, Taag ropes were made out of it. This business activity was done in the month of May. So, in these days, Jayaji spent most of his time of childhood playing in and around this river in the company of his father and grandfather. Jayaji was very much fond of playing in the Kayadhu River water for hours. Therefore, since then, he has a strong bonding built up in his mind with the Kayadhu River. But, later, came the 'Nylon' ropes,

which spread its wings in the market all over and the "Taag" rope business came to a standstill.

Later, the family depended on daily wages as a labourer for earning their livelihood. Father Purbhaji Paikrao, wanted Jayaji, to learn a lot and grow up accordingly. For that, they sent him to the village school. There was a school in the village till VI standard. Further, his father Purbhaji continued to send him to Nanded for education. Jayaji used to do hard work during his summer vacation to earn money for perusing his entire education. In this way Jayaji completed his studies till his degree. He did not give up the pursuit of education, even after getting married. Despite the dire economic situation, he did not worry at all.

Decisions are in our hands, although though the fate is not in our hands. Fate cannot change the decision, but the decision can change our condition. Keeping the struggle on, you have to wait for the opportunity. In such an adverse situation, Jayaji got a chance. One day an advertisement appeared in the newspaper. And he went to Mumbai for seeking admission for the Master of Labor Services course. However, he did not get admission in that course. But, accidentally, he got access to a course in Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai itself. His consistency, perseverance and honesty must be the reasons behind the admission.



After completing his education at TISS, he had a chance of a government job. But, he did not join there. Had he been doing this job, he would have retired on a very high post of a Secretary to the government of Maharashtra. However, he is a very ambitious man and equally committed to his goals he has set in his life. Such goal-driven people are always crazy and only they happen to achieve their goal.

The 'Kayadhu' Village Development Project and his organization Ugam have kept themselves still connected with the rural areas. In the rural development, water plays a very important role for farmers and laborers. For this, Jayaji initialized a revolution in the field work through "Pani Adwa-Pani Jirwa" campaign (Stop Water - Soak it in the soil). Basically, his organization 'Ugam' stands out as a model for all. Due to the working of Paikrao, his organization did not limit it only to Kalamnuri or even Marathwada, but, it has been connected on its own to the network of individuals, organizations and institutions at the state and national level as well. Jayajirao is participating at the government level as a representative of a NGO on various government committees. While doing the 'Integrated Watershed Management' program, he has connected himself with the common people in Hingoli district as well as the government officials and employees.

With an intense bonding with Kayadhu River and understanding the importance of a river as an ecosystem, he is committed to reviving the

river with an integrated development approach in whole the the river basin. He has meticulously implemented the concept of micro-watershed development in areas of two nallas in Kayadhu basin in a head to toe approach. This is why the government has honored him as a 'Water Warrior'. Out of 50 'water ambassadors' in the district, 30 are from his organization 'Ugam'. In this work, he sought the guidance from Dr. Rajendra Singh, who also had a big admiration for Jayaji for his extraordinary work.

The path of Jayaji's Kayadhu River revival programme is not an easy task and it would be even more difficult, if public participation is not involved. This movement will not be successful in the true sense until there is a place for the river in the people's heart. For this, about 2 lakh people in 200 villages of the river basin need to be connected closely with this movement. Although, the length of Kayadhu is 900 km, its waterways have been spread over in 3 lakh ha, which need to be treated. This definitely does not happen to be a work of a lone person. Jayaji Paikrao - who is also called with short name 'JP', is well aware of the facts. The previous generation of Jayaji had worked very hard in the scorching heat of summer, now their descendant Jayaji Paikrao is carrying the torch with a great struggle. However, he is marching ahead on this tough path to achieve the hard goal. Many many salutes to JP for his passion and tireless efforts!

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## Jayajirao - A Guide of the Under Privileged

Shri. Maruti Bansode



(An English Translation by Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

Shri Jayaji Paikrao has been working for the last 30 years to provide justice to farmers, agricultural laborers, widows, destitute, abandoned and single women in Hingoli district through his organization 'Ugam'. The organization

has done tremendous work for resolving issues of women, unemployment, health, education and also conducted many awareness programs regarding water and development work at the village level.

Jayajidada's, (We call him Jayajidada - our brother) contribution to social work is very

important. He is well known for his work nationally as well as internationally. In 2002, Jayajirao had come for a work of the 'Hello Medical Foundation, Andoor' in the office of Parivartan, a social Organization, working at Naldurg town. He was accompanied by Mrs.Elizabeth from Norvegy and one more guest. Mrs.Elizabeth was felicitated on behalf of the organization. Jayajirao has done the work of giving direction to NGOs in Marathwada.

An NGO meeting was held at Mantralaya, Mumbai in the context of social auditing of MREGS. For that one NGO was to be appointed in each district. It is a matter of pride for us that the government selected our social organization 'Parivartan' in Osmanabad district. We had this privilege only because of the support of Jayajiraodada.

I came up with the idea of creating a network called 'BSEF' for the grass root level organizations working in all the eight districts of

Marathwada and it was later implemented with the help of Jayajiraodada.

The work that Jayajidada has done so far is very inspiring for all. He is constantly working to bring justice to the underprivileged. He is involvement in the DFID PACS project, as well as in the 'End Drought, Save the People' campaign, which is immensely important. There is a need for independent research on Dada's work. There are many facets to his social work. There are 4 MSWs in his family and all are devoted social workers. In general, the Paikrao family has made a great contribution in carrying out social work in a scientific manner. This is definitely an inspiration to the newcomers in this field of social work. That is why; I always say that, Jayaji Paikrao is the true guide of the neglected.

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## Jayajirao - A 'Bhagirath' of Social Service

Shri. Ram Khandare



(An English Translation by Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

In the year 1987, Jayaji Paikrao brought a couple of acquaintances to our village and gathered some eminent men there. I was just 20 years old, that time. But, even then, I was counted in to distinguished citizen of the village. So, I was also invited to this meeting. In the meeting, a person who accompanied him, introduced Jayajirao and spoke about him in very high words. I did not know that time that, Jayajirao was an MSW and a learned man and he has started social work with immense desire..

Later, Jayajirao used to come to our village Hatmali oftenly with a view of undertaking some social work there. Initially, he undertook some small activities in the village. I simply started

cooperating to him as much as I could in this endeavour, because my education was going on. Then I got BA degree. Earlier to that, I had done Diploma in Agriculture. I loved learning Marathi in those days. However, as the Marathi language education was not available at Hingoli, I needed to go to Nanded for that, but that was not possible for me, because of my poor financial position, and so, I could not continue my studies in this direction.

One day, both, Mr. Jayajirao and his wife Mrs Sushilabai Paikrao, had come to our village for certain work. We had interactions among ourselves for a while. During that Sushilatai asked me as to why should not I involve in their social work, as a full time worker, for which they would pay me sufficient remuneration that could be enough for running my house, because, even otherwise also, I

had been cooperating them in their work. I thought over it for some time and conveyed my consent to her and immediately joined their Ugam organization from the next day, as per her request.

I really like the way, they worked. They mingled with the people and then planned and worked out how to put the thoughts into action. So, the works became successful. Gradually, the works got better. Jayajirao's name also became popular. A little bit of rural development was also seen. They further started working in various fields like running women's self help groups, running 'Aangan wadis' (like kindergarten), implementing schemes for farmers, watershed development works, running women's banks etc. In each of the field, Jayajirao and his organization's work came in limelight.

So far, they have done organic farming at least on 5,000 ha, watershed development works on at least 10,000 ha, planted about 5 lakh trees as an environmental conducive activity, and also established farmer groups. At the same time, they carried out LBS, CCT, CNB, soil drainage works, construction of gabion structures, farm ponds and earthen structures in thousands. Even today, these developmental works are still going on.

While doing these various works, they assigned me to various positions as their worker. First, I was selected as a worker. Since then, I have worked as an Agriculture Assistant, Agriculture Officer, Watershed Secretary, Information Research Assistant, Dairy Secretary, Organic Agronomist, Resource Person in SHG, Resource Person in Watershed Development, Resource Person in Organic Agriculture Development and Master Trainer in various training programs. I was fortunate enough to get training at various centres all over India. I have even worked as a trainer in various training programs in many districts as a resource person. I successfully got through all these and proved my metal. In this way, I have been moulded and developed under his guidance and in his association. Like me, many others, also got developed in the same manner.

Now, Jayajirao has a new focus in his life -

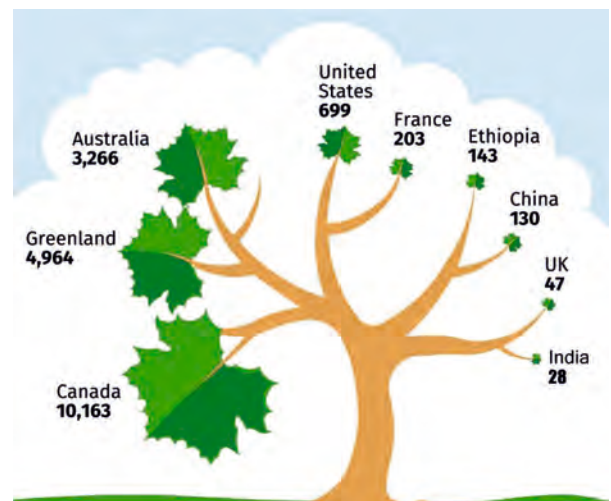
the gigantic work of revival of the Kayadhu River. He has been working in that direction for many years. It will not take them long to realize their goal, as they are moving appropriately in that direction.

I have been with them for the last 35 years. This association with him has helped me in understanding what the social work is all about. The honorarium I received from Ugam, helped me develop my home and also my farm. Living with Jayajirao has given me the opportunity to associate with people from many countries around the world. At the same time, I got acquainted with many leading social public leaders and social workers in India and I could observe them closely.

Each of them faced hundreds of difficulties in their lives, doing socially useful works. But, they did not waver and did not give up... and in the end, each of them succeeded in their work. I have seen these things up close. So, I also learned from them how to deal with adversity in life.

I learned many important things from shri Paikrao. Now, the revival of Kayadhu River should happen at the earliest through his hands, this is what I wish and expect of him and that's what millions of people like me, may be wanting. I pray, may god fulfil all the dreams and commitments of this 'Bhagiratha' and may he get longevity for making his dream of revival of Kayadhu River, come true.

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## Jayajirao - Our Inspiration for Social Service

Shri. Rajesh Paikrao



(An English Translation by Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

Kanjara village is very remote ... Near the railway line ... but no station. Only walking paths, no constructed roads... School in the village is till 7th. I had studied in the village school. I am the younger brother of Jayajirao Paikrao.

Dada, as we call to our elder brother Jayaji, is the first M.S.W. in Marathwada. He obtained a degree in social work from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. After returning back to village from Mumbai as an M.S.W., the first thing was Dada did in the village was, he organized an eye surgery and family planning camp. The whole village enthusiastically worked for the success of this camp. The dictionary words 'public participation and voluntary labor work' were first heard at that time. The first jeep and surgery vehicle arrived in the village for the camp. It was all very new for the people. They simply rushed there just to see it. Otherwise, there were no happening in the village, except for the sports event, when the CEO and the district Collector would visit the village.

In our house, deliberations on the topic of social work, was a regular feature. I have been grown listening to it since my childhood. W h e n I

was in 7th standard, Dada sent me to a camp of Rashtra Seva Dal for the first time for 7 days. The place was 100 km away from our village. Later, we were sent to different places like Latur, where a National Integration Camp was held and at Somnath for a 'Shram sanskar' Camp. By sending us to such different places, we had a special social upbringing. In this way the atmosphere at home was socially functional and vibrant. The concept of professional social work was then developed in us.

Inspired by Dada, now we have 7 people in the house, who have done M.S.W. It includes Sushant and his wife Vijeta, Vikas and his wife, me and my wife Saroj and Dada himself. We all seven people, are working in different fields - such as sustainable development, farmer's development, women's empowerment, gender equality, women entrepreneurship etc. All have received their inspiration from Dada. The tree he has planted is spreading all over Maharashtra.

I am confident, that this work will not stop now and the next generation will ably carry it ahead. Many thanks to Dada for inspiring us for entering in the social work and congratulations for his great work towards humanity!!

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## Jayajirao Paikrao - A Selfless Activist

Dr.Sanjay Gawai, (M) : 9423345877



(An English Translation by Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

I got to hear the name Jayaji Purbhaji Paikrao, a great social activist, in the year 1996-97. It so happened that in these two years, I did my M.S.W. at Karve Social Service Institute, Karvenagar,

Pune. While doing this, I was accompanied by Jayaji Paikrao's brother, Rajesh Paikrao, who happens to be my batch met and friend. Whenever Jayajidada came to our college hostel, we used to discuss with him about the various professional social works, he was doing.

In fact, born in a rural area like Kanjara, Jayajidada completed his educational journey with great difficulty. He undertook studies in Vocational Social Work at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, a reputed institute in India, which started professional social work in India. After completing his education, he reached Kalamnuri directly for the welfare of the poor, needy, destitute and deprived people in his rural areas and he initiated various social activities in the taluka.

I remember Dada initially started Kayadhu Village Development Project, Maher, in Kalamnuri. He was an honorary member of the organization and still serves as the former executive founding secretary. Today, Jayaji Dada is such a personality that people in Marathwada know him as JP.

Dada has decided to transform the Kayadhu River by making proper use of his education of professional social work. The history of the river Kayadhu will never be complete without mentioning the tireless work done by Jayaji Dada. Kayadhu River is a very important river of Hingoli district and is appropriately known as lifeline of the district.

As such, Hingoli district is extremely backward in Marathwada. Considering the rainfall there, I have never seen any pace of development in this place, as compared to other districts. But, with the experience of his earlier project initiated by Jayaji Dada at Maher in Kalamnuri taluka, he laid the foundation of Ugam organization. Today, the organization Ugam, is seen not only in Marathwada, but also in Maharashtra as well as at the national and international level, doing highly commendable and enterprising experiments.

Training is a fond subject of interest for Dada. And so, he has started a novel training center for creating innovative activists in Marathwada, with the help of country like Japan.

Dada has been constantly trying to figure out as to how to involve others in all the areas of Social work, not just thinking of his organization or his family only. It is a matter of pride for Marathwada that the book 'Kayaduche JP' on his life has been released at the hands of Reverend

Waterman Dr.Rajendrasinghji Rana. Dada's expertise in considering every concept of professional social work from a scientific point of view and making it work is very important. The participation of his wife, in this whole work is also very important.

Dada has done an incredible work in the fields of water, forest, land, people and animals in the whole of Marathwada. I think it is important to remind you here that not only has he worked with people in the community, but he has always tried to make his whole family an ideal family because of his excellent rhetoric and work style.

Even today, after seeing Dada working in the field of sustainable agriculture and organic farming, I honestly think that it will not take long for this country to prosper. I have been working on this project for a few months now and I am getting the satisfaction of this work only because of guidance from Dada.

Dada's personality is a ubiquitous personality. He is still very much concerned about the environment. Women empowerment is his favorite subject. At the same time, Dada has been consistently insistent on modern technology, and so I think, it is very difficult to put personality in only one of these topics, as his personality is a multifaceted personality.

To this day, Dada has tried to reconcile the families of many who were on the verge of collapse. Many activists have been formed under his guidance. He has helped many people in various ways such as socio-economic, educational, cultural, giving them a new energy to live their lives. And so I think it is very important to follow the example of Dada and work on the burning issues that have arisen in today's society.

Dada has consistently tried to make the person who came in Dada's company bigger than him and so to describe his work in a few words about such a personality would be like patching the sky. However, I have made this small effort for the purpose. I wish him the best luck for his next journey.

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## Jayajirao Paikrao - A Work Oriented Activist

Shri. Gautam Mogle

(An English Translation by Shri Gajanan Deshpande, Pune)

With the dream of working tirelessly for the overall development of the people in the rural areas, Jayaji Paikrao strived hard for the establishment of his organization Ugam and even so many years, he has steel been working consistently without getting tired of the opposition.

Jayaji, is a native of Aundha Nagnath Kanjara village in Hingoli district. After completing his MSW from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, the desire to do something for the people in his village, did not allow him to keep quiet. So, he set up Maher Sanstha. Later he founded 'Ugam' organization, initially with only 5 workers. Today, this institution seems to have been transformed into a banyan tree. He started his work with the goal of development of rural areas. He got strong support from his wife smt. Sushilabai Paikrao in all his journey and also the difficulties encountered while working in the rural areas,

If the development of rural area is to be done in a real sense, tackling only a couple problems will not be just enough. With this in mind, he continued the work vigorously with the aim of developing the area by exchanging views on various issues that were coming up from that area.

For this, he started various activities like Batchagat, Mahila Bank, Grass Conservation, Sugarcane Workers, stopping Farmer Suicide, Financial Partnership, Employment Guarantee Scheme, Watershed Development, Sanitation and Toilet Construction, Environment, Grassland Development, Stopping Migration, Land Rights Movement etc. He also started various programs across Maharashtra with the assistance from various networks like Land Rights Movement, Savitribai Phule Mutual Benefit Trust, Community

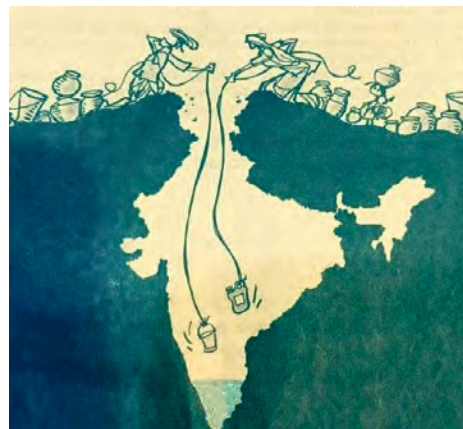
Based Micro Finance, Mahila Panchayat, Lok Arogya Abhiyan etc.

In order to make the rural people aware of their rights and also the responsibilities coming along with rights, he started educating the youth and women, farmers, well-educated unemployed, NGO workers, school children in a view of making them able for leading the society.

He started a separate section for women's development and also started giving guidance to them on various aspects like legal, health, economic progress, self-employment etc. through their self Mr. and Mrs. Paikrao and his expert team. Starting from Kanjara village this organization is now making a different impression on the society by doing remarkable work in different areas of Marathwada and all over Maharashtra.

Now the work of reviving Kayadhu River with the cooperation of government and social organizations is in progress. Therefore, there is no doubt that thousands of farmers in the Kayadhu river valley will flourish economically. My salute and millions of good wishes to the work of this passionate man Jayaji Paikrao and his Ugam team and wish them a grand success.

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## **List Of Governing Body Members of Ugam Gram Vikas Sanstha, Umra**

<b>1. Shri Jayaji Purbhaji Paikrao</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>2. Shri Gangadhar Nivrutti Ingle</b>	<b>Vice President</b>
<b>3. Shrimati Chhaya Narayan Padghan</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>4. Shri Tukaram Kisan Ingole</b>	<b>Assistant Secretary</b>
<b>5. Shrimati Rekha Vijay Sathe</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>6. Shri Sakharam Ramji Bhagat</b>	<b>Member</b>
<b>7. Shrimati Sunita Vitthal Chounde</b>	<b>Member</b>
<b>8. Shrimati Saroj Rajesh Paikrao</b>	<b>Member</b>
<b>9. Shrimati Jyoti Suresh Kamble</b>	<b>Member</b>

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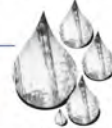
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