Chapter One

DR. V.T. PATIL: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
FROM 1900 TO 1995
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Dr. V. T. Patil: Alias Kakaji: A Biographical Sketch -

From 1900 to 1995

Dr. Vishwanath Tukaram Patil was popularly known as ‘Kaka’ (Uncle) among the people of Kolhapur and Sangli Districts. He was born in Shigaon in Sangali district (former Southern Satara District) on 30th July, 1900. He was unfortunate in losing his parents while he was hardly four years old. Therefore, he was taken care of by his paternal aunt in his early days. It is under her care he received primary & secondary education.

His family in Shigaon was known as Nagare Patil family. It was a Vatanholding family. His father Tukaram Balwant Patil had in all eight children, three sons and five daughters. His paternal aunt Gojarabai was the follower of Vithoba Cult. Therefore, she served these children very devotedly after the premature death of their parents. Kaka’s birth day falls on a Nagpanchmi day as per the Hindu calendar. Therefore, he used to celebrate it on that day.

He received his primary education upto fourth standard in his village Sigaon. After 4th Standard he wasted two years as there was no facility in his village school to study beyond fourth standard. Then his maternal aunt took him to the village called Benadi in Belgaum District where there was a facility to study upto 7th standard. He therefore, completed his primary education, there at Benadi. Here he established his reputation as a clever boy in that school. Therefore, his headmaster Shri Shankar
Bhau Kulkarni used to love him. In those days epidemic like the plague used to visit the villages and the villagers used to migrate either to their farms or to other places. There was a saying among the villagers in those days that they were not afraid of the tigers but are afraid of the rats.²

After completing his primary education in Benadi he came to Kolhapur for higher education. He took admission in Victoria Maratha Boarding and joined Rajaram High School. He completed his secondary education in Rajaram High School and joined Rajaram College in Kolhapur for higher education. The chair of the principal of Rajaram College was then adorned by a great Scholar, educationist and historian Dr. Balkrishna. Kaka used to be favourite student of him. Kaka was very studious. He was the editor of the college magazine called Rajaramian. He was a poet and had developed the art of prolific writing.³

He was a good drama actor. he played major roles in the dramas that were staged in the anniversary gathering of the college. He was also a good hockey player. The principal used to pat him on his performance in the game.⁴

For his B.A. course he joined Wilson College Bombay and passed his B.A. Exam., offering Economics & Political Science. Then he got married to the daughter of Dattajirao Patil of Benadi but again joined law College for law degree in Pune. Took his LL.B. degree in 1929 and started legal practice in Kolhapur in 1930 and soon earned a good reputation as a leading lawyer.⁵
His Life in Kolhapur: It is already stated that he started his legal practice in Kolhapur in 1930. And continued his legal practice up to 1950 and simultaneously served the people in their social & political life. Here he during this period did enormous services to the cause of education, journalism, industrial expansion, and political field in Kolhapur. In fact the Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaja of Kolhapur wanted him to join the State services but as he wanted to remain free to serve the public he entered legal profession. He was very much inspired by the life of Chh. Shivaji Maharaj and Chh. Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur. In his opinion Chh. Shivaji saved Maharashtra politically and Shahu Maharaj saved Maharashtra socially. Therefore, following their footsteps was the life mission chosen by Kaka and he did it throughout his life. When the merger movement took serious turn in Kolhapur Dr. V.T. Patil stood with Chh. Rajram Maharaj. Therefore, he was branded as reactionary.6

Kaka had tremendous respect for Maharani Tarabai, the founder of Kolhapur State. Chh. Rajaram Maharaj once expressed his desire to V.T. Patil that he should take interest in raising a living memorial of Tararani. Kaka did it but unfortunately not while living time of Chh. Rajaram Maharaj.7

Kaka had close association with great leaders in public life like Bhausaheb Hire, Yashwantrao Chavan, Vasantdada patil. Industrialist like D.C. Shah, Shri. Madan Mohan Lohia etc. The careers of these men also made some impact on Kaka directly or indirectly.

Fortunately Kaka had very devoted life partner in his wife Sarojeenidevi
whom he married in 1927. His wife Sarojeenidevi came from a very cultured family of Benadi village near Nipani. She was very soft spoken, peace loving and highly cultured lady. Though her husband was a public figure she never disliked it. She tirelessly assisted Kaka in his multifarious public activities. Kaka named his banglow as Saroj Bunglow. Though she did not have any issue she never felt for it. As a result they donated entire property to the Tararani Vidyapeeth founded by them. The leaving house which was named as Saroj Mandir was also made by them the property of Tararani Vidyapeeth Trust and no trustee can sale the property was the condition put by Kaka. This shows his deep love that he bestowed on his wife.

Both Kaka & Sarojeenidevi used to treat the workers very kindly. They never got angry with any worker. On the contrary Kaka used to help the workers in their need & necessity. When Sarojeenidevi's brother Dinkar D. Patil got married a girl against the desire of his father, Sarojeenidevi sheltered him. Dinkar D. Patil was a famous film director in Marathi cine industry in Kolhapur.

Sarojeenidevi not only sheltered her sister-in-law but even gave some of the gold ornaments to her after her marriage. Even the delivery of the first child took place in Sarojeenidevi's house. All this was done by her incurring the rath of her own father.

She has no issue was the pinch for Saroj. She used to request her husband for his second marriage, but Dr. Patil turned it down by saying that he loved Saroj beyond any measure. One Kaka's friend also suggested to him for second marriage but his argument was that he never felt the need of any issue or he ever felt unhappy.
because he had no issue.

Because of this compassionate stand of V.T. Patil his wife Sarojeenidevi also turned towards the public activities of V.T. Patil. On some occasions she handed over her ornaments to her husband for public cause. Her view was husband is God and she will remain even after his death with her husband.¹⁰

When she died on 18th of April 1969 Kaka became not only sorrowful but also mentally unstable at least for some days. However he slowly recovered himself from that because of the side of his public responsibility.¹¹

HIS LEGAL PRACTICE IN KOLHAPUR (1930-1950) : In legal practice the first case that he pleaded was the murder case. Fortunately for him he won the case and came into limelight. He was the first pleader in Kolhapur who had his own car, which he used to use for going to the court. That gave him an added prestige in those days. He established his reputation soon as an intelligent lawyer & earned enough money. He was aware of the hardship that he underwent in his school & college days. Therefore, he decided to devote his later part of remaining life to the cause of education of the masses. In those days Chhatrapati used to act as the judge of the state this gave Kaka a chance to plead some of his cases in front of Chh. Rajaram who became favourably inclined towards him by hearing him arguing his cases before him.¹² Because of his legal knowledge he was permitted to deal with both civil and criminal cases by making his as a special case.¹³ In some cases he was both a pleader as well as a witness.¹⁴
Places Associated With Dr. V. T. Patil's Early Life

Way to Vijaydurga
Way to Sawantwadi
Ragana Fort
Village
District Place
Railway
National Highway
Slate Highway
HIS EDUCATIONAL WORK: But his real fame remains lasting due to his contribution to the cause of education and for this he will be remembered generations after generation in Kolhapur. He was interested in educational institution for the masses, particularly for the rural masses. Gargoti, the head quarter of Bhudargad Taluka in Kolhapur is a place with abundance of natural beauty with beautiful thick forestry and near it there is a village called Patgaon which was a seat of medieval saint Mouni Baba. Shri. Chh. Shivaji in his Karnataka expedition had met him and sought his blessing. Kaka loved the place & the saint because of this historical importance. Therefore, he choose Gargoti for his monumental, educational Institution and established Mouni Vidyapeeth in 1946 there.

In 1943, the prince Shivaji Maratha education Society was establish as a part of the Nagojirao Patankar High School. In 1945, Kaka established Tararani Vidya Mandir, Kolhapur and in 1946 he founded Mouni Vidya Mandir in Gargoti.

TARARANI VIDYAPEETH: Tararani Vidyamandir which was founded in 1943 mainly to educate the women was converted into an autonomous educational institution in 1953, because of the various branches like Bal Bhavan. Primary School, Usharaje High School, Junior College of Education and Kirti College that were developed. Then Kumar Bhavan, Kadgaon. Taluka Bhudargad and Shivaraj College, Gadhinglaj, were developed as part of Tararani Vidyamandir. The last important educational institution was the Kamala College for women in Kolhapur founded in 1984. Today the Kamala College is the leading women’s College in the jurisdiction of the Shivaji University.

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In the premises of Tararani Vidyapeeth at Kolhapur there is a full size statue of Tararani Seated on the horseback has been erected and the opening of the statue was done by the army Chief Gr. Maneksha. This shows Kaka's love and reverence for Maharani Tarabai. Tararani Mandir was named as Tararani Vidyapeeth in 1953. This institution which was started with 22 female students is catering to the educational needs of almost 4000 female students in Kolhapur today.

MOUNI Vidyapeeth: Kaka had a rural background in his childhood and India's rural population by and large remained unlettered in India's past. Kaka had the pinch for illiteracy of the rural masses. He chose Gargoti a Taluka place in Kolhapur District situated in Konkan forest. He founded Mouni Vidya Mandir there in 1946. This was named as Mouni Vidya Peeth and Kaka used to say that he will provide facility there right from primary education to Ph.D. degree. The institution that he developed were 1) Shishu Bhavan- Children's school 2) Jawahar Balak Bhavan- Primary School 3) Shahu Kumar Bhavan (High School) 4) Udajirao Junior College of Education 5) Arts and Commerce College 6) Karmveer Hire Rural Institute of Higher Education 7) Acharya Jawdekar B.Ed. College 8) Institute of Civil Engineering 9) Gram Sevak Training Center 10) Penchayat Raj Training Center 11) Composite Training Center. 12) Korgaonkar Research Institute 13) Extension Department and 14) Audio-Visual Department. Gargoti is in the southern part of Kolhapur District at a distance of 45 Km from Kolhapur. The nature has bestowed all its blessings in the form of trees, hills and valleys on Gargoti. By seeing these educational institutions one can think of old Ashramas founded in thick forests in the company of nature. The
Mouni Vidyapeeth has all the facilities such as libraries, hostels, canteens, dispensaries, stores, open air meeting hall, Gymkhana, guest houses etc.

Thus both women and rural masses that were neglected in educating them Kaka opened great educational institution for both of them. In this task he was helped by liberal donors and leaders like Bhausaheb Hire. He was also helped by great educationist like Dr. J.P.Naik and Prin. S.R.Tawade. Kaka remembered all these with his deep sense of gratitude.18

While appointing teachers he never saw their caste, merit was the only consideration in the appointment. Even today this academic principle is meticulously followed in case of appointments of teachers in his institutions. Therefore, the institution is educationally manned well.

KAKA'S HOSTEL MOVEMENTS : It will not be wrong if we say that Kolhapur under the leadership of Chh. Shahu Maharaja became the home of hostels in India.19 Shahu's tradition of education of the masses and providing hostel facilities for the students had inspired many future day leaders of Kolhapur. Karmveer bhaurao Patil & Kaka were the notable examples. Kaka opened hostels in Mouni Vidyapeeth in Garogti and for Shivraj College Students in Gadhinglaj and for Tararani Vidyapeeth in Kolhapur. The growth of hostels in Kolhapur particularly for women is spectacular. He laid the foundation of hostel for girls in 1959 in Kolhapur. Initially the hostel building in Kolhapur accommodated only hundred girl students and as demand increased he went on expanding the ladys hostel building and today 400 girl students are accommodated in the hostel. The building has the dinning hall and the guesthouse.
This may be the largest ladies hostels owned by a private management of the educational institution in Kolhapur.

KAKA AND CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT: Shri. V.T.Patil’s contribution to CO-operative movement in Kolhapur is as great as his contribution to the cause of education. He was one of the main founders of the Shetakari sahakari Sangh in Kolhapur and he continued as a guiding force as a member of director’s board of the Sangh. He has his own contribution to this most popular Shetkari Sangh, which has spread throughout the districts to cater to the needs of the farmers in providing fertilizers, seeds and other equipments. He was also one of the founder members of the Maratha Co-operative Bank. He also took leading part in establishing the sugar factory at Bidri in Kagal.Taluka. The factory originally covered 4 Talukas of Kolhapur districts namely Kagal, Bhudargad, Radhanagari and Karveer. He had also initiated the movement for establishing Vedganga Sahakari Sakhar Karakhana. In 1962, he started and completed the Veeshwanath CO-operative Housing Society for the staff of Tararani Vidyapeeth. It is due to his efforts the teachers and other workers of Tararani Vidyapeeth got the houses of their own. He also opened consumer stores for the teaching & non-teaching staff members of Tararani Vidyapeeth.

He was also one of the founder members of Shahu Market Yard in Kolhapur. He was the Chairman of the market committee for many years. It is he who built up Shahu market where it stands today by shifting it for Shahupuri where it was functioning in a small area. In establishing all these institution Kaka was moved mainly by his urge for social work and not by any political motives. Therefore, he
never tried to control those institutions and organizations for his political or any other such designs.

He established Rayat Sabha mainly with the view to support the Kolhapur State ruler against the merger. He knew that all other princely states have already forfeited their claim to continue because of their misrule but he thought that Kolhapur is an exception to it. Kolhapur is well-governed state. Its ruler is a scion of Chh. Shivaji the great. Shivaji was national hero and it is he who brought life to a dead nation. Therefore, Kaka had highest regard for Kolhapur Gadi.\textsuperscript{24}

Though Kolhapur State was merged Kaka's contention that Shivaji is national hero who introduced life breath in the national life of India and the successor Shri. Chhatrapati Shahu of Kolhapur, awoke the common masses to their natural rights and national consciousness is quite accepted by most in India.

POLITICAL WORK: By his profession of practicing law Kaka not only earned reputation as a legal expert but he also earned money in a big way in his profession. Since his was the multifarious personality he did not remain away from politics. In 1930 he was nominated on municipal council as its member and within three years time he built up his reputation there, and became the chairman of Kolhapur Municipality in 1933, he continued in that position up to 1938. From 1939, to 1948 Kaka remained as the President of Kolhapur local Board. He was also the member of the Kolhapur State legislature from 1942 to 1945.\textsuperscript{25}

In the election of 1952 he was elected from Bhudargad-Ajara constituency to the Bombay legislative Assembly and was the MLA up to 1957. In
1962 he was elected from Kolhapur constituency as a member of the Indian Parliament. During all these years of his political career Kaka rendered enormous services to the masses.

He used his political position to improve roads in the Kolhapur, raised gardens in Kolhapur city, paid attention to the education aspect particularly the primary education in Kolhapur district in addition to his own educational institutions. He also attended to expand the area of Co-operative field. To improve agriculture he initiated the move for the growth of Sugar factory in Co-operative sector.

He was in political field due to the inspiration from the work of Jedhe, More and Bhausaheb Hire, and therefore, rural agricultural masses were the center of his activities. He showed his respect for Bhausaheb Hire, by having Arts, Commerce & Science College at Gargoti after his name. He stood firmly in favor of creating Sanyukt Maharashtra State out of Bombay Presidency. In 1967, he voluntarily retired from politics only to devote completely to the cause of women education in the institution founded by him.

**HIS WORK IN OTHER COMMITTEES AND INSTITUTIONS** He occupied important positions in some other committees & institutions from 1930 to 1968. From 1932 to 1935 he was the chairman of the Central Health Selection Committee and also City Ambulance Core President. From 1932 to 1938 he was the chairman of district school board and from 1935 to 1942 he was the president of the city scout association. In 1948, he was the President of District Bar Association. From 1956 to 1957 he was the member of the Indian Oil Seeds Committee. From 1952 to 56
he was the Vice-Chairman of the Kolhapur district Development Board. He was also in the Devastan Committee (holy places & temples) & during that time he reformed conditions in Mahalaxmi Mandir. To spread the message of Tararani a committee called Tararani Seva Sangh was formed in 1931. Its Chairman was Shri V.T. Patil and the editor of ‘Sattaywadi’ Padmashri Balasaheb Patil was its secretary. The work that he did in all these committees was simply remarkable and worth remembering.

KAKA AS A PUBLIC SPEAKER AND WRITER: Kaka was very forceful public speaker. When Hitler was defeated at the end of 2nd world war, most of the Indian leaders were happy. In one of the public speeches organized at Gadhinglaj Taluka, while analyzing Hitler’s fad for dictatorship Kaka said that according to Nitze it was only Germans who had the capability to rule the world because they belonged to the Aryan race. Kaka explained that no leader with imperialistic designs would ever succeed in establishing his rule over the world. He is bound to perish in his efforts. This is what has happen in case of Hitler. This shows the depth of Kaka’s understanding & studying the world situation.

Chh. Rajaram who had the special love for the spread of education appointed Kaka the President of Ilakha Panchayat of Kolhapur State. Kaka did his job well in this capacity. The total roads that were under the care of Ilakha Panchayat the road of some 300 miles ware good and those were maintained well. The British officer’s used to come to Kolhapur to see particularly the roads that were maintained nicely.

Kaka was also a studious man as well as a forceful writer. He did his
His newspaper writing was very much appealing to the people because of the language style & contents. Literateur like G.D. Madgulkar, V.S. Khandekar were his nearest friends.

Knowing well that the newspaper is the better weapon to educate the masses he took leading part in establishing the newspaper Pudhari in Kolhapur on the occasion when Chh. Shahaji Maharaja of Kolhapur became the ruler of Dewas because he belonged to Pawar family of Dewas and his name was Shrimant Vijaysingh Pawar and in 1938 a special Pudhari issue was brought out. It is this Vijaysingh Pawar of Dewas who became the ruler of Kolhapur after Chh. Rajaram’s death and he was named as Chh. Shahaji Maharaja. Kaka would have become the famous journalist had he continued there.

When Kaka’s wife Sarjoenidevi died, Kaka was very much remorseful and after recovering from the shock, he wrote the following poem to give vent to his feeling over the demise of his wife. The poem is in Marathi, which is reproduced below along with its English gist.

ती. सरोजनीदेवीस -

नक्के तुजला मला सोडतूनी

जावाने या जागल्नी

जीव पुंसला होता समजा

तुज्या देखून पती जीवनी

भक्तिप्रीतिमय निर्पंड प्रेमक

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तपस्विनीचे जीवन सगळे
सरयले तू पती आणि पति
काही संतत ने अपले
लाभतीस तू पती म्हणूनी
शतकम्मीच्या पुल्लाईने
कृतार्थ जीवन पावन आल्या
जीवन भरले विश्वासीने
हीन दीन अनु उपकितांबी
वाहिनीस तू सदैव किता
नाही केला उप्य जीवनी
कधी कुळाचा हेयादावा
गर्व कधी न तुम्हां सर्विला
मृत्युभर तू विनम्रता
सहिष्णुस न आशित कुळावा
सत्यसील तू, प्रियमंदा
तू प्रीतीला सातवच फूकिले
मागत्याच्या पावन केले
तू व्याग्राज देवत्य दिले
जीवन र्याचे तुम्हाने नतविले
तू भक्तिरती एकनिष्ठा
सेवेती मिरीटेक देवता
In this poem he has remembered his wife’s great services to him. His feeling was that she should not have gone leaving him alone. Her sacrificing life with...
pure love towards him has made him feel as if she was with him for centuries together. Her sympathy towards needy & poor, her non egoistic disposition, her simplicity in leaving & devotion to good cause, her nature of forgiving & non inimical attitude were all the gifts of god to her. Ever ready to perform duty and her non-attachment to worldly things are the sweet memories that she has left behind.

FOUNDER OF PUDHARI PAPER: The newspaper Pudhari of Kolhapur is the most popular and leading daily news paper in Southern Maharashtra and Northern Karnataka. Kaka took a leading part in starting this newspaper in 1937. In the beginning this paper was a weekly then soon in 1940 it was made daily news paper. Kaka was the first editor of this newspaper. The aim behind starting this paper was to awaken the rural masses called Bahujan Samaj which was mainly of peasants & workers and throw light on their problems and suggest remedies and correctives. Infact news paper Pudhari soon surpassed all other news papers in Kolhapur and occupied an important place in cultural, political, social, educational and economic life of the people. However Kaka did not continue as editor for long due to his deep involvement in other work, Kaka handed over the editorship of this paper to Shri G.G. Jadhav and Shri. Shankar Rao Bhosale was made in charge of the monetary side of this paper. 33

In the early stage of this paper there were some managerial and financial problems. The paper did not belong to anyone. Its ownership was vested in the society and not in any individual. This was creating some hurdles in smooth running of the paper. Kaka thought of making someone as owner of the paper and he found Shri. G.G. Jadhav an honest man with some urge to do some good services to the society.
Shri. Jadhav came from a poor family but had spent much hard time in the service of Bahujan Samaj. In Kaka’s views Shri. Jadhav was most deserving man to own this paper. But Shri. Shankarrao Bhosale opposed this idea. His argument was that if the paper is to be transferred it is he and Shri. Jadhav should be the owners of the paper. But Kakaji favored Shri. Jadhav alone and Shankarrao Bhosale remained soar with Kaka forever.\(^{14}\)

Another person Raosaheb R.S. Bhosale who helped financially in starting the paper was also opposed to transfer the ownership of the paper from society to an individual. To him it was unprincipled thing. Kakaji understood the importance of this argument but he also knew the impracticability in it. He thought that unless someone is made responsible to run the paper it cannot go well financially and managerially. Thus ultimately Shri. G.G. Jadhav who was strong in his commitment to the cause of Bhahujan Samaj was made the owner of the paper.\(^{35}\)

Shri G.G. Jadhav proved his worth and stood the test of Kaka in making this paper a leading Marathi newspaper in Maharashtra.

**KAKAJI’S SECULAR THINKING** : Kakaji had grown in Kolhapur tradition of the ideal of social equality & justice as preached & practiced by Chh. Shahu. Kaka was Shahu’s true follower. Moreover he was an highly educated man. Therefore, he seems to have kept communal and other parochial things out of his educational institutions. Though he was by caste Maratha he used to say that his caste is an accident but his educational institution has no caste.
It is wrong to attach founder’s caste to educational institution. Imparting education is the mission of the educational institution. Education is truth, beauty and love and all these have no caste. Therefore, he has never considered the caste while appointing the teachers and other staff members from different castes. Even the Christians & Muslims were the members of teaching staff in Tararani Vidyapeeth.  

He knew that the educational worth of the teachers alone is important. The students in his institution came mostly from the Bahujan Samaj. Therefore, the caste consideration is worthless if the Bahujan Samaj students are to receive a good education. As people while going into the temple remove their shows outside similarly the Caste considerations must be left outside of the temples of learning.

One can notice in this thought provoking and highly appealing views in the consideration of Kaka. Even today the roster of Tararani Vidyapeeth will show that the 50% teacher’s positions are reserved for the backward classes in the society and proportion of reservations is higher than the proportion fixed by the Government.

KAKA’S DEVOTION TO THE WORK OF TARARANI: It is well known that it is Tararani who saved the independence of the Maratha State from the invasion of Aurangzeb. She was the daughter-in-law of Shivaji the great. In Kaka’s view the historians did not do justice to throw proper light on the work done by Tararani.

Kaka began his work towards this direction by establishing Tararani Vidyapeeth in Kolhapur. Having established this Vidyapeeth he erected a huge full scale statue of Tararani in the premises of Tararani Vidyapeeth. And the unveiling of the Statue of Tararani was done by the Chief Commander of the army Gen.
Manekasha on 22nd Feb. 1972. 39

The famous Marathi poet G. D. Madgulkar composed four lines poem praising the bravery of Tararani in Marathi on this occasion, and the same was inscribed on the stone of the basmet of the statue. 40

The year 1975 was the 300th Birth year of Tararani. Therefore, Kaka had decided to celebrate it on grand scale. He organized lecture series on Tarabai in Tararani Vidyapeeth. The Chief Speaker was Babasaheb Purandare. 41 He invited Dr. Jayasingrao Pawar, a well-known historian in the field of the Maratha history to write biography of Tararani. Dr. J. Pawar wrote a volume on Tarabai under Kaka’s Scheme. 42

Kaka had another plan in the program of the celebration. He wanted to get a drama to be written on Tarabai. He invited a famous drama writer Prof. Vasant Kanetkar who wrote a drama on Tarabai under the title ”Grass Became Spear” 43 (Gavatala Jenva Bhole Phutatat). Kaka also invited a film producer to produce a film on Tarabai. The famous Marathi film producer Shri Dinkar D. Patil on his request produced a Marathi film called, “Daughter-in-law of Shivaji” (Shivarayanchi Sun - Tararani).

Kaka’s last effort was to start a women’s university in Kolhapur. He had started using his political influence with the government. However this did not materialize may be because the government of Maharashtra established Shivaji University in Kolhapur in Nov 1962.

To promote activities in cultural field kaka also introduced a prize called
Bhadrakali Tararani Award. After every three years award of Rs. 21,000/- is given to a woman who has made an outstanding contribution in the field of the promotion of culture. Smt. Vijayaraje Shinde, Sarojeeni Babar, Smt. Medha Patkar, Smt. Usha Mehta and Dr. Kiran Bedi were the eminent women who were honoured with this award so far. 44

KAKA’S RESIGNATION FROM POLITICS: Kaka was never a politician in the sense that playing political tactics was not in his nature. He had entered in election politics only through his social & educational work and also through his popularity in his legal profession. Therefore, having worked as a MLA from 1952-57 and as a member of parliament from 1962-67 he left politics in 1968. 45

He after leaving politics fully concentrated on the expansion of the institution of the Tararani Vidyapeeth in Kolhapur and Mouni Vidyapeeth in Gargoti.

KAKA AND KAKI’S SACRIFYING NATURE: Kaka had already made a legal deed of all his property a legal deed in the name of Kaki. When he expressed desire to his wife Sarojeenidevi that she can dispose of the whole property in any manner of her choice. She may distribute among the relatives or donate it to a temple or to any holy place she quietly said that she had decided to donate the whole property to the Tararani Vidyapeeth to serve the cause of women education. 46 Her answer was a pleasing surprise to Kaka. He felt tremendously proud of her and unknowingly he started shedding tears from his eyes out of his gratitude towards her. 47

Kaki took her own decision and on 12th Oct. 1967 Kaka registered a trust called Smt. Sarojeenidevi Vishwanath Trust and the entire property which was in
her name and was to the tune of Rs.10-12 Lakhs (according to today’s rate 1 to 1.5 crores) was donated to the trust. Saroj Bungalow, Kolhapur and Parsad Palace Panhala and land at Sigaon, all the ornaments and even the utensils were all handed over to the trust. Kaki personally attended the counting of the utensils and ornaments as if she was donating all that to her daughter.48

In fact this kind of sacrifice for a cause is a very rare thing in the human affairs. Persons like her are the oasis in the desert. a real hope in the otherwise today selfish world short cut measures.

In 1967 they handed over all this property to the trust. There was an occasion when Kaki was removing her ornament from cupboards one by one and giving it to Goldsmith for valuation Kaka was watching whether she feels anything sad for it. But she was much happy while doing that. Women’s love for ornament particularly in India is an age-old thing. The goldsmith on one occasion said Kakiji keep at least some minor ornaments for daily use but Kakiji said she had no such temptation now. Such was her sacrificing attitude she had developed with the advancement of time and her love for the cause of her husband. In this way the whole property was handed over to Tararani Vidyapeeth Trust. 49

Kaki died on 19th July 1969. Though she had not received much formal education she was highly an elevated lady much advanced culturally.

Once a lady guest had come to Kakaji, she saw Kakaji’s beautiful bungalow, garden, motor car etc. and asked Kakiji how many children she had and Kakaji immediately said 400 children. The guest was puzzled but Kakaji explained to
the guest that she had no child. But there are 400 lady students in Tararani Vidyapeeth run by them and Kaki regards all of them as children. The guest was very much happy after hearing this and she said that God has given her the gift of love for humanity and a mind for social commitment.50

Kakaji’s Trusted Friend: Though Kakaji in his public life had suffered from the political tacticians on many occasion but he was also equally lucky in getting support from his trusted friends. Shri. M. M. Lohia of Panhala, Devachand Shaha of Nipani, Shri Bhausaheb Hire, Shri. Vasantdada Patil & Shri. Balasaheb Desai were his close and trusted friends.51

Kaka was in the director’s board in some of the banks in Kolhapur and some of them came in trouble. For example he was director of Kolhapur Bank. In 1953 Kolhapur Bank was liquidated Kaka sold some of his property to reduce the burden of the bank.52

He fought the case in Bombay High Court for 17 years and his friend Shri Samant pleaded his case with free of charge.53 Ultimately the case was disposed off in 1970 and the court asked him to pay some money to the bank. Thus the court case which continued for 17 years was over.54

In 1946 Kaka opened an high school called Mouni Vidyamandir in Gargoti since then he was popular among the people in this area. Shri J. P. Naik who belonged to this area was a well known educationist. He suggested a plan for development of rural area to Kaka. Kaka made him in charge of the development in Gargoti much against the advice by Prin. C. R. Tawade. Shri Tawade’s contention was
if you give free hand to a Brahmin in any institution he will ultimately swallow that institution, Shri J. P. Naik showed that tendency & ultimately Kaka did not go well with him and Naik left Gargoti and went to Bombay. But J. P. Naik created sufficient problem for Kaka at Gargoti. Kaka slowly withdrew from Gargoti & and then he did not go to Gargoti for a long time.

HIS FELICITATION IN KOLHAPUR: However Kolhapur, which was the main field of his whole activities remembered his services with great gratitude & indebtedness. A committee to felicitate him was formed under the chairmanship of a great educationist prin. M. R. Desai & he was felicitated on 5th January 1981 in open public meeting by presenting him a shawl, coconut & address.

Similarly he was also felicitated by Municipal Corporation of Kolhapur. Here also he was honored in public meeting by shawl, coconut & address at the hands of Minister Shri. Shivajirao Deshumkh. Shivaji University also did not lag behind in recognizing his services. On 25th January 1990, it conferred on him D Litt. (Honours causa) degree as a token of love and gratitude towards him for his services.

Kakaji died on 17th Jan. 1995. He lived for 95 fruitful years. He was one among the some shining stars of Kolhapur who had developed career in public in the tradition of great educational & social movements of Shri Chhatrapati Shahu.
NOTES AND REFERENCES:


2. Ibid. PP.63-64.


9. Ibid.


13. Ibid.


26
18. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
56. Ibid PP. 13-14.
58. Ibid PP. 43-44.
59. Personal interview with Shri. Ram Shirke on 25th December 2001