

Smt. Shalini Moghe

Recipient of Jamnalal Bajaj Award for Uplift and Welfare of Women and Children-1992

Born: 13.3.1914; B.A., Montessori Diploma, Trained in Juvenile Court & Child Welfare.

Smt. Shalini Moghe is a selfless dedicated social worker and educationist. In 1944, with her own resources, she started the first private nursery school in Indore after resigning from a Government job. The seed sown by Smt. Moghe has now blossomed into a wide range of child welfare activities.

In 1947, some friends and well-wishers formed an association to help Smt. Moghe in her mission, and registered it under the name of Bal Niketan Sangh. Over the years, the Sangh's activities have come to include urban and rural welfare centres, creches, a rescue home for destitute children, Balwadis, integrated child development programmes, arranging financial assistance for needy women, medical help and camps, etc. both in and around the town of Indore and the surrounding villages. Smt. Moghe has been initiating, directing and implementing all these activities very commendably. She has been a pioneer almost in every branch of child education and women welfare.

In 1953, Smt Moghe opened a Balwadi in the Sweepers' colony, overcoming violent opposition. She was nominated as member of the M.P. State Welfare Board in 1957 and placed in charge of the two districts, Jhabua and West Nimar, having predominantly Adivasi population. This gave her an opportunity and a new field for welfare work in rural and Adivasi areas.

Smt. Moghe is never short of innovative ideas which take into account children's creativity and also the need to impart to them wider social consciousness. In 1971, she opened a unique Toy-Library where educational, scientific, mechanical and constructive toys are made available to children up to 10 years of age. A massive tree-plantation programme was adopted in 1979 by channelising students' energies for social-forestry under the motto of 'One boy one tree'. Yet another project is the scheme of experience in rural living for children from urban areas and in urban living for rural children.

Apart from Balwadis, Smt. Moghe's programme of child development includes immunization, baby-shows, training of mothers and holding various competitions. For development of women, Smt. Moghe's institution conducts craft-training courses, spinning on Amber-Charkha, Toy-making and manufacturing educational equipments as a means of employment to needy women.

Sal Niketan Sangh is now running institutions for pre-primary teachers' training and the training of Anganwadi workers.

In 1989, for the first time in M.P., a voluntary institution-Bal Niketan Sangh-was allotted two Integrated Child Development Services Projects: One in the slum areas of Indore city and the other in the adivasi area of Jobat in the Jhabua district.

Under the scheme, one hundred centres, each catering for 1000 population have been established in the 100 slum areas of Indore and 74 centres, each catering for 700 populations, in Jobat adivasi taluka. At these centres immunisation of children, prenatal and post-natal services to women, nutrition to children, education in health and hygiene, pre-school education and family planning education are being carried on.

These two projects have brought about a great change in the life of the people of these areas. The immunisation has been more than 90%. Women willingly come to the centres for getting their children immunised. They also have started coming to Hospital for deliveries and for their ailments. Death rate among children up to 6 years of age has considerably declined. Family planning has started taking root. In the slum areas of Indore, it has been very successful. There has been increasing public participation in various activities organised by these projects.

The Girls' Hostel at Jobat has created impact on the adivasi people. The adivasis are now pressurising Smt. Moghe to give admission to more girls than the prescribed limit and land is being donated for this purpose. The girls are being given all around education. Besides the regular School courses, they are taught music, yogasanas, carpet-weaving, tailoring, knitting, cooking and healthy and clean living.

Her knowledge and expertise in the field of child development has been recognised by educationists as well as the government.

She was appointed as a member of the task force constituted under the Chairmanship of Miss Sulabha Panandikar, a member of the Kothari Education Commission, to prepare a draft report in regard to pre-School Education.

She was also a member of the Committee constituted by the Union Education Ministry in 1979 to prepare a scheme for "Early Childhood Education". The scheme is presently being implemented in all States.

Smt. Shalini Moghe comes from a middle class family with no full-time servants at home or bank balance in her name. For the major part of her life, she has worked in an honorary capacity; whenever she received any remuneration, she donated it to her Institution.

Smt. Moghe has been a source of guidance and inspiration to the younger generation of social workers working in this field. She has created a large band of trained and dedicated workers who have been a great source of strength to social welfare activities in Madhya Pradesh.

