

A Visionary Educationist : Dr. C L Patel

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by
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"I came to Vallabh Vidyanagar. I was fortunate to get the opportunity to work at Charutar Vidya Mandal. I am humbly proud that I have been offered the task of keeping the fires alight for the great educational yajna started by Shri Bhikhabhai, Shri Bhaikaka and Shri H. M. Patel. Within this educational context, I learnt about the administration of education. I have derived strength from my colleagues, thousands of teachers, professors, and principals. I have been able to fulfil my task with the help of a large number of generous donors, thousands of students, my spiritual guide Parampujya Bahamaswarup Pramukhswami Maharaj whose blessings have been my constant companion, and the grace of Bhagwan Swaminarayan."

— C L Patel (5-4-2010)

Dedicated to...

Those who strive for educational illumination

Author's Note

It was hardly a couple of years ago that I first saw Dr. C L Patel in the central office of Charutar Vidya Mandal. A red divine mark on the forehead, white attire and white beard! It was July 16, 2008. After meeting Dr. C L Patel, I said to Shri Hari, "He looks like a Rishi (Seer)..."

I didn't know much about Dr. CL Patel at that time but his extraordinary personality had left an ever lasting impression on me. My bringing-up, education and a career as a journalist-writer had shaped up in Mumbai. Then I stayed in Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar. During this time, I might have heard the name of Charutar Vidya Mandal and Dr. C L Patel but never had an opportunity to meet him. And once the opportunity came, I realized that he is one of such personalities that one never forgets after meeting once.

He invited Shri Hari to join Charutar Vidya Mandal and we embraced Vidyanagar. We settled in Vallabh Vidyanagar. Then many

things about Dr. C L Patel came to our knowledge; we heard many things about him. We heard of his transparency, honesty, faithfulness, ethical righteousness, fearlessness, bold and outspoken nature. I used to take interviews of great personalities in a column 'Gurjar Gaurav' for Samkaleen Daily of Indian Express Group published from Mumbai. Later I realized that I should have taken an interview of Dr. C L Patel for that column. A glorious person of his stature must be made familiar to the public.

What could not happen at that time is happening now. Incidentally, I was given the responsibility to take an interview of Dr. C L Patel on the occasion of his Platinum Jubilee celebration. It was something that I had to do for a long time now. He gave an interview for an entire week. He talked, at times for an hour, or an hour and a half and sometimes even for two hours at a stretch. It was a sheer pleasure to hear in his own words about his childhood, his childhood pranks, his school days, his love for his teachers, his fondness to watch movies, his university days, his career as an employee of Gujarat Electricity Board. Mr. Girish Rathod, an M.Phil. student of Centre for Research

and Studies on the Life and Works of Sardar Patel, lovingly known as CERLIP, did the recording of the meetings with Dr. C L Patel. In front of camera, Dr. C L Patel cherished the moments and memories of his parents. Moreover, Dr. Patel had shared open heartedly his days as a Joint Secretary and then Chairman of Charutar Vidya Mandal. He talked about the struggles, challenges, hurdles that he had to fight back. It was exciting to know how he overcame the problems and challenges. After more than a seven hour conversation, I realized that this is not just a story of achievements, but also an incredible adventure saga; not only a biographical sketch, but also an inspiring and encouraging narrative for the readers.

I have heard of Satyuga - the Golden Age of truth, morality, religion, bliss and prosperity that existed once. However, after meeting Dr. C L Patel, I realized that even in the contemporary postmodern age of anti-belief, I met up a saint of that Golden Age. I am sure that you would share the same feeling after reading this book.

I express my sincere gratitude to Shikshan Maharshi Dr. C L Patel Platinum Jubilee Celebration Committee for assigning this

responsibility to me. Very special thanks to Shri Mitul Trivedi, Faculty, H M Patel Institute of English Training and Research (HMPIETR), who volunteered to take-up the most difficult task of translating my Gujarati book into English and Dr. R.P Jadeja, Director, HMPIETR for his constant and valuable inputs. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Piyush Joshi for his invaluable help during the process of translation. I am thankful to Shri Kanu Patel for designing the artistic jacket of this book.

Let me acknowledge the help of Shri Anton Chauhan (CERLIP) and Shri Rikesh Patel (ILSASS) also.

I shall be very happy to receive responses from the readers.

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FOREWORD

Life in Vallabh Vidyanagar, in the first decade of 21st century, is a fascinating experience. Because of the fast pace of change; because of the widening horizons of educational endeavour; because of the possibilities unfolding in front of your eyes. It is a happening place. And, as the story unfolds in these pages, largely because of the magic touch of Dr. CL Patel.

The fast pace of change can strike you immediately if you are someone who is coming to Vallabh Vidyanagar after one or two years. The landscape has changed. You realize that you are visiting a new place. So, of course, the New Vallabh Vidyanagar is new indeed; but even the 'old' one is 'new' in some ways – in many ways. Under the leadership of Dr. C L Patel, Charutar Vidya Mandal is spreading its wings – literally and metaphorically. So many new courses and whole new institutions are added every year that one finds it difficult to keep counting.

The magic touch of Dr. C L Patel transforms everything, and everyone, that comes in contact with him.

But an important characteristic of this extraordinary man is that he always refers to himself, in all humility, as an ordinary man. Therefore, it was all the more difficult to have an up-close glimpse of the inner reality of his mental make up. In a sense, hardly anyone knew him. Till he agreed, as a part of the Platinum Jubilee Celebration, to give an extended interview. And, equally, important aspect of it is, till Tinaben unearthed the treasures lying within his outer shell. This book is the result of several hours of authoring of the whole text in an exquisite style that brings out the real personality – which gave us the Gujarati version, ‘So Touch nu Sonu’. In the past, Mrs. Parul Tina Doshi Desai, who is an eminent writer herself, has interviewed some prominent personalities like Dr. P C Vaidya, Shri Makarand Dave and Shri Raghuvir Chaudhari, and created lively pen-pictures bringing out the significant but less known aspects of their lives. But this biography of Dr. C L Patel comes as the crowning glory of her literary achievement.

The original Gujarati text is a marvel in itself. It is a marvellous account of a great life; authenticated at every step by the actual words used by the real characters depicted

in the biography. The way Gujarati language is used in ‘So Touch nu Sonu’ would make a fascinating study : every bit original, every word used as it is used by the worthy sons of Charotar soil like Sardar Patel.

Translating a text like that is a challenge. It requires trans-creation. This English version of biography cannot, of course, have the benefit of ‘the actual words’ used by the people depicted here. But I think the English version remains equally authentic, in the sense that it follows the original as closely as possible, and also in that it is seen by Dr. C L Patel himself. Mr. Mitul Trivedi has taught and guided research in the area of translation studies at H M Patel Institute of English Training and Research. No wonder, therefore, that this translation can be cited as an example of unique use of English language in the Gujarati socio-cultural context.

Rajendrasinh Jadeja

Director
H M Patel Institute of English
Training and Research



A Visionary Educationist : **Dr. C L Patel**

A glorious, awe-inspiring personality, a synonym of honesty, thoroughly ethical and righteous, meticulous and fearless, a leader with tremendous mental abilities, a true fighter against all the obstacles, a man of firm determination and indomitable spirit to face all kinds of challenges....

No, this isn't a description of ten different persons. These qualities are associated with only a single man. Guess, who it could be?

Chhotubhai Lallubhai Patel... Chairman of Charutar Vidya Mandal. He is known as Dr. C L Patel not only in Charotar region, but also in Gujarat and outside the state as well. Approximately 6 feet in height, with a glowing face, sparkling eyes, bright forehead, a divine mark on forehead, white attire and in white beard, he resembles the Rishi of an ancient time. Undoubtedly, Dr. C L Patel is a pride of Gujarat. He is an enlightened educationist, a management guru and a Vishvakarma - creator of New Vallabh Vidyanagar. He is an

inspiration to the self-financed colleges in Gujarat. A farmer by birth and an engineer by profession, Dr. C L Patel has been successfully spearheading the largest education trust in Gujarat, Charutar Vidya Mandal, for last 16 years with utter perseverance. He manages billions but characteristically he has remained uncontaminated. 'The values we cherish must also be practise' is the sole motto of his persona. Under his competent leadership, 44 institutions of Charutar Vidya Mandal have been successfully progressing. Like in education field, he has demonstrated a skillful leadership in the area of social reform also.

“I have inherited the quality of leadership...”, giving the interview in his *Madhuli* amongst the green bushes of New Vidyanagar, Dr. C L Patel slipped into the past : “My father had served as a *Mukhi* of Gamdi Village. In those days, it was the law of inheritance of the one family to be the *Mukhi*. But the inheritor, at that time, was so young that Lallubhai had to take up the responsibility of a *Mukhi*. He was very well-respected at the taluka level during the reign of British Government. He helped many. Even the government paid attention to his proposals. The *Mukhi* of the village would look after all the matters concerned. He would decide the rate of labour wages during the year. Many donors might have come forward to donate land for good causes. Some land might have been for Mahadev. Some would be for the Ramji temple. Even the dogs were taken good care of. During the monsoon, dogs were fed

with rotla and halwa. So even they had been allocated specific land. And many other kinds of lands were to be taken care of. All these things were managed by my father. He would manage the meals for Brahmins during the month of Shravan. Similarly, when it was Holi festival, or New year celebration or Ram Navmi, or Gokulashtami, according to the ceremony, the fund had to be raised. My father always used to tell us, 'I would not bring money home. The money we receive as donation must be used for the cause they were donated for'. And the other thing he kept telling us was, 'When you shoulder a responsibility, if you can't do any good to the deserved, it's alright. But make sure that you do not cause undue suffering.'

Chhotubhai learnt all these lessons from Lallubhai. It was Lallubhai's subtle influence that taught Dr. C L Patel the lessons of leadership and righteousness. *Like the father, like the son* is the proverb best appropriately illustrated in Chhotubhai's childhood as an initiation of a leader. Witnessing Lallubhai being the leader of the village, Chhotubhai too had taken up leadership of the youth. He prepared a team of the young members of the village. Together, they used to clean the village. The well and a trough of water for cattle were cleaned up by the young team.

“At that time, 'Rentiabaras' (Gandhiji's birthday celebration by working on spinning wheels) was a very important and significant event...”, cherishing the memories

of his early years, a 75 year old Dr. C L Patel goes down the memory lane : “On the day of Rentiabaras, we used to light up the lamps exactly in the number of the years of Gandhiji's age. We used to make a map of India extending to Brahmadesh and Singapore and border the map with the lamps. We used to perform good plays. We used to plant trees. We used to keep a bucket and everyone had to water 5 trees. This is how we planted trees around the village pond.”

As time passed, the seeds of leadership sprouted in Dr. C L Patel. When he entered the matriculation, he initiated literacy movement. He says, “At that time, the local inn had no doors. It only had one board. We used to go there with two lanterns. One was hanged there and the other was placed on the floor. We used to teach the elderly, the shepherds and other nomadic groups. Thus, we were probably ahead of time



Lallubhai Patel

in the movement of literacy awareness.”

During this period, the NSS activities were also at its peak. Chhotubhai used to invite the volunteers of NSS. With their support, he used to construct the roads of the village. He used to save money from this activity. He says, “We developed a library

above the Panchayat house in our village. This happened around 1954. At that time, we built a fairly large building in Rs. 13.50 thousand. We had Rs. 5000 from the Youth Association activity as our savings, Rs. 5000 were given by the government and the rest were collected from everyone involved with each donating Rs. 250. The first person to donate was my father. I still remember that I went to Baroda from Gamdi on a bicycle to collect Rs. 250 from a merchant.

With this perseverance, honesty and dedication, Dr. C L Patel developed a public library in the village. He bought Carrom boards and cricket kits in the Youth Association. He made sincere efforts to sustain the unity of the Association. He followed the advice of Lallubhai 'If you can, do help others' and developed the leadership traits from the childhood.

Along with the leadership, Chhotubhai is proud to have inherited the quality of fearlessness from his father. He says, "My father was such a brave man that he inspired awe. I could not even look straight in his eyes from the days of my maturity till the day he passed away. He used to keep a gun. In his time, he had helped counter the collective attack of two outlaws. For that, he also was honoured with two certificates of bravery by the British Government."

When Chhotubhai started narrating the incident of the outlaws, he recalled this instance of bravery and strength. Let us hear the incident in his own words :

“It was around 1947...I was in my matriculation. At that time a railway track passed across the village. Any goods train on Dakor line would whistle till the signal was given. After departing from Anand, the evening train kept whistling till it left our village. Exactly at that time the outlaws attacked. There was no electricity in those days. I was reading under the light of a lantern on the first floor. At that time my father came in to take his gun. As he was returning, I also walked along. No one would dare to take on outlaws armed with guns and weapons. But my father did.”

“This incident happened in our neighborhood. Reaching the target house, the outlaws first shouted the name of the owner of that house. As soon as the owner identified himself, the outlaws attacked him with a sword. It caused a wound on the owner's wrist. Another person started screaming, “Help! The outlaws have attacked”. The outlaws saw him and fired a bullet. He got his eye injured.”

“We rushed to the place. Other neighbours had hidden themselves under some cover. The person injured by the bullet had covered himself under a bedstead. At that time, my father planned a strategy. He roared, “All the nine gunmen, attack. Kill them all...”. In fact, he was the only person with a gun. But he just played the trick. Actually he was anxious about me. I had a lantern in my hand. He was worried that the outlaws might shoot in the direction of the light and I might get killed. So he signaled in silence. He waved at me

suggesting that I should move away but I didn't understand the message and stood there watching. The outlaws started firing bullets incessantly. However, at last, the attackers failed due to the bravery of my father. If my father had not used the trick and his strength, the attack might have caused much damage to the village.”

“The targeted home of attack had also got a revolver and a gun but they couldn't do anything. But with the presence of mind, my father could counter their attack.”

Chhotubhai still remembers that on the next day at school, his teacher Vitthalbhai praised him saying, “A brave son of a brave father !”

The brave son of this brave father also remembers many other incidents of courage that his father had shown. Unlocking the memories, he says, “There used to be many snakes in our village. My father used to shoot them. People used to call him if snakes were found around. But when he fired his 12-bore gun, the sharp tiny bits of bullets would be fired. Once it so happened that the holy statute of Lalji Maharaj got shattered due to the bullets. From then on, my father stopped killing snakes with his gun.”

As the saying goes 'Like the father, like the son' Dr. C L Patel used to shoot snakes when his father was not around. Looking into the past, he says, “Once there was a snake in the roof. I fired a shot and the snake was cut into two.

But after that, my mother prevented me from killing the snakes.”

Chhotubhai had to kill snakes but also considered cobras as holy creatures. He says, “It is believed to be a grace if a Cobra stays in the farm. In one of our farms, we had three Cobras. Even today one Cobra visits our present home. We don't kill them. I also have dreams wherein I am surrounded by Cobras. Even my grand-children don't feel frightened of them.”

While remembering his grand-children, a 75 year old Chhotubhai is reminded of his own grand-father. The memories of grand-parents, parents, village and family enliven in him. He walks back across the seven glorious decades of his life and opens up the treasures of reminiscences:

“My family was settled in the Gamdi village near Anand. We lived with my grand-father Garbaddas and my grand-mother Jibabahen. Among their four children, my father was the eldest son. My father was 14 when my grand-father passed away. His youngest brother was merely 5 years of age at that time. My father courageously took up the responsibility of the family. Like a father, he sheltered and took care of the siblings. He took care of his brothers as if they were his own children.”

“Our occupation was farming. Depending on the rain, the

respective land was ploughed. Over and above, animal husbandry was a subordinate profession. Everything was solely done by him. Necessary tools and appliances were purchased. My father used to keep good breeds of buffalos and bullocks.”

“I used to call my father DAJI. He had two daughters from his first marriage. Lallubhai was well-respected when he was getting married a second time. At that time, Patels could not get a spouse for the second marriage. But Daji got. Two of our family members didn't get. That's why my father said that he would get married only in the family that offered a bride along with two other daughters. That's how along with my father, the two members of the family also got married.”

“Out of six children, my father had five daughters and I am the only son. However, my father never discriminated between male and female child. He used to tell me that when my eldest sister got married, the ceremonial canopy was decorated with the banana and papaya leaves. A fountain was also erected. The guests from the groom's side should be served five meals but the food was so teeth-some that just in three



Jiba (Gangabahen)

servings it got over. The food was prepared in pure ghee. Similarly, the marriage ceremonies of the remaining three sisters were solemnized appropriately.”

“My mother's name was Jiba. But my grand-mother also had the same name so my mother was called Gangabahen. She belonged to Kasor which is one of the villages in Anand taluka. I am the only son to my mother. I was born on April 10, 1935. During my childhood, I lost two brothers and a sister. We six were left. Five sisters and I.... That was the time when every member of the family had to work to earn the livelihood. So, like my father, my mother also used to take responsibilities of the family. I remember we used to keep two buffalos.”

Remembering his mother, Chhotubhai was again in the fabulous world of memories. He says, “So many memories are associated with my mother. She always offered fresh milk to us. We used to have a litre a day. During the winter time, the nutritious dish of dates mixed with ghee was offered to us. And Magas was prepared so nicely that it could be cut with a knife. In the farm she would pick the Jambu berries for us. She would not even allow my children to touch it. 'It's for my Chhotu', she would say. Once I had an opportunity to accompany her on the BAPS Yogiswami train on a Pilgrimage.”

Dr. C L Patel says, “My mother's vision was very sharp and she didn't have to wear eyeglasses. Neither did she develop

any cataract. I have inherited my sharp eyesight from my mother.”

As a gift of heredity from the mother, Chhoubhai's eyes have remained sharp and he has not to wear any glasses and from his father he inherited the qualities of righteousness, fearlessness and leadership. In the light of these hereditary characteristics from his parents, Chhotubhai remembers various instances. However, there are some instances which are associated with both of his parents. They are mostly memories of getting thrashed. Chhotubhai says, “I was beaten heavily by my parents at many instances because I was really mischievous and used to play various pranks. When someone was milking the buffalo, I would throw leaves and straws into the milk. Due to my extreme mischievousness, I earned the sobriquet 'Lallu Gadbu's Monkey'. Many complaints were received at home and then I was thrashed regularly. My father used to give me *Methipak*.”

Along with these beatings, Chhotubhai also recalled another instance. While talking about it, Chhotubhai re-lives his childhood : “At that time my father used to smoke bidi and a hukka. It was my job to light the hukka and keep it next to his bed in the morning before he woke up. As soon as he woke up, he would smoke the hukka. As I observed him, I was also tempted to smoke. Well, I didn't smoke the bidi. I went for a popular cigarette brand Taj and occasionally I smoked that. But when my father came to know about it, he punished me.”

Answering the question, “What punishments did you receive?’, Dr. C L Patel answered with a smile on his face : “There were many kinds of punishments. He would take a piece of rope and tie it to a *kada* - an ironed ring in the ceiling. Then I was tied up and was hanged from the Kada. Then he would strike me up for 4 to 5 times and ask, “Will you do it again?” I would say 'No.' Then he would untie me. Of course, I never had a fascination to smoke from then on.”

Chhotubhai quit smoking but was never spared from beatings. People kept complaining about his pranks and Lallubhai kept beating him. Chhotubhai never reacted but one day he lost his patience. He decided to run away from home. Lets hear this incident in his own words :

“Once my father beat me up so badly that I decided to run away from home. I left home, escaped to the outskirts of the village and climbed up on a Tamarind tree. They all started looking for me. But just beneath the tree, a dangerous bullock was tied to the trunk. Hence, nobody would approach the tree. But I was noticed by a girl. She felt that she could see something bigger than a monkey on the tree. She informed everyone that I was there. Then they got me down. Other elders reprimanded my father and advised him not to beat his only son so heavily.”

But even after these heavy beatings, Chhotubhai never felt any repulsion against his parents. Chhotubhai strongly



Chhotubhai in a farm, Gamdi

believes that it was due to his father's good teachings that he has been brought up so well. Along with his father's bravery and leadership traits, Chhotubhai also has a vivid memory of his sincerity and meticulous style of functioning. Chhotubhai shared an instance to elaborate this : “My father was extremely careful about things. Once, the knife was forgotten in the farm. He sent me back to the farm to get it. I walked almost 3 kilometers in the dark. It was believed that if you had some iron with you, the evils would not harm you. So I carried a piece of iron with me, went all alone to the farm and brought back the knife.”

Chhotubhai maintains that his father was very benevolent and generous by heart. An incident in this connection has a deep impact on him. He says : “On occasions

when I had financial problems with my uncle, my father would tell me,

'What do you see on that mango tree?'

'It seems to be a mango tree, but it isn't.'

'It is Odho (parasite). Some other tree growing on a mango tree as a parasite from the droppings of birds is known as *Odho* - tree.... When we lend money to someone, we should forget about it. Forget that it's our money. We should neither note it in a register, nor should we ever inquire about it. Think that we are paying the debts of our previous birth. Give and forget, be a tree on a tree.'

After this great teaching of Lallubhai, Chhotubhai has adopted the policy not to keep track of the money that he has lent to anyone. Neither does he maintain any record of the sum, nor does he inquire about its return!

Moreover, Chhotubhai has also carried the other three pieces of advices that Lallubhai had given to him : love your people, close family members should be remembered at weddings and death and do not entertain any desire for any retaliation.

Many such things and experiences have been alive in Chhotubhai's memories. Even after spending seven and a half decades of his life, he still has a crystal memory of his childhood days. Chhotubhai remembers that he used to play

Gedidado during the Holi festival. He was fond of roaming around in the farms. He used to be aware of which mango tree in the village had sweet fruits on. He also knew which vegetables were worth eating. And then he would bring them home.

Chhotubhai did not only move around in different farms; he also used to work on his farm as well. He says, “I have grazed buffalos. I have also cleaned up their dung. I also used to take good care of them. It was also my responsibility to keep the cattle clean. I also had carried bundles of grass. I know how to plough the field or drive a bullock-cart. I have learnt all the skills necessary for farming.”

Talking about his experiences of farming, Chhotubhai remembers that his father had 45 vighas of land (1.75 vigha = 1 acre). He says, “My father used to farm the entire land on a joint family pattern with his younger brother. I was seven then. At that time, my uncle proposed to separate the farming. My father told to his younger brother to keep a larger portion of 25 vighas and asked for only 20 vighas for himself but at the nearer place. Thus, we were left with 20 vighas of land. We used to take the crops of tobacco, wheat, millet, paddy, Tuver and Bavato. I still remember in those days I used to carry up and down the gunnysacks of grain.”

Thus, Chhotubhai had enjoyed the village life at its fullest. Moreover, the people of the village also developed a lot of

affection for him. They would say... *He is Lallu Mukhi's son...* Chhotubhai says : “Being the son of Lallubhai I always felt as if I were a Prince!”

However, this Prince's name was Budhiyo in his childhood. In this regard, Chhotubhai says with a smile : “Since I was born on Wednesday (Budhvar), I was named Budhiyo. I was known as Budhiyo till I entered the school. Brahmins used to call me Buddhishankar. Then one teacher gave me another name – Manishankar. After that my father got my horoscope prepared. My moon sign was Gemini so I was christened Chhotubhai.”

Like the memories that he has kept alive of his childhood and family, he also has much space to store the memories of his school life. He received the primary education from Sharada High School in Anand. At that time, Lallubhai had many friends in Anand. Ravjibhai was one of them who was working as a homeguard commander in D N High School. So he insisted on admitting Chhotubhai in D N High School.

“Thus I was shifted to D N from the fifth standard....”, Chhotubhai started narrating further from his tremendous memory storehouse : “The Hostel had many blocks at that time. But I was placed into guesthouse no. 19. I was alone in that room. I never realized how the day passed till it was 9 or 10. But the night watchman would strike the hour-bell at 11 in the night and then again at twelve he would strike twelve.

I used to wake up in fright and could not sleep through the night. I felt so homesick that I used to stand on the gate. If anyone from Gamdi passed by, I would break into tears. Somehow I pulled on like this for three days. Then on the fourth day my father came and got me back home.”

After that incident, Chhotubhai used to walk to school that was 4 kilometers from Gamdi and returned home after the school hours. However, he now realizes that if he had stayed in the hostel at that time, he would have learnt more from his teachers. He has great respect for D N High School. He still feels that D N High School has played a pivotal role in shaping up his career. He has intact memory of his teachers at D N. He remembers Principal Ishwarbhai, Maths teacher Ranchhodbhai, his English teacher Aminsahab, his history teacher Viththalbhai, and his PT teacher N R Pandya with utter respect. Chhotubhai says : “Highly respected and knowledgeable persons like Ravishankar Maharaj, Vinoba Bhave, Babalbhai Mehta, Dada Dharmadhikari and Mavlankar dada used to visit our school. Writers like Sneharashmi and Sundaram used to come. Moreover, the school was frequently visited by poets and social reformers. We used to learn from their inspiring speeches how to develop and direct our career.”

However, Chhotubhai still wonders how he commuted in those days. He says remembering the days : “I still wonder how I used to commute. If you were to come to our place from

Anand, you had to pass by the Christian graveyard, which had several crosses placed within. It would become more frightening during the winter fog and had always the feeling that somebody would turn up at any moment!”

While talking about winter, Chhotubhai was reminded about the thick cloth of Dinesh Mill. He also had got a half-pant, Bandi and a coat from that cloth. He even remembers how that cloth used to keep him warm in the cold days. Chhotubhai has a sharp and bright memory. He has been able to keep the memories of his childhood days and his school life intact. He never had any trouble climbing up the Girnar during the picnics and even though he had gone to Mount Abu by bus, he would prefer to walk back till Ambaji. And when he describes this, one would feel it happening right in front of one's eyes. Once again, going back into the memory lane of his childhood, he says : “They were the days when gymnasium movement was very powerful. Ambubhai Purani used to visit us. He became so emotional that he would shed tears as he delivered his talk.”

One more memory of his school days is associated with Viththalbhai. Sharing this, he says : “We belonged to village and used to come to school with a satchel. We never had a handkerchief to clean up our running-nose, so we had to use one of the sleeves of the shirt for that. Viththalbhai would not verbally comment but would act out. From then, we started keeping a piece of my father's dhoti or a piece from my

mother's sari as a handkerchief.”

Chhotubhai remembers that Shivabhai and Viththalbhai saheb went to jail during the Independence Movement. Ishvarbhai saheb used to take care of his son's education. They were engaged in the underground activities such as



Viththalbhai Saheb

stealing away the mails, distributing pamphlets against the British Raj and preparing bombs. At that time, hearing the march song 'Aage Badho, Aage Badho', even Chhotubhai got inspired and developed a desire to do something for his motherland.

But he was only a child at that time so he could not do much. However, he did have an opportunity to see Sardar Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in person. In this regard, Chhotubhai says : “Sardar Patel got off from the train and arrived through the Sankdi Sheri (street). Once again when he arrived in Anand in April 1947, I went there. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru also got down at Anand. There was a crowd of nearly 500 people running after his car and I remember that I was also one of them. It was a dusty path. The car raised clouds of dust and we who were following it were coughing all the way.”

He recalls several memorable incidents of his D N High School days. His study at D N developed his awareness of history and religion. The inspiring lectures of great men taught him how to go ahead and progress in life. The school provided him an atmosphere wherein all-sided development of the learners was possible. Following the moral teachings from the family especially his father and from teachers in the school, he could give a right direction to his life.

While in D N, Chhotubhai decided upon which direction he wanted to lead his life and what career he was willing to opt for. Chhotubhai, who cleared matriculation with Pali language, says : “When I was in matriculation, a chart on the possible directions after matriculation was displayed. The chart contained information regarding BA, BCom, BSc, Engineering and many other courses that one can opt for after the SSC. My father wanted me to be a Collector but after studying the chart I decided that I would go for engineering.”

After clearing his matriculation, Chhotubhai started working very hard for becoming an engineer. He got



V P Science College

admission in Vidyanagar's V P Science College. He used to come to the college either by bus or on cycle or on foot. N M Shah, a wrangler, was the principal at that time. He was highly strict and expected discipline from the students. Even students were scared of him. Chhotubhai says : "N M Shah used to live in the house where the present Director of CDC stays now. There was a public toilet between his house and the college. As soon as N M Shah came out of his house, students would rush to the toilet to avoid being noticed by him. I was also one of them." However, Chhotubhai has great respect for N M Shah. He also remembers the lecturers of the college with fond sentiments : "Dr. P C Vaidya and C M Shah used to teach us mathematics. Chemistry was taught by Mankad saheb. The present Secretary of Charutar Vidya Mandal Dr. R P Patel used to be a demonstrator of Physics. Prabhu and R A Dave were our English teachers."

"Dave saheb used to teach English so interestingly that you would never feel like leaving the class...", Chhotubhai narrated a wonderful incident while remembering this : "Once there was a lecture by Dave sir. I took out a pencil from my friend's pocket. So Dave sir said, 'Somebody has stolen something from somebody's pocket. Stealing is also an art.' I was so embarrassed that I placed back the pencil in my friend's pocket right away."

Amidst such wonderful experiences, Chhotubhai finished his first year of college. He wanted to go to the USA at that

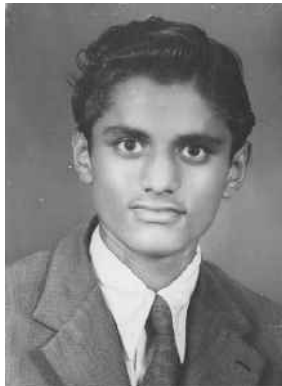
time so he started making efforts for that. But the relatives and friends of Lallubhai had told him, 'He is your only son so don't send him abroad !' So Lallubhai had given up the thought of sending Chhotubhai to the States. After that Chhotubhai started his Inter-science. He was allotted room number 80 in the Square Hostel. Recollecting his experiences of that time, Chhotubhai says : "In the hostel other boys used to survive in just Rs. 80, whereas I would spend Rs. 300. My friends used to tell me 'Chhotubhai, even if you are lying drunk, people would say that this is a reaction of overdrinking milk, whereas we survive just in Rs. 80 and still are considered to be vagabonds'."

Though Chhotubhai never took to drinking, he smoked Capstan for a year. Then he gave up smoking and after that he never cultivated a bad-habit. But when he was doing his Inter-Science, he lost interest in studies. He says about this : "One of my uncles had six sons, whereas I was the only son of my father. So I thought that all these properties belonged to me only. Then why should I study? Thinking this I opted out for a drop."

Chhotubhai didn't want to study but his father wanted him to become a great man. He gave up farming for 18 years. Meanwhile, Chhotubhai's education furthered. Lallubhai's brother-in-law used to stay in Ahmedabad. So he sent Chhotubhai to Ahmedabad for his studies. Chhotubhai got

admission in M G Science College of Ahmedabad. He started his Inter-Science and now he also got interested in studies.

Likewise, Chhotubhai also had developed interest in watching movies. He says: "In Anand, it was not difficult to get tickets. But in Ahmedabad, we had to buy a Rs. 1.25 balcony ticket by paying Rs. 10. But even then we used to go. I also imitated Bharat Bhushan hairstyle at that time. It was also an age of Dev



Chhotubhai in hairstyle of Dev Anand

Anand. Once I had a bet of Rs. 5 with my friend. The bet was that he had to identify a man in a photograph. After seeing the photograph he said that it was Dev Anand. But he lost and I won because it was my photograph in Dev Anand's hairstyle."

For such hairstyles, Chhotubhai used to go to a hair-cutting saloon near Bhadra. He remembers that a haircut



Chhotubhai

would cost him half a rupee at that time. Once he also tried to have stylish outfits. He smiled sharing this: "In Ahmedabad, Praful, the son of a Manchester cloth merchant, was my roommate. He used to bring 'cut-piece' of foreign cloth and so I also had my clothes sewn from it. And

then when I returned home at the village I walked out wearing that outfit. At that time, Viththalbhai of D N High School grabbed me and asked why I switched over to foreign cloth. Listening to his remark, I gave up wearing such clothes and returned to my original dressing style.”

With such wonderful experiences, Chhotubhai passed his Inter-Science. Then he joined BVM Engineering College for his studies. At that time, BVM used to offer both Diploma as well as Degree courses. Chhotubhai got into a diploma Course.



BVM Engineering College

Even though he had 58% which was the pre-requisite for the admission in a Degree Course, he had to take admission in Diploma because he did his Inter-Science from Ahmedabad and hence was considered to be a student from an other University. That was the time when students from Vidyanagar were given priority for admission. Courses in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering were offered at that time. If you had

studied electrical, then you could do mechanical in one year. Similarly, if you had studied mechanical, you could do electrical in one year. He opted for electrical. It was the month of March when he was supposed to sit for exam but meanwhile he had applied in Gujarat Electricity Board and was offered the job, so he gave up the studies and took up the job.

Lallubhai advised him when he joined Gujarat Electricity Board : “Son, you are taking up a government job. But remember that no extra money should be brought home except your salary. Ill-gotten money would destroy the peace of life...” Chhotubhai kept this advice so honestly that except the sterling income, no extra paisa has ever entered his home.

“I was extremely faithful to Gujarat Electricity Board...”, he says remembering the days of his government job : “Government job is all about getting over-benefits. One would build his share keeping the government or public at loss. Even I had plenty of tempting offers. People used to drop their jewelries with us. I used to return them with words that bless us so that we can remain uncorrupted.”

He did receive the blessings and they did help. And as a result, Dr. C L Patel, who has become a synonym of honesty and faithfulness, has been able to keep himself away from all the temptations. The white attire is not only his outfit but a symbol of chastity, honesty and self-respect. He is always seen in the white khadi attire. Talking about his attire,

Chhotubhai says : “The volunteers of Independence Movement used to say with pride that they never let their white attire soiled. Then on I too started wearing the white... When I was a student, once I had to wear a khaki outfit. I did wear but then I shifted to my white dress. Everyone else was wearing khaki and I was in my white costumes. Observing this, the superintendent once warned me that if I would not put on khaki, I would be thrown out of the workshop. I too said that let it be so. But I would not wear khaki... So I studied with white attire. Now Ramanbhai of Alpa Finance says, 'See, C L Patel wears white. Show us one spot if you could find any'....”

Thus, the white attire is Dr. C L Patel's pride. It's a symbol of his honesty, reputation and self-respect. It can be said that Mount Meru might have shaken, but Dr. C L Patel's heart has never. He is also proud that from the day he had begun the job till today, he has never let any spot stain his white attire.

“I joined my job on March 01, 1961...”, Chhotubhai is talking about the early days of his job as an engineer : “It was the 1st March I joined the Sabarmati Circle. On the 2nd March I got posting in Nadiad and on the 3rd March I came back to Anand. In those days, Gujarat Electricity Board used to have substations of 66 kv. Sabarmati, Nadiad, Anand, Utaran, Vadodara etc. were considered to be big substations. I got an opportunity to work with Anand substation. The superintending engineer at that time had also assigned me

extra responsibilities. During that time, Dr. H M Patel, the then GEB Chairman, had invited 95 big industrialists to develop industries in Vidyanagar. The scarcity of electricity was the major hurdle. It used to remain working from 10:00pm to 07:00am only. With a view to having power supply during the day time as well, I was given the responsibility of Diesel Generating Power Station. Everyday I used to come on bicycle. I used to look after the Diesel Power Station from 7 in the morning till 10 at night.”

From those days with Gujarat Electricity Board, Chhotubhai has earned a good-will of how to serve the community. The first principle of the job was a consideration that the employee was a constituent of the system and whoever came was a customer. So he had a wish to satisfy the customers in a maximum way. But it is said that there are innumerable obstacles in the path of good work, senior employees and other people used to create umpteen problems. Chhotubhai too had to face such problems. Amongst



such obstacles too, Chhotubhai was determined not to step back in any circumstances. And his this determination was further motivated by Socrates and Roma Roland.

“Don't bother what people would say. Be conscious of what a person who understands just and unjust would say!”

- Socrates

“I have declared it thousand times that the worst evil exists in the society not because of the strength of unjust and evil-minded people but because of the weakness of good and just men. It retains its existence from the lack of will, a fear to freely giving opinion and ethical impotence.”

- Roma Roland

These words are still framed on the wall of Dr. C L Patel's chamber at Charutar Vidya Mandal. Dr. Patel says : “I have continued to keep these statements from 1961 when I joined

“આપણા વિશે લોકો શું કહેશે એની દરકાર ન કરવી પરંતુ એ એકાકી માનવી કે જેને ન્યાય અન્યાયની સમજણ છે. તે શું કહેશે તેની દરકાર કરવી.”

- સોક્રેટીસ

“મેં વારંવાર જાહેર કર્યું છે કે દુનિયા જે ભૂંડામાં ભૂંડા દુઃખાણથી ત્રાસ પાળી રહી છે તેનું ખરું કારણ દુષ્ટોની તાકાત નથી પરંતુ સજ્જનોની નબળાઈ છે અને આજે નબળાઈ છે તે મોટોભાગે ઈચ્છા શક્તિની સુસ્તી, સ્વતંત્ર મત પ્રદર્શિત કરવાનો ભય અને નીતિ વિષયમાં બાયલાપણું એમને આભારી છે.”

- રોમા રોલાં

Gujarat Electricity Board. They have become my friends since then.”

These statements have become the guiding principles for Chhotubhai. He caught many illegal electricity users. It is Chhotubhai who has caught maximum illegal users of electricity so far.

“You have to be brave and strong if you want to stop the illegal use of electricity in the village..”, Chhotubhai is reminded of one incident while talking about this : “It was one of the villages of Borsad taluka. There were two persons with ill-repute. One was Patel and other Kshatriya. The Kshatriya was government executive and revenue officer (Mamalatdar). Both of them had not paid their electricity bills for last three years. But they continued to have electric supply for their well. So one day I went there. I kept my Jeep one kilometer away and went there walking. It was summer. I used to keep a knife with me. I plucked a raw mango from the tree and walked along peeling its skin. Then I said,

'Is this the well of Mamalatdar?'

'Yes. It indeed is. Who are you?'

'I come from Khambholaj. I have also got connection from electricity board. They have given me the notice that I have to install the water-pump within three months. Otherwise I will have to pay the minimum bill. I inquired in Borasad office and came to know that there are two places in

your village where they have disconnected the supply. You have a Jyoti Motor and I want to have the same one. That's why I have come.'

'So you have come all the way from Khambholaj?'

'Yes, I want to buy that Motor.'

'See there, what can you make out?'

'What are you making me see?'

'The same well from where the water is being supplied.'

'Show me the starter that you use.'

Mamalatdar showed Chhotubhai everything. Chhotubhai could see that he was stealing the electricity. However it was recorded in the meter. But nobody had courage to go there for collection of dues. After observing everything, Chhotubhai said,

'Now let me go to Dahyabhai. He might have removed the motor...'

'You don't need to go there. He has it the same way.'

But Chhotubhai went to his home and he had done it the same way. He was building a home out of the money he was saving from the bill. Witnessing all this himself, Chhotubhai returned. He got back into the jeep and raided the estate of those two persons. Both of them were shocked. They recognized him and said,

'Wasn't it you who visited us earlier?'

'Oh no. This is my first time visit.'

'No. it was definitely you,' the Patel said: 'You wanted to buy the Motor.'

"I had recorded their metres..." , Chhotubhai elaborates this incident : "At that time, I mean in 1965, they were supposed to pay up the bill of Rs. 11 to 12 thousand. So I asked the Kshatriya : 'Now what do you want to do? Would you prefer to go to jail, Mr. Mamaltdar?'. Then I turned to the Patel and said : 'If you want to construct your home, let it be so but not from this money.' And then both of them paid their bills."

Due to such instances, the illegal users of electricity started feeling frightened of Chhotubhai. They started to think about various possible tricks. One of such illegal users came to Chhotubhai and expressed his wish. Sharing this instance, Chhotubhai says : "This happened in Gana. I used to have a scooter at that time. I also had a beard. We received a complaint of getting just single phase. So I went there. I got every line checked; got the transformer and connection checked. At that point the person, who had registered complaint, said,

'Send that C L Patel... I want to hang him up deep in the well.'

'Uncle, you won't be able to do it with him.'

'You just send him. We will set him right.'

While this conversation was on, Chhotubhai got the connection, the starter and the rest checked. He also realized that the man was stealing the electricity. He went back. He returned in his jeep after a while and said to the uncle : "I am C L Patel you were talking about. You won't be able to hang me up in the well but let me do that to you... Get a stamp paper of Rs. 3.50 and confess your crime on that. And now pay up your bill."

"You have indeed hanged us up", saying this, the uncle did exactly what Chhotubhai had asked him to do. The descendents of the same person have donated the land for New Vidyanagar today!

While he was working with Gujarat Electricity Board, Chhotubhai had had many adventures like this. He hated people who pilferage the electricity. He caught many customers doing that. He controlled many dangerous persons. So it was obvious that they became his enemies. They started looking for apt opportunities to take revenge. They started making efforts to revenge on him.

"There have been many attempts on my life, as there were two parties in the elections of Gram Panchayat of my village...", Chhotubhai says : "my rivals from village did make many attempts to kill me. I used to pass by Chikhodara

crossings at least four times a day. I have been attacked there. Once, a person from the crowd took away the revolver from the attacker's hand. They attacked my family members also to take revenge on me. Once they attacked my father. I took him back home after the treatment. I thought at that moment that I too would retaliate and kill those three or four.... I had a Belgium made gun. Loading the bullet when I started rushing out, my father stopped me and said that let their sins destroy them.... At that time, my eldest son was one and a quarter year old. I looked at him. And then thought, today I will kill him and subsequently he would attack and harm me. It would go on. So on that very day I surrendered my gun to Anand Police Station. This happened in 1968... Meanwhile, what my father said – *let their sins destroy them* – had come true. Three of them, who tried to kill me, died a pathetic death. Then I realized that a weapon of destruction should not be kept at home. So I sold out my gun.”

After this incident, Chhotubhai has never let any ill-thought to enter his mind for anyone. However, he never had done harm to anyone before that. He always had a sensitivity to serve the community from the beginning. His sole motto was to satisfy the customers. Meanwhile, because of his sincerity and efficiency, he was promoted in 1966. So he went to Rajkot.

“The biggest Diesel Power Station of India was in Rajkot...”, remembering this, Chhotubhai slipped into his past

: “If the Dhuvaran Power Station had stopped functioning, the Rajkot Power Station had to be activated. But that was to be done only when the Dhuvaran Power Station developed a snag. So in the free time, whenever I used to walk around, I used to find the engineers and other employees killing their time in unproductive activities. So I realized that they were paid so they had to be given work. I am talking about the days when Dr. Verghese Kurien was the Chairman of GEB. At that time, three hundred transformers were lying out of order and kept in the yard. I taught the engineers how to repair the transformers. So the three hundred transformers were repaired without spending any money on them.... In those days, if someone requested the electricity connection for home, he would get it within fifteen days and if someone applied for a connection for the business purpose, it would be done within one month. This is what I could manage to do in Rajkot!”

One more memory is associated with Rajkot : “One kilo of Ghee used to cost Rs. 8 and one litre of oil used to cost Rs. 1.25, when I was appointed in Rajkot.... We were offered first class tickets but I traveled with my family in the third class. We went to Viramgam from Anand. Then we settled in the train that could take us to Saurashtra. We had three or four gunnysacks of vessels with us. The rest of the luggage was yet to be brought. There was a contactor named Sadhusingh. He often used to visit Saurashtra. So he got the rest of my

luggage to Rajkot. My Head-Clerk deposited a TADA bill of Rs. 300 and I accepted the money as well.”

Meanwhile, one day Chhotubhai's wife Sharadabahen said : “The maid, who works at our place, does her job so nicely”. So Chhotubhai remarked : “We have come to an unknown region. So be careful.”

“A few days after this conversation, my wife said to me that her watch was missing”, saying this, Chhotubhai continues : “Though our luggage was brought here by Sadhusingh, we took Rs. 300 for that work. Now I think the account is settled. So don't worry now for the lost watch.”

This incident provides a glimpse of the transparent persona of Chhotubhai. He doesn't regret to confess honestly the wrong thing that he has done.

This is probably the ideal quality that makes him loved and respected by people around him. He has brought back many to the right path. He always said to his colleagues not to ask anything to a man with two hands; God has thousand hands, ask from Him... Accepting and following this



Chhotubhai and Sharadabahen

golden advice of Chhotubhai, many rogues have transformed into saints. But those who were corrupt always hated

Chhotubhai. Moreover, the illegal users of electricity also had problems with him. They never let go of any opportunity to trouble Chhotubhai. Yet if they couldn't cause any trouble, they would get him transferred through political pressure. Chhotubhai says : “During my twenty years in GEB, I had twenty transfers.”

Recalling an incident of transfer, Chhotubhai says : “Shantikumar Raja was the Chairman of GEB at that time. He asked for suggestions regarding how Gujarat Electricity Board could maximize profits. I forwarded suggestions of transformer maintenance and stopping of illegal use of Electricity. He also congratulated me for these suggestions. But I was transferred under political pressure for the reason that I caught the illegal users. I was driving to Petlad in a jeep car. I was stopped by an officer who stepped down from his jeep and said to me, 'Excuse me sir, but we have with us the order of your transfer...' When I read the order, I came to know that I was transferred to Koyli Refinery.”

Chhotubhai said to D M Patel, who was the Chief Engineer at that time : “What wrong have I done to Gujarat Electricity Board that I have been transferred to Koyli Refinery? You do one thing. Send me to Head Office.” Then Chhotubhai got posting in Vadodara Head Office. So he shifted to Vadodara with his family. He had to face the financial challenges here. Let it be quoted in Chhotubhai's own words :

“I decided from the day I took the job that from now on I would not ask for any financial help from my father. I would survive from my salary... But once it so happened that my wife got ill and the illness got serious day by day. In those days, you would get a scooter loan from Gujarat Fertilizers. I had a scooter, which my father gave me in 1963. I had travelled 75 thousand kilometers on that scooter but it was maintained in a good condition. One of my friends wanted to buy that scooter, so I sold it in Rs. 3600. I had bought that scooter for Rs. 2900. I gave that money to my father. I didn't have enough money even for an injection. I had four daughters and two sons. I had to spend on their education. And moreover my wife was ill. I never ever did the kitchen work but I cooked under the instructions of my wife. But how to manage money? I needed money to purchase the medicine. Finally I borrowed Rs. 5000 on interest from Anand's Jaykrushna Shroff. I paid for the medication from that money. But the policy was that three percent interest was deducted in advance and if you don't pay the installments in time, you would be considered as a defaulter. I wanted to return the money but I didn't have any money. But the Shroff asked me to pay it anyhow. I withdrew money from my PF and took a loan to pay his Rs. 5000. I again asked him for Rs. 5000 but he refused saying that I didn't pay up the installments in time so I had become a defaulter...”

After that Chhotubhai started saving money. The doctor used to charge half a rupee for an injection. For saving that

half a rupee, Chhotubhai used to walk. He would cross Kareli Baug and take a bus from the station. In the evening again, crossing the Kamati Baug, he would come to Kareli Baug. Chhotubhai says : “Once I was walking back when some women folk were sitting on a raised platform of a verandah. The gossip was that the lady residing in 15 number would not live long. Hearing this I felt that my wife must have had her internal system damaged. So I decided to take her to Dr. Umedbhai's Hospital in Anand. She had to be taken there in a car. So I went to the taxi stand and inquired what it would cost to go to Anand. I was told : 'Rs. 30'. I only had Rs. 30 at that time. So we hired a taxi and reached Umedbhai's Hospital in Anand. Umedbhai started the treatment. And within two-three days my wife was alright. I said to Umedbhai that my wife was ill for last two or three months, so what did he do to get her out of her illness so quickly. Then I inquired about the fees. At that time we used to get our salary on 28th in advance. So I thought that I would pay up the fees as soon as I get the salary. I did have the fare for my return journey to Vadodara. But Umedbhai said to me that we were friends so he would not charge any fees at all. The matter ended there.

Though the matter was closed at that time, recently, when Chhotubhai met Umedbhai in America, it was discussed again. He says in this reference : “Umedbhai's son Dr. Nilesh is settled in America. When Pramukhswami Maharaj's operation was performed, along with Dr. Subramanyam,

Dr. Nilesh was also there. I dropped in at Dr. Nilesh's home in America to see Umedbhai. The matter came up again and I said to Umedbhai, 'When you treated my wife I had no money with me. If you had asked for the fees, I would have come to you with my salary and paid up the fees. But you didn't ask for it and that was your generosity...'. So Umedbhai said, 'Well, it was your favour on me. Some time ago, some rogues were troubling me in Grid area so I called up your father and asked for your number. Hearing the matter, your father came to my home. He called up those Grid people and told them, 'I am C L Patel's father. Now lets talk about Umedbhai's matter.' Then the Grid people said to him, 'Please do not to talk to Chhotubhai about that matter. We would not cause any trouble to Umedbhai...' Thus I was relieved from the troubles of those Grid people just by a call from your father...' After so many years this was shared between us.

This occurrence shows the respect won by Chhotubhai in Gujarat Electricity Board. On the basis of his honesty and righteousness, he earned a good reputation in Gujarat Electricity Board as well as the common mass. He was, at that time, also active in Engineering Association. One day, Shantikumar Raja, the Chairman of GEB called him and said :

'Mr. Patel, what do you think of yourself?'

'Nothing sir..'

'What have you started doing then?'

'Nothing at all, sir'

'If you keep doing this, you would be ruined.'

'Sir, I have never done anything wrong in my life for which I would be ruined. But leave that aside. Tell me why have you called me?'

'If I assign you some work, will you do that or not?'

'I surely will but not against my principles.'

'Alright. You can go.'

This conversation took place around quarter past five. When Chhotubhai returned to his office, he found a transfer order on his desk. He was transferred to Kandala. Seeing the order, he went back to the Chairman for a discussion. But the Chairman had left. There was none with whom he could possibly discuss. So he returned but decided not to go to Kandala.

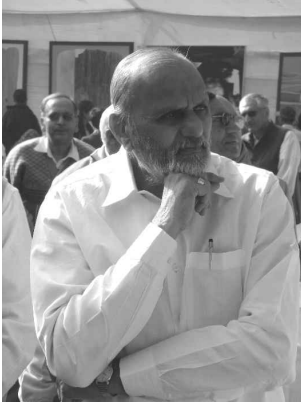
Chhotubhai kept his decision and didn't go to Kandala at all. He stayed at home for 10 months. Meanwhile, Shantikumar Raja must have thought in peace and must have felt that Chhotubhai is an honest man. So he paid him 10 months' salary and transferred him to Nadiad. Chhotubhai again took up the work. But when the time came for the promotion, he lagged behind because of his qualification. Chhotubhai had carried out all his responsibilities as an electrical engineer efficiently. But he had a degree in

mechanical engineering. Stretching this point, the technical member Mr. Mankodi had transferred him to Dhuvaran. So Chhotubhai said : “My children study here. So please don't send me there.”

“See, if you want to continue with your job, you have to go to Dhuvaran...”, Chhotubhai didn't have any option when Mr. Mankodi said this. Chhotubhai thought that Mr. Mankodi wanted to punish him. He used to go to Dhuvaran once in a month in his Fiat but gradually he even stopped that. So it was bound to happen. Chhotubhai's job was terminated. Official termination happened after two years. So at the age of 45, he had to quit the job.

Though Chhotubhai had lost the job, he had won the love and respect of the people. Because of his sincere work with GEB, he was loved by not only his seniors at the Gujarat Electricity Board but also by the workers under his supervision and all the people around him. That's why the people of Nadiad wanted to elect him as an MLA. Remembering that instance, Chhotubhai says : “Nadiad's Mahudha belt used to survive on the rain water. I had worked a lot for the people there. Once they came and asked me to quit the job so that they would make me their MLA. But I refused saying that I didn't go there for becoming an MLA.”

After declining to be an MLA, he was requested to be a Member of Parliament. Late Chief Minister Chimanbhai Patel



was willing to make Chhotubhai a Member of Parliament. But Chhotubhai declined that proposal politely. However, he says now : “If I had been associated with the ruling party, then I could probably have served the people more efficiently.”

Though he was not a part of the ruling party, he did have many opportunities to work for the welfare of the people. Chhotubhai actively participated in Maha-Gujarat Movement. In this regard, Chhotubhai says : “The Maha-Gujarat movement was at its peak during those days. Even in Vidyanagar, public meetings were organized. They were led by efficient leaders like Brahmakumar Bhatt, Harihar Khambholaja and many other leaders. I was associated with the Youth Congress. I used to attend these public meetings. Once a public meeting was organized at Kankaria in Ahmedabad. I went to attend the meeting but reached Law-Garden instead of Kankaria. At Law-Garden Indulal Yagnik was addressing another gathering. Jawaharlal was the Prime Minister of India, but even his gathering would look trivial in front of the gathering Indulal Yagink had. Indulal Yagnik elaborated on what tremendous injustice would follow if Gujarat was not partitioned as a separate state... I was assigned the responsibility to spread awareness in every

village regarding the benefits of forming Gujarat a separate state. We had a team. We used to travel by train and when the train passed by the village we intended to visit, we would just pull up the chain and get down. This is how I visited all the villages from Karamasad to Khambhat and like a soldier I performed all of my responsibilities that I was assigned in the Maha-Gujarat movement.”

Chhotubhai did work like a soldier, but he was destined to be the commander-in-chief. That is why today he is the chairman of Gujarat's largest educational trust Charutar Vidya Mandal. He is the leader. He has been leading the Carutar Vidya Mandal from the front for last 16 years successfully. He has established new traditions in the field of education. He has not only initiated reforms but also guided them. However, before entering the education field, he had established many novel traditions at social front. He initiated many new social reforms. He provided ample guidance to Patidar Samaj after giving up the Gujarat Electricity Board job. He had contributed to his maxim to develop the Vansol Sattavis Patidar Samaj. He opposed the dowry system. He persuaded



Patidars not to spend lavishly on weddings. He started the tradition of group-weddings. He paid for two such events himself.

During that period, Chhotubhai engaged in community services. At the same time, he also used to do farming and was also looking after his estate business. But before that he had faced many financial challenges. Talking about that, Chhotubhai says : “My step-sister died leaving behind her a two-day baby. My mother brought him up, and educated him. I gave him the responsibilities of farming and other such stuff. But he cost us everything. Even my father's savings were lost. So the day came when I was compelled to take a loan of Rs. 25,000 for farming and other social reasons. I used to pay up the loan from the produce of farming and then again would take a loan. Thus I did this loan turnover for five years.”

Those were the hard days for Chhotubhai, but he never gave up the hard work. He didn't bother about extreme heat or cold or heavy rainfall... He would start at 5:30 from Nadiad on his motorbike to come to the farm. He would sprinkle fertilizer on the farming land, or he would water the farm or he would cut the corps. If for some reason Chhotubhai could not go to the farm, Shardaben would go. In the peak season, there was a large work-force. Calculating 3 for 1 person, Shardaben would prepare 250 *Rotalas* or *Dhebras*. Chhotubhai would go to the farm carrying them with him... Thus, he had done a real hard work.

With hard work came the good fortune. That fortune brought Chhotubhai to Charutar Vidya Mandal. The Joint Secretary of Charutar Vidya Mandal, Manibhai Aashabhai Patel had passed away. His absence was felt terribly. Gordhanbhai Patel was the Secretary of CVM at that time. He was a research scientist in the field of agriculture. He knew Chhotubhai. Once he made a proposal to Chhotubhai, 'You have given up your job, now why not join the field of community service through education?' Chhotubhai responded positively. So Gordhanbhai took him to the Chairman of Charutar Vidya Mandal Dr. H M Patel. Dr. Patel said to Chhotubhai : "Well you want to serve... We will decide and call you..."

'What happened?'

'Patel saheb has said that he would decide and call me up. But if you want me to work, I will work in my own way. I would not prefer any interference.'



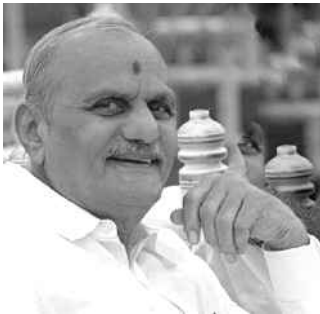
Dr. H M Patel

After this conversation, Gordhanbhai must have had a talk with Patel saheb. So Patelsaheb appointed Chhotubhai as Estate manager. As soon as Chhotubhai took up the charge, he started working. He started fencing of Charutar Vidya Mandal properties. At that time, people used to learn driving and

riding in Shastri Maidan. And even donkeys were left grazing in it. So Chhotubhai prepared a plan to construct a compound wall around Shastri Maidan. At that point, Bhaikaka's son Chimanbhai remarked : "You would cut the trees around Shastri Maidan, wouldn't you?"

"I am a farmer's son. I would not cut even a single tree...", said Chhotubhai. And as he said, without cutting a single tree, Chhotubhai constructed a wall around 17 acres of Shastri Maidan by spending 3 and a half lacs. This was his first important contribution to Charutar Vidya Mandal.

This instance made H M Patel saheb realize the genius of Chhotubhai. He invited Chhotubhai to become the Joint Secretary. Chhotubhai served with utter dedication to this position. He completed many projects. Remembering an incident in this regard, this enlightened educationist says : "A



girl from Jamnagar had taken admission over here but she had not found any suitable hostel room for her. So she called up her father. Her father asked her to stay here until he came... he started his journey but the vehicle had met with an accident.

Fortunately he didn't get himself hurt. So he came and met me and talked about the unavailability of a suitable hostel room for his daughter. So I discussed the problem with Patelsaheb :

“We get some rooms in the Sardar Patel University Hostel yet we have to deny admissions to about 250 girls only because of the unavailability of accommodation facilities. So let us build a hostel for women.”

“But how do we finance that project?”

“We would go for a 25 Lac loan.”

“Who would give us loan?”

“That I shall manage...”, saying this Chhotubhai managed the finance and he constructed a women's hostel with kitchen facilities that could accommodate 250 girls. From the income of the hostel, he paid up the loan. Thus, the expense to build the hostel was recovered.

After completing the women's hostel project, Chhotubhai took up the responsibility for Polytechnic. The amount of Rs. 2.5 crore was sanctioned for the project. If the time-line was kept, the grant was sufficient to cover the expense. But if the time-line was not kept, there could be a 20% additional expense required. But Chhotubhai completed the project on war-footing.

As a Joint Secretary of Charutar Vidya Mandal, Chhotubhai successfully accomplished several such projects. In this list there are also instances when he had taught lessons to rouges. In this connection, Chhotubhai is reminded of an incident :



Polytechnic

“At that time, those who had a small lari or galla, used to stay illegally in the hostels. One rouge named Gabbarsinh Sardarji was also one of such type. In certain cases, students had to be admitted to some colleges because he recommended them. In one case, he charged Rs. 2000 for an admission in Polytechnic. I used to keep a hockey stick with me in those days... One day I went with my hockey stick and fetched Gabbarsinh till Polytechnic beating him all the while from Mota Bazaar. And I said, 'Return that amount of Rs. 2000...' He returned Rs. 2000 and never returned again.”

Chhotubhai also taught a lesson to another rouge. It happened when Rameshbhai Trivedi was the Principal in TV Patel High School. Once he met Chhotubhai and complained : 'A rouge stands on the staircase and causes the girls to fall by tripping. But he is from Karamsad so we can't do anything to him.'”

“You don't worry. I will come during the recess today.”, said Chhotubhai and reached there on time. He gave such a harsh beating to that rouge that he ran. Chhotubhai followed

him in his car. Chhotubhai warned him, 'If you ever come back from Karamsad, I will kill you...!' The rouge loved his life so he never came back again.

Because of such courageous and brave acts of Chhotubhai, the academic atmosphere has been created in Vidyanagar. The fragrance of Chhotubhai's works had spread far and wide. Meanwhile, in 1990 the government had appointed him as a Senate Member. He contested the Syndicate Election in 1991 and won by a record voting. Moreover, he helped getting elected many of his own group members. But one important event happened during that period. Once, Chhotubhai went to Pramukhswami Maharaj for darshan, where the then Education Minister Karsandas Soneri had also come. Chhotubhai met Soneri and had a conversation, wherein Soneri said : "Send us a recommendation of a name whom you would want to be the Vice Chancellor of Sardar Patel University."

Chhotubhai informed Dr. H M Patel but he said, 'I would recommend none...!'

"Sir, Dilavarsinh Jadeja would like to be the Vice Chancellor. Please send the recommendation of his name..." Since Chhotubhai had suggested it, Dr. H M Patel sent the recommendation. And thus after many years, Sardar Patel University had its first Vice Chancellor from the Charutar Vidya Mandal.

Obviously, Chhotubhai was very happy as a Vice Chancellor from Charutar Vidya Mandal had been appointed. But soon after that something shocking happened, and his happiness disappeared. Sharing that instance, he says : “I was a Senate Member. It was a rule that after a three-year term, the member has to be re-elected. But Mandal thought that I am already a Senate Member so my name was not sent to the Government. One cannot continue as a syndicate member if one is not a member of Senate. Mandal didn't make any effort for correction, so I, too, decided not to work for those who had no appreciation for me...”

Chhotubhai took the decision and put it in action too. He resigned from all the executive bodies and from other posts as well and decided not to work for them ever... Once again the Syndicate election came up. So Shanubhai and others approached Chhotubhai and asked him to contest. Initially Chhotubhai refused but then he thought that Patelsaheb ran the Mandal for the betterment of society. So we should not feel hurt if something wrong happened. Thus Chhotubhai agreed to contest the election. Being a joint Senate contender with Sheth Goyenka and Amrutlal, he contested the election and won. After that, he used to be a part of the selection committee of lecturers as well and this was how his reputation soared higher and higher.

Meanwhile, in 1993 Dr. H M Patel passed away. So Chhotubhai was requested to contest the election for the

Chairmanship of Charutar Vidya Mandal. Chhotubhai says :
“At that time, H M Patel saheb's party wanted Anandbhai Amin to be the Chairman. Other leading supporters were also in favour of Anandbhai. But except Bhikhubhai, who was then a member of Vidyanagar Municipality, the rest were in my support. 18 out of 19 members publically declared their support to me. 90 percent people of Vidyanagar and the entire Bakrol community were with me. From Mahendrabhai Patel of Municipal Bureau to Rajan Vinubhai Patel, everyone was fovouring my position. Then Anandbhai realized that he could not win. Even his son's father-in-law, who was a well-reputed man of Karamsad, also requested Anandbhai not to contest. Finally one day before the election, Anandbhai gave his statement saying that he would withdraw his candidature.... The next day election took place. Anandbhai got 100 - 200 votes whereas I received two and a half thousand votes. As the old saying goes that any individual can become a king if the she-elephant anoints him. Likewise, the members of Charutar Vidya Mandal made me the Chairman of Charutar Vidya Mandal.”

Chhotubhai won the election in March 1994 and took up the responsibilities as a Chairman from April 09, 1994. He clarifies that he contested the election for Chairmanship because he was asked to do so by Pramukhswami Maharaj :
“At that time, Pramukhswami Maharaj called me up from Delhi and said, 'The Trust has to run efficiently. So contest the

election. God be with you.' And I won. After that, Swami himself helped me offer the puja at Salangpur and blessed me, saying, 'You don't need to worry about anything. Shastriji Maharaj is with you. You will not have any trouble. All of your resolutions will be successfully achieved.'

With the blessings of Pramukhswami Maharaj, Chhotubhai took up the responsibilities as the Chairman of Charutar Vidya Mandal. He says remembering the sentimental state he was in at that time : “A common man becoming Chairman of Charutar Vidya Mandal is in itself a



great achievement. I was fortunate to be elected to chair this position. Otherwise, when we were the students, this office had its marvelous grandeur. Nobody would

dare to climb up the steps besides the Brahmaji statue here. Bhaikaka used to sit on a wooden cot there. You would find Chimanbhai Desai sitting by as well... People would go to the bank, but nobody could dare climb up those steps. Even we couldn't.”

Chhotubhai didn't climb up that step, but in times to come he reached the pinnacle and became the Chairman of Charutar Vidya Mandal... He became the leader. He took up the responsibilities of the Chair but realized that it was a

crown of thorns and has under it many challenges of its own. The treasury had reached its bottom. So one day Chhotubhai called up Kansara (accountant) and asked,

“What is our financial status?”

“We have no finance with us... We get the block grant. But as soon as it comes, we pay up the salary. And if it doesn't we are left with paying no salary.”

“Do we have any fund to spend?”

“No, not at all.”

“Tell me about the loss.”

“Last year we had a loss of 25 lacs.”

The Mandal had assets worth 15 million rupees. Mandal was not in debt. No payments were due. But the estates were not in a good condition. There were non-utilizable lands all around. They were covered up with prickly shrubs. They were full of garbage. Even hostels were in a worn out conditions. A huge renovation was necessary. But finance was required for that. From where to possibly raise the fund?

To answer this question, Chhotubhai kept thinking. It is said that where there is a will, there is a way... Chhotubhai had a will so he could also find a way. At that time somewhere around 20,000 students used to study here. So he came up with an idea regarding what could be done to remove those prickly shrubs. He introduced a small additional fee in the

form of environmental protection. Rs. 20 for a term! That came to Rs. 40 a year. Thus, a fund of Rs. 8 lac could be generated from 20,000 students. So Chhotubhai wanted to introduce this additional fee in the form of environmental preservation. But Shanubhai, the then Principal of BJVM, dissuaded him saying, 'Sir, please don't do this... It would really put you in trouble. In times of Bhaikaka, there was a strike. And H M Patel was a big name so somehow he handled it. But people would really throw you out.'

“They would only throw me out, right? They can't do anything else. See, I am not unemployed. I have my property at home. I come in my own car and don't use any money of Mandal for my personal purposes. So why should I worry?”

Thus, Chhotubhai took a bold step and introduced the Environment Preservation fee. The entrance fee was introduced in the second phase. In primary and secondary school, Rs. 100 per annum and in college, it was Rs. 200 per annum were charged... Thus Rs. 30 lac were generated.



Bhaikaka

This is how the financial condition of the Mandal improved. Then, Chhotubhai thought that something new must be done now. He says : “I used to visit America

since 1991. I visited universities over there and the system of their functioning. Observing them, I realized that God has destined an ordinary man like me to do these extraordinary things. So why shouldn't I do them?"

Chhotubhai had good reason for this. Before Bhaikaka joined the Ahmedabad Municipality, he had a salary of Rs. 1800 per month. At that time the Municipality rule was that a chief engineer could not be paid more than Rs. 1000. So Bhaikaka returned the cheque of Rs. 1800 and asked for a Rs. 1000 cheque. Similarly, Bhikhabhai mortgaged his own home to pay up the salary of the teachers. H M Patel was an ICS officer. He rendered his services on various important positions. He was one of the best Chairmen of Gujarat Electricity Board. Chhotubhai says : "I was blessed to be placed on the position occupied by these great men. So I thought that I must develop a persona to retain its status. I always prayed to the Almighty for that."

And the Almighty heard his prayers and blessed him. People kept gossiping that though Chhotubhai had become the Chairman, he would hardly survive for six months. But he was chosen by God. Chhotubhai was destined to be successful and so the donors have always supported him. He



Bhikhabhai Saheb

started receiving donations from 1994 onwards. Chhotubhai says about this : “At the time I took up the charge as a Chairman, the CVM Primary School was functional at the place where now we have Mohanlal Someshwar Mistry School. In the Annual Meeting of the Milk Federation, I was invited as the Chairman of Charutar Vidya Mandal. I put forward an appeal in the Meeting that I could build a school but I need their support in the form of financial assistance. In response to my appeal, the council members of the Milk Federation donated their yearly profit and contributed Rs. 51 thousand. VVCC Bank also contributed Rs. 51 thousand. And then the time came when the Mistry Trust donated Rs. 25 lac and the school was named after him.”

Thus, donations started flowing in. it was the beginning of a financial stability. During this period, Chhotubhai thought of establishing NVPAS college. Natubhai Patel, the donor of the college, had already donated Rs. 15 lac for the purpose. An MOU was prepared on the stamp-paper that whatever expenditure required above the sum of Rs. 15 lac for the college would be borne by CVM. It was also decided that the 50 percent seats would be filled up by CVM and the rest would be filled up by Natubhai... Chhotubhai wanted to start this college. And one day, Natubhai told him,

“Chhotubhai, tell me... What is to be done now? You are not building the college. What about the money that I donated? What about the promise that you made?”



NVPAS college

“Uncle, whatever you are saying is true. I do want to build the college. But I require additional finance for that purpose. Please give me Rs. 1 crore.”

Natubhai was initially a little annoyed listening to this. But then, the pious and kind-hearted man gave another 1 crore to establish the college. And NVPAS came into existence.

Chhotubhai accomplished one more project successfully. But another project was awaiting his attention. He had started the preparation for GCET. In this regard, the dedicated educationist Chhotubhai says : “I thought of building up GCET in 1995. At that time there was no such course as Information Technology. According to the statistics of Reserve Bank, 120 thousand crore was being invested in Chemical Industries. I wanted to start the college with both of these courses. So I got the design ready by architect Suryakantbhai. Kiritbhai and his family was settled in America at that time. They publically announced the donation. Even the Bhumi Pujan was to be done by him.”

Everything was going right till that point. But then the trouble began. Chhotubhai's daughter was operated in the Apollo Hospital of Madras. After the operation, Chhotubhai returned by air on his own expense. But Kiritbhai had already left for America before he came. The Secretaries of Mandal didn't inform Chhotubhai about this because they thought that it would give a tremendous shock to saheb!



GCET College

Meanwhile, the time for Bhumi Pujan was running out. So Chhotubhai himself did the Puja. He said to everyone : “Pray to God that this project is successfully accomplished...” With this prayer, the Bhumi Pujan was done.

“I called up Kiritbhai, who had reached the States by then, after the Bhumi Pujan...”, Chhotubhai, a leader with tremendous mental power and a true fighter against all the obstacles, says : “It used to cost Rs. 90 per minute. I spent Rs. 16 thousand calling him on that day. That amount was also spent from my pocket. But Kiritbhai said many unpleasant things to me,

“Mr. C L Patel, you are building this college just to satisfy your ego. H M Patel was no fool that he didn't build any other college when there was already BVM. You are doing it only for your own sake. There is no such need at all. BVM is already there... we are fortunate that people have cautioned us, else we could have lost our money.”

“Kiritbhai, you have said what you wanted to say. If nothing is left now, I shall put down the phone...”, saying this Chhotubhai put down the phone. But he was seriously worried because he had already given the contracts of Rs. 3.75 crores. He already did the Bhumi Pujan and had no money with him. In such a difficult time, only God could help him so he went to God. It so happened that the news appeared in the newspapers regarding a new engineering college being started. Dinasha Desai, the Trustee of Gordhanbhai Hathibhai Charitable Trust, called up Chhotubhai. And this conversation took place :

“C L Patel, have you thought of the finance for the new college that you are building up?”

“Yes, the college shall be christened after the name of the person who donates Rs. 3 crore.”

“Do you think we can move in that direction?”

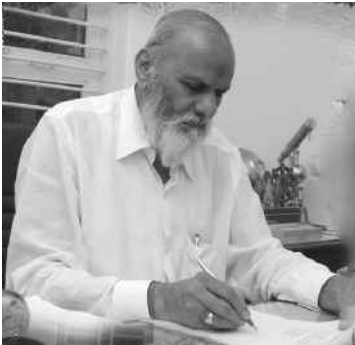
“Sure you should.”

After this conversation, Gordhanbhai called up

Chhotubhai and said that they were coming to meet him... But at that time, Chhotubhai's sister was admitted into Bhailal Amin Hospital in Vadodara. She had a brain hemorrhage. She had a clot of 2.5 centimeter so she had to be operated. So Chhotubhai was required to go to Vadodara everyday. He said to Gordhankaka : "I shall come to meet you myself after the Uttarayan (The Kite Flying Day). We shall talk about everything then."

So Chhotubhai and Gordhankaka met up after Uttarayan as decided, and Gordhankaka decided to donate Rs. 3 crore. But Chhotubhai was a bit worried about the contract that they had assigned. Chhotubhai says in this reference : "Chimanbhai Sathi was the Chairman of Charutar Nagrik Sahkari Bank in Anand. He said to me, 'Make sure that no project would suffer because of the want of finance. We are with you.' Similarly, Ramanbhai from Alpa Finance had offered his full support. He was also a member of Executive Council. He said to me, 'You write cheques upto Rs. 2 crore on the name of VVCC Bank.

They will not bounce."



These words relieved Chhotubhai from all the worries. He took Rs. 3.75 crore loan from Charutar Nagrik Sahkari Bank. As promised, Gordhankaka had donated the sum in five years time. Thus

Chhotubhai accomplished another project and GCET was established.

Chhotubhai founded the college and also provided it with all the necessary requirements. He also developed hostels for the College. He was falling short of finance, still he had constructed 80 Quarters. Thus, he marched forward in making the dreams of Bhaikaka come true. And then he thought of SEMCOM. Shanubhai Patel was due for retirement at that time. Talking about this,



SEMCOM

Chhotubhai says : “It was R C Desai who created the circumstances for Shanubhai's premature retirement. At that time, I was thinking of the 3 possible names to be recommended for the panel of Vice Chancellor of Sardar Patel University. So I proposed V S Patel, Shanubhai and somebody else. Prof. V J Trivedi, the principal of Gujarat College, was the Member of the Search Committee. R C Desai asked him to drop Shanubhai's name and to write his own name in his place. When I returned from America, I came to know about this. Hearing this, I went to V J Trivedi saheb's home and at that time he gave me the entire report of what had happened. But meanwhile Shanubhai gave up the job as he felt humiliated. But we were on real good terms so I asked him to look after SEMCOM and thus SEMCOM was founded.”



SICART

After establishing SEMCOM, Chhotubhai thought of establishing SICART and ISTAR. He was on a foreign tour at that time. Chhotubhai says : “I was visiting Germany, France, Switzerland and Netherlands. There was a big farm near our hotel in Netherlands. A couple used to keep 50 cows and used to do farming in 50 acres. Observing that, I was inspired to do farming. So in the same hotel of Netherlands I decided and named the two institutions - SICART – *Sophisticated Instrumentation Centre for Applied Research and Testing* and ISTAR – *Institute of Science and Technology for Advance Research*.

Meanwhile, Mumbai's Damodar Trust had already given Rs. 20 lac for PG Centre for Pharmacy Education.



ISTAR

Ashokbhai from America had also given 45 lac rupees for PG Centre for Engineering and Technology. Jayantibhai C Patel, a resident of America, had also decided to

donate one million dollars. He gave 15,000 dollars for five years. Then Changa trust asked Jayantibhai for money so he asked me, 'What should I do?'

“Your money seems to have a fortune in their arms. So let it go there.” Hearing this from Chhotubhai, Jayantibhai started giving money to Changa. However, the donation kept coming in for Chhotubhai as well and many institutions were founded from them.

As it is said, good things beget good things. One after another education institutes were established. “Rest” is the word that his dictionary doesn't contain. He always strives to do new and innovative things. In 2000, Chhotubhai wrote a letter to Bhaikaka's son Chimanbhai : “Children from wealthy families would be able to go to colleges for education. But if we want the poor children to be skillful and competent, we have to build ITC. For that, you give me some land in the Poll Factory compound.”

Chimanbhai wrote back : “We don't want the Charutar Grammodhar to die. We can't donate the land.”



Chimanbhai M U Industrial Training Centre

After receiving that answer, Chhotubhai thought that something must be done now. His friend Ravjibhai Patel passed away at that time. So Chhotubhai approached his son and son-in-law : “You have bought the land behind the GIDC at Rs. 7 thousand per guntha. You help us get that land as donation. I would make necessary arrangements for you to get back the Rs. 17 or 18 lac that you have invested.”

This is how Chhotubhai got the 468 gunthas of land in donation. He thought of developing an Engineering college and ICT over there. Chimanbhai's family, residing in Africa and who had also helped for MU Technical school, was convinced to donate Rs. 60 lac for the hostel purposes. But Chhotubhai took him to visit the 468 gunthas that he had been donated. And Chhotubhai said : “I want to develop ITC here and whoever donates Rs. 1.5 crore shall have the honour to name the institute after him.” So Chimanbhai's son Ajitbhai donated Rs. 1.5 crore. This is how *Chimanbhai M U Industrial Training Centre* – came up.

After ITC, Chhotubhai thought of ADIT. He went to Mumbai to visit Parmanandbhai, who was the son of Tulsidas



ADIT

Vallabhbhai and originally belonged to Dharmaj. Chhotubhai shared his idea of building up an Engineering college. Keeping the same thought in mind, Parmanandbhai and his wife came to visit Chhotubhai. They said : “I would donate Rs. 7 crore for GCET and would also give another Rs. 10 crore for new engineering college. So in total I would donate Rs. 17 crore but christen both of these colleges in my name.”

“I would not replace the name of G H Patel even if you donate Rs.17 crore for GCET alone...” The matter ended there for the time being. After that the proposal was presented to the renowned US based industrialist Mukeshbhai Patel, son of Shri Arvindbhai Patel of Adas, an alumnus of BVM Engineering College. He decided to fund the ADIT Engineering College in memory of his father by contributing Rs. 5 crore in just 6 months and also came forward to donate an additional sum of Rs. 1.5 crore.

Thus, Chhotubhai kept accomplishing one after the other projects. Meanwhile, he decided to develop an Ayurvedik College. During this period, the following incident happened. Chhotubhai was returning from the hair-cutting saloon and Rajan Vinubhai Patel met him on the way. He said, “Uncle, you would live for a hundred years.”

“I don't want to live for hundred years...” Chhotubhai said tenderly and asked Rajanbhai to come to his office. Both of them went to the office and Rajanbhai said to him : “We are placing a statue of my father.”

“Good. Place it at a right spot. There is nothing wrong in it.”

“We are planning to place it in Mota Bazaar.”

“It doesn't seem to be appropriate. At that spot, we should place the statue either of Sardar Patel, or Bhaikaka, or Bhikhabhai, or H M Patel. Think of another appropriate spot where you can place the statue of Vinubhai.” Saying this, Chhotubhai left. But from the village, people wrote him letters saying that ultimately it was decided that Vinubhai's statue would be placed in Mota Bazaar. So Chhotubhai wrote a letter to Rajan : “Dear Rajan, you are planning to place your father's statue in Mota Bazaar. But that is not appropriate. At that spot, we should place the statue of either Sardar Patel, or Bhaikaka, or Bhikhabhai or H M Patel. Vinubhai's statue will also be placed at an appropriate spot. But please don't go ahead with the plan to place it in Mota Bazaar...”

“So the conflict started...” Chhotubhai further elaborates on this matter : “One day Mahendrabhai from Municipality Bureau came to meet me. He said, 'Vinubhai's wife is literally shocked...’

“If Vinubhai's wife is so shocked, I shall ask the DSP and the Collector to grant permission. If there is no one else who has opposed, there is no reason for me to oppose the issue.”, Chhotubhai said and then inquired it with the DSP. DSP informed him,

“Chhotubhai, none except you has opposed.”

“So I would not oppose either.”

“Please give us in writing that you are not opposing it.”

“What? Do you think I would do that? I still am not convinced at all. If you place the statute, I would not stand there opposing. I would not go on fast either. But I do have my reasons not to be in the favour!”

And, when Chhotubhai went on a pilgrimage to Mansarovar, Vinubhai's statue was placed. Chhotubhai says : “I usually pass by Mota Bazaar at least four times a day. But I have no repulsion. If people don't bother, why should I?”

Chhotubhai never sustained any ill-feeling regarding the matter, but on the same issue he was harassed. He says in this reference : “On the basis of this incident, Rajan started troubling me. He started blackmailing me. Everyday he would create some problem. He wrote to the Charity Commissioner that 'Chhotubhai takes loan of crores of rupees but never takes your permission'. He wrote to the Bank, 'Under the influence of Chhotubhai, your senior Managers approve the loans without the necessary formalities.'...”

Due to these harassments, Chhotubhai developed diabetes. But he still kept his patience. It was the time of unwarranted challenges but he went on with a strong determination. And with the help of that determination he

furthered the work of Ayurvedik College. But it is said that when problems come, they come in battalion. A letter from the Charity Commissioner was received that said, 'Without our permission, you should not take any loan or do any other thing.' Even banks were also informed that 'Without necessary formalities, no loan of Charutar Vidya Mandal should be approved.'

Any ordinary man would go into the state of pessimism and surrender to the circumstances. But this was Chhotubhai. He never surrendered to anything except the Almighty and his guru Pramukhswami Maharaj. He went to Pramukhswami Maharaj and said : “Bapa, bless me...” He was blessed by Pramukhswami Maharaj and the sterling money of Jayantibhai C Patel came in. Chhotubhai, a true worshipper of Pramukhswami Maharaj, says : “Charutar Vidya Mandal's Honorary Joint-Secretary Bhupendrabhai Patel and I met Jayantibhai in London. We had a conversation with him. And he decided to donate Rs. 2.5 crore. Rs. 1.25 crore for the college and the rest for the hospital. Thus, for the Ayurvedik College, Jayantibhai's sterling money came in. You take one righteous step and the Almighty would help the rest go well. We have spent Rs. 15 crore for Ayurvedik College and we didn't require to borrow any money at all.”

After Ayurveda, Chhotubhai started thinking of Biotechnology. A group of 21 biotechnologists were invited all the way from Jammu to Tamilnadu. And a project of 15 crore

was taken up. Meanwhile, Ashokbhai Patel and his wife Ritababen met Chhotubhai. They said : “We would like to donate Rs. 2 crore.”

“It's a good thing that you want to donate money. But you are from Changa so you donate there.”, said Chhotubhai. But on the next day Ashokbhai and Ritababen came with their two sons. They said : “We will surely give money to Changa when the time comes. But at present I have come to give you Rs. 2.25 crore, which you have to accept.”

This is how the donations kept coming in and from that money ARIBAS – Ashok and Rita Patel Institute of Integrated Study in Biotechnology – was founded.

Chhotubhai has been receiving donations constantly and from that money Institutes have been established. No one at present would give



ARIBAS

away even Rs. 5 to anyone without reason. But donors have everlasting faith in the visionary educationist Chhotubhai who has been working selflessly and with utter dedication. Donations have kept coming from Jayantibhai, Ashokbhai Patel, Manubhai Somabhai Desai, Gordhanbhai Hathibhai Patel, Indukaka Ipcowala, Vasantibahen Chandubhai and many others. And from those donations, Chhotubhai has

been successful in establishing Gujarat's Largest Education Trust!

Like an ascetic, he has illumined not only the discipline of education but also the benchmarks of community services. Students, lecturers and other employees work under the guidance of Chhotubhai when natural disasters strike. In this regard, Chhotubhai says : “Whether Orrisa or Latur has been affected by an earthquake, or whether there is excessive rainfall or a draught, we always try to be helpful to people in their hard times. When earthquake struck in Kachhchh, we spent the entire money to build all the schools in the seven villages around Dholavira. All the primary schools were named after Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. For this cause, we received support from Kaushikbhai Patel of Bharat Patidar Samaj and Town Club, Vallabh Vidyanagar.”

Like in the times of natural disasters, Chhotubhai is always ready to help in the time of man-made disasters. As a result, he made necessary arrangement for the education of kashmiri children who were orphaned by the terrorist attacks. Talking about that, Chhotubhai says :

“Those were the initial years of New Vidyanagar... During that time Godharakand shoot all of us and the members of Rajmohan Gandhi's *Mission for Peace* came to me. Two of the members were from Kashmir. I just told them that where they had come was an educational town. We work for the



development and betterment of the youth. We provide them with the opportunities for higher education. Terrorists in Kashmir have created chaos over there. They have orphaned many children. So out of them, give me 25 children who have no facilities for their education... I got 22 boys and 3 girls. We financed the entire expenditure of their education. We gave them lodging, boarding and even the expenses for their educational visits. We didn't even charge anything for their uniforms. This is how we educated them. We created an atmosphere where they would not find any difficulty to study.”

While Chhotubhai was sharing this, he was reminded of an incident of Doda in Kashmir :

“During the period when Ghulam Nabi Azad was the Chief Minister of Kashmir, the terrorists had killed 19 Hindus in just a night in his region. I decided to visit the region. Nikhil Zaveri, the Principal of SEMCOM was ready to accompany me. But I had an information that terrorists were hiding in Doda. So I advised him not to come and went there alone. I informed the member of Rajmohan's Mission and an Advocate of High

Court Altaf and I started my journey. Manmohan Singh was expected in Kashmir on that day. A 'Bandh' was announced by the people. I landed on the airport on the same day. The airport authorities thought that I was one of the members of the Manmohan Singh's unit. So I was taken there by a van. But I said to them that I was not with the Prime Minister. I have come alone on my own. So they got me out from another door. Many students had come to the airport to receive me. I went along with them. I always keep the divine mark on my forehead so the Army people wondered at the sight that a Hindu was being loved and respected so much by Muslims..."

"First, I visited two Hindu places. I visited the Sankaracharya's Ashram (Monastery). There I could see the policemen doing all the worshipping. I could see no Hindu there. At one spot there is a big ashram of Mataji. Even there I could see the policemen offering arti (worshipping). I took the Khir Prasad after the arti. Then I went to Jumma Mosque. I dropped Rs. 100 in the donation granary. I prayed to God Almighty – to Ishwar and Allah – that the brotherhood between Hindus and Muslims would remain intact and Kashmir would be blessed to come to its original beautiful scenario. Then I came out. I hired a taxi and after a three or four hours drive I reached to Doda at 4 o'clock in the evening. I was to visit the spot where the terrorists had attacked on the next day. One Muslim brother and a reporter of Hindustan Times were to come with me..."

Chhotubhai reached the Check-post along with the other two the next morning. But they were stopped... The Military asked them not to go further. But Chhotubhai kept convincing them for 3 hours. So the Military suggested that they meet the Collector. So they went to see the Collector at 11 o'clock. Chhotubhai said to him, 'I have no political intention, I have come solely for educational purposes.'

"Please meet the senior Supritendent of Police...", said the Collector. So Chhotubhai met the SP who was a Sardarji and conveyed his objectives. He requested him to grant the permission but the SP said :

"Still the terrorists are hiding there. So we cannot grant any permission to you to go there."

"But I have only educational purpose and no political one."

"No. it's dangerous to go there. You please drop the idea."

"But I will go there at my own risk."

"Even if you want to commit suicide, I can not grant permission."

Chhotubhai made many efforts to convince the Sardarji but he didn't budge. So Chhotubhai contacted a Military officer on mobile. He explained his intentions and requested the permission. The officer said :

"Can you go that way?"

“Which way?”

“Secretly, I mean..”

“Yes. I would go secretly, if you allow me to go that way...”

“No. I will not allow. If you get caught, I shall arrest you.”

“Alright...”, saying this, Chhotubhai started a secret journey. He reached the destination on foot.

“It was a village situated on a 6700 feet height...” He explains this in a sad tone and with a heavy heart : “There was a room, 14 by 14 feet. There were marks of bullets on the wall. This was the place where the terrorists had slaughtered 19 innocent people. An aged woman was sitting there with two young children. There were 16 widowed women and 52 children. But all of them were very young. I could see that all of them were of a very young age – hardly of the age to go to primary and secondary schools. Since they had different medium of instruction in their schools, it was difficult to offer them the education in Charutar Vidya Mandal schools. But I made the necessary arrangements for their education in Military Camp. And I made arrangements for three girls to get higher education in Charutar Vidya Mandal colleges.”

This is Chhotubhai. He went to Kashmir risking his own life and made the necessary arrangements for the education of children, who were affected by the terrorist attacks. What a dedication! What a humanitarian approach! Chhotubhai was

received at the Ahmedabad airport by the principals of all the CVM institutions on his return.

Several organizations have appreciated and respected Chhotubhai's dedication and services in the field of education. He has been honoured by many awards and honorary degrees. Some call him an enlightened educationist and some call him the management guru!

“But how would you like to be considered?”, in answer to this question, Chhotubhai says with a smile : “I am an ordinary person and with the help of people I do extraordinary things.”

Chhotubhai may consider himself as an ordinary man but after knowing about his struggle and achievements, wouldn't you yourself call him an extraordinary man?”



A Wonderful Wedding



“Chhotu, we have decided to get you married now...”

“But I will first see the girl and then decide.”

“That’s alright... But you will have to marry where we finalize!”

It was 1953... Chhotubhai was merely 18 when he had this conversation with Lallubhai. He wanted to go to America for his studies. He also got admission in Berkley University. But Lallubhai dropped the idea of sending his only son Chhotubhai abroad primarily because his friends and relatives had told him so. And Lallubhai started preparing for Chhotubhai’s wedding. It was considered to be impolite on the part of the son if he demanded to see the would-be bride before the wedding. However, Lallubhai agreed with an added remark : “But you will have to marry there!”

And Chhotubhai went to Samarkha to see Chhotabhai Lallubhai Patel’s 16 year old girl. Regarding his reminiscences of that time, Chhotubhai says : “According to my age and height, I found the girl appropriate. She was fairly healthy and

fair-skinned. Additionally, she did vernacular final which was the maximum education that any village girl could have. So I thought that the alliance would work.”

“Did you ask her any question?”, to this question, Chhotubhai says : “I didn’t ask anything. But even if I had asked, she could not have answered. However, I just looked at her at that time but she couldn’t do that either.”

Though Chhotubhai had not asked any question, the girl was of his kind. So he agreed. And in 1953, Chhotubhai and Shardabahen got married.

“Those were the summer days...”, Chhotubhai says about the memorable experiences of the wedding : “I got a Gabidian suit prepared as I was planning to go to America. It was a woolen suit. It can’t be put on during the summer at all. But I went to the wedding venue wearing that suit. At that time, there were no facilities for lights or fans. A Petromax was on and moreover the holy fire of the chori was on. And further the warm suit had its effect. I was perspiring so much. I had another suit made of cotton but I didn’t carry it with me. So on the next day, I put on a shirt and a pajama...

So this is how Chhotubhai and Shardabahen’s wedding took place. At the time of wedding, Chhotubhai’s name was Chhotabhai. But since the groom’s father’s name was also Chhotabhai Lallubhai Patel, he changed his name and became Chhotubhai from Chhotabhai.



Dr. C L Patel Says...

1. Favourite Book :

Vachanamrut and Shikshapatri. These two holy scriptures are the greatest gifts of Lord Swaminarayan to the society.

2. Favourite attire :

White shirt and white trousers.

3. Favourite food :

All vegetarian food, especially Raipur Bhajia. As per the Swaminarayan Sampraday instructions, I don't eat onions and garlic.

4. Favourite film :

I like to watch social movies. I like Amitabh Bachchan's *Baghdan* and Rajesh Khanna's *Avatar*

5. Favourite actor :

Raj Kapur and Balraj Sahni

6. Favourite Sport :

I like cricket

7. Favourite place :

I have travelled to many places. But there is no foreign destination that I like. However, I do like the Niagra Falls and Switzerland. I like Kailash Mansarovar. I give more importance to our country because what is not there in the rest of the world is found here.

8. Favourite language :

Gujarati.

9. Favourite historical figure :

I don't give much importance to the characters and figures of the distant past. However, from the recent past, I consider Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel as the greatest man.

10. Most pleasant moment :

I would say the moment when I got the job in Gujarat Electricity Board.

11. Most unpleasant moment :

The most unpleasant moments for me were when in 1969 my father passed away and in 2008 my son-in-law passed away.

12. Your temperaments :

I have inherited my father's strong temperament. After being temperamental I always feel that one should not get angry. Two things happen : first, we hurt someone and second, we don't utilize the knowledge that we have. If someone, whom I trust, hurts me, or when someone does something unethical, or if someone hurts my ego, I get angry. I consider it as my limitation. It comes at anytime. I compare my anger with Durvasa. Durvasa knew that his anger was a wrong thing. But he used to get angry so that others would realize the truth. Otherwise, anger was Durvasa's positive characteristic. I always keep myself aware that my anger should not do any unjust to anyone. I believe in the policy of 'forget and forgive'.

13. Your dream :

I have no dream that has not come true. As an ordinary man I have achieved many things. Now whatever dreams I have will come true with the blessings of my guru Pramukhswami Maharaj and with the collective efforts of the entire Charutar Vidya Mandal family.

14. Favourite politician :

I don't like any politician. If we talk about the present time, all the politicians play their politics to sustain their current positions. They are least bothered about people. I don't give importance to any of them. According to me, Saradar Vallabhbai Patel is an ideal political leader.

15. Financial challenges :

I have never faced any financial challenges since the day I have been appointed as the Chairman of Charutar Vidya Mandal. I would say that it happened because of Brahmaji's statue, Bhagavan Swaminarayan and Pramukhswami Maharaj.

16. Any decision that you regret to have taken :

I have never taken any such decision. Some may think that some of my decisions were ill-judged but I have never such feeling. My father advised me that, 'You are taking up a Government Job. See that no one suffers because of you.'

17. Your leisure time activities :

In the leisure time I usually think of three things : first, the further development of Charutar Vidya Mandal whose

responsibilities are on my shoulders; second, to prepare and introduce new courses that are relevant and demanding in 21st

25. Any regret :

I always feel bad when someone you have helped progress in his life becomes jealous and lets you down.

26. Ideal person :

A person who always introspects for his weakness and always tries to notice the virtues in others is an ideal person. Whoever thinks that in the happiness of others, my happiness resides is an ideal person.

27. Memorable incident of a student :

A son whose father used to pull a lawry, got 89% but he had no money for higher education. He wrote me a letter and expressed his desire to study in SEMCOM. I waved his fees for all three years. He studied in SEMCOM and earns a package of Rs. 18 lac today.

28. Vehicle and Adventures :

My father gave me a Lamreta Scooter in 1963. At two different instances, I travelled on scooter from Rajkot to Anand. In 1966, I bought a Ferguson Tractor in Rs. 16 thousand. Then I got the learning license. I left Rajkot at 8.30 in the evening after my dinner. I drove through-out the night. I reached Anand at 9.30 in the morning travelling via Viramgam and Sarkhej. At that time, roads were not up to the mark. Moreover it was monsoon. It was raining cats and dogs. I drove the vehicle constantly for 13 hours in such a cruel weather and reached home. At that time it was an adventure.

29. The Charotar Bhumi :

A person from Charotar is different from similar persons

are the rays of these great men. No one would place a statue of a person who had developed and prepared the atom-bomb. But those who spread the light in the lives of people will be respected and worshipped.

All good deeds should have good objectives to achieve. We should not have any selfish motive. Let there be mistakes. We shall get enlightenment from these mistakes. Nothing would ever happen if we lock up ourselves merely from the fear of others' criticism.

32. Education and Service :

When my father had physical problems and got ill, Dr. Manibhai Valand used to give him treatment. At that time I thought that the Medical profession is the best one. And I decided that if someone wants to be a doctor but has financial challenges, we should give him the expenses. At that time a son of a potter got a very good result. He wanted to be a doctor but had financial problems. His father was a postman. So I shouldered all his expenses and he became the doctor. Then on, I have been instrumental in the making of many doctors and engineers.

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INSTITUTIONS OF CHARUTAR VIDYA MANDAL

The Institutes established by Shri Bhaikaka

1947	V P & R P T P Science College	1949	G J Sharda Mandir
1948	Birla Vishwakarma Mahavidyalaya (Engineering College)	1951	B J Vanijiya Mahavidyalaya

The Institutes established by Dr H M Patel

1958	B & B Institute of Technology	1971	S M Patel College of Home Science
1959	NA & T V Patel Arts College	1971	Vallabh Vidyanagar Technical Institute
1960	Ipcowala-Santram College of Fine Arts	1977	CVM Higher Secondary Complex - General Stream (TV Patel)
1963	M U Patel Technical High School	1977	CVM Higher Secondary Complex - Science Stream (RPTP)
1965	H M Patel Institute of English Training & Research	1977	CVM Higher Secondary Complex - Vocational Stream (Home Science)
1966	S D Desai High School	1980	Arvindbhai Patel Institute of Environmental Design
1969	Rama-Manubhai Desai College of Music & Dance	1981	A R & G H Patel Institute of Pharmacy
1970	I B Patel English Teaching School (Secondary)	1982	H M Patel Career Development Centre (CDC)
1970	I B Patel English Teaching School (Primary)	1987	M S Mistry Primary School

The Institutes established by Dr C L Patel

1996	Set up Natubhai V Patel College of Pure & Applied Sciences (NVPAS)	2005	Govindbhai Jorabhai Patel Ayurved College & Surajben Govindbhai Patel Ayurved Hospital
1996	Founded G H Patel College of Engineering & Technology (GCET)	2005	Ashok & Rita Patel Institute of Integrated Study in Biotechnology & Allied Sciences (ARIBAS)
1997	Founded Sardar Gunj Mercantile Cooperative Bank Ltd. English Medium College of Commerce & Management (SEMCOM)	2008	Vasantiben & Chandubhai Patel English School (CBSE)
1999	Institute of Science & Technology for Advanced Studies & Research (ISTAR)	2008	Sumanbhai Parshottambhai Patel Primary School
1999	Sophisticated Instrumentation Centre for Applied Research & Training (SICART)	2009	Centre for Studies & Research on Life & Works of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (CERLIP)
2000	A D Patel Institute of Technology (ADIT)	2009	Institute of Language Studies & Applied Social Sciences (ILSASS)
2001	Shapurbhai I Patel Centre for Learning	2009	Madhuben & Bhanubhai Patel Institute of Computer & Communication Technology & Research Centre for Women
2001	Chimanbhai M U Patel Industrial Training Centre	2009	CVM Institute for Degree Course in Pharmacy
2002	S S Patel College of Physical Education	2009	CVM IAS Academy
2003	C Z Patel College of Business & Management		
2003	Indukaka Ipcowala College of Pharmacy (IICP)		
2004	Waymade College of Education		

Dr. Chhotubhai L Patel: Chronology

Born on April 10, 1935 at Kasor, near Anand.

- 1945 Joined D. N. High School, Anand and Matriculated in 1951
- 1952 Joined Vithalbhai Patel Mahavidyalaya, Vallabh Vidyanagar.
- 1953 Got married to Smt. Sharadaben of Samarkha village (16th May)
- 1955 Joined M. G. Science College, Ahmedabad.
- 1956 Admitted to Birla Vishwakarma Mahavidyalaya in 3yr-Diploma course in Mechanical Engineering
- 1960 Studied for Electrical Engineering
- 1961 Took job in Gujarat Electricity Board as Technical Incharge, rose to be Deputy Engineering and Executive Engineer. (March)
- 1981 Left Gujarat Electricity Board.
- 1988 Joined Charutar Vidya Mandal as Hon. Estate Manager and then Hon. Joint Secretary.
- 1990 Elected to the Syndicate of Sardar Patel University and served for fifteen years.
- 1993 Again elected to the Syndicate of Sardar Patel University.
- 1994 Rose to be Chairman of Charutar Vidya Mandal as Dr. H M Patel's successor (April)

SOME OF THE MANY HONOURS EARNED

- 2000 Charotar Ratna (Jewel of Charotar region) award by the Rotary Club International at Anand.
- 2001 Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) by Sardar Patel University
- 2004 Shalin Manav Ratna (Jewel among Graceful Humans) by Anupam Mission
- 2005 Doctor of Literature (Honoris Causa) by Anand Agricultural University.
- 2005 Rajiv Gandhi Shiromani Award by Global Economic Council, New Delhi
- 2006 Rashtriya Rattan Award by Citizens International Peace Society, New Delhi.
- 2008 Sardar Patel Award by Sardar Patel Trust, New Delhi
- 2008 Divya Bhaskar Declared him as one of the Eminent Personalities of Gujarat under 'The Power 100' list.

INSTITUTIONS ESTABLISHED

- 1996 Set up Natubhai V Patel College of Pure & Applied Sciences (NVPAS)
- 1996 Founded G H Patel College of Engineering & Technology (GCET)
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- 2003 C Z Patel College of Business & Management
- 2003 Indukaka Ipcowala College of Pharmacy (IICP)
- 2004 Waymade College of Education
- 2005 Govindbhai Jorabhai Patel Ayurved College & Surajben Govindbhai Patel Ayurved Hospital
- 2005 Ashok & Rita Patel Institute of Integrated Study in Biotechnology & Allied Sciences (ARIBAS)
- 2008 Vasantiben & Chandubhai Patel English School (CBSE)
- 2008 Sumantbhai Parshottambhai Patel Primary School
- 2009 Centre for Studies & Research on Life & Works of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (CERLIP)
- 2009 Institute of Language Studies & Applied Social Sciences (ILSASS)
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- 2009 CVM Institute for Degree Course in Pharmacy
- 2009 CVM IAS Academy



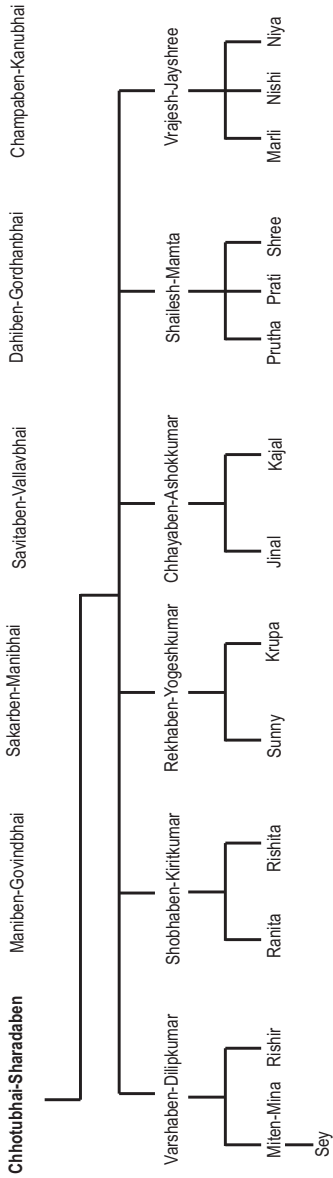
Dr. C. L. Patel's Family Tree

Odhavajibhai

Becharbhai

Garbaddas-Jibaben

Lallubhai-Jibaben (Gangaben)





ParulTina Doshi, Ph.D.

ParulTina Doshi is a well-known journalist, writer and researcher. She has worked with the reputed publications - Janmabhoomi Pravasi - Dailies of Mumbai based Saurashtra Trust. She was also associated with Express Group's daily 'Samakaleen' and News weekly 'Chitralkha' as Feature Writer for many years. She has remained associated with the daily newspapers published in the state of Gujarat, such as 'Sandesh', 'Divya Bhaskar', 'Sambhaav', 'Phulchhab' and 'Kutch Mitra'. She has also contributed regular column to the magazine 'Aha Zindgi !' of Bhaskar Group. She has rendered her services as a Project-in-Charge and Editorial Coordinator for the 'Gujarat Samachar' (Gujarati) and 'Asian Voice' (English) weeklies published by ABPL Group from London. She has done an in-depth research on 'National Review of Bhoodan Movement' under the guidance of Dr. Sudarshan Iyengar, Vice Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapith which was founded by Mahatma Gandhi. She has earned Ph.D. Degree in Sociology from Saurashtra University in May 2010 on her doctoral dissertation on "Tribal Movements : A Historical Perspective". She is deeply interested in the area of the status of women in ancient India. Her upcoming project is CVM's Indian Women Encyclopaedia.

She has ten books to her credit. Three of them - 'Women in Ancient India' (Prachin Kal mam Stri) published by University Granthnirman Board, Gujarat State, 'Nari tun Niralii' (Navbharat Sahitya Mandir) and 'Manushi : Aadhi Kalpana Aadhi Kaya' (Under Sahitya Academy Scheme) - are based on the status of women in ancient time. She has also inked up a struggle saga of a handicapped man, titled 'Pag Vinanan Paglan'. Two books - 'Gurjar Gaurav' (Ruchi Prakashan) and 'Gurjar Garima' (Rannade Prakashan) - are based on the interviews of reputed personalities; on a real crime-based story collection, 'Ajayab Alam Aparadh ni' (Navbharat Sahitya Mandir); biography of Virappan, 'Virappan : Manav ke Danav' (Navbharat Sahitya Mandir); a book on terrorism 'Atankvad ni Aganjwala' (Naaradniketan) and a book on political wit 'Jode Jode Kajode' (Rannade Prakashan).

She has also been honoured by Gujarat Sahitya Parishad for the sketches of her book 'Gurjar Garima'. She has received another award by Sahitya Academy for her in-depth research based book 'Prachin Kal man Stri'. She is recipient of several other awards by Gujarat Daily Newspapers Association and Government of Maharashtra for her contributions to the field of Journalism.

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Mitul Trivedi

Mitul Trivedi is associated with H M Patel Institute of English Training and Research, Vallabh Vidyanagar, as a Lecturer in the PG Department of English. He has keen interest in the Contemporary Literary Studies and Postmodern Theories, Translation Studies, Cultural and Historical studies. He has presented his research works in various countries, mainly Greece, Czech Republic, United States of America, United Kingdom and in the major academic universities of India.

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