

**Founder Members of Belgaum Jilha Prathamik Shikshan Samiti, Belgaum**



**Late Shri. Baburao Thakur**



**Late Dr. G.V. Herekar**



**Late Shri. Chaturdas Shah**

A Social worker with a difference :

Late Shri. Baburao Thakur was not only a patriot, a freedom fighter and editor of "Tarun Bharat" but he was a social worker to the core. Social service was his prime aim in life, who regarded eradication of illiteracy, the root cause of all social evils, more than anything else, even courting jail. He meant by social work constructive contribution with dedication and determination. He believed that it was prime need of our country. It is more relevant even now, even after about seven decades of establishment of Samiti. It has hindered our national progress. Baburao Thakur realized this started Night Schools in Belgaum as early as 1919. They were followed by Kannada, Marathi and Urdu Schools, unaided though, where the teachers worked like missionaries. Then came the Belgaum Jilha Prathamik Shikshan Samiti into being, on October 1st 1937. The Samiti took Primary Education to the villages and hamlets, in the deep interiors, in the remote areas of Belgaum, Khanapur and Chandgad. He was well-aware that it was a challenging task and demanded immense patience, emotional involvement and physical-labour. Baburao Thakur was a man of determination. He knew that a journey of even a thousand miles begins with a single steps.

That first steps was opening of two primary schools one at nandawade in Chandgad Mahal, now in Kolhapur District and the Second was at Gavali in Khanapur Taluk of Belgaum District. Though the beginning was humble, it was beginning of a great mission within a year, many schools came in Belgaum, Chandgad, Chikodi, Saundatti and Khanapur Talukas. By 1939 the number of schools managed by the Samiti rose up to hundred and six.

The Belgaum Jilha Prathamik Shikshan Samiti was Registered under the Society Act. XXI of 1860 on 22-01-1940 by then Bombay State. And further registered on 27.7.2000 under Bombay Public Trust Act 1950 under No.F-44 (BGM)

In next few years the society managed to run smoothly on hundred and one Marathi, sixty five

Kannada and one Urdu Schools in Belgaum, Chikodi, Khanapur, Gokak, Hukkeri, Chandgad (Kolhapur), Bailhongal and Soundatti Talukas of Belgaum District.

The Samiti took up adult education in rural areas as a social mission to which scores of enthusiastic and energetic teachers devoted themselves selflessly. The Society than came to be known around and its work was appreciated in the Southern part of then Bombay State.

The Samiti never felt short of dedicated persons to share the responsibilities with Shri. Baburao Thakur, Late Dr. G.V.Herekar, Late Shri. Annasaheb Latthe, Late Shri. Chaturdas Shah who were other dedicated persons and comrades-in-arms who stood by the Samiti in the early teething and growing period. They worked round the years and Shri. Annasaheb Latthe's legal guidance to run the Society smoothly was of immense help. People, realizing the Samiti's work came out with financials help though it was just a few rupees. It was an act of generosity because a gift is never a small thing.

The teachers who worked in villages had to face a number of problems, such as accommodation, proper conditions of sanitation and water supply, besides they were paid very little remuneration due to Samiti's financial constraints. Their service to the Samiti can only be recognized by remembering them with gratitude. As the Samiti's work spread all over Belgaum District. The Samiti felt the need of appointing supervisor to inspect the schools and guide the teachers. The senior teachers who were entrusted with this responsibility traveled extensively in the interiors of Khanapur, Belgaum and Chandgad Talukas to discharge their duty. The Schools were conducted so well that they set an ideal even to the Government of Bombay. Taking a leaf from the B.J.P.S.Samiti the then Bombay Government started such Schools which later, after Independence, became Government of Maharashtra and Karnataka. The Samiti insisted on both the Governments that they should take over the schools along with the staff and their cadre be maintained accordingly. Both the Governments agreed to it and the service of the teachers, supervisor and inspectors were regularized.

A special note should be made here that the B.J.P.S. Samiti even in the early days of its growth took up the work of adult-education, road construction and running co-operative societies for the rural uplift. It encouraged the rural public to build roads, keep their houses, premises and surroundings clean. The Samiti guided the agriculturists to use compost manure and new methods of cultivation. It is note-worthy here that the Samiti helped to raise the standard of living of rural public in general.

In Chandgad Taluka itself the B.J.P.S. Samiti constructed about 80 roads. It was a co-operatives work, voluntarily undertaken by the villagers in the real Gandhian spirit called, "Shramdan" -the spirit which inspired the founders of the Society. More than 14,000 people participated to construct 20 miles of roads. Men, woman and children from all walks of life readily responded to the call given by the Samiti. It was then appreciated and praised by print-media like :The Hindu", who praised the work in the editorial column. The commissioner of the South division of then Bombay State, Mr. E.W.Perry personally visited the villages, surveyed the work and expresses his satisfaction.

The Samiti conducted refresher courses time to time to guide the teachers to discharge their duty more efficiently. Noted teachers and educationists not only attended these courses as expert persons but guided the teachers, the practice which was totally unknown before. The teachers assembled once in a month in their respective taluka headquarters to exchange their views, ideas and plans, to share their students, their parents and rural public in general. This was a novel thing unknown before even in the leading cities.

Managing Committee :

President:

Shri. R. D. Shanbhag

Vice President:

Shri. Kiran D. Thakur

Secretary:

Shri. V. L. Ajagaonkar

Treasurer:

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Shri. Sharad Walwalkar  
Shri. S. Y. Prabhu  
Shri. H. S. Prabhu  
Shri. Pankaj Shivalkar  
Mrs. Bimba K. Nadkarni

Our Educational Institutes:

1. The Marathi Teachers Training College, Tilakwadi.
2. M.V.Herwadkar English Medium School, Tilakwadi.
3. Ramkumar Jangra Kindergarten, Tilakwadi.
4. J.N.Bhandari School of Art, Tilakwadi / Shinoli.
5. Smt. Radhabai Salgaonkar Computer School, Tilakwadi.