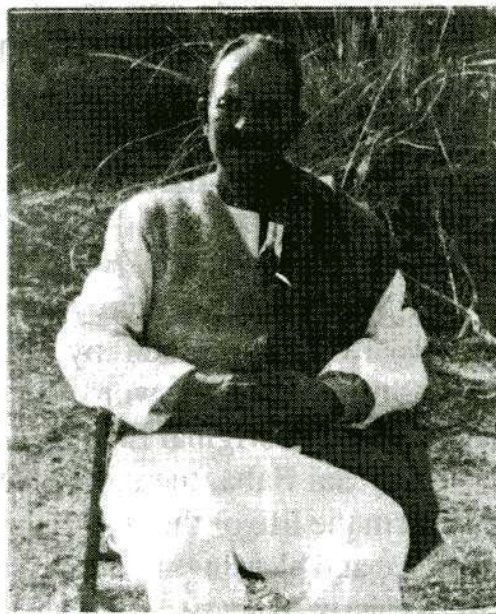


of gratitude to my wife Veena Ji Kaul Kothidar, who has been a fellow adventurer and a tower of strength in pursuing this project.

I assign the copyright of this book to Shri Sai Sansthan, Shridi. They are hereby permitted to reprint the book or transmit it in any form by any means, electronic, chemical, mechanical, optical, photocopying or any other form. The film and negatives of the offset are also assigned to them. All sale proceeds, royalty or profit from the book may be given to the "FREE PRASADALY LANGAR OF SAI BABA AT SHRIDI." I request Shri Sai Sansthan to send it to the corners of the globe to people of all religions and countries, who are thirsting for Baba's life story in Urdu.

SAI SEVAK



Bushan Lal Kaul Kothidar
60 Bhagwati Nagar
Jammu Tawi.
Ph: 0191-438581,
554118

from Maharashtra (Kolhapur). Baba being an incarnation of Lord Dattatreya Muneshwar it is obvious that my links with Him are not coincidental.

I thank all those who helped in the production of this book.

- ★ Shri D.M. Sukhtankar I.A.S. (Retd.) Chairman Sai Sansthan, Shri Subhash Jagtap, Administrative Officer, and trustees of Shri Sai Sansthan, Shridi for their encouragement and unconditional acceptance of the project.
- ★ Dr. M. Rahman, I.A.S Ex. V.C. Aligarh Muslim University now Secretary Parliamentary Affairs Govt. of India.
- ★ Prof. R.R. Sharma Vice Chancellor Jammu university Dr. Zahur-ud-Din Registrar Jammu university and Dr. Mushtaq Ahmed Wani for the correction and authentication of the manuscript.
- ★ Shri S.N. Thusoo, Financial Advisor (Retd.) Dr. R.L. Shant who helped me painstakingly in compilation of this book for publication.
- ★ Shri S.A.S. Qadri I.A.S (Retd.) Shri P.Patnaik I.F.S. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests J&K State. Shri M.K. Kaw, I.A.S. Secretary Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India. They have encouraged me at every stage for publishing of this book.
- ★ Shri Joginder Lal Kuthiala of Jammu for helping in the free Supply of the first 500 copies of the book to the Shri Sai Sansthan Shridi.
- ★ Shri Nazeer Ahmad, Proprietor, J.K. Offset Printing press, Jama Masjid Delhi.
- ★ Last but not least, I would like to acknowledge my sense

better to consult an expert in the Urdu language, in order to guarantee the accuracy of the translation and its authenticity with reference to the original English version of Sh. N.V. Gunaji. Thus it was Shri D.M. Sukhtankar Chairman Sai Sanasthan referred the manuscript to Dr. M. Rahman I.A.S., Vice Chancellor, Aligarh Muslim University. But not before he had offered me Baba's special shawl and prasad in the Smadhi mandir Shirdi.

Armed with Shri Sukhtankar's letter, I presented myself at Aligarh, where Dr. Rahman received me with considerable affection. He started making a few corrections in the manuscript himself but soon realized that it was a monumental task. He offered to refer it to an expert, but as my presence was also vital, I would have had to stay in Aligarh for at least six months. I requested Dr. Rahman to refer me to the Jammu University, which he graciously did.

Prof. R.R. Sharma, Vice Chancellor, Jammu University requestd Dr. Zahur-ud-Din Registrar and Head of the Depratment of Urdu to have look at the translation. Dr. Zahur, being busy with his other work and responsibilities, took about 1½ years correcting the manuscript and then referred it to Dr. Mushtaq Ahmed Wani M.A. Phd (Urdu Scholar) for the final Pruning. He was pleased to write a Foreword. Thus it is, dear reader, that final version is now ready for your eyes.

I would like to dedicate the book to the memory of the fortunate associates of Shri Sai Baba, although they have already left their mortal bodies, yet their vibrant voice echoe in the Samadhi Mandir Hall of Shridi.

I pay obeisance to the memory of my parents late Smt. Vanmali Kaul Kothidar and late Shri Dina Nath Kaul Kothidar. They told me when I was a child that we were from the "DATTATREYA GOTRA" and our ancestors came

It occurred to me that the descendants of Abdullah Baba a close associate of Sai Baba might have a book in Urdu, but when I met his great grandsons Gani Bhai and Hamid Bhai, I found that they knew only Marathi. They did unearth a “Dastawez” in Urdu penned by Abdullah Baba in his own hand during his life time when he was with Sai Baba for about 30 years in Dawarka Masjid and Chawadi Mandir, but although I tried very hard to decipher what was written on the half-torn pages, I could not understand a word.

Enquiries from Shri Subhash Jagtap, Administrative Officer of the Sai Sansthan revealed that there was no Urdu version of the Satcharita available anywhere. Thus it became clear to me that if I wanted to enjoy the Satcharita in Urdu, I would have to translate it myself. When I laid this proposition before Shri Jagtap, he welcomed the idea and offered to render every assistance in publishing the manuscript. Shri D.M. Sukthankar I.A.S. (Retd.) Chairman of the Shri Sai Sansthan also blessed the proposition.

It did cross my mind later that in embarking on this ambitious enterprise, I had probably bitten off more than I could chew. I just did not possess the literary skills or the intellectual acumen. But the die was cast. It also occurred to me that if Baba had fired me with this idea, he would also see me through.

I started the work there and then giving the title “SAB-KA- MALIK-EK” to the book. I could finish only a few pages at Shridi and had to return to Jammu. With great love and patience, I pursued with the arduous task, trying to retain the spirit of the original and finished it in about one year. Thus it was on Guru Purnima of 1999 that I was able to present the completed manuscript to Shri D.M. Sukthankar in presence of distinguished trustees of the Santsthan. They were highly pleased with the work, but rightly felt that it would be

Om Sai Ram

INTRODUCTION

Sai Baba of Shirdi occupies a pride of place in the galaxy of saints and incarnations who have appeared in the sacred country of Bharat. It is thus that God redeems His pledge made in the Bhagwat Gita that he will incarnate whenever unrighteousness swamps the world, in order to protect those treading the path of rectitude and to destroy the evil-doers.

The life of an incarnation of God is full of deep mystery. It is as wide as the blue sky and as deep as the wayward ocean. It is given only to a fortunate few to be able to delve into the depths of the mystery and bring back the pearls of wisdom for distribution among the seekers and devotees. Sant Jnaneshwar has rightly said that the Lord loves those who write the narratives of the lives of saints. One such blessed soul was Shri Govind R. Dabholkar (Hemant Pant) who wrote the immortal classic 'Sai Satcharita' in Marathi Language on the life and teaching of Sai Baba. Shri Nagesh Vasudev Gunaji translated it in English.

It was on a Guru Purnima Day in July, 1998, that I had gone to Shirdi. As I prostrated in reverence before Baba's Samadhi, my eyes caught the Urdu inscription on the third step: "786 Wafat Baba 9 Moharam 1918 " Sikandar Hayat". (786 وفات بابا 9 محرم 1918ء سکندر حیات). As I hail from Kashmir and have been nurtured on Urdu from my early childhood, this inscription immediately kindled a desire in my heart to read the Sai Satcharita in the Urdu language. But however hard I searched in the book shop and library of the Sansthan and in the Shirdi bazar, I could not lay my hands on such a book.