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9th December, 1936

Bayyaji Apaji Patel, aged 47, Mahratta, Land owner and Revenue and Police Patel of Biragaon, residing at Shirdi says:

I knew baba since my babyhood. My house was one of the few houses from which Baba took his biksha i.e., begged his bread from the beginning of his life here and up to the end. For some 3 years, Baba would go over about 8 times during the day to our house to beg for his bread. Next for 3 years he visited us for this purpose four times a day. For 12 years, he visited us twice a day and during the last 12 years he came to us for bread once a day only. From my 11th year, I used to serve Baba. In 1896 i.e., my seventh year, the Ramanavami Urus celebration began. It was then that Baba began to allow Hindus to affix sandal or to do pooja to him and Muslims to read Koran before him at the masjid. This

urus was started by Appa Kulkarni out of gratitude to baba for the acquittal in the embezzlement charge brought against him. When Hindus affixed sandal paste to Baba, the latter applied sandal marks with the hand (Punja marks) on the walls of the masjid and other Moslems did the same. Baba then applied sandal paste to Mahalsapathy's forehead and the some Moslems. Mahalsapathy applied it to Baba's forehead. Baba then allowed Namaz to go on at the mosque and enjoined silence on all others while Namaz was going on. Baba himself recited the Namaz sometimes. That was only on Saturdays. When Pedas or other sweets were brought to Baba, he uttered the Kalam (which is the same as Fatia) over the sweets etc., and then distributed them to all Hindus and Moslems alike. Baba finding that Hindus and Moslems would have differences as to the way and manner of celebrating the Urus allowed Sandal Panja to be put on all - Hindus and Moslems alike. My father, Nana Sahib Chandorkar, Tatyapa Patel etc, all bore the expenses of the celebration.

One day, when I was 11 years old (1901-2) Baba stopped me from going away to tend my cattle. Then he suddenly spoke angrily at me and others, and broke four mudpots. Then he blew "Bum Bum" on the back of his hand indicating that death or some inauspicious event was coming. This was at 9 A.M or 9-30A.M. That night my father's sister's son Daji Kote, aged 30 died of fever. During the last 14 years of Baba's life, he gave me daily four rupees. Even on his last (Samadhi) day, he gave me four rupees. As to the use of his gift, Baba once told me neither to lend the moneys he gave, nor make a gift of them. "Do not eat and excrete this, Do not give it away to others." So I have invested it in purchases of land. I purchased 84 acres of land out of Baba's gifts. I have had already 10 or 11 acres of other land.

Baba has helped me with his wonderful knowledge of the future. (1) About my cultivation, there was the strong temptation to plant my lands with sugar cane as so many do. Baba's advice was "Don't". But I yielded once to the temptation, despite this advice. A loss of 300 rupees in the money invested on sugar cane planting and the going without the usual supply of dry crops I would have got on the land, that was the result of disobedience. (2) In 1913, my father who was over 70 years of age went out as usual on horse back and

returned with a stroke of paralysis. I went to Baba and asked for his Udhi. Baba said "I will not give Udhi, Allah Malik Hai." I wept. On the 3rd day of the attack i.e., on Kartik Suddha Ekadasi, Sunday, a specially holy day, my father breathed his last. Next day I went to he masjid and massaged Baba's leg as usual. I used to boast and feel proud that I had Bhima's strength. So I tried to lift Baba up in my arms after the massage to carry him and place him before the fire. Many a day I have done so. That day I could not lift him. Baba laughed at me and he put down my pride. That was a Dwadasi day, Baba then taught me two lessons- not to be proud, and the other not to feel grief for the death of my father. "Why should you be sorry? In 5 months he (i.e., my father) will come back." Then my son was born. He is aged 22 years and 8 months.

Baba gave me his last instruction or moral lesson on the day he reached his last. After sending away Kaka Dikshit he gave me a moral lesson and enjoined silence on me with these words. "If you reveal it to any one, you will die." He added i.e., "me jato mereku badaku uchaude sagale brahmana majaya jabalur tahatilu i.e., I am" going. Carry me to Wada. All brahmins will be living near me." With these words, he breathed his last. After these words were spoken Nana Nimonkar poured water in to his mouth but the water came out. I held my hand below his chin to catch the water. Baba leaned upon me and expired. When Baba expired there were troubles of all sorts. Government took charge of all the properties. There was wrangling between two parties. Moslems said that Baba should be buried in a separate building to be constructed at the expense of people who (like me) had been benefiting by his daily bounty. We stood out for burial in the Dagdi Wada in accordance with Baba's wishes. The Kopergaon Mamlatdar Mr.Kulkarni was on the spot and the Rahata Foujdar Chakranarayana also. The Mamlatdar decided that the public including both Moslems and Hindus should express their views and he would agree that the wishes of the majority should be carried out. Moslems prepared Mahajar with 100 or less of signatures. We prepared Mahajars and got numerous (over 200) signatures including prominent names, e.g., H.S.Dixit, Bapu Saheb Jog, Bala Saheb Bhate etc. Therefore our view, being that of the majority, prevailed and Baba's body was

interred in the Dagdi Wada. In 1910, Shirdi had its second visitation of plague.

Four years ago, Baba gave me timely intimation and help. At Shirdi, a bull was marked with a trident and being thus dedicated to God Shiva was freely grazing all over the village and near our Lendi garden. It was injuring our gardens and we all contributed some 3 rupees and odd for the expenses of sending it to a pinjrapole at Yeola. The bull was entrusted to Bhiku Marwadi with the money and he took it away to be left at the pinjrapole. He returned and told us that he had performed that duty. That night Baba appeared in my dream and said “kuyn sothe. Merekoo kasaeke dari bandaya, i.e., “Are you sleeping? I have been tied to the door of a butcher”. I woke and consulted Tatyapa Patel and others. We concluded that the bull had been left with a butcher and not left at the pinjrapole at Yeola. So I started at once, went to Yeola and searched for our bull at the two pinjrapoles there. It was not there and we were informed that Bhikku had not brought our bull there. Then I went round and looked near the butchers’ quarters. Our bull was lifting its head over a wall. It was in a butcher’s place. It was to be cut up that very day by the butcher and he told us that he had purchased it for 14 rupees from Bhiku Marwadi. The animal was rescued and placed in the pinjrapole, and Bhiku was charged, convicted and sentenced to 2 months’ imprisonment.