
LIFE SKETCH AND WORK OF BABA AMTE AND SUNDER LAL BAHUGUNA

Archana Verma,
Research Scholar
Shri Venkateshwara University
Amroha

Dr. Ritu Bhardwaj
Research Supervisor
Shri Venkateshwara University
Amroha

LIFE SKETCH OF BABA AMTE AND WORK

Muralidhar Devdas Amte, popularly known as Baba Amte, was born on 26 December, 1914 in Hinganghat, Wardha district in Maharashtra. He was the eldest son of his parents. His father was a wealthy Brahmin landowner of Wardha district, who owned over 450 acres of good cultivable land. The name 'Baba' was affectionately given by his parents. At a very young age, Baba Amte owned a gun and used to hunt wild boar and deer. Later, he went on to own an expensive sports car, cushioned with panther skin. He studied Law and started a lucrative practice in Wardha, but was moved by distressed condition of the poor and downtrodden classes of society. Then he relinquished his ceremonial dress and started working with the rag-pickers and sweepers for some time in Chandrapura district. Later, he resumed practicing but as a "defence lawyer" for the leaders imprisoned in the 1942 Quit India movement. Amte, like Vinoba Bhave was deeply influenced by the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. Amte was a constant follower of Gandhiji and practiced various aspects of Gandhism for his entire life. In 1946, Baba Amte married Sadhana Guleshastri. She was also a believer of humanity and always supported Baba Amte in his social works. She was popularly known as Sadhnatai. 'Tai' in Marathi language means "elder sister". After pursuing a leprosy orientation course at the Calcutta School of Tropical Medicine, Baba Amte set up 11 weekly clinics and started working for those struck by leprosy. Later in 1951, Baba Amte was given 250 acres of land by the state government on which Amte founded the Anandvan ashram. Inside the ashram premises, two hospitals, a university, an orphanage and a school for the blind were opened.

Baba wanted the youth to enlighten themselves with knowledge so that they can understand the meaning and importance of India's freedom. Baba had once said, "We must try to understand this power contained in the roots of trees. Only when you will understand this phenomenon, will you find the courage to embrace adventure and perform what needs to be done. Those who want to bring about creative revolution must fully understand this root phenomenon."

The work of Baba Amte was unanimously praised by many national and international organizations. He was awarded with the United Nations Human Rights Prize, the Ramon Magsaysay award (1985), the Templeton Prize (1990), the Gandhi Peace Prize, and many other humanitarian and environmental prizes. The Ramon Magsaysay Award is often considered as:-

The "Nobel Prize of Asia"

In 2007, Baba Amte was diagnosed with leukemia. After suffering for more than a year, Amte left his mortal body on 9 February, 2008 at Anandvan. Many renowned faces from across the world expressed condolences at the death of the great soul. Unlike Hindu rituals, the body of Baba Amte was buried not cremated.

AWARDS AND HONORS OF BABA AMTE***Awards from the Government of India***

1. Padma Shree, 1971^[18]
2. Padma Vibhushan, 1986
3. Gandhi Peace Prize, 1999
4. Other awards

5. Rashtriya Bhushan (Pride of the Nation), 1978: FIE Foundation Ichalkaranji (INDIA)
6. Jamnalal Bajaj Award, 1979
7. N.D. Diwan Award, 1980: National Society for Equal Opportunities for the 'Handicapped' (NASEOH), Bombay
8. Ramshastri Award, 1983: Ramshastri Prabhune Foundation, Maharashtra, India
9. Indira Gandhi Memorial Award, 1985: Government of Madhya Pradesh for outstanding social service
10. Raja Ram Mohan Roy Award, 1986: Delhi
11. Fr. Maschio Platinum Jubilee Award, 1987: Bombay
12. G.D. Birla International Award, 1988: For outstanding contribution to humanism
13. [Templeton Prize], 1990 [Baba Amte and Charles Birch (Emeritus professor of University of Sydney) were jointly awarded the prize in 1990]
14. Mahdeo Balwant Natu Puraskar, 1991, Pune, Maharashtra
15. Adivasi Sewak Award, 1991, Government of Maharashtra
16. Kusumagraj Puraskar, 1991
17. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Dalit Mitra Award, 1992, Government of Maharashtra
18. Shri Nemi Chand Shrishrimal Award, 1994
19. Fr. Tong Memorial Award, 1995, Voluntary Health Association of India
20. Kushta Mitra Puraskar, 1995: Vidarbha Maharogi Sewa Mandal, Amravati, Maharashtra
21. Bhai Kanhaiya Award, 1997: Sri Guru Harkrishan Education Trust, Bhatinda, Punjab
22. Manav Sewa Award, 1997: Young Men's Gandhian Association, Rajkot, Gujarat
23. Sarthi Award, 1997, Nagpur, Maharashtra
24. Mahatma Gandhi Charitable Trust Award, 1997, Nagpur, Maharashtra
25. Gruhini Sakhi Sachiv Puraskar, 1997, Gadima Pratishthan, Maharashtra
26. Kumar Gandharva Puraskar, 1998
27. Apang Mitra Puraskar, 1998, Helpers of the Handicapped, Kolhapur, Maharashtra
28. Bhagwan Mahaveer Award, 1998, Chennai
29. Diwaliben Mohanlal Mehta Award, 1998, Mumbai
30. Justice K. S. Hegde Award, 1998, Karnataka
31. Baya Karve Award, 1998, Pune, Maharashtra
32. Savitribai Phule Award, 1998, Government of Maharashtra
33. Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry Award, 1988: FICCI, for outstanding achievements in training and placement of disabled persons
34. Satpaul Mittal Award, 1998, Nehru Sidhant Kendra Trust, Ludhiana, Punjab
35. Adivasi Sevak Puraskar, 1998, Government of Maharashtra
36. Gandhi Peace Prize, 1999
37. Dr. Ambedkar International Award for Social Change, 1999, "in recognition of outstanding work done in pursuing the cause of the exploited and the underprivileged, reconciling differences among conflicting social groups and contributing significantly to social change"
38. Maharashtra Bhushan Award, 2004, Government of Maharashtra
39. Bharathvasa award, 2008

Honorary titles

1. D.Litt., Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India
2. D.Litt., 1980: Nagpur University, Nagpur, India
3. Krishi Ratna, 1981: Hon. Doctorate, PKV Agricultural University, Akola, Maharashtra, India
4. D.Litt., 1985-86: Pune University, Pune, India
5. Desikottama, 1988: Hon. Doctorate, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, West Bengal, India

6. Gandhi had conferred on Amte the title *Abhayasadhak* ("A Fearless Aspirant") for his fight against leprosy.

LIFE SKETCH OF SUNDER LAL BAHUGUNA AND WORK

Sunder Lal Bahuguna was born January 9, 1927 in the village of Maroda, near Tehri, India. He is a Garhwali environmentalist and a leader of the Chipko Movement. His philosophy is based upon Gandhi's Satyagraha or Truth Force Principle. Vimla Bahuguna is his wife and his children are Rajiv Bahuguna, Mahuri Pathak and Pradoep Bahuguna.

He is an example of a householder who lives in an ecological way in line with the Vedic Philosophy, which promotes ecology in every phase of one's life. The Chipko Movement first developed in the 1970's. Women of the villages of India hugged trees to save them from the loggers. His slogan was, "Ecology is permanent economy." He travelled from village to village from 1981 to 1983 in the Himalayan area educating people and drumming up support for the movement. He met with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who instituted a 15-year ban on cutting green trees in 1980 in Uttar Pradesh State. He worked closely with Gaura Devi, another Chipko Leader.

He also protested the building of the Tehri Dam for decades. He went on fasts and was arrested on April 20, 2001 for protesting against the dam. This is the 10 year anniversary of his arrest. He worked for temperance and for the rights of hill working women who were trying to make a living from the trees.

In 1987 he received the Right Livelihood Award for his great environmental work. In 1995, when he was 70, he told the Prime Minister that "the Himalayan glaciers were receding at an alarming rate. If this was not checked, the glacier feeding the Ganges would disappear within 100 years." He has suggested that the "mountain slopes be covered with trees giving food (nuts, seeds, flowering trees for honey and seasonal fruits), fodder, fuel and timber, leaf fertiliser and fibre trees. Each family should be given land to grow 2000 trees and a subsidy to rear these trees." In 2009 he received the Padma Vibhushan Award, India's second highest civilian award.

AWARDS AND HONORS OF SUNDERLAL BAHUGUNA

1. 1981 Padm Shree by govt. of India, but he politely refused saying that "I do not deserve it till flesh and blood (top soil) of India was flowing down to the sea."
2. 1987: Right Livelihood Award for Chipko Movement
3. 1986 Jamnalal Bajaj award for constructive work.
4. 1989 Honorary Degree of Doctor of Social Sciences was conferred by IIT Roorkee 2009: Padma Vibhushan.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. "An interview with Baba Amte" By Anita Kainthla.
2. "Award for Baba Amte, Mashelkar". The Hindu (Chennai, India). 1 May 2005.
3. "Baba Amte Obituary: The Economist". Times of India Daily, February 28, 2008.
4. "Baba Amte: The Gandhi after that Gandhi".
5. "BIOGRAPHY of Murlidhar Devidas Amte".
6. "Collector office chandrapur -Maharashtra Bhushan Baba Amte".
7. A tribute to Baba Amte, Article- by Dr Asha Mandpe, in Times of India Daily, THANE Edition Dated. February 22, 2009.
8. Amar Geet (Baba Amte) – By Nisha Meerchandini Published by Marathi Publication P. Ltd.
9. Baba Amte : A Vision of New India by Hans Staffner S. J. Popular Prakashan Pvt Ltd **ISBN : 978-81-7154-674-9**
10. Baba Amte- By B.G. Bapat Published by Marathi Publisher New. **ISBN 13: 979110011061Y**
11. Back to basics: Sunder Lal Bahuguna is guided by three As—Austerity, Alternatives and Afforestation Indian Express, September 27, 2005.
12. Bahuguna, the sentinel of Himalayas by Harihar Swarup, The Tribune, July 8, 2007.
13. Bhagirat Putra: Baba Amte- By Dr. Dhyryasheela Baburao Shirole Published by Marathi Publisher New. **ISBN 13: 979110011486Y**
14. Biodiversity: Social and Ecological Perspectives (editor); Zed Press, United Kingdom

15. Biopiracy: the Plunder of Nature and Knowledge, South End Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, ISBN 1-896357-11-3
16. Biopolitics (with Ingunn Moser), Zed Books, United Kingdom
17. Breakfast of Biodiversity: the Political Ecology of Rain Forest Destruction, ISBN 0-935028-96-X Close to Home: Women Reconnect Ecology, Heal