



MS. PRASANNA BHANDARI

Recipient of the Award for Development and Welfare of Women and Children - 2018

Born: December 12, 1934

Mummyji, as she is lovingly called, Prasanna Bhandari is the Convenor and guiding light of Shri Karni Nagar Vikas Samiti (SKNVS). Her love for those in need started early. As a child, she followed her father working for social cause in the neighbourhood. Later she also worked at refugee camps in Kolkata. When she got married and moved to Kota, Prasanna Bhandari found ways to continue her work. She picked up abandoned children and distressed women and looked after them till they were adopted or could move on with their lives.

Prasanna Bhandari works for the cause of the deserted and relinquished infants, destitute children, distressed women and girls and the helpless aged persons. Various centers were set up to address the needs and carry out various developmental activities.

Campus 1 MAMTAhas Balgriha, Family Counseling Center and Primary School

Campus 2 AASHRAYAcomprises Balikagriha, Diva Sangam, Lateral learning and Library

Campus 3 SHRADHAhas Old Age Home, Shishugriha and a Physiotherapy Clinic

Following is a brief description of activities undertaken by Prasanna Bhandari:

- **Shishugriha** is an infant care nursery for abandoned infants. Since its inception in 1977, more than 900 such children have been legally adopted by willing couples.
- **Balgriha** a destitute children's home with the present capacity for 120 children, takes care of the food, shelter and educational needs of the grown up boys in the age group of 6 to 18 years. In the 50 years of service, around 3000 boys have been taken care of.
- Similarly **Balikagriha** is a home for the destitute girls aged 6-18 years, which is presently taking care of 45 girls. 200 girls have been married or integrated into mainstream society.

The formal education for younger children is arranged in-house, whereas children in higher classes are sent to various schools and colleges for higher education. The primary school is affiliated to the Rajasthan Education Board. In addition, children are taught several vocational skills like wall paintings, nursing and paramedic technics. SKVNS takes care of their stay, food and education.

Special emphasis is given to overall development of the children (boys and girls) by bestowing love and care, inculcating values and life skills, and developing good habits and discipline in the children. They are encouraged to participate in various competitions, cultural, literary events and sports tournaments. Many of them have won laurels. Prasanna Bhandari has been a mother to the children, who are now well settled in various professions and spheres of life. Some of the alumni are also associated with SKVNS activities.

- **Short Stay Home** provides facility to widows, divorcees, unwed mothers or women and young girls in distress. Rehabilitation process is an integral part of this activity. Counseling and skill training is also the focus area. Many women have been restored to their families and many eligible have been married. 640 women have been served so far and over 200 homeless girls were married.

• **Old Age Home** is set up to restore dignity and comfortable stay of old people who are abandoned by their children and families. Presently 40 senior citizens live in peace and joy. There is a physiotherapy center in its premise.

• **Family Counseling Centre**, set up in 1985 has a qualified women's team who provide counseling service with the aim of reconciling. The problems for which people come to this center include cases of physical abuse, alcohol/drug addiction, dowry, extra-marital relations, economic and legal issues etc. Since 1985, approximately 3500 cases have been registered and the success rate of the center has been overwhelming.

• **Diva Sangam** provides the senior citizens with varied activities keeping them engaged in day time by holding lectures, symposia, seminars, music programmes, kavi sammelan, mushaira.

Prasanna Bhandari presently heads the Kota branch of Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti, Jaipur (BMVSS) as President. This institution which has been working since 1978 was initiated to empower the people with disabilities (Divyangjan). It has a fabrication unit for prosthetic aids and its team comprises of a prosthetic and orthotic expert and ten technicians, who are people with disability. In its journey of over 40 years, it has provided aid to over one lakh Divyangs by holding camps in more than 100 cities.

Quantitative impact with year of initiation:

1978: Infant care and adoption: 900 beneficiaries

1978: Child care under destitute home: 3000

1988: Short stay home for women: 640

1999: Shelter to aged: 300

1985: Family Counseling: 3500 cases

Prasanna Bhandari has an affinity for the most vulnerable and has brought babies found abandoned in the city's drains, the disabled from across the country and others with little hope of survival. She has nursed hundreds of such people with love and taken pride in their recovery. The origin of the work of SKNVs can be traced to the principle of compassion towards all living beings. Prasanna Bhandari is a motherly, caring and affectionate woman, who naturally connects with the distressed people. Doing Seva of the deserted and distressed women and children is close to Prasanna Bhandari's heart and she continues to work tirelessly to manage and expand her work.

Awards & Recognition:

1986: Samaj Bhushan for social welfare by Governor of Rajasthan

1988: National Award for child welfare by President of India

2004: Mahila Pratibha Samman for women welfare activity

2005: Maharana Mewar Puraskar

2010: Thirteenth Mahaveer Award by Governor Tamil Nadu

2015: PHD Chamber Award for Excellence in the category of social welfare by a non- corporate

2015: Times Global Excellence award in the social field

Contact Details:

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