

LIVE EXPERIENCES OF THE TARKHAD FAMILY WITH
SHRI SAI BABA OF SHIRDI

BY

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PREFACE

Shri Jyotindra Ramchandra Tarkhad of Santacruz, Mumbai had given a good account of his live experiences with Sai Baba of Shridi. Infact through his narration he is putting forward the teachings of Sai Baba in a prominent way. These narrations also give a fair introduction of Tarkhad family to the readers.

The writer, publisher Shri Virendra Jyotindra Tarkhad is a retired engineer staying at Santacruz in Mumbai, which Sai devotees of Mumbai may be aware of. The writer has in all written 17 chapters out of which 16 chapters are the self experiences of his father which he could put across through his sheer memory and this can be tallied with the Sai Satcharitra by Late Shri Annasaheb Dabholkar, by the readers.

Shri Virendra Tarkhad has given the account of the self-experiences of his father to the Sai devotee readers and I would request them to relish the same. The incidences experienced in the association with Lord Sai by Jyotindra gives a fair account of prowess's of Lord Sai which is published by the writer as close to facts as his memory can recall. The writer is expressing in a unique way the close bondage of his father with Lord Sai, which I must say, is admirable. I think the narrations are expressing that the devotees when they visit Shirdi should take darshan of Samadhi Mandir, the Khadoba Temple and practice the teachings of Sai namely **Shraddha & Saburi (Faith & Patience)** in order to sail smoothly through their life.

Shri Babasaheb Tarkhad could make his life comfortable, which was witnessed by my grandfather, and one of the closest devotees of Sai Baba Shri Mhalsapati Chimanaji Nagare (Bhagat) is what I would like to state. I am sure the reading of this book can provide some guidance and self-satisfaction to the Sai devotee readers. The book takes us closer to Sai Baba once again is what I can experience while writing this preface. I the grandson of Shri Mhalsapati also feel honoured to offer this preface, infact I consider it to be a true reverence to our family.

Ramachandra Atmaram Tarkhad alias Babasaheb Tarkhad in association with Shri Dasganu Maharaj had made a great contribution in the formation of Shri

Sai Baba Sansthan, Shirdi and was the first treasurer of the Sans than. He further went on to publish the **Sai Leela** magazine and had written the preface for the very first issue of the magazine thus creating history. I must declare to all Sai devotees that the 9 chapter of Sai Satcharitra by Late Shri Annasaheb Dabholkar gives a true account of pure devotion of Tarkhad family towards Lord Sai.

Lastly I would like to close" this preface by saying: -

**"ANANTAKOTI BRAHMANDANAYAKA RAJAOHIRAJ YOGIRAJ
PARABRHAMA**

SHRI SATCHIDANANDA SATGURU SAINATH MAHARAJ KIJAI

In times to come these narrations of Shri Sai Baba may be well remembered by innumerable Sai devotees is what I sincerely desire and thus offer this preface in the memory of my grandfather Shri Mhalsapati who had welcomed Shri Sai Baba by stating "Aao Sai" in front of the Khandoba Temple.

I now handover this preface to Shri Virendra Jyotindra Tarkhad for publishing.

Sd/-

Manohar Martanda Nagare

INTRODUCTION

Dear readers, before I write these live experiences I beg the pardon from all of you for the single reason that these are not my own experiences but they were narrated to us by our father Shri Jyotindra Ramchandia Tarkhad from time to time when he was alive. During my childhood when I use to listen to him while narrating, they use to sound like fairy tales for me. As I grew up and came to know about the supernatural powers of Shri SaiBaba of Shirdi I realized that my father had experienced something divine during his ten years of association with Sai Baba and they were the precious possessions of his life time which is difficult for any common man to acquire. I use to always feel that I should open up these prized possessions to all of you but our daily routine is such that it is difficult for us to find time to devote for such spiritual writings.

I have visited Shirdi the Karmabhoomi of Sai Baba several times by now and during these visits I met several Sai devotees. During these meetings there

was always a natural question whether I am also a Sai devotee. I use to feel rather awkward to declare so because the way my father use to perform Sai Pooja , I was no way near such devotional duty and use to tell those Sai devotees that I have some kind of unique connection with Shri Sai Baba because of my father's association with him when he was alive and very much active in Shirdi and that is the main reason I visit Shirdi. Primarily, there are three individuals in our Tarkhad Family who were the main cause of such connection. My grandmother (father's mother), my grand father Ramchandra Atmaram Tarkhad & my father Jyotindra Ramchandra Tarkhad. These three people came in contact with Shri SaiBaba and their association spanned from the year 1908 to 1918 i.e. till Sai took Maha Samadhi. As a result of this association subsequently for all members of Tarkhad family Sai Baba was their God. Then that Sai devotee would make a request to narrate some divine experience encountered by my father. I use to oblige by narrating whatever used to come to my mind then. This use to take place in a place called **Lendi Baug in Shirdi**. After hearing the experience invariably the devotee would bow in front of me and touch my feet. I used to then feel very awkward. Once it so happened that a Sai Mandal from Pune requested me to come to Pune & narrate such experiences to Sai Followers in Pune. I obliged them by visiting Pune along with my wife and children. That program lasted for two hours and after I completed my narration there was a big queue in front of me to perform Namaskar to me. As I was a family man I decided to stay away from such a function for simple reason that those were the experiences of my father and I may make some mistake during narration. At the same time I decided that after I retire from the services, I might have plenty of free time which I will utilize to write out these out of the world experiences of Tarkhad Family members. Of course the purpose is to express my devotion and love towards Shirdi Sai Baba. On 18th June 2003 I have completed 60 Years & today on 15th August 2003 i.e. 57th Independence day of our beloved country India I have commenced writing this book.

Dear Sai devotee reader I wish to express that I am not Hon Hemadpant the great Late Annasaheb Dabholkar who has composed the **Immortal Sai**

Satcharitra. I regularly read this Holy Book which consists of 54 Chapters covering the life span of Shirdi Sai Baba. There are incidences in this Holy Book when my father was also present in Shirdi and I shall be humbly narrating them to you as they were viewed and passed on to me by my father. Dear readers please pardon me as I am not in a position to state the exact dates and time of these incidences but during the time span of 1908 to 1918 my father had visited Shirdi 17 times and his stay per visit used to be from 8 days to one month. During these 17 Rounds please believe me my father had a first hand experience of the divine powers of Shri Sai Baba which were in the true sense supernatural. In fact I wish he should have had written these himself as he was a student of St Xavier' s School. Of course the sole purpose of my writing is purely to express our deep and sincere Shraddha (faith) in Shri Sai Baba which gives me immense peace of mind.

Dear reader Sai Devotee, I am sure after reading this book you may think that I might have also come across some divine experiences But I humbly state that certainly not the kind that my father had come across. I firmly believe that my father was destined to come in contact with Shri SaiBaba may be due to his **Poorva Punyaee** (good deeds of last birth) and his experiences have been all before his marriage i.e. from his age span of 14 to 25 years. Many a times I wonder that experiencing such divine power why did my father resorted to family life? Well in that case, I would not have been there and may be this book too would not see the light of the day.

Now a brief introduction about Tarkhad Family. Our native place Tarkhad village near Vasaj_Fort (Fort of Bassein). Our surname is therefore Tarkhadkar. The history goes that my ancestors had fought the Battle of Bassein Fort along with the Great Maratha Warrior Chimaji Appa against the Portuguese who were defeated in the battle. As recognition of their bravery Chimaji Appa granted them **Jahagiri of** Tarkhad village. Later on British took over the fort from Marathas and my great great grand father Pandurang Tarkhad shifted to Mumbai. He had built his Bungalow on Charni Road Chaupaty near Wilson College. Pandurang had two sons Dadoba and Atmaram. Out of this Dadoba became very famous

Grammarian for writing the grammar books for Marathi speaking people who could speak and write correct English language. Second son Atmaram was doctor by profession. He was family doctor to the erstwhile Viceroy of Bombay. My grand father Ramchandra. Atmaram Tarkhad was a specialist in cotton textile & he was secretary to Khatau Group of Mills. He had established his own household in Bandra and later on came in contact with Shirdi SaiBaba. He was one of the founder members and the first treasurer of Shirdi Sai Sansthan. He extend all possible support to Dasganu Manaraj who was spreading Baba' s Message to people of Mumbai and Maharashtra. When you visit Shirdi Sai Samadhi Mandir you will find their photos amongst the photos of Baba' s devotees of that time Late Annasaheb Dabholkar has written the famous **Sai Satcharitra**, which gives detailed accounts of Baba' s Leelas in Shirdi during his tenure.

The 9th chapter of Sai Satcharitra narrates the experiences of Tarkhad Family with Sai Baba. Babasaheb Tarkhad as stated in this 9th chapter my grandfather. The lady Tarkhad as stated is my grandmother and their son as stated is my father Jyotindra Ramchandra Tarkhad. The life experiences as I am going to state in this book are mostly that of my father Jyotindra. He was born on 15th June 1895 and expired on 16th August1965. Brief information about the author would be appropriate at this stage. My name is Virendra Jyotinjra Tarkhad, second son of Jyotindra (1st son Ravindra has" expired). I am an engineer by profession and have worked in two companies Crompton Greaves Ltd and Siemens India Ltd in the managerial capacity currently I am a retired person staying at Santacruz.

Dear Sai devotees after going through this book if you wish to get in touch with me please do so but purely to express our mutual devotion towards Lord Sai.

Sd/-V. J. Tarkhad

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1st Meeting with Lord Sai

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

This incidence had taken place on a summer day. Jyotindra had just . had his lunch in an Irani Restaurant near Metro Cinema and was sing the road to go back to St Xavier' s School where he was studying. This was his daily routine to have lunch in the Irani Restaurant during the recess time. That day while crossing the road one Fakir dressed in a white Robe accosted him and begged for alms. Jyotindra took out a coin of one paisa (a copper coin with a hole in the center) from his pocket and offered the same to that Fakir and was proceeding to the school. But the Fakir stopped him and he told Jyotindra that it is one Paisa (denomination) coin of 1894. In those days people use to offer one pai as charity thus one paisa was rather a much higher amount to be given as charity from a student. Jyotindra told the Fakir that he daily gets four annas for lunch purpose and therefore he can give away one paisa as alms. Besides, this one paisa is a running denomination so that the Fakir should not worry about it. The Fakir then laughed and said, "Allah Bhala Karega," Jyotindra then proceeded to school and forgot about this incident,

Jyotindra had two elder brothers named Satyendra and Ravindra who were studying in medical college. Satyendra further acquired the degree as GGMC (Graduate of Grand Medical College later changed to MBBS). He is the uncle of the writer staying in Konkan Nagar at Matunga. (He is no more and his son & daughter are staying there). Jyotindra' s brother was a doctor, his uncle was a doctor, and his grandfather was not only a well-known medical practitioner but also the family doctor of Viceroy of Bombay, then. In short it was a doctors family for Jyotindra.

But inspite of so many doctors in the family Jyotindra' s mother means writer' s grandmother was sffering from migraine and use to get severe headache. All sorts of medicines were tried but her migraine appeared to be incurable.

They had a house maid who worked with them and suggested to her she should go to one Pir called Maulana Baba near Bandra Masjid, who she further told gave some Ayurvedic medicines which were seem to cure even acute diseases.

Now in those days for a Hindu lady to go to a masjid to meet a Pir was an extremely difficult proposition. My grandmother suggested to her son Jyotindra who by nature a dare devil character organized for a Burkha and took his mother by car to Pir Maulana Baba. But natural when a human being is suffering from any acute ailment such religious boundaries are no longer difficult to transcend. But after meeting Maulana Baba their difficulties increased instead of easing out. Maulana Baba told my grandma that for this ailment that she was suffering from he did not have any medicine to offer but he told her that, "I have a brother named Sai Baba who stays at Shirdi and you can go to him. He will cure you and relieve you from all your sufferings"

Now both of them were in great difficulty. Firstly my grandfather was a strong headed Prarthana Samajist and they knew that he would not give them the permission to "meet such Babas. Secondly where is this Shirdi situated and how to go there was a big question?

However Jyotindra did not give up (Dear readers, here I believe that it was written in their destiny to meet Shri Sai Baba and therefore no one could stop them in doing so.)

He collected all the information from the owner of the Irani Hotel near Metro theatre.

He came to know that Shirdi village is in Ahmednagar District and one has to go by train up to Kopargaon via Manmad. Then from Kopargaon one has to travel in a horse cart to reach Shirdi, which is 9 Kms away. This means one has to be away from home for at least 3 days. Anyway Jyotindra organized for his father' s permission and made all the arrangements for the journey. On one Friday evening both the mother and son left for Shirdi. On Saturday morning they were in Shirdi. They had made all the enquiry and after they had freshened themselves they reached Dwarkamai to meet Shri Sai Baba. They saw Sai Baba was sitting in front of the sacred Dhuni (Fireplace lit by Baba). My grandma bowed in front of Baba and touched his feet.

They looked at each other and what transpired between the two is as follows:

Baba said to my grandma, "Dear mother you have come. My brother from Bandra has guided you to me. Please sit down. Oh mother you' have a very severe headache is it not?" Then Sai Baba dipped his five fingers in the pan of Udi, (sacred ash) and hit the forehead of my grandma with that Udi laden hand. He held the forehead firmly in all the five fingers and said "Oh Mother from now onwards till your death you will never get any pain in your head. This headache of yours has disappeared forever." Dear readers my grandma was stunned with this act of Sai. She had not uttered a single word of complaint and how could SaiBaba knew the purpose of their visit and her sufferings. I think two acts of SaiBaba made a complete transformation of my grandma. One-the exchange of looks between them i.e. Eye contact and the hitting of the forehead with Udi laden hand. In fact it was an order to that decease to go away from that head. My grandma had never ever had such a powerful dose of medicine. What transformation she was experiencing she only knew it better. The sad look on her face from the headache had disappeared. She was feeling fighting fresh. She told my father Jyotindra to bow to Baba. My father was astonished to see all this. His mother had never ordered him like that earlier. Then my father bowed to Baba & touched his feet. Instantly Baba said to him" Dear Bhau (Brother),have you not recognized me?" My father replied in the negative. Then Baba told him "Please look at me and stress your memory and try to recollect." My father could not come to any pass. Then Baba put his hand in the pocket of his **Kafani** (robe) and took out the .copper coin of one paisa. He showed the same to my father and said "Hey Bhau! Do you remember this copper coin dating back to the year 1894, which you had given as charity to one Fakir while on your way to school? Now my father was beginning to recollect the incident narrated at the beginning of this chapter, His eyes were in tears and he instantly held Baba' s legs in his hand. . Baba lifted him and said "Hey Bhau, that afternoon the Fakir you had A met was none other than me and your this one paisa coin I am returning ^ to you. Please take it back and preserve it very carefully. It will breed in multifold of paisas for you."

Now dear reader devotees you will surely agree with me that such a pleasant Sai Darshan which my grandma and father had must have been unmemorable for both of them and then onwards they automatically got attracted to him forever.

After this 1st divine Sai meeting the Tarkhad family decided to reckon SaiBaba as their Guru and they completely gave up themselves for his devotion. The headache of my grandma had vanished forever and her devotion towards God increased multifold. The one paisa coin was put to worship in our house.

We use to ask our father what exactly use to happen after meeting SaiBaba. He use to state that the **Blissful Sight** in his eyes had an enormous attraction which would pull any one towards him and that **Midas-touch** in his powerful hands could heal any deep wound. As you all know that SaiBaba never equated himself to God & would always state that he is a messenger of God. However my father use to say that the priest of Khandoba Temple (later turned great devotee of SaiBaba) Mhalsapati Bhagat had very appropriately named him in his very 1st meeting saying "Aao **Sai Baba** Aao." Our India is a land of many spiritual Babas and their devotees name them accordingly. My father use to say that **SAI** name suggests everything. His explanation was the word SAI in Marathi) means **SAAKSHAT** (actual) and the word I means **ISHWAR** (God). Thus from his point of view Sai Baba means Saakshat Ishwar Baba. I must say that what my father had experienced during his visits to Shirdi was something amazing and any common man like him after undergoing such divine experiences would come to only one conclusion that SaiBaba possessed that supernatural **Godly Power**. I consider myself lucky to have been born in this blessed family and wish that Sai' s blessings be with us for all time to come.

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

2nd Meeting along with Babasaheb Tarkhad

After experiencing such a wonderful meeting with SaiBaba both mother and son felt like quickly returning home and narrating the same to my grandfather Babasaheb Tarkhad. However SaiBaba had suggested to them to spend some more days in Shirdi so they conceded his request. They had consultations with Mr. Madhavrao Deshpande who was very close to SaiBaba and use to help and guide devotees. He told them that in the morning Baba was looking out for someone and on inquiring with him he said that his mother and brother are arriving to meet him. Mr.Madhavrao also informed them that normal practice followed by devotees in Shirdi is to leave the place only after seeking permission from Baba. They then wrote a letter to Babasaheb in Bandra stating that they are extending their stay in Shirdi as they have experienced something unique Thus they spent about one week in Shirdi and after seeking Baba' s permission and promising him that they would come back along with Babasaheb Tarkhad, they returned to Bandra their place of residence.

During their one-week stay they came across other Sai devotees like Shri Mhalsapati, Kakasaheb Mahajani, Shamrao Jayaker etc. They conveyed the entire episode to my grandfather & tried to convince him that Shri SaiBaba of Shirdi is not an ordinary person. He not only gives good medicines but also possesses supernatural powers. My grandfather took lightly the impressions of my grandma but was rather surprised to hear the same from my father .Of course both of them informed him that they have promised Baba that next time they will visit Shirdi along with Babasaheb.

Dear readers I firmly believe that, Babasaheb was also destined to meet Shirdi SaiBaba hence in course of time he met his friends Mr. Shamrao Jayaker, Kakasaheb Dixit, Justice Dhurandhar and he came to know that they all were Sai devotees. Finally my grandfather agreed with the family to visit Shirdi as an outing. As he was a very busy Person it was difficult for him to be away from the job. They decided to save on Friday night on a weekend along with his friends.

They were travelling by night train to Manmad .My father and grandma had spread their bedding and were relaxing. The Gents were busy playing cards.

Train had left Nashik Road station and a Fakir with his hair tied with white cloth, entered the compartment. He came to my grandfather and begged for alms. My grandfather looked at him and he felt pity at his status. He took out a silver coin of one Rupee and gave him and asked him to move away. Fakir drew his attention to the one Rupee coin because it was rather too big an amount to be given in charity in those days. Here I wish to mention to readers that my grandfather was Secretary to Khatau Group of Mills and in the year 1908 he was drawing Rs 2000 per month as salary. He told the Fakir that the coin is genuine with stamp of George the V embossed on it and issued in the year 1905 and he need not worry about it. He requested him to move away as their card game was getting disturbed. The Fakir then moved away.

Next day morning they reached Shirdi. My grandmother and father directed my grandfather, as they were now familiar with the place. They had bath & breakfast and they along with pooja material entered **the Dwarkamai**. My father and grandmother bowed to Baba and touched his feet. Baba then gave a smile and turned to my grandfather and said "Mhatarya (old man) my mother and Bhau had to plead to you and after of persuasion you had agreed to come to Shirdi.

Have you recognized me?" My grandfather replied in negative. Then Baba put his hand in the pocket of his Kafni and he took out the one rupee silver coin bearing the stamp of George the V. He showed the same to my grandfather and asked, "Do you at least recognize this which you had given me last night?" Now my grandfather started recollecting the incident of previous night in the train and before he could say anything Baba told him, "Hey, that Fakir of the night was none other than me." Babasaheb was instantly overwhelmed. He realized his mistake that he had taken Baba to be a beggar. He felt very sorry for his act of the night. He bowed to Baba and asked for his pardon. He realized what Jyotindra and his wife had narrated about Baba was 100 percent true and Baba is not an ordinary person and he is a ' Messiah of the Lord' in the true sense of the term.

After this incident there was an unprecedented transformation in Babasaheb Tarkhad. He was no more a Prarthanasamajist. He developed a spiritual love towards Baba. He started taking important decisions only after aligning with Sai Baba. He started sending Tagas (Rolls) of cloth to Baba so that he can stitch Kafani out of it.

He had also send Petromax lamps for illuminating the Dwarkamai at night. My father use to light them every evening whenever he used to stay in Shirdi and hung them at decided locations in Dwarkamai. There is an interesting incident about this, which I will narrate later.

Dear readers in this fashion three members of the Tarkhad family came in contact with Sai Baba of Shirdi. Infact Baba only pulled them towards him like a powerful magnet. They all developed intense love toward Baba. Their visits to Shirdi had increased for simple reason that they started getting experiences, which were unique in their nature. They were nothing but miracles and this made them realize that Sai Baba is God' s incarnation. I am going to reveal to you these experiences and I am sure you all will agree with me after you have read through them.

Baba returned the one rupee silver coin back to my grandfather and he said "Mhatarya I am returning your coin back to you. Please worship the same and your will have a very fruitful life. Believe in me. I never lie when I speak from this sacred Dwarkamai" Thus Baba addressed my "grandfather as "Mhatarya" and my father as "Bhau" and that continued in all their future conversations.

SaiBaba's Sandalwood Mandir

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

As described earlier the visits of Tarkhad family members to Shirdi had increased. Their love for Baba was on the rise like the waxing of the Moon of first Fortnight. Although they felt like being at Baba' s feet in Shirdi all the time, which in any case was not possible. They developed a strong desire to have a big size photo, which could be put to worship in their residence at Bandra. The idea behind was, when they were away from Shirdi they should not forget Baba, i.e. out of sight is out of mind. Both father and son had a peculiar nature that they

would never speak about their love towards Baba. They had immense faith in him. They knew that he is **Antaryami** who can accurately read their mind and will surely organize to fulfill their desire at an appropriate time. As such Baba' s two main teachings were **Faith and Patience**.

On one early morning Babasaheb and Jyotindra had a dream. They saw a beautiful carved Mandir and Baba sitting in it. The dream had deep impression on their mind. They got up and drew the sketch of the same, as such they both were good at drawing. When they came to the breakfast table they exchanged their thoughts about their dream of the morning. They brought their sketches and were astonished to see that the sketches matched in toto. They instantly decided to have such a Mandir in their house. They made inquiries and purchased Sandalwood. They appointed an expert carpenter and showed him the sketch of the Mandir and requested him to carve out one for them. Their Bandra residence had a small terrace and the Mandir making began over there. I think it took more than a year for the Mandir to take final shape. At the end of it 9 feet tall & 2 1/2 x 21/2 feet square Sandalwood Mandir was ready. Well they were in dilemma, from where to acquire Baba' s portrait, which can be put for worshipping in that Mandir.

Dear readers you must be aware that Baba never allowed anyone to photograph him by a camera hence to get his portrait was a big task But Tarkhad' s were confident that the dream was Baba' s creation and he will therefore fulfill the same.

As their habit one Friday afternoon they visited Chorbazar in Mumbai They would dress up in a fixed attire i.e. Babasaheb in Coat Trousers with an English Hat and Jyotindra in Coat & Trousers with Black coloured Gandhi cap on his head. While they were going round in lanes of Chorbazar something unique happened. One Muslim shop keeper came shouting at them and said " Hey Gentlemen, all these days I am looking forward to meet you as I have a parcel for in my shop." Babasaheb and Jyotindra were taken aback and were worried that the shopkeeper might dump some stolen article on them. They questioned him that how could he select them out of so many people. The shopkeeper then requested them to move to his shop where he can explain everything. On

reaching his shop he informed them that a few days ago one Saintly looking elderly gentleman came to his shop and handed over one parcel to him. He told him that on Friday one Hindu father and son are coming to this place. Father wears an English Hat and Son wears a Black Gandhi Cap. He handed over one parcel for them and also paid Rs.50/-as service charges.

I was therefore keeping watch on the people moving in pairs and located you rightly so. They were then beginning to get convinced by his explanation. He then brought the parcel and handed over to them. But they were still doubtful about the stolen material so they made him open the parcel before taking the delivery of it. He unpacked the parcel and it was a black & white Portrait of Lord Sai enclosed in a nice Wooden Photo Frame. Both of them were in tears and they confirmed to the shopkeeper that it is their Parcel. They profusely thanked him and offered to pay some money in return. The shop keeper declined to accept any money as he had strict instructions of the Donor. They use to travel in a Studebaker champion car and they could carry the photo frame safely to Bandra. They had another pleasant surprise as the photo frame fitted exactly in the Sandalwood Mandir without calling for any alteration. The entire Tarkhad family was overwhelmed with joy, which had no bounds. They then consecrated SaiBaba' s Photo in the Sandalwood Mandir. My father use to religiously get up early morning and at 5 a.m. he would perform the pooja by sandalwood paste to Baba' s forehead and lighting a lamp scented sticks. Sugar cubes were offered as prasad, which they all use to consume at lunch time. Now they all were eagerly waiting for their next trip to Shirdi.

As usual they entered the Dwarkamai and presented their offerings to Baba. He told them to be seated over there. One of the Sai devotee, who was stationed in Shirdi and was frantically trying to take out a Camera photo of Sai for past few days and was unsuccessful came to Baba and requested for the last try. Baba suddenly became angry and shouted at him and said, " Hey, what are you craving for my photo. Please go to my Bhau' s place and you will find me alive in that photograph in his mandir. No sooner my father heard this they were more than pleased for what all they had done in their house. Baba was confirming that

he is receiving their worship daily. My father immediately got up and prostrated in front of Baba. My father prayed to Lord Sai internally stating that he may be granted such a boon that he shall never be able to forget Sai and shall keep singing only his prayers and nothing but his prayers (HECHI DAAN DEGA DEVA TUZA VEESARA NA VHAVA).

So this is the way Shirdi Sai Baba got himself consecrated into Sandalwood Mandir at Tarkhad's residence. This Mandir is available for Darshan at the residence of my late brother Ravindra at Vasai.

Sai the Saviour of Ganesh Murti

"Om Sainathaya Namaha."

In the Sandalwood Mandir there is also one small marble Murti of Lord Ganesh. This is a unique Murti as the Lord's Trunk is turned towards his right. The Murti is placed on a silver shrine. Separately made for the same. The story of the Ganesh Murti is very interesting and therefore I feel like stating the same for you all readers. Of course the existence of the Ganesh Murti is for such a long time, the credit goes to Shirdi Sai Baba, which I will now narrate to you all.

My grandfather used to pay visit to an antique shop near Regal Theatre in Mumbai. On one such visit, while going round the shop he heard an English gentleman bargaining with the shopkeeper. My grandfather was rather curious that an English gentleman was bargaining so he took an active interest in the same. The bargain was for a beautiful marble Murti of Lord Ganesh. It was 9 inch tall sitting in a lotus flower and painted very appropriately in various colors. The shopkeeper was asking for Rs.15/- and was giving the justification that it is from Somnath Temple and very antique hence the price tags. The English gentleman had started the offer with Rs.5/- and then went on to Rs.8/-. My grandfather now got attracted towards that deal, He inquired with the Englishman, out of sheer curiosity as to what he intended to do with the Murti. The Englishman replied that the beautiful marble stone he would use as a paperweight on his desk. On hearing that my grandfather became very angry. He took out Rs.100/- note from his wallet and gave it to the shopkeeper. He told him to take Rs80/- (i.e. ten times the offer of the Englishman) and pack the Murti for him. He declared that he

would not allow his God to be used as paperweight to anyone. On further inquiry with the shopkeeper he learnt that the Murti was from the main entrance gate of the Somnath Temple and hence very antique. On reaching home he declared that he would wish to place the Murti in the Sandalwood Mandir so that along with Sai pooja it will also get worshiped which in any case is much better than being used Paperweight. The family members agreed with his suggestion. On opening the pack my grandmother realized that the Murti had a trunk turned on the right side and this type of Lord Ganesh (Siddhwnayaka) are generally not kept in the house for pooja as it calls for observance of very strict discipline in all household activities. They then consulted the priest who advised that they can worship the Murti on condition that every Ganesh Chaturthy day they will repaint the same and they can not perform the immersion of the same. Tarkhads were happy for such solution and on the following Ganesh Chaturthy day they brought a Silver Shrine for the Murti and consecrated the same ceremoniously in the Sandalwood Mandir. From then onwards on every Hartalika (one day prior to Ganesh Chaturthy day) my father would remove the old paint of the Murti with turpentine. Then give scent water bath to it,. Each one of us would participate in it and then repaint the same. On Ganesh Chaturthy day he would re consecrate it back on its Silver Shrine and we all would perform the pooja. I remember when I was young my school friends use to ask me whether we get Ganapati in our house. I use to tell them that our Ganapati is permanent. They would not understand me then. So Tarkhads were transformed from Prarthanasamajist to Idol Worshippers.

This Ganesh Murti in our house was once put to an acid test by my grandmother. My grandfather who was well known in the textile industry got an assignment from Maharaja of Baroda to set up a textile mill in his state. They therefore shifted to Baroda and were given accommodation in a bungalow on the bank of a river. In one rainy season it rained heavily overnight and by the time it was morning their bungalow was under water. This was a new experience for them. My grandmother was scared as the water level was rising hour after hour. The steps to the bungalow were submerged in the water except the last step. My

grandmother then brought a flat copper vessel and placed it on the last step. Then she lifted the "Vighnaharta" from the Silver Shrine and placed it in the copper vessel and declared that if the Murti submerges in the water then she would proceed to perform the immersion ceremony of Lord Ganesh in the same waters. Of course her solemn intentions were that Lord should save them from that dangerous situation. I think only the staunch devotees can dare to venture into such dare devil acts and possibly God likes them. The water level rose further and touched the copper vessel and stopped rising any further. After 3 to 4 hours later the water level receded and they were all happy. Their "Vighnaharta" had come to their rescue, as they desired. In that year they performed the Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations for five days instead of one and half days.

I will proceed further to narrate one more incident about this Ganesh Murti. This incidence would throw some light on the title of this chapter. On one Hartalika day (incidentally dear readers my grandmother passed away on Hartalika day) while removing the old paint the part of the right hand of the Murti got dislocated from the bow onwards. My father was very scared because as per Hindu religion one cannot worship damaged Murti. However by now it had become integral part of the family and they would be reluctant to part with it. They decided to go through the celebrations and then seek advice from SaiBaba. Thus they proceeded to Shirdi. Dear readers is it not an unfair act on their part? They had never involved Baba so far in their business of Lord Ganesh and now in times of distress they wanted his help. On that occasion when they were in Dwarkamai Baba was unusually silent with them. They had realized their mistake and were feeling guilty about not involving Baba from the beginning. They were internally seeking his pardon for it. They waited patiently. Then as the crowd in the Dwarkamai receded Baba called them near. He addressed "Oh mother in the event our son undergoes a fractured hand we do not throw him out of our house. On the contrary we feed him and nourish him well so that he reaches the manhood." No sooner they heard this, they instantly fell at his feet and profusely thanked him. Dear readers I do not find suitable words to describe Baba's

wisdom.. He was really an "Antardnyani" in the true sense of the term so that he could read what is going on in your mind.

Great were those Baba' s Leelas and great wæe these mother and son. This is how Baba saved the Ganesh Murti, which continues to be with the Tarkhad family for seeking their worship till date.

Frightful Sight of Goddess MariAai

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

Dear Sai devotee readers, we are passing through the 21st Century and hence I have a humble request to make to all of you to believe in this experience of Jyotindra which I will be narrating to you shortly. Those who have read Shri Sai Satcharitra would know that once there was an epidemic of Cholera in Shirdi. Village people believed that you have to pray to Goddess ' MariAai' when such an epidemic is widespread, inorder to keep the deaths under control. Off course in those days the medical aids were not forthcoming and advanced like today and epidemics were a common phenomenon in Indian villages. Also the communication system was not that developed and as a result of which when my father reached Shirdi he was not aware that there was Cholera epidemic in Shirdi. Offcourse he had by then developed great faith in Baba and he knew that Baba will take care of him and as such if it is too dangerous to stay then Baba would instantly direct him to return to Mumbai. He therefore was unafraid and performed his rituals as usual. In the next two to three days he experienced that the death toll was on the increase and Cholera was increasing into menacing proportion in the villages around Shirdi. He was internally frightened. One evening, as per his ritual, he lighted the Petromax lamps and was placing them in Dwarkamai. No sooner had he climbed the steps where Baba used to normally sit in front of the Dhuni than Baba got angry on him. He started abusing him. This was a new experience for Jyotindra. Baba' s anger was reaching high peak. In rage he told my father that he will cut him into seven pieces and burry him in the Masjid. Jyotindra was very scared. He fell at Baba' s feet and started pleading to be pardoned because he thought he might have inadvertently made some mistake, which aroused anger in Baba. Then in the same mood Baba ordered

him to sit there and press his legs. My father instantly obeyed his orders and was seated at his feet pressing his legs. He noticed that Baba was still murmuring something and continued to be in the angry mood he was in. After a little while Jyotindra started perspiring because he was seeing in front of him the Goddess Kali in that terrifying pose. Her menacing posture and blood soaked tongue. On seeing this sight my father lost his senses completely. Automatically he held on to Baba' s legs with all his might and strength in his body. He was trying to convey to Baba to save him from this, but the fright was so deep that words could not come out He became speechless. His face was only turning in two directions from Baba to Kali and vice-versa. He was seeing Baba uttering something but was unable to hear and comprehend. In no time he felt unconscious. When he woke up he realized that Baba was shaking him and asking him to wake up. He regained his consciousness and was drenched in sweat. Baba was telling him that "Hey Bhau I told you to press my legs but you are holding them so tight that your nails are hurting me." My father was very thirsty and he asked for some water. Baba gave him some water from the earthen pot (Kolamba) which used to be there in Dwarkamai. My father drank the water and he reached the NTP (Normal Temperature and Pressure) condition. He instantly told Baba not to show him such dreadful sights because he did not have the strength to withstand them. He told him that for the next four days he may not be able to gulp food and he would have to rethink whether he should come to Shirdi or not. Then Baba asked him "Hey Bhau please tell me what exactly did you see?" Then my father narrated the whole incident which was still a fresh in his memory. He asked Baba that "You were murmuring something with that dreadful person but I could not hear anything as I fell unconscious." Baba replied "Hey Bhau that dreadful person you are referring to was none Aai.' ' She was asking for your soul and I was declining. She was refusing to go away, then I told her you may take five more people but I will not part with my Bhau. Finally she gave up and left Dwarkamai." Baba went on to say "Bhau please remember I do not bring you to Shirdi to die and when you are at my feet nobody can snatch you away from me." For my father it was like he had taken rebirth. He fell at Baba' s feet and once

again pleaded not to show such dreadful sights as it is beyond his ability to withstand. Whenever my father used to narrate this incident he used to say that very remembrance of that sight would give him a sleepless night.

Dear Sai devotee readers after going through this episode I am sure many of you may have some doubts and would like to seek some clarification but as said in the beginning please believe it. Shirdi SaiBaba was nothing but Lord Incarnation and therefore he possessed those supernatural powers which when required he utilized to save ' s devotee. I am sure there must be ample number of people who must have undergone such life saving experiences. Baba use to declare that it is his ardent duty to protect his devotee from evil effect. " He told my father "Bhau after my bodily departure from Shirdi people will come like ants to Shirdi and please remember I do not utter lies while speaking from this Dwarkamai"

Dear readers in this 21st century we all are seeing and experiencing what has transpired in Shirdi and I am sure this will go on till the end of this world.

Meeting with Lord Vithoba of Pandharpur

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

Dear Sai devotee readers I request you to please forgive me as I do not have the chronological sequence of events as were experienced by my father. I am narrating to you as they come to my mind. My father used to describe them to us whenever he used to come into that spiritual mood and hence chronological order is not possible for me to state.

As informed earlier, the Tarkhad family started worshiping SaiBaba on daily basis and on Thursday evening they used to perform the Aarati collectively at their residence. My grandmother was completely at peace of mind and she was very happy that her headache had disappeared forever. She was now getting attracted more towards spiritualism. She started reading spiritual books regularly. Once she expressed her desire to my father of going on a pilgrimage to Holy Pandharpur and to take Darshan of Lord Vithoba. She went on to inform him that, the holy books suggest that before one parts with this world, one should

visit Pandharpur. My father advised her to check with Baba and seek his clearance.

Accordingly, during their next visit to Shirdi, she asked Baba to permit her to go to Pandharpur. Baba told her "Oh Mother for us Shirdi is our everything and there is no need" She was rather disappointed . She told Baba that Pilgrims visit Pandharpur, as they firmly believe that Lord Vithoba is stationed there and once you have his Darshan then your path to attain Moksha (salvation) is clear. She expressed to him that she has developed very strong urge to visit and perform his pooja at least once in her lifetime. Baba knowing her desire to be genuine then declared "Oh Mother do not worry you will visit Pandharpur and fulfill your desire." On returning home they informed Babasaheb Tarkhad about that and after proper planning my father and my Grandmother proceeded to Pandharpur. Readers will appreciate a point that as Mecca is to Muslims, Bethlehem to Catholics so is Pandharpur to Maharashtrians.

On reaching there my father made all the necessary arrangements.

After taking bath and breakfast when the morning rush hours were over they walked up to the Vithoba Mandir along with pooja material. On entering the sanctum sanctorum they sought the permission to perform pooja from the priest of the Mandir. My grandmother proceeded in her own way and almost completed the pooja. Now was the time to adorn the Vithoba Murti with the garland and there was a dilemma. My grandma would want to garland with her own hands but the priest would not allow doing so, as no one is permitted to climb the platform where the Murti is situated. My grandma told my father that her pooja would remain incomplete if she were unable to garland the Murti with her own hands. My father advised her to pray to Baba and seek his help as he had granted her permission to visit Pandharpur. She closed her eyes and raised both the hands holding the garland, and requested Lord Vithoba to accept her pooja. Then came a miracle. Lo and Behold! The Murti of Lord Vithoba slid down the platform. My father instantly shook my grandmother Bodily. He told her to open her eyes and see for herself that the Lord had responded to her prayers and now she can adorn him with her garland. She instantly placed the garland on Vithoba' s neck

and the Lord was back to its original place. Both mother and son prostrated in front of Lord Vithoba.

On seeing this, the priest was completely astonished and flabbergasted. He jumped down from the platform and held the feet of my grandmother and father and declared that they are the Vithoba and Rakhumai and he would not allow them to go away. He pleaded pardon for his arrogant behavior. My father consoled him and told him not to have any wrong ideas about their identity. He told him that they are devotees of Shirdi SaiBaba and on getting consent from him they are visiting Pandharpur. He further told him to have strong faith in Lord Vithoba who is **Jagrut** (wakeful) over there and is no more a stone God. He advised him to perform his pooja from the bottom of his heart and seek his blessings in return. He then requested the priest to give them prasad so that they could leave the Mandir. They purchased Brass Idols of Vithoba -Rakhumai and placed it in their Sandalwood Mandir to offer daily worship.

This experience was like receiving heavenly pleasure for both of them. Though they use to offer prayers to God very sincerely they never ever imagined that Lord Vithoba will greet them in that fashion. After this visit when they visited Shirdi next, Baba asked my Grandmother (mother) could you meet Vithoba?" My grandmother replied "Baba this is all your making. I am now read to part with this world as I consider my life is complete now." She profusely thanked him.

Dear Sai devotee readers my father used to say that God always exists in any stone Murti which you worship. I for one strongly feel that all those divine experience they encountered purely because of their solemn and good deeds of the past and undoubtedly they were under the umbrella of Grace of Sai's blessings all along which made this possible.

Facing Death in a Cloudburst in Shirdi

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

Dear Sai Devotee readers, I presume that you must have paid a visit to Shirdi at least once. The present Shirdi and the Shirdi of yester years when my father used to visit, there is a vast difference. During that time when you enter Shirdi from Kopergaon end there was a rivulet, which you were required to cross to enter Shirdi village. Most of the times of the year the rivulet was dried up, only during monsoon season one would find it actively flowing. Currently one would find a small bridge over it on the main road. In those days villagers use to perform their morning duties on the banks of this rivulet. As such there were lot of shrubs and the place was appropriate before the sunrise, as there was hardly any traffic on the road.

Those were the rainy days when my father was in Shirdi. He was in the habit of getting up early and after performing morning duties he would attend the Kakad Aarati. On that eventful day he got up early and proceeded to the bank of the rivulet to perform his morning duties. It was drizzling so he carried an umbrella and torch with him. During his course of morning duty he heard someone shouting from the other bank of the rivulet. Initially he ignored the shouts. He tried to locate the person but due to darkness he could not see anyone. Soon he realized that the person was shouting and asking to runaway from the bank. He was shouting in Marathi and saying that" LONDHA ALARE ALA PALA." My father did not understand the meaning of LONDHA. (A torrent) as such his education was in English medium and it was difficult for him to understand the colloquial Marathi. However he could sense that the person was warning everybody to run away from the place. He hurriedly finished his morning duty and stood up and lighted the torch to find out what was going around. Soon he realized that a huge column of black colored water 15 to 20 feet in height was coming towards him. There was a cloudburst, which had taken place during the night at a far away place resulting into sudden floods in the rivulet. He realized that his end was near and he shouted saying "BABA MELO MALA WACHAVA".

(Baba I am dying and please save me.) He closed his eyes and just stood still in that place, all the time chanting Baba' s name. After some time he realized that he had not been swept away and he was still alive. He opened his eyes and what he saw was believable. The column of water was divided into two parts and Pushing past him without touching him. He was standing still in that gushing water. He was scared to death and the entire time chanting Baba' s name (NAMASMARAN). After some time the water level receded and when it was down to knee level the water touched his body Now he was in knee deep water. He could see around him branches of trees, shrubs, catties etc were passing through that floodwaters. He thanked Baba there and then as he realized that only Baba could have Saved him from that sure death situation. He then .slowly walked back through those knee-deep waters. He came to their place of stay and took bath. Needless to mention that he had missed Kakad Aarati that morning. He informed his mother what he had undergone that morning. She advised him that as Baba had pulled him out of the jaws of death, he should immediately go and thank him for saving his life. He immediately paced up to Dwarkamai and as he was climbing the steps with pooja material in his hand Baba talked to him in raised voice, "Hey Bhau today early morning why were you shouting for my help and are you afraid of death?" My father fell at his feet and told Baba that he knows everything and an ordinary man like him is bound to get scared with the sight of sure death in front of him. Baba then lifted him by holding him from his shoulders and said " Hey Bhau get up. I bring you to Shirdi not for dying. Please remember you will not die like this so easily, as you have to perform lot of constructive work in future."

Dear Sai devotee readers, I know it is difficult for common people like us to comprehend such experience. Then came a thought-provoking event in my life, which I will describe it to you now.

It was the month of June 1962 if I remember correctly. There was a great movie running at New Talkies (today' s Globus Theatre) in Bandra. The name of the movie was "**TEN COMMANDMENTS.**" This film was produced by Cecille Be Demille, one of the most renowned producers of Hollywood. The movie had

broken all previous records in Regal Theatre at Colaba and the New Talkies at Bandra was renovated with 70 MM screen and stereophonic sound system. I saw the film and realized that the miracles shown in the film matched with the miracles seen by my father during his association with SaiBaba of Shirdi. After lot of persuasion I convinced my father to come with me to see the movie. May be after a long span of 30 to 35 years he was to enter a theatre to watch a film. He saw the scenes, the divine light. Moses comes across when he visits the mountain and when Moses take all his Jew people leaving the terrain of Egypt and come on the shores of Red Sea and prays to the Lord and the Sea water divides into two parts giving them way to escape from the wrath of king Faroha. My father was delighted to see that picturisation and tears of joy welled and were flowing through his eyes. When we came out of the theatre he confirmed to me that the Shirdi Sai Baba possessed the same type of supernatural powers and he very much resembled the character of Moses as shown in the film Ten Commandments. He went on to add saying "Viren at least now you have some reason to believe what unprecedented experiences I have gone through in association with SaiBaba of Shirdi."

Resurrection of a dead body

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

I am very certain that many of SaiBaba' s devotees must have come across such spiritual experiences and as a result Baba' s name & fame spread all over the continents. I came across one Ms. Bhakuni who is attached to Shri Sai Mandir at Chattarpur near New Delhi. She is doing her Ph D in literature and the subject she has selected is Sai Baba. She has done a lot of research work on Baba. Their trust is publishing a quarterly magazine in Hindi and it is quite educative. Offcourse during Baba' s lifetime his message was spread over Mumbai and Maharashtra by mainly none other than Dasganu Maharaj. Baba used to address him as "Ganya". Dasganu Maharaj use to perform "Kirtans" through which he used to impress upon people the Leela' s of Baba and also use to spread his message to the masses.

Once during Dasganu' s stay in Shirdi he was called upon to give performance in a village near Shirdi. Dasganu Maharaj used to keep Baba' s Photo on a stool and use to garland the same before he began his Kirtan. Ofcourse which when conducted near around Shirdi he use to take Baba' s Blessings before proceeding. One afternoon he came to Dwarkamai and informed Baba that in the evening he will proceed to perform the Kirtan in a nearby village and hence he needed Baba' s blessings. Baba told him that he is free to go but requested him to take Bhau (my father) along with him.

Dasganu said that he has no objection in taking along my father but he would not like to deprive him of his ritual of lighting lamps in Dwakamai in the evening. Hearing this Baba said that he need not worry about Dwakamai Lamps as somebody else would attend to that task, but insisted that Dasganu should take Bhau along with him. Both Dasganu and my father (who was present there) understood that this is rather Baba' s order. Then as per the agreed time they left in the evening for that village which was around 7 to 8 km away. In those days there was no transportation facility like today so they had to go by walking. By the time they reached the village the sun had already set they unfolded the mats on the ground, kept the stool with Baba' s photograph orit and garlanded the same. They lighted the Petromax lamps & hung at Four Comers. Villagers had gathered and Dasganu Maharaj began his Kirtan. After about an hour when night had already set in they encountered trouble.

Around 7 to 8 people who were very dark complexioned possible from Bhill tribe came over there. They were carrying a dead body over their shoulders and were on the way to cemetery to perform the last rights. Their leader straight came to Dasganu Maharaj ant; threatened him. He inquired about the Photograph on the stool Dasganu explained politely stating that the photograph is of SaiBaba who is stationed at Shirdi and he worships him as his Guru as well as his Deity. He went on to state that SaiBaba gives medicines to poor people and relieves them from their agony. He is performing the Kirtan, which will bring happiness to the villagers. Then that Bhill leader told his people to keep the bier down and he addressed to Dasganu stating that if his Deity is mighty, then it

should be possible for the Deity to bring back life into that dead body. He challenged him to do so otherwise he would kill him and his troupe. Dasganu was very scared and he approached my father seeking for his advice.

My father had realized that this could be probably Baba' s creation and they should plead to him only and invoke his mercy to come to their rescue. He suggested to Dasganu to perform his famous Kirtan "SAI RAHAM NAZAR KARNA BACHHON KA PALAN KARANA" and leave it to Sai to decide the rest. Then Dasganu began his popular Kirtan and he got so much engrossed in it that my father had never seen him in that state ever before. He was literally dancing and all the villagers were positively responding to him. My father was rather keeping a watch on that dead body. About an hour must have passed and something unprecedented happened. The life had returned to the dead body. It broke open all the strings tied around him and sat on the bier and started clapping and joined the Kirtan along with the rest. My father was overjoyed to see that He got up from his place and went to Dasganu who was no more himself because he was in a trance. My father caught him with his both hands and told him to stop the Kirtan Baba had saved them from fear of loosing their own lives. The Kirtan stopped. Those Bhills got up. They helped that dead body (which was no more dead then) to stand on its own feet. They told him to bow to Dasganu and then made all detailed inquiry about Baba and promised to visit Shirdi for his Darshan.

Next day when Dasganu and my father went to Dwarkamai Baba . Hey Ganya good that my Bhau was there with you yesterday, otherwise who would have saved you from the wrath of the Bhills?" and hearing this both of them told Baba that it was all his creation and they are totally dependant on him in situations like that and he should continue to shower his mercy and blessings upon them.

Dear readers here you may have all kinds of doubts. I can only plead you to please believe this. May be that dead body was not actually dead but was in coma. What is important is Baba knew in advance what is going to happen during the Kirtan or may be it was all his creation to imbibe confidence in

Dasganu. Baba knows best how to pull people towards him and this will continue to happen. We must keep our strong faith in him.

Sai's Golden Test

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

Dear Sai devotee readers I am inclined to think that you all must have liked the experiences I have narrated so far. Our normal life cycle is such that we first put on the mantle of family hood and then come across all the sweet/bitter experiences of life. On going through them we get attracted towards spiritualism for final peace of mind. But this cycle was exactly reversed in case of my father. He first went through all holy experiences and then had to grind the axe of tough family life. One thing was clear that because of his association with Sai Baba he had possibly learnt the art of facing any eventuality. I also believe that the path of Bhakti is such that when one starts practicing it, he gets better equipped to face any kind of fear in life.

By now my father had visited Shirdi ample number of times and was sufficiently rich with divine experiences to his credit. The time had come that he faces some twisting moments. Those were the winter days when days are shorter and the nights are longer. One such day when it was dusk and twinkling stars could be seen in the sky, Baba told my father to accompany him .It was an out of the blue invitation because Baba would never leave Dwarkamai at that time of the day. He walked towards "Lendi Baug" and then passing through it they came to the bank of the rivulet as described in the earlier chapter. By then it was quite dark and the moon had risen in the sky. Then Baba told my father that he is going to show him some fun and that is the reason he has brought him to that place. My father was very pleased because he was anyway getting some special personal attention. Then they sat down and Baba started moving the soft soil with his own hand. He then asked my father to look in the soil whether he is able to see anything. My father saw and replied in the negative. Baba then repeated the act and my father looked at the place for the second time and said that he can only see the soil. Then Baba repeated the act for the third time and this time he hit the back of my father' s head with his hand and told him to look

carefully. When my father looked at the place he saw some shining metal over there and it was glittering even more because of the moonlight. Baba enquired with my father whether he is seeing anything. My father then replied that it is some metallic object and it is shining. Then Baba told him "Bhau that metal . nothing but Gold and you can take as much as you want." Then my father told him that "Baba I do not want this. With your blessings we have everything and I do not come to Shirdi with the intention of getting such materialistic returns from you." Then Baba cautioned him stating that "Bhau this is Goddess Laxmi, She is pleased with you and once you decline her boon she will never ever come back to you, atleast not in this birth. So please rethink". Then my father told him that "Baba you are putting me to some acid test and I will not fall prey to this ' Maya' and once your blessings are there with me then I can live a peacefully comfortable life without this ' Maya' . Then Baba moved the mud back in its place and then both returned to Dwarkamai.

One interesting thing happened at that time. One of the natives of Shirdi had seen what was happening at the bank of the rivulet. He guessed that SaiBaba had shown some buried treasure to my father over there. He decided to visit that place late at night and dig the same and unearth the treasure. Accordingly he got up at midnight to venture for the treasure hunt. But alas! No sooner had he laid his hands to pick up the crow bar than a scorpion stung him on his fingers and he was uncomfortable throughout the night. By morning the pain was unbearable so wisely he decided to go to Saibaba and pleaded guilty. He had realized that he cannot disclose his last nights plan of treasure hunt to any one other than Baba. When he entered Dwarkamai he was in severe pain. My father was present there. He saw the native was pleading to Baba with guilt and was saying that he will never ever commit such a sin again but was requesting Baba to relieve him from the agonizing pain due to the scorpion sting. Baba then told him that the one who was destined to have the treasure declined to take it, which does not mean that any other person can get it. In this world the Lord has made a rule that each one will get according to his own ' Karma' and if one tries to break this rule then he is bound to get punished from the Lord. My

father understood the conversation. Baba then applied his sacred ' Udi' the scorpion-stung finger of that native and told him not to misbehave in future. He blessed him that Lord will relieve him out of this agonizing pain.

So such was the ' Golden Test' my father was put through to at Shirdi and I think he was successful in the same because he did not fall a Prey to ' Maya' . But one thing was certain that in his future career he could not accumulate wealth. Goddess Laxmi had refrained from going to him and his financial status was so but we shall not go into that history.

9TH Chapter from Sai Satcharitra

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

I have opened up in front of you the treasure trove of the experiences of Tarkhad family and I am sure after reading through the same your faith in Baba must have doubled up. Now we will move towards the experiences as given in Sai Satcharitra.

I would like to draw your attention to chapter No. 9 from Sai Satcharitra. Of course here I presume that our readers are knowledgeable about this holy book and they have read the same at least once. If one has not done so then my humble request is please do so, which describes in great detail the life of Shirdi Sai Baba and an account of various Leela' s he depicted to his devotees during his life span in Shirdi. The 9th chapter of this holy book is dedicated mostly to Tarkhad family i.e. my grandmother my grandfather Ramchandra Atmaram Tarkhad alias Babasaheb Tarkhad and my father Jyotindra Ramchandra Tarkhad. As described earlier the Tarkhad family was staunch Prarthanasamajist and they did not believe in Murti Pooja. For that matter they did not believe in God. However their destiny led them to come in contact with Shirdi SaiBaba and then it was a great transformation. As such Sai Baba' s famous Aarati states that he is capable of converting an atheist into firm believer in God (NASTIKANAHI TU LAVISHI NIJABHAJANI). In case of Tarkhad Family this happened practically:

The writer of Sai Satcharitra, Late Shri Annasaheb Dabholkar states in this 9th chapter that Babasaheb Tarkhad was very lucky to have a son like my father

who was a good worshipper. My father used to get up at 4 a m in the morning and after taking bath he would perform Baba' s Aarati by applying sandalwood paste to Baba' s Photo In their Mandir at home. He use to light a silver lamp (NIRANJAN) in which the one paisa coin given by Baba was placed. Also there was a regular offering of sugar candy as prasad, which they all would eat during their lunch. After the Pooja father and son would leave for their textile Mill at Byculla. With Baba' s grace in those days my grandfather was earning Rs.5000/- and my father Rs.2000/- as salaries per month. Once my grandfather developed an urge to send cotton bails to Baba so that he can make Kaffanis out of it for his personal use. He suggested to Jyotindra to go to Shirdi along with his mother and deliver the offerings to Baba. But Jyotindra was rather reluctant because who will perform the pooja at home? Then my grandfather took upon himself and gave him the assurance that he will carry out the ritual as practiced by Jyotindra and there will be no let up on that count. With that assurance my father along with his mother left for Shirdi. Next two days passed properly but on the third day my grandfather forgot to keep sugar candy during the pooja time. He realized this only in the afternoon when there was no prasad in his plate. He immediately got up and wrote a letter to Jyotindra in Shirdi requesting him to seek pardon from Baba for his grave mistake.

There in Shirdi at the same time one interesting thing happened. After the afternoon Aarati in Dwarkamai when my grandmother and my father went to Baba to seek his blessings Baba told my grandmother " Oh mother! I am very hungry today. As usual I went to Bandra, and I found the door was locked but no one can stop me as I entered from the narrow gap in the door but was totally disappointed as I could not find anything for lunch & I had to return on an empty Stomach." My grand mother could not understand what Baba was saying but my father instantly realized that his father must have forgotten to offer prasad to Baba during Morning Pooja time. He requested Baba to pardon his father for the grave mistake and asked for his permission to leave for Mumbai instantly. Baba did not permit and said to stay for some more days. My father was any way restless and he wrote a letter to his father stating the details of what Baba had

uttered. The two letters crossed each other and on receiving them and going through them both father and son were in tears. They realized the depth of Baba' s love for them .On the other hand Baba reminded them that he is very much present in that Photo frame and he accepts their daily offerings unfailingly.

Once while they were in Shirdi when my grandmother was about to take her lunch, a dog came there and started wagging its tail. My grandmother offered him a piece of Chapati, which the dog ate with relish and moved away from there. Little later a pig laden with muck all over the body came there. Normally looking at that ugly creature one would not be able to gulp the food down once throat but my grandmother was a very kind hearted and God fearing person. She offered the piece of Chapati to that ugly pig also. The pig ate that piece and went away. Then later that day when they visited Dwarkamai and they went closer to Baba he said to her "Oh mother, today you have fed me with your own hands and the feeding was so sumptuous that I am still continuing to belch. " My grandmother was surprised hearing that. She told Baba that "Baba you are mistaken I have never given you food in Shirdi, as such I do not cook any food over here. Infact I myself eat the food in one of the restaurants over here run by Mr. Saguna and pay for it." Then Baba told her "Oh mother this afternoon when you were taking your lunch did you not offer food to a dog followed by an ugly looking pig? That food has reached me." Then my grandmother told him "Baba this means you take the tests of your devotees by entering in the form of creatures." Baba then told her "Oh mother, please continue to be kind to these creatures and God will continue to bless you. God will see to it that there is never dearth of food in your house."

By now Tarkhad family had developed lot of acquaintances with other Sai Devotees and some of them like Mr. Dabholkar, Mr. Purandare and Mr. Tendulkar who were staying at a closer distance from their place of residence at Bandra. They use to meet each other and then share their sweet experiences with Baba. Whenever they would plan to visit Shirdi they use to inform each other and if anyone wanted to send something to Baba then they would act as a courier for the devotee. Of course the intention behind was expressing pure

devotion and love towards Baba. Once Mr. Purandare along with family were proceeding to Shirdi and my grandmother offered two Big Black Brinjals to Mrs. Purandare and requested her to make ' Bhareet' out of one Brinjal and ' Kacharya' (Fried Brinjal Slices) out of the other Brinjal and offer the same for His lunch. Mrs. Purandare on the first day prepared the ' Bhareet' and along with other preparation offered the same in the plate for Baba' s lunch. Baba ate the ' Bhareet' and expressed his desire to have ' Fried Brinjal slices' . Ms. Radhakrishnamai (devotee native) of Shirdi who use to look after the lunch arrangements of Baba was in a fix. She enquired with the ladies and learnt that Mrs. Purandare brought the Brinjal preparation. That was anyway not the season of Brinjals and hence the difficulty to obtain one in Shirdi. So Ms. Radhakrishnamai ran to Mrs. Purandare and enquired about the availability of Brinjals. She said that she had one and had planned to offer the "Fried Brinjal Slices" the next day. Then Ms Radhakrishnamai took away the Brinjal and hurriedly fried the slices for Baba as he was bent upon completing his lunch only after having them. Now this was purely an act of expressing the intense love towards His devotee and also confirming to the devotee in return the receipt of devotion from him/her. When Mrs. Purandare on returning to Bandra informed my grandmother about this incident she was completely overwhelmed and thanked Baba from the bottom of her heart.

In the same way one evening Mr. Govindji (son of Mr. Balakram) visited Tarkhad' s residence as he was proceeding to Shirdi that night. He was to perform the rites of the immersion of ashes of his late father at Nashik and then proceed to Shirdi. As he was in a dire hurry and my grandmother could not provide anything sizeable to send to Baba she managed to locate one ' Pedha' which was kept in the Prasad Pot in front of Baba' s portrait in the ' Sandalwood Mandir' . She told him to offer the same although she was not internally happy because the ' Pedha' had already been offered as Prasad earlier. Besides Mr. Govindji was combining his visit for the immersion of ashes followed by the pilgrimage to Shirdi. Of course my grandmother kept aside all these illogical

thoughts for her intentions bore divine love as was expressed by Shabari to Lord Rama when she had offered Him the tasted fruit of ' Bora'

When Govindaji reached Dwarkamai after completing all his other rituals he had completely forgotten about the Pedha. Baba asked him whether he had brought anything for him. Govindji replied in negative. Then Baba reminded him stating that someone had given him something to offer to him. Govindji was stone faced and was negative once again. Baba was now angry and literally shouted at him saying" Hay while leaving Mumbai my mother had given you something for me and where is it?" Now Govindji realized, he ran to his place of stay and brought the Pedha and gave it to Baba. The Pedha was instantly consumed by Baba and he told Govindji to inform the mother that it tested very sweet.

Dear Sai devotee readers such instances of divine love have been very effectively depicted by Late Shri Annasaheb Dabholkar in the 9th chapter of Sai Satcharitra. My father when used to narrate this to us tears used to flow out through his eyes. I think which devotee not feel that way when he would get a return receipt from the Lord in such fashion. I for one feel "KAHAN GAVE WOH LOG?".(HATS TO THOSE PEOPLE) AND WHERE ARE THOSE DEVOTEES AND WHERE IS THAT KIND OF DEVOTION TO-DAY? BUT SAI BABA' S LOVE FOR HIS DEVOTEES IS OMNIPRESENT.

Other Episodes from Sai Satcharitra

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

Dear readers, I once again feel that the episodes in this chapter are mainly for those people who have gone through Sai Satcharitra. Of course others will also find it undoubtedly interesting enough. There are many instances as depicted in Sai Satcharitra when my father was present (there) in Shirdi, and he had narrated them to us from time to time which I am going to put forward to you all. I am sure many devotees who were present there at that time must have experienced the same. However, I consider myself to be lucky, to hear them directly from my father, and as they were stored in my hard disc, I now blow it up

before you, for your personal knowledge. I sincerely hope you will pardon me in case I falter anywhere.

"Granting Mukti (salvation) to Tiger"

This incident took place in the year 1918. My father used to distinctly recollect this because that happened to be his last visit to Shirdi when Baba was alive. After this incident I think a week later Baba took Maha Samadhi. On that day, as usual Baba's Darbar in Dwarkamai was on and suddenly outside Dwarkamai there was a big commotion. All were anxious to know what was happening there. Four Darveshis (fakir) were carrying a full-grown Tiger who was tied up in chains; in a bullock cart. They had brought the bullock cart near the entrance of Dwarkamai and parked it. One of the Darveshis entered the Dwarkamai and pleaded to Mr. Madhavrao Deshpande (close devotee of Baba) stating that the Tiger is their source of income. They carry the Tiger from place to place and exhibit his show to people and the earnings are spent on their livelihood including that of the Tiger. But the Tiger had taken ill and while passing through Shirdi they had learnt that a great Saint SaiBaba is lived there. They also learnt that SaiBaba possessed miraculous powers and was able to cure living beings simply by his divine looks. They therefore, thought of showing the ailing Tiger to Baba provided the permission was granted to them. On checking with Baba, he granted the permission to bring the Tiger inside Dwarkamai. Darveshis took all precautions and brought the Tiger, who was walking slowly. He came close to the steps of the platform where Baba would normally be sitting. He looked at Baba and then put both his front paws forward and bent himself as though he was bowing and offering Namaskar to Baba and then suddenly gave a big roar. The sound of the roar was so loud and terrifying that it almost shook entire Dwarkamai. On giving that loud roar the Tiger fell flat on the ground and was motionless. The four Darveshi rushed forward to check the Tiger and they realized that it was dead. They declared to Baba that the Tiger was dead and now what should they do with its dead body. Baba advised them to bury the dead Tiger outside Lord Shiva's Temple near the statue of Nand(bull). All the people of Shirdi had gathered to witness the burial ceremony of the dead Tiger. My

father who had witnessed the entire episode live and in great detail felt that there was some kind of exchange between Baba and the Tiger and only after that the Tiger had passed away. My father waited for the right opportunity to enquire with him as to what exactly transpired between him and the Tiger. Baba then smiled and told my father "Hey Bhau that Tiger was in deep agony and he was requesting me to relieve him out of that agonizing pain as he could not bear it anymore. I felt pity on his miserable condition and hence I prayed to the Lord to grant him salvation. My Lord is very kind and he responded to my prayers and granted him salvation. That Tiger is free for ever from this cycle of birth and rebirth." My father was totally astonished to hear this explanation from Baba. My father told Baba that till then he had seen him showering blessings on human beings but for the first time he had witnessed him showering blessings on a wild animal like the Tiger. Of course this last visit to Shirdi was unprecedented for my father which I will narrate in the next chapter

Control over Rain God

In Sai Satcharitra there is an incident, when there was an unprecedented rainfall in Shirdi. My father was also present over there. He was one of those lucky ones who had seen the battle between two superpowers. He used to always say that SaiBaba had acquired the "ASTHASIDDHIS" (the eight superhuman powers) and he used to Practice them whenever he was called upon to overcome the crisis faced by his devotees. Of course the nature's superpower would respect him and respond favorably to his SOS call because SaiBaba Himself was the Incarnation of God on this Planet Earth.

Those were the rainy days and since afternoon it was raining. As the evening approached the rains were getting heavier. Dark clouds had gathered in the sky. Gusty winds started blowing. There were clear signs of a thunderstorm approaching. The skies were getting lit with flashes of lightning followed by sounds of thunder. The storm was very active and entire Shirdi village was getting lashed with severe rains. Water was getting accumulated everywhere and all villagers along with their cattle started gathering in Dwarkamai as they had never come across such a severe downpour and thunderstorm. My father could

not be an exception. He also came to Dwarkamai. He was reminded of the incident in the Bhagwat Gita when Lord Krishna had to lift the entire Govardhan Mountain and give shelter to all living beings and offer them reprieve from the unprecedented fury of the nature. That was the day in Shirdi when the natives needed someone like "Govardhangiri" who could only rescue them from that grave situation. Of course all were worried and waiting for Baba's blessings to fall upon them. There were no signs of storm clearing and soon Baba's patience was over. He got up from his seat, picked up his "SATKA"(small baton) in his hand and came down to the gate of Dwarkamai. He stood there in the open, a severe lightening had flashed in the sky and Baba hit the ground with the Satka and roared loudly saying please go away from here (JATES KI NAI? To be precise in Marathi). The intensity of that roar was so high in decibels that the entire place started trembling as though a tremor had hit Shirdi. Once again a severe stroke of lightening and Baba's hitting the ground with Satka asking for the rain God to move away from Shirdi. This happened thrice. It was a clear battle between the two Giants and soon the storm was coming to terms with Baba requests of reprieve. The lightening stopped, the rains receded and the winds slowed down. In about an hour's time everything was peaceful once again. The skies were clear and Baba asked everyone to return to their homes. My father resorted to his evening duty of lighting the Petromax Lamps. He was itching for the right moment so that he could ask Baba about the battle. Then came the moment and he asked Baba whether he is also in a position to rule over the nature. Baba replied saying "Bhau whenever my devotees are in distress I pray to the Lord of the Universe to shower his mercy upon them. The Lord comes to my rescue extends his help to me." Of course my father could not forget the sign when Baba was standing in the middle of the rains and roaring back to the Rain God to move away from Shirdi. Baba was looking like the Lord himself in a hostile mood.

Command over Fire Power

Once "DHUNI", the sacred fireplace started by Baba in Dwarkamai burning fiercely. Baba had already predicted the day of his departure from this

world, hence I think it must be the day of "VIJAYADASHMI", popularly known as Dassera. It was evening time. Baba had stationed himself at his usual sitting place opposite the Dhuni in Dwarkamai. My father was also present there. Every evening he would come to Dwarkamai, sit there and observe the interesting happenings if any and proceed with his duty of lighting the Petromax Lamps. That day Baba suddenly got up, went near Dhuni, moved some wood pieces and started murmuring something while pacing up and down in Dwarkamai. This was very unusual and my father felt that something strange is likely to happen. Here I must state that even in those days there were many devotees of Baba who were anxious to know the religion of Baba by birth i.e. whether he was a Hindu or a Muslim. In any case he was in human form so he must have taken birth from a human body, in which case whether his parents were Hindu or Muslim was the question? Of course my father cannot be an exception to the rule.

Baba was slowly turning into an angry mood. He started abusing people who had assembled over there. Here the fire in the Dhuni was also raging higher and higher in the same proportion of Baba' s angry mood. Entire Dwarkamai was lit up with the light from the firewood. By now Baba was charged with rage. He removed the cotton cloth tied to his head and threw it in the Dhuni. Suddenly the fire flames rose higher. Baba' s long hairs became free. After a little while Baba removed his Kafani and threw the same in the Dhuni. The fire flames rose still higher so much so that people feared that the Dwarkamai would catch fire. Baba' s anger was reaching its zenith. He stood in front of the People in that angry mood and in a fraction of a second he removed his Langot"(loin cloth) and threw the same in raging Dhuni. He had thus become "DIGAMBER"(nude) and he stood in front of the people in that form. He then shouted at them and told them to look at his body and decide for themselves and ascertain whether he was Hindu or a Muslim. What a way to give proof of oneself Now I am going to narrate to you what my father had seen at that time. My father used to say that Baba had acquired a very fiery posture. His eyeballs had turned red hot like burning coal and rays of light were emanating- from every pore of his body and his entire body was hidden behind that glow of spiritual ball of light. The light rays

were so powerful that my father had to close his eyes. Needless to say that he could not make out the identity of Baba' s religion. All present in Dwarkamai were stunned, Baba' s shouts were continued. The flames from Dhuni were reaching very high and throwing enormous amount of light. Outside there was severe lightening and thunder. Then Mr. Bhagoji Shinde, one close devotee of Baba a leper (Baba used to allow him to press his legs) came forward and with great courage tied the new "LANGOT"(loin-cloth) around his waist. Then Baba cooled down to normalcy. He lifted his "SATKA" and came close to the Dhuni. He started hitting the flames with the Satka and was saying "Ugi...Ugi.means calm down, calm down. With each stroke of Satka the flames lowered in height and soon everything was back to normal. Then people got the courage to make Baba wear a new Kafani and his hairs (JATA) were tied with new piece of cloth. Although it was very late but devotees venerated Baba and carried put the evening Aarati as usual. Of course what impressed my father most was that Great Godly Body of Baba emanating light and his powers of having command over the fire. Baba-has selected Vijaya Dashami day with a purpose. He had given indication to his devotees that this will be the day when he will bid bodily good bye to this world. Later in the year 1918 on the Vijayadashmi day Baba took Samadhi.

Dear Sai devotee readers after knowing this I think we all should bury the hatchet of anxiety about Baba' s religion and simply worship him with utmost devotion and 100 percent faith, for SAI means "SAAKSHAT ISHWAR"(GOD) who has no religion and is all pervading omnipotent and omnipresent.

Bathing of LORD SHIVA by Megha

One staunch Sai devotee who had permanently stationed himself at Shirdi was Mr. Megha. He was a very ardent follower of Lord Shiva and Baba knew about it. Baba had therefore gifted him the Lingam of Lord Shiva so that he could perform his daily pooja of his Lord. Baba also loved Megha intensely, which made him to attend his funeral procession in Shirdi. Baba joined the procession and went on showering flowers over his dead body right up to the cemetery and

also shed tears like a normal mortal showing his grief and love for his true devotee.

Of course Megha use to reckon Baba as his Lord Shankar and Baba had therefore allowed him to draw the Trishul on his forehead as was desired by Megha. On one Mahashivratri day Megha developed a fervent desire of giving a bath to Baba with Gangajal i.e. water from river Godavari. He was therefore nagging Baba to allow him to do so well in advance, as he knew that Baba would not permit him to do so easily. Finally after a lot of persuasion Baba agreed to take a bath from Megha.

On receiving the permission Megha was very happy. One day earlier Megha informed his acquaintances and invited them to witness the ceremony. My father was one of the invitees. Earlier night Megha left Shirdi with a Kalashi (metal vessel) for getting Gangajal from river Godavari that is around 11 km away from Shirdi. But for an ardent devotee like Megha, distance was no bar and he was back in Shirdi before noon with the Gangajal. After the noon Aarati Megha requested ' Baba to come for the bathing ceremony. Baba told him that he was only joking about taking the Gangajal bath, as such for a Fakir like him such acts are not permitted. Baba suggested to him to pour the sacred Gangajal over the Lingam of Lord Shiva in the Shiva Temple in Shirdi. Then Megha told him that he is bathing the Lingam daily and he reckons Baba as his living Lord Shiva and Mahashivratri being the most auspicious day for all Shivabhaktas Baba should not disappoint him. As Megha was very adamant Baba told him that he would allow him to pour the water only on one condition. Baba explained to him that Ganga emanates from Lord Shiva' s head and hence Baba will bend forward and then Megha should pour the water over his head only. Megha though reluctant agreed to abide by this condition. Then Baba got up from his seat and they proceeded to Lendi Baug. There was a special stone on which Baba used to take bath, he sat on it, bended his head forward and signaled Megha to proceed. Megha started pouring water over Baba' s head very slowly but he was not satisfied with that kind of bath, he decided to act as he had contemplated in his mind all these days. He suddenly emptied the bucket with

the remaining water on all over Baba' s body saying "Hara Hara Mahadev." He was very jubilant and started dancing with Joy, as he thought he had fulfilled his desire completely. But this did not last long. Soon he realized that although he had poured water all over Baba' s body, only his head was wet and rest of his body including his Kafani was as dry as ever. Megha was astonished to notice that and he could not believe. Then Baba told him "Hey you know Ganga flows out of Lord Shiva' s head and does not touch rest of his body." My father was watching this fun along with other invitees. He realized that Baba wanted to impress upon Megha that his word is final and no one can dare to disobey him. Also Baba wanted to ascertain to Megha that he is his Living Lord Shiva. My father by then had fully understood Baba' s various acts. According to him Baba over period of time had developed typical devotees around him. Through their mystical acts he use to impress upon people the presence of Lord and his mighty powers which people must learn to respect through their faithful devotion. To name some of them were Megha (Lord Shiva), Nanavali (Lord Hanuman), and Dasganu (Lord Vithoba). In fact Dasganu Maharaj in one of his Aarati says SHIRDI MAZHE PANDHARPUR SAIBABA RAMAVAR (My Pandharpur is Shirdi and my Vithoba is SaiBaba). My father use to say that sometimes in jovial mood Baba would say that "Hey Bhau I am none other than Goddess Laxmi and while sitting in this Dwarkamai I would never utter a lie." In his entire life span he called upon himself as messenger of God and never God himself. Of course whatever he would utter would take place unflinching. My father use to recall Baba saying that "Hey Bhau, after I depart from this humanly body, you will see that people will flock to Shirdi like Ants to sugar. Today you visit Shirdi any day of the year you will get the proof of Baba' s statement made years ago.

Other experiences with Lord

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

Dear readers, as informed earlier that my father had visited Shirdi around 17 times and the span of each visit use to be anywhere from 7 days to one month. During the stay they used to come across such interesting Leela' s of Baba that they never felt like leaving Shirdi. Of course, no sooner Baba would

order them to leave; they would depart from Shirdi. My father had good collection of these experiences which I might not remember all. In this chapter I will try to narrate to you some of these experiences which are other than those depicted in Sai Satcharitra. I am sure Sai devotees of those times must have come across many such interesting experiences and they must have passed them on to their dear ones. I am narrating them to you to purely express my love and devotion to Lord Sai.

Gimmicks of Nanavali

There was an eccentric devotee of SaiBaba by name Nanavali. I am taking this liberty to term him as cranky because he used to perform very funny acts (monkey tricks), which used to annoy people and they used to complain to Baba about his misbehavior. Baba would then scold Nana stating that devotees would go away from Shirdi if he continues to misbehave. My father had a different kind of admiration for Nanavali. He was suffering from hernia so much so that the grown up portion used to touch the ground and he used to walk in that fashion only. Sometimes he used to tie the pieces of cloth to his trousers at the back forming a long tail and then he used to jump like a monkey. All the children of the village used to get amused with his monkey tricks and then in that state he used to come running to Baba to save him from the onslaught of the children. My father used to wonder as to how can this man in that state of hernia run so fast. He never thought of him to be a mad person. Nanavali used to call my father by name 'Gawalya' and used to beg him for food. Then my father used to go to the eating house run by Sagun and request him to feed him with sufficient food. According to my father Sai Baba and Nanavali was like a pair of Lord Ram and his ardent devotee Lord Hanuman. Nanavali once commanded Baba to allow him to sit on his seat. Baba responded positively to his call and got up from his seat and allowed Nanavali to occupy the same. Nanavali sat for a while on the seat and then got up saying, "Oh Lord only you can occupy this seat because it suits you, my right place is near your feet only". You can all imagine what great guts Nanavali had to ask Baba to allow him to occupy his seat and also the enormous quantum of love that Baba extended to him and vacated his 'Asan' (seat) for

beloved Nanavali. Offcourse the reason why my father use to reckon them as an equivalent pair of Lord Ram & Hanuman is different. Once Nanavali told my father "Hey Gawalya come with me and I will show you some fun". He then took my father to ' Chavadi' which is a little distance from Dwarkamai. Baba was sitting there in Chavadi. In no time Nanavali reduced his stature and made himself so small that he could fit in a ' Handi' (glass bowls which are tied with small ropes and hung onto the ceiling of the Chavadi) and then literally jumped up and went and sat up in one of the ' Handis' . Like a monkey he was sitting in the Handi and teasing my father. My father was astonished to see that act. It was unbelievable. It was nothing short of a miracle. How can Nanavali with that state of his body jump so high and make himself small enough to sit in that Handi. It was simply amazing and unbelievable. He then realized that Sai Baba and Nanavali are Avatar of Lord Ram and Lord Hanuman in Shirdi. He instantly prostrated in front of Baba there and then venerated Him.

Dear Sai Devotee readers Nanavali was deep in sorrow after Baba had taken the Samadhi and on the thirteenth day he himself renounced this world. Nanavali' s Samadhi is situated near the eastern entrance door of Lendi Baug. I always bow before it whenever I visit Shirdi. Millions of bows to Lord Sai and his amazing Leelas.

Disappearance of Moreshwar's Asthama

Moreshwar Pradhan was a close devotees of Sai Baba. He was a judge in Bombay High court. He was suffering from acute Asthama. He used to be a partner of my grandfather whenever they used to play the Bridge (a game of cards). For the cure of his Asthama my grandfather advised him to visit Shirdi and he obliged. On his very first visit to Shirdi when he met Sai Baba he was offered to inhale the ' Chilim' (a clay pipe which Ba used to smoke) which Baba gave him personally. Moreshwar was rather worried but he inhaled the ' Chilim' and it was a miracle. From that moment onwards he never got any attack of Asthama. What a strange way of curing a person of his ailment. Moreshwar thanked my grandfather and from then on became an ardent devotee of Shri Sai Baba. It was a Vijaydashmi day of the year 1918, and late afternoon suddenly

Moreshwar got an attack of Asthama. The attack was severe and he had send his servant to Bandra and requested my grandfather to come to Santacruz to his residence. Moreshwar' s servant told my grandfather that his master has suddenly taken ill and requested him to rush for his help. Then my grandfather along with my father left their house. Offcourse they carried along with them the ' Udi' , which Baba had given personally to them on their last visit to Shirdi. They saw Moreshwar in utter distress. My grandfather consoled him. He put Baba' s ' Udi' in a glass of water and requested Moreshwar to drink the same. Moreshwar obeyed my grandfather as he was reckoning him to be his very close friend. No sooner had he drank the water than the intensity of the attack went on reducing and in a short while he was feeling relieved. Moreshwar asked my grandfather stating that Baba had said that his Asthama has gone for ever in which case how come the revival of the attack? My grandfather advised him not to worry and in the event it happens again he should consume Baba' s Udi as medicine. However Moreshwar was not required to do so any more. The consumption of Udi had certainly reduced the Asthama attack but there was an altogether different kind of message behind this incident, which they all realized later on. On that very day at about 2 p.m. Sai Baba had taken Samadhi in Shirdi and while doing so he had sent in his typical way wireless messages to all his ardent devotees. Of course my grandfather and father had also received this wireless message which I will narrate to you all in a later chapter.

Eating the Skin of Watermelon

During Baba' s lifetime, some people who visited Shirdi could not get his blessings may be they lacked faith in him or may be they did not have patience. These people were of elite class and whenever they had visited him, looking at his poor lifestyle they used to think how can a "Fakir" like him get rid of their problems. Of course Baba' s ways of handling issues were also very funny and difficult to understand in the very first meeting.

It was- summer time. One woman vendor with a basket full of Watermelons came near Dwarkamai. Baba purchased all her Watermelons. He then cut one and made slices and started distributing them to all devotees

present over there. They all were enjoying the Watermelon. Baba had not given a slice to my father who was also present over there. At that point of time one elite gentleman well dressed accompanied with his two servants entered Dwarkamai. He was suffering from severe Diabetes and on the advice of someone he was visiting Shirdi. Baba did a funny thing he took one slice and separated the skin and the pulp and offered the pulp to my father and the skin to the gentleman. The elite gentleman was rather annoyed and replied that he is not an animal like cow or a goat to eat the skin. Baba then offered the same to my father and said "Hey Bhau you only eat this now." When my father had a bite at it, to his surprise it was soft like a Banana and sweeter than the pulp he had already consumed earlier. My father used to say that such sweet Watermelon he had never tasted in his life. The elite gentleman felt insulted and went away from there. He had probably missed his permanent cure on diabetes. My father expired at the age of 70 years and had no trace of diabetes till then. Dear devotees the real medicine was not in the substance but was there in those sacred hands of Baba which use to give that Mida' s Touch to that substance which then probably was getting converted to nectar. Those devotees who had realized these facts were immensely benefited. Of course Baba' s most important teachings were "SHRADDHA" means faith and "SABURI" means patience. Those who practice these two Mahamantras will always be successful in life.

Killing of Insects

During Baba' s lifetime devotees visiting Shirdi used to voluntarily take part in executing some duties such as cleaning of Dwarkamai, sweeping the road from Dwarkamai to Lend! Baug which Baba use to walk upon daily. These duties were not entrusted upon but devotees would perform them as though they are offering their worship to Baba through such social deeds. The resident devotees of Shirdi were regularly performing such duties. My father whenever in Shirdi would undertake the job of cleaning the Petromax Lanterns and lighting them up in the evening and hang them in assigned places all over Dwarkamai. He would use that opportunity to seek clarification from Baba on any query he would tumble upon. Once he declared to Baba that he would no more light up the

Petromax Lanterns because that act of him is making him to be a sinner. No sooner the Lanterns are lit and darkness approaches, lots of insects gather around the lamps and after hovering around for sometime they fall beneath the lamp and die. In the event that he does not light the lamps they would not come there and possibly would not die My father basically wanted to know why God had created such a phenomenon and Baba' s explanation on that matter. Baba laughed at that query and said "Hey Bhau you are mad. Do you think that these insects will not die if you do not light the lanterns? They would go to the place where there are lamps and light and would die there. This is all Lord' s creation. He had planned their death at the time of their birth itself. In case Lamp or light is not there then other creatures would finish them. These types of deeds do not add to the sins of a human being. Your main intention of lighting the lamp is to remove the darkness from Dwarkamai so that the devotees can perform their worship with ease. You are therefore not indulging in any act of sin. The very fact that the dying of insects hurts you in itself is an indication that you have a kind heart. The Lord knows his duties very well and we need not interfere with his work. He has planned our end side by side while putting life into us. You therefore need not worry and continue to perform the work which gives you pleasure. Lord will be kind to you (ALLA BHALA KAREGA)". So Baba' s teachings were very simple and of a convincing type. Through this incident he administered a noble advice to my father and made him aware of a norm created by God.

Fight with Fire

Dear Sai Devotees you must be aware that Baba had saved the life of a potter' s daughter who had accidentally fallen in the baking oven. In doing so his own hands had received severe burn injuries. A leper by name Bhagoji Shinde used to apply the Ghee (purified butter) to the wounds and then bandage the same with pieces of cloth. Baba also use to use his hands as a ladle for stirring hot Dal or mutton curry and these items were given as Prasad (consecrated food) to His devotees. Of course I am sure that the touch of that sacred hand must be inducing tremendous amount of medicinal properties in those substances. When one ate them as Prasad it must be driving away all acute

decease instantly. However I am going to narrate to you all an unprecedented incident over here.

One fine morning my grandfather had a dream. In his dream he saw his Khatau Mills was in flames and as a result his sleep was disturbed. At the dining table when he broached the subject to my father they decided to inform the proprietor of the mills. Mr. Dharamsi Khatau. As a secretary of the Group of mills he advised the proprietor to cover the mills with suitable insurance against fire. In those days the insurance cover was not common as the money spent was reducing the profits and the financial managers {Munimji} were against it. Finally my grandfather succeeded in convincing Mr. Dharamsi and they arranged for revaluation of the entire textile Mill and renewed the insurance cover for enhanced value of the Mill.

Five to six months later one morning they received an S O S call from the mill that there was a fire in the mill and they were summoned immediately. They rushed to the mill forthrightly. On reaching there they saw the weaving department was under fire. They both prayed to Baba and requested for his help to contain the fire and save the mill from being destroyed completely. As they climbed to the second floor where the weaving department was situated, to their utter surprise they saw one "Fakir" with his head tied with a piece of cloth and was in the midst of the fire and waving his both hands trying to contain the fire. My grand father asked my father "Is he not our Baba trying to extinguish the fire?" They got confirmation that Baba had responded to their prayers. It took around one more hour and the fire was under control. They all gave a sigh of relief, as the damage was only limited to the weaving department and there was no necessity of shutting down the mill. Also due to the insurance cover the financial losses were compensated. No sooner the normalcy of operations were reached they both visited Shirdi to convey their thanks to Baba. When they were near the steps of Dwarkamai Baba almost coaxed my grandfather saying "Hey Oldman (MHATARYA), who is operating your mill?" My grandfather prostrated at his feet and told him to continue his unfailing blessings to all of them. He profusely thanked him for fighting the fire. He there & then confirmed to Baba that

He is the real secretary. On hearing this Baba got up from his seat, he lifted Babasaheb Tarkhad from the ground and said "Hey Old man, please get up & remember that I stand committed to pull out my devotees from the gravest of the dangers. I will fulfill all commitments given by me from this Dwarkamai to my devotees. No sooner my devotee send a distress signal to me I am there at his service, whichever part of the world he may be."

I am sure you all will agree with me that it was an unprecedented incidence Oh Lord Sai I sincerely bow before you and your Leelas.

Washing of Baba's Kafani

Now as I am proceeding further in my endeavor I strongly feel that my father should have had written his diary. This would have given a proper chronological account of the growing intensity of his experiences in association with Baba resulting into his ever-growing love towards Lord Sai. Offcourse after his first meeting with Lord Sai, he must not have had the faintest of an idea that he had come in contact with a superpower which was going to give a new twist to his life. I think possibly only Shri Narsinha Saraswati was one swami in those times, who had written his own diary which has thrown a great light on Baba' s Leelas. These are all after thoughts now. I for one who had come across few incidences have not kept any date wise account of them. Needless to mention that my experiences are a few compared to the voluminous and extraordinary experiences of my father.

Although the love and devotion of my father towards Baba was in the ascending order, Baba had a typical knack of strengthening the bond with his devotee. While in Shirdi my father had learnt from the natives that Baba' s bathing was also of a very special type. He not only cleaned and washed his body from outside like all of us but he also cleaned and washed his internal parts. He would take out his intestines and wash them and put them back in his body. My father used to say that, only Lord Rama and Lord Krishna were born with "ASHTASIDDHIS" (eight superpowers) and that is the reason they were called Lord themselves in human form. As per him Baba' s birth details were not known

but his Leela' s were equally competent and matching in all respects with the superpower.

On one of his visit to Shirdi, Baba told my father that he would have to , accompany him to his bathing place and will be given a special task^ My father was ever willing for such a duty. He anticipated that he would get some more divine exposure, Baba said, "Bhau the assignment is very simple. I will take my bath and while doing so you kindly wash my Kafani. After washing you will have to hold it in the Sunlight with both your hands raised till it dries up. As you know that I take an unusually long time for my bath hence by the time I finish my bath it would dry up and I could wear it again. Please note that it should not touch the ground while it is drying." My father instantly agreed to perform the task and proceeded to do it practically.

They went to Lendi Baug where there was a covered room with tin sheets and a big rectangular stone on which Baba use to take bath. My father waited outside the bathroom for Baba to offer his Kafani for washing. As there was no call from Baba and the Kafani was not coming forth, he got impatient. He thought it must be one of those gimmicks of Baba. He decided to peep inside the room through the small opening in the door. To his utter disbelief he saw Baba' s body was emanating rays of light from each and every pore of his body. He could no bear the powerful light and feared of loosing his eyesight. Also his misdeed would come to surface. At that very moment he heard Baba giving him the call for collecting the Kafani for washing. My father collected the Kafani, took it near the well and washed it thoroughly with soap. After rinsing the water by squeezing it he held it in both his hands in the blazing hot sunlight. Initially he could bear the weight of it, but as the time passed the Kafani started getting heavier instead of losing the weight due to drying. My father realized that he would now fail the test, as the Kafani would touch the ground soon. He decided to pray and seek the help from Lord Hanuman to grant him sufficient strength to get through the arduous task. As he was offering his prayers to Lord Hanuman, he heard Baba yelling form inside "Hey Bhau! Why are you calling for help from Lord Hanuman?" Undoubtedly Baba was "ANTERDNYANI"(possessing intuitive

knowledge) who could read your mind with pinpointed accuracy. Then my father requested Baba for forgiveness as he had committed the sin of trying to look at Baba' s naked body. Baba responded to this confession and in no time my father found the Kafani had become lighter. My father thanked Baba and took a vow not to venture into any such adventures. He had realized that one could not hide anything from Baba.

So great were the teachings of Baba and with your permission could I take the liberty of saying that "Fortunate were those recipients who were blessed with the teachings directly by Baba."

An Encounter with a Ghost

Dear readers I am fully aware that we are passing through the 21st Century and it is difficult to have a belief on the existence of a Ghost. I Myself am an engineer and firm believer in science and have been around the world. This experience is that of my father and that too in the holy place like Shirdi Baba' s ' KARMABHOOMI' , where **Ba** performed all godly deeds unbelievable to mankind. I will therefore narrate to you the experience as stated by my father and as competently stored in my memory is able to recall the same. On one of his visits to Shirdi on a particular day early in the morning my father was performing his morning duty in Shirdi. This was near the bank of the rivulet and he was sitting under a Pipal tree. It was still dark and there appeared in front of him a wild cock. It was giving its crowing call but the sound of the crowing call was very funny which my father had never heard before. The wild cock attracted the attention of my father towards him. My father started watching him and suddenly the cock turned into a black colored snake. The snake rose and took an upright position over there and expanded its hood. My father was scared and started praying for Baba' s help. After a little while the snake disappeared from there. My father was scared to death. He decided to hurriedly complete his morning duty and move away from that spot. As he was in that process, he heard someone saying "Hey Mansa (human) you are sitting in my way from where I pass daily. I order you to move away from my way." In no time a small dwarf like ugly looking person stood in front of him. My father told him that there is plenty of place

around for him to go and as such after finishing his morning duty he would anyway vacate the place. But that dwarf started growing taller and taller and said "Have you not recognized me? I am "VETAL" and this is my territory and I once again order you to move away from here." Though my father was very scared but for him, only Baba could order him in Shirdi as he reckons him to be the Master of the place and nobody else. My father then lifted handful of mud and taking Baba' s name threw it on that tall standing Vetal and prayed to Baba to come to his rescue. He saw a big line of smoke in place of that Vetal which disappeared in the thin air. My father literally ran away from that place. After taking his bath and breakfast he went to Dwarkamai. As he approached Baba' s feet, he heard Baba asking him rather jokingly Hey Bhau early this morning why were you seeking the help of my udi? My father fell at his feet and told him what all had happened. In that process he told Baba that as he was not having his Udi with him he picked up the mud of Shirdi (Baba' s Karmabhoomi) and treated it like Udi and threw it on the Vetal. On hearing that Baba said "Bhau you did a good job today. You have given Mukti (salvation) to that Vetal." My father told Baba that he acted upon all the instructions coming to him from his Lord i.e. Baba, because at that scary moment he had lost his thinking power. He profusely thanked Baba. With Baba' s permission then he asked him whether these Ghosts or Witches ~~to~~ are true things in this world. Baba replied saying "Bhau this is also the creation of The Lord. But remember the savior is always stronger than the destroyer is. While I am sitting in this sacred Dwarkamai no one can inflict any harm to you. Be fearless in Shirdi."

Dear Sai Devotees believe me while narrating this to you all I get vibrations all over my body. My humble request to you all is, please believe this. In any case it was not an imagination of my father, because why should he do so? I am sure my father must be getting queries in his inquisitive mind and Baba would resolve them in his own ways. This must have happened to many of his devotees at that time.

Sai Darshan to Grandma

Dear Sai devotee readers as the saying in Marathi goes during those 17 rounds of Shirdi my father was enriched with multifold experiences and whenever he use to get into that spiritual mood he would narrate those experiences and amuse us. I am sure he must be getting immense pleasure out of it. I once again sincerely wish he should have written them. I am narrating to you those few, which have made lasting impressions on me and of course those, which I am in a position to recollect. My intentions are simply to make known to Sai devotees the great prowess of Shirdi SaiBaba and while doing so make an attempt to express my devotion to him.

My great grand parents, who were staying in their bungalow at Charni Road Chowpaty (Girgaum Beach), had come to know that Ramchandra (my grandfather) and Jyotindra (my father) were frequently visiting Shirdi. As father and son were staying in Bandra in Tata Blocks on rental basis they would meet them only occasionally-The living style of my great grand parents was in line with the English people of that time. However my great grand mother was very inquisitive person and she would inquire with my father about Shirdi SaiBaba and his Leelas whenever he would visit them at Chowpaty. She would always tell him to take her to Shirdi for Darshan of Lord Sai and my father would always assure her. He was sure that it would not happen, as his grandfather would never allow such a visit. She was seventy plus in. age and the grandfather was a non-believer in Babas or Saints. .

It so happened that there was an epidemic Of Plague in Mumbai and the doctors had not found the definite medicine or cure on the dreadful disease till then. My great grand mother (I will address her as grandma now onwards) was running temperature and the treatment given by her Dr. husband was not yielding any good results. On learning about her illness my father paid a .visit to their residence. During the visit grandma told my father that she would not come out of that Plague attack and he should offer prayers to SaiBaba to come to her rescue. She would then visit Shirdi and take his Darshan On hearing her plea my father advised her that if she has a genuine belief in Lord Sai then she should offer her

prayers from her bed and Lord Sai would surely come to her help. My father then put a small packet of Udi (which he always carried in his wallet) under her pillow and after coming home prayed to Lord Sai to offer relief to her. On the third day early morning the servant from Chaupaty Bungalow came to Bandra and said that he is being summoned to bring Jyotiba (my father) along with him. My grandfather and father were worried and prayed nothing untoward had happened. They immediately rushed to Chaupaty. On reaching there and seeing grandma sitting in the bed they got the jolt of their life. She was in tears and said "Jyotibaba last night your SaiBaba came over here. He was wearing white robe and head tied with white cloth. He was having a white beard. He stood near my bed and laid his Palm laden with Udi on my forehead and said mother now onwards you will start feeling better and better and he disappeared. After that I started sweating profusely and my fever had vanished. Early morning I was feeling normal and I did not brush my teeth and asked the servant to bring a mirror to me. On seeing my face I could clearly see the Sprint of his Udi laden palm on my forehead. I therefore send the servant to summon you and now you can see for yourself." Grandma's and Grandson's joy knew no bounds at that moment. My father instantly thanked Lord Sai for his divine services. Dr.Tarkhad (Grandpa) also was astonished, as many of his Plague infected patients were no more. They arranged for a Kirtan Programme of Dasganu Maharaj in their Bungalow and as such Baba's Darshan to grandma had already taken place. Lord Sai had fulfilled her desire on his own. Sai I am short of words to express our gratitude to you. Please continue your divine blessings on all of us.

Dear Sai Devotee readers with this self-experience of the Tarkhad family I wish to complete this chapter. Before proceeding further I sincerely request the soul of my father whom we use to call Dada, to earnestly pardon me in case I have faltered anywhere in narrating his valuable experiences and made any mistakes. I am sure the great soul wherever it is, would pardon me because my sole intention of writing this book is exclusively to salute Dada which I could not do during his lifetime and I think it is better late than never.

Memorable Last Meeting with Sai

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

I have completed narrating the live experiences of Tarkhad family with Lord Sai. One can now affirmatively say that the Tarkhad family was destined to come in contact with Lord Sai and this had taken place because of their "POORVAPUNYAI"(good deeds in their previous birth.) One peculiarity you must have noticed that they were never required to ask for anything from Baba. Although their first visit was to get relief on a biological ailment but even during this visit they were not required to declare the purpose of their visit. Baba could read their mind with pinpoint accuracy and shower his blessings on them in order to bring them closer to him. In the course of time their bond went on becoming stronger and stronger and now I sincerely pray that this should last till the end of this world.

I think it must be the year 1918 and Navaratri days because Baba took his mahasamadhi on Vijaydashmi day seven days later after granting Mukti to ailing Tiger. Baba had-become very old and he would walk with the help of two devotees one on each side of him. One evening after placing the Petromax lanterns in their required places my father had noticed that Baba was looking very tired. He asked Baba whether he could press his legs in order to give him some relief and comfort. Baba then said "As you have expressed the desire you may proceed and satisfy your self" My father then sat near his feet. After a little while Baba turned to him

and said "Bhau this is our last meeting and we will not meet after this, As you know many kinds of people come to Shirdi and ask different kinds of grant like Sampatti (wealth), Santatti (children), Swastha (good health) etc from me. I do not displease any one and Lord on their behalf. My Lord responses positively to my prayers and grant them their requirements. You are one person I have come across who has not asked for anything. Possibly you are not married and Having no family hence not feeling any need for anything. But Bhau, since we will not meet anymore please ask for anything you desire otherwise I will always feel indebted to you for all services you have tendered to me so far." My father then

said "Baba with your grace I have everything in life and I really do not need any materialistic thing. Only make sure your blessings are always there with me and under no circumstances you should be far away from my memory in future (HECHI DAAN DEGA DEVATUZHA VISAR NA VHAVA)". Then Baba said "Bhau I am in any case duty bound towards my devotees and I am asking you to ask something personally for yourself because each individual has his/her separate identity and needs some external help to successfully sail through his/her lifecycle. Please feel free and ask?" My father realized that it was an acid test for him, so he said "Baba now that you are emphasizing so much hence before I ask, you promise me that you will positively grant me my wish. ' Then Baba said "Bhau I have granted the wishes of so many, hence you should not have a least doubt in me, you ask and I grant" Then my father said "Baba I need-Only one from you. Put me to any birth and I must be able to see your feet." Baba was then silent for some time He broke His silence saying "Bhau I am not able to grant this wish of yours." My father then said "Baba I was not asking for anything and you only forced me into this and I do not need anything other than this from you." Then Baba gave a smile and said "Bhau so many people come to Shirdi but very few are like you who have completely understood me. By your wish you want to bind me up for ever and I do not have such permission from my Lord to get bound like this with anyone. However you need not get disappointed. I promise you that in our next birth when we are ten years old we will be sitting together and eating in one Thali (plate)". "My father then said "Baba as you wish. In short Baba promised him to meet again in the next birth. My father was satisfied and he prostrated before him instantly. Baba lifted him and then dropped his hand in the pot of Udi next to him and offered him a handful and said "Bhau please preserve this with utmost care and use it very sparingly as it contains enormous power of even putting life back into any body." It was the time for evening Aarati. My father had a very contented feeling at that time. At the same time he was rather sad because Baba had declared that it was their last meeting. Next day Baba asked him to leave for Mumbai. On reaching home he informed his parents what all had taken place at Shirdi. They brought a small

silver box and filled it with Udi, which they valued like Nectar given to them by God himself. I remember that if any one of us use to fall seriously ill then my father would take a small quantity and put it in the water and offer us to drink in order to get well. One thing is certain that during his lifetime none of his seven children passed away.

Dear Sai devotees my father had gone through many ups and downs in his life. He had his own bungalow, car and everything that one craves for in life. But at later stage he lost interest in materialistic world. I have never seen him falling sick. He took ill at the age of 70 years and he passed away about which I would narrate to you later.

Proof of Sai's Mahanirvana in Mumbai

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha.

Earlier I have narrated to you medicinal effect of Baba' s Udi when Mr. Moreshwar Pradhan had revival of an attack of Asthama. At that time my grandfather had given him Baba' s sacred Udi to drink which had given him relief. My father and grandfather were very happy as this was the same Udi which Baba had given them with great assurance and they had never imagined that they would be required to put it to use so early. But then something very interesting happened. On returning from Mr. Moreshwar' s residence to their home in Bandra when they went in front of their Sandalwood Mandir to offer their thanks to Baba, they found that Baba' s portrait had slipped out from the bracket, and it was hanging in an inclined position. They inquired with my grandmother whether any servant had performed any cleaning operation in their absence. But it was not possible as that was the Vijayadashmi day and all cleaning and pooja had taken place in the morning. They were then trying to figure out the coincidence of those two events. They thought of going to residence of Mr. Tendulkar or Mr. Dabholkar who were residing nearby in Bandra. But this was not required as the servant of Mr. Dixit from Vile Parle was at their doorstep in the evening. He informed them that Baba had passed away in the afternoon in Shirdi and Mr. Dixit would be leaving for Shirdi and had requested Babasaheb Tarkhad (my grandfather) to join him.

On learning this they were able to put two and two together and realized that Baba had send them the wireless message indicating that he is going for his Mahanirvana and bidding good-bye to this world. So was the temporary revival of Asthama and sliding of Baba' s portrait in the Sandalwood Mandir. Imagine the distance between Shirdi and Mumbai and what a unique way to communicate with his loving devotees that one is bidding good-bye forever.. Dear Sai devotees very appropriately Baba is termed as "ANANTAKOTI BRAMHANDANAYAKA RAJADHIRAJ YOGIRAJ PARABRHAMA SATCHIDANANDA SHRI SAINATH" and such unique ways of his communications to his loving devotees must be sending shivers through their spine which they only know better. Of course SaiBaba' s Mahanirvana was only hisbodily departure because during his "Avatarkarya "he had impressed upon the minds of his devotees that he will always be there with them and at their beck and call.He had declared that "My bones will talk to you from my grave and keep immense faith in me. The eternal truth is I am always alive and this is my promise to you all, which you should never forget."(NITYA ME JEEVANTA JANA HECHI SATYA)"

We are in 21st Century and even now on those Utsav Days of Ramanavami, Gurupornima and Vijayadashami one can see of his devotees present in his Shirdi. My Dear readers, I also wonder after experiencing such divine spiritual association with Lord Sai, how come my father adopted the path of a common man to live rest of his life. The normal rule is one adopts the path of "Paramartha"(divine truth) in order to get rid off the intricacies of "Prapancha"(family life). But my father' s life had been an exception to this rule and that is what one will have to accept. I will give you some details about my father' s last journey, which in my opinion is also unique.

Shravan Monday -16th August 1965

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

From 1918 to 1965 a period of 47 years is quite a long time span and how did my father cruise through this long journey I would not like to state it to you all. My very purpose of writing this book is to narrate to you his experiences with SaiBaba of Shirdi and through which one can express his love and devotion

towards Lord Sai. Of course during this time he got married to my mother who hailed from a place near Mumbai called Kelve Mahim. Her name was Laxmidevi Kelvekar. Also during this time my parents got acquainted with one of the great Saints of Maharashtra Saint GADGE MAHARAJ who directed my father to buy one bungalow for his own family. Accordingly my father purchased a bungalow in Khar (situated at 51 E, Khar Pali Road) then and they all bid good-bye to Tata Blocks in the year 1923. As the name of Saint Gadge Maharaj has appeared during my narration I would like to place some facts about him in my next chapter. After his marriage my father had taken my mother to Shirdi only once and had given her the detailed account of his earlier life and association with Lord Sai. My mother was also a religious person. In short I now consider myself to be a lucky person to have God-fearing parents like them from whom I have imbibed "Good Sanskar" a rare commodity in 21st Century. My father was a very healthy person. I never saw him fall ill at any time, he not even suffered from common cold or cough. He had five daughters and two sons. He fulfilled his duty of marriage of his five daughters and could not see the marriages of his two sons.

It was the month of July 1965. He had taken ill, had severe bronchitis followed by a catch in the waist, which forced him to lie-down in bed. We all thought it to be signs of old age. I was studying in the final year of B.E. in VJTI Engineering College and my elder brother Ravindra was working in the same textile mills from where my father had retired. In those days my mother used to suffer from all kinds of illness like Hypertension, Diabetes, Asthma etc. She used to get serious at times whereby we were required to put her on oxygen. In fact we use to keep one oxygen cylinder handy at home all the time. My father was in great pain and initially doctors had diagnosed as Lumbago. I use to apply Wintogeno or MahaNarayan oil to his waist, which use to give him some relief. He used to feel very sad that we were required to nurse him. He had never ever asked us to even press his legs & hence he use to feel terrible to be a bed ridden person. Once he asked me whether he would come out of his sickness. I ' remember to have told him to give a distress call to his Baba who could only

come to his rescue. But this did not happen. His condition worsened and under the advice of Dr.Joshi we were required to admit him in Nanavati Hospital at Santacruz. My mother was totally duty bound in extending all nursing assistance to him. She had completely forgotten that she was herself a patient. She used to take morning tea and breakfast to him and then again in the evening take dinner for him. I use to inquire with her after returning from college about his health. She would say that not much of improvement but he has not lost any of his senses.

I think he was hospitalized for about a week. My mother would daily give him the sacred Udi, which Baba had given him along with his cup of tea every morning. Then came the 16th August that was a Monday in the month of Shravan as per Marathi calendar. My mother told my brother and me to return home early as we use to take dinner early before Sunset on all Shravan Mondays. I returned from college in the afternoon. While going to Hospital, she said that today is a crucial day. If your Dada goes through it then he will survive for at least one more year. I asked her why was she saying like that She replied that she had learnt from her mother in law that Shravan Monday is unlucky day for the men folk of Tarkhad family as most of them had died on that day.

Now what happened when she reached hospital? Around 3.30 p.m. she gave a cup of tea to my father which she used to carry in the thermos my father was a tea addict. He felt better and around 4 p.m. he once again asked for tea from my mother. My mother told him that only half an hour ago she had given him the tea and as it was Shravan Monday she would go home early. At 5.00 p.m. she would give him the tea and then would leave for home. But my father insisted that she should give him the tea as he was seeing something, which is not very clear. My mother told him not to worry and she gave him the Mala of Tulsi beads in his hand and asked him to pray for Baba. She also applied the sacred Udi on his forehead. No sooner he took the first sip of tea he started telling my mother that someone is calling but he can' t see the face clearly and make out who the person was. My mother then told him that we are only two people present in this room and he should do "BABA' S JAPA" with the Tulsi Mala. He then started murmuring Baba' s name. For a shortwhile his face had

turned brighter. The agony of pain had disappeared and he almost shouted saying "Baba I am coming to you"(BABA MEE ALO). These were the last words and he was lifeless. This was his end. I think he must have seen Baba at that time. What a way to die!! They say that each living being suffers a lot when life "PRANA"(soul) leaves this body. However my father died by saying "Baba I am coming to you." So this way Baba had taken away his Bhau with him. I admire the courage of my mother who returned home alone. She told us that your Dada had left for Heavenly abode. Please inform all concerned and make preparations for his last journey. I remember when in school we had a lesson the title of which was "MARANATA KHAROKHARA JAGA JAGATE"(One Lives The Real Life In One' s Death). Dada had proved this title one hundred percent. My mother normally was a very emotional person but she did not shed even a drop of tear. May be she was overwhelmed with that unprecedented sight of death or may be there were strict orders from Baba to those tears not to flow on that day. So the dictum of my grandmother had come true on that Shravan (name of Hindu Month) Monday of 16th August 1965.

Experiences with Saint Gadge Maharaj

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

As stated earlier I am going to make an attempt by stretching my memory to reveal about one of the greatest Saints of Maharashtra Saint Gadge Maharaj. He used to visit our bungalow at Khar uninformed in the evening and then leave in the wee hours of the morning. I have seen him personally. He would wear a robe made out of pieces of colorful cloth hemmed and stitched together and tie his head with a piece of cloth. Because of his this attire he was also known as GODHADI MAHARAJ or GODHADI BABA. He used to wear leather "Chadhav" as footwear and always carried a bamboo stick in his hand. The Bamboo stick had an iron cap at the bottom to protect it from wearing. He was a very ardent devotee of Lord Vitthal (Vishnu) and would keep uttering Panduranga...Panduranga...all the time. I think Dasganu Maharaj who would spread Sai Mahima through his Kirtans all over Maharashtra introduced him to our family. The focus of attention of Saint Gadge Maharaj was mainly to provide

all kinds of help to downtrodden people. He also used to teach them the importance of cleanliness and would demonstrate practically himself by sweeping the roads of the villages all over Maharashtra. "Cleanliness is Godliness " was his teaching, which can only free the villages from epidemics and diseases used to be his message to all the villagers. Of course, in the process if he could get grants from wealthy people which he would collect and distribute' it to needy people of the villages. After the Mahasamadhi of SaiBaba my grand father started donating the Tagas (rolls) of raw cloth to Saint Gadge Maharaj. My mother would stitch a "Godhadi" with her own hands and offer the same to GadgeBaba whenever he would visit our house. He would then bless her and carry the same for his personal use. I think love and affection which people of that time use to shower, is difficult to find these days.

As informed earlier Saint Gadge Maharaj was instrumental in forcing my father to buy a bungalow. He used to go around on foot most of the time and he had seen a bungalow at Khar Which my father had purchase outright for Rs. 15,000/- in the year 1923. At that time it was like a solitary structure in Old Khar and I remember we could see Railway station, Mount Mary Church etc. unobstructed from the terrace of our bungalow. Whenever GadgeBaba would arrive, he would order my mother who would then prepare special Roti of "Jwari" and "Zhunka" for him and that night we all would have "Zhunka Bhakar" dinner. Believe in me the great taste of those items is cherished in my memory for- ever. After dinner Saint GadgeBaba would narrate his experiences gathered during his "Padayatras" to various villages. GadgeBaba was certainly not an ordinary person but another messenger of God. I will now narrate to you what divine experience my father had along with him during his visit to Pandharpur with him.

GadgeBaba was a regular visitor of the Holy place of Pandharpur, which is a pilgrimage. He was an ardent devotee of Lord Vithoba and would always do his Namajapa saying Panduranga... Panduranga... during his free time. Once my father inquired with him whether he had met Lord Panduranga any time in his life. GadgeBaba told my father to accompany him to Holy place Pandharpur. He stated to my father that he will have to stay there like a pilgrim and away from the

luxuries as available in his comfortable bungalow. My father then embarked upon the second visit to Pandharpur along with Saint GadgeBaba.

They were put up in a tent built on the sands of river Chandrabhaga. Throughout the day he went around along with Maharaj and witnessed how he undertook cleaning operations, how he offered advice to downtrodden people who flock around him and patiently listen to his sermons. My father got a fair idea about the social activities of Saint Gadge Maharaj and in the evening they returned to their tent. My father noticed that there were three mattresses laid inside the tent, each with a "Kambal"(black colored blanket) and kerosene Lantern hanging in the center of the tent. GadgeBaba told my father to relax and he would go and fetch some "Zhunka Bhakar"(special village dish)for eating. My father was inquisitive and asked him about the third mattress and its would be occupant. GadgeBaba informed him that he had forgotten to tell him that he would have one guest of him for a night' s stay and will go away well before dawn. The guest will not cause any inconvenience to them. He declared that whenever he visits Pandharpur this guest gives him company at night. On saying this GadgeBaba left the tent. Soon darkness had settled in the tent, so also the temperature had dropped, my father started dozing and fell asleep. He was awakened by the call of GadgaBaba who brought some "Zhunka Bhakar" for my father. He apologized to him that he had already taken the dinner with his guest and my father can go ahead as he must be very hungry. In the meantime he would go for a stroll on the riverbank. My father had a look at the guest. He was wearing a "Dhotar" and nothing on top. The color of his skin was pitch dark like "Bhills"(tribe in India) and his eyes were red like burning coal. He had a "Kambal on his shoulder. The most surprising thing was that the entire tent was filled with a strong aroma of Musk, which my father had never smelled before. They both left the tent and my father carried on with his delicious dinner. Yes he had never tasted such a delicious food before. The aroma of the musk played its role and my father was in deep sleep no sooner he finished his dinner. He got up in the morning with the loud sound of a crowing cock. GadgeBaba was already awake. He told my father to rinse his mouth and drink the hot tea, which was waiting for

him in the earthen pot. My father inquired about the guest, when GadgeBaba told him that the guest had already taken his tea and left, as he had to be there on his duty before the Mandir opens. My father felt rather awkward and asked Maharaj, as to why did he not introduce the guest to him. GadgaBaba then told my father that he thought that my father would have recognized the guest who needs no introduction in "Pandharpur" My father told him that at night he could not see him properly and he thought that in the morning Maharaj would anyway introduce him before he departs. Then Maharaj told him that the guest was none other than Lord Vithoba of "Pandharpur." He asked my father whether he got an answer for his question, posed to him in his bungalow. Now my father could lay hands on that sweet and hypnotizing aroma of Musk. My father used to say that the aroma of the Musk accompanied him for quite sometime and made him feel the presence of Lord Vithoba.

Saint GadgeBaba also offered one pleasant experience. He had also gone old with the passage of time and his last visit to our bungalow was also a memorable one he used to always come along with his "Kambal "(Coarse Blanket) and "Stick" and leave our house with his belongings. On his last visit he forgot to carry his stick with him. Infact he did not actually forget to carry but I think he deliberately left it behind as a mark of remembrance. Why I say this because his style of walking was such that without the help of the stick he couldn' t have walked. My parents discussed amongst themselves to find his whereabouts and return his stick to him. But it was not possible to search him because he was in the true sense of the term "The Roaming Saint of Maharashtra."

Always in service for the downtrodden. My parents used to treat that stick as a very sacred item and it was kept near our Sandalwood Mandir. My parents also purchased one portrait of him and placed the same in our Sandalwood Mandir in order to perform the daily pooja as you will appreciate that he was also like a deity for them.

Dear readers I am sure you all must have found this episode also an interesting one. I once again feel that to day we miss such Saints or Messengers

of God amongst us and we also lack presence of ardent devotees with their selfless devotion towards the Saints.

Writer's Own Experiences

"Om Shri Sainathaya Namaha."

I am sure that after reading these priceless experiences of my father, you may be inclined to think that I might have also gathered some experience of my own. Well once I narrated one of these experience to a lady devotee. She told me that I might not have come across that kind of rich library of spiritual experiences like my father, but as I have taken birth through such "Punyatma", I must have inherited an iota of "Punya" from him, and hence must have come across some experience certainly worthy enough of narrating to all Sai devotees of the present era. This way I can also distribute part of that "Punya" to all of them. This response of that lady devotee gave me a jolt and I decided that, however small & silly it may be from my point of view, I should be disclosing to you all whatever I have encountered so far. In this way I can express my "Sai Preeti" and a token of Saiservice from my side.

My full name is Virendra Jyotindra Tarkhad. There is a small story behind our names. It goes this way. My great grand father had named all his sons in such a way that their first name ends with letter "DRA". The originator to this theory was none other than the Nobel Laureate late Shri RabindranathTogore. It so happened that before proceeding to U.K. he had stayed with my great grandfather in his Choupaty Bungalow. This was with a purpose to acquaint him with English etiquette, as the Tarkhad family was well known for that at that time. Late Rabindranath was very fond of Astrology and he had done deep ,study of the subject. He prepared the ' Kundali' (Horoscope) of my great grandfather and concluded that the Tarkhad' s are originated from Lord Indra and hence they must identify (the men folk) themselves by that name. He impressed upon my great grandfather to therefore name his sons accordingly. My great grandfather must have been convinced and he named his sons as Ramchandra (my grandfather) Dnyanendra etc. My grandfather entrusted names of his two sons as Satyendra and Jyotindra (my father). Further Jyotindra named his sons as Ravindra (my

elder brother) and Virendra (myself). Ravindra had named his son as Devendra and I have named my son as Mahendra.

Ofcourse from my childhood I am attending the Aarti of SaiBaba in our house on every Thursday evening and this ritual is continuing till date. Fortunately my wife also happens to be a Sai devotee. She has been visiting Shirdi ever since she was a 5-year-old child. I visited Shirdi for the first time when I was 18 year old and that too along with my two friends Amar Bhagtani and Shashi Bhatia. After marriage I started staying in my mother-in-laws flat. My wife had lost her father when she was 5 years old and they were two ladies who needed the presence of a man. As my mother-in-law and my wife both were Sai Devotees there was no interruption in my ' Sai Sanskars' in fact they grew higher and higher.

Guru Poornima in Shirdi

I started attending the ' Gurupoornima Utsav' at Shirdi along with my mother-in-law and to the best of my knowledge I attended 18 ' Gurupoornima Utsavs' consecutively. You all must be aware that Gurupoornima Utsav is of three days duration and one of the items is continuous reading start to finish of ' Sai Satcharitra' ' Akhanda Parayan' as it is called. Sai devotees have to give their names and then through a kid 54 names are randomly picked up who have to read the chapters of ' Sai Satcharitra' in front of Baba' s Portrait in Dwarkamai. On one such Poornima Utsav I also gave my name and number 9 was allocated to me. This meant that I had to read chapter 9, which described love & devotion of Tarkhad family towards Sai. Believe me that it was a great pleasure. After I read the chapter in Dwarkamai I received in return a coconut and a photo of Lord Sai as Prasad. This photo was laminated, framed and placed in our house for regular Pooja. Till date every morning when I am out of my bed I stand in front of this photo and do "Namaskar"and pray to Lord Sai saying HECHI DANA DEGA DEVA TUZHA VEESERA NA VHAVA"(Oh Lord grant me only this wish that I should never forget you).

Creation of Vijyot

Dear readers I am of the opinion that each one of us carries within him/her a strong desire. My father would remind us that he was also a wealthy man with a bungalow, a car and a store room filled with all kinds of eatables filled in China clay pots. Of course at a later stage of his life all this had gone away. I was his last child. So obviously I carried a strong desire God willing I would strive to get back that lost wealth in my own way. Of course to own a bungalow in Mumbai was an impossible task. My wife was also brought up in a bungalow at Khar. So there was a joint desire to have a bungalow of our own whereby at least in our old age time could be spent in comfort. Then in the year 1991 we purchased a N.A plot admeasuring 6 Gunthas (726 Sq. Yards.) at Vangaon. (Railway station on western railway 100Kms away from Mumbai). I was able to get a loan from my company and by 1993 we were able to construct our bungalow at Vangaon. We named it as "VIJYOT". Way back in 1960 when I had visited Poona, a school friend of mine had shown me a bungalow called "LAKAKI". It was the bungalow belonging to famous Industrialist, LAXmanrao KAKasaheb Kirloskar. You will know the secret behind that name by picking up the first letters from his name i.e. LA—KA—KL We were required to sell our bungalow at Khar due to financial constraints in the year 1959. On seeing Lakaki, the only thought that came to my 16 year old mind then that, if ever I build my bungalow, I would name it as VIJYOT.

Sai Prasad from Aba Panshikar

Of course the real things lies ahead. When we made the blueprint of our bungalow we decided to have a small marble Mandir for Pooja and meditation purpose. The Mandir was ready and we had a strong desire of placing a life-size color photograph of SaiBaba in it. We tried very hard but were unable to get one. It was the month of April 1993. Mumbai had witnessed tragic bomb blasts in the month of March and all people were scared to talk to any stranger. One day an unknown person rang our doorbell late in the evening. My wife attended the door, when one stranger was insisting that he wanted to see me in particular. He was unable to say my name so my wife was rather doubtful about his identity. Then I

intervened and he recognized me. He recalled that we had met in Lendi Baug in Shirdi and that I had narrated the experience of Baba to him. Well I was then clear, he was one social worker from Sai Mandir Pune and I allowed him into our house. As it was our dinner time we offered him dinner and he obliged. During our discussion I told him about our desire of a colored photograph of SaiBaba. He instantly replied that the life-size portrait we will have to get it painted from an artist on the canvass and if we are looking for a color photograph, then only Mr. Aba Panshikar can help us. He had telephone number of Mr.Prabhakar Panshikar a well-known stage artist of Marathi Theatre and younger brother of Mr. Aba Panshikar. I then telephoned him and obtained the telephone Number of Mr.Aba Panshikar in London and gave him the call. On hearing my request for a color photograph he only replied that, in the month of May he would be in Mumbai and I can get in touch with him at his brother' s place in Prabhadevi. So I waited till May and got his appointment for one Saturday evening. We all went i.e. my wife Kunda, my daughter Sujal and my son Mahendra.on 22nd May 1993. I had no idea about him at all and a gentleman in Saffron color robe, wearing a "Rudraksha" Mala had appeared in front of us. Mr. Aba Panshikar introduced himself and I offered my "Namaskar" to him with folded hands and gave him the introduction of my family. He rather scolded me saying that how come we are with empty hands and not having any Garland and Pedhas (a type of sweet) etc. I was rather surprised because he had never told me that he had brought the photograph for us. I anyway pleaded guilty and rushed to Siddhivinayaka Temple area and purchased a garland of flowers and some Pedhas. He then went inside and brought along with him an elephant size drawing storing box. He opened it and removed the drawing paper roll. He unrolled the same and there was Our SAI in front of us sitting on his famous Throne and giving his eternal smile to us. As advised by him, I garlanded the colored photograph printed on 1mm. thick Kodak paper and distributed Pedhas to all. Mr. Aba then wrote a message on it stating "To Virendra, Kunda, Sujal and Mahendra, Sai Prasad from Aba Panshikar"and signed at the bottom. He then said, "Please take your Treasure". Believe me readers that was the, golden moment of my life. I was speechless

and did not know what to do. Undoubtedly it was a priceless treasure for me. I took out Rs.1001/- from my pouch and offered him but he refused to accept. He said, he does not sell photographs of Baba. Then I told him to accept as donation to his Sai Temple in London. Reluctantly, he agreed but did not take money in hand and told me to place the same on the table. He then inquired with us about our background. I then told him the connection my father had with SaiBaba. On hearing me, he literally embraced me and said he had received the greatest pleasure of his life that day. He was emotional and went inside and brought two one Rupee coins and gave it to me. I took them and prostrated before him and said, "Now I am in receipt of real Prasad of Baba". He requested for the explanation. I stated that "These two coins denote the Universal message of Baba i.e. "Shraddha" and "Saburi" which he emanated to the whole world during his life-time. Aba was overwhelmed with my explanation and tears of joy rolled from his eyes and he went on to declare that he had met the true Sai devotee that day and gave a bear hug to me.

Then Aba narrated his own story to us. His father was a chief priest of Ganapati Mandir in Girgaum and when he was 8 years old one Muslim Fakir came in their compound and offered a SaiBaba photo to him. Aba replied to that Fakir that he is the son of a Brahmin and is not permitted to keep a photo of a Muslim Baba in his house. The Fakir told him that "BETE AB TU ISE MAT LE PER TERI KISMATME LIKHAHAI KI TU ISKI ZINDAGIBHAR SEVA KAREGA AUR ISKE PHOTO LOGONKO BATA KAREGA."(My son you may not accept this photo now but I can read your destiny that you will be serving him through out your life and will distribute his photographs to the people). The predictions of the Fakir were cent percent true and Aba Panshikar was in the service of SaiBaba till his end. I request your pardon that; I should have termed him as Late Aba Panshikar as he is no more with us.

Subsequently I organized to laminate the Precious photograph and made a good wooden frame for it. On Guru Pournima day in the Year 1993 we consecrated the same in our small Sai Mandir in our bungalow "Vijyot" at

Vangaon. Ever since then we celebrate our Guru Poornima over there in a simple and homely way.

So this is a small self-experience of mine. I do visit Shirdi whenever I have a desire. I am a retired person now and with Sai' s grace living a comfortable life. We now only pray to Baba that both our children should also get their life-partners who are Sai devotee' s in order to maintain the continuity of love and devotion of the Tarkhad family towards Lord Sai.

Lastly I request all Sai devotees never to forget the two Maha Mantras given to us by SaiBaba i.e."Shradha" and "Saburi" which means faith and patience and if one truly abide by these two Mantras Baba grants your wishes without fail. I would now like to end this book with my endless bows and the following apt salutation to our ever-loving SAIBABA

**"ANANTAKOTI BRAHMANDANAYAKA RAJADHIRAJ YOGIRAJ
PARABRHAMA
SHRI SATCHIDANANDA SATGURU SAINATH MAHARAJ KI JAI**