

References to VGKK & Dr. Sudarshan in speeches by

Former President, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam

- 1. Extract from the address during the dedication of JIPMER to the nation, Puducherry on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008**
- 2. Inauguration of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Vivekananda Girijana Kalyana Kendra at BR Hills on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006**
- 3. Excerpts from Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam's speech in Hyderabad in 2005**

**Extract from the address during the dedication of JIPMER to the nation, Puducherry on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

Reaching the Unreached

In the present circumstances and environment, it was inspiring to see, how a MBBS doctor has put all his dreams in mainstreaming the tribal citizens of Karnataka for the last 25 years through Vivekananda Girijana Kalyan Kendra (VGKK), at BR Hills. When I visited BR Hills in 1998 and subsequently in 2006, I could see substantial new developments in that area. I could see that "New Tribal Hospital", Roads and education environment and above all the earning capacity of the tribal citizens have been increased with the technology resource centre as a base. Dr. H. Sudarshan, is the inspiring architect of this societal transformation.

Dr. Sudarshan's father died in a village without any medical help when he was just twelve. This event followed by his reading the biography of Dr. Albert Schweitzer who worked in Africa motivated Dr. Sudarshan to take up medical profession and work in tribal areas in India. Dr. Sudarshan derives his philosophy of work from Swami Vivekananda's teachings which states "they alone live who live for others, rest are more dead than alive".

Dr. Sudarshan starts his day at 4.30 am in the morning with Yoga, meditation and prayer with tribal school children. After his breakfast at 7.30 am, he attends to administrative work for an hour. From 9 am to 1pm, he goes around the ward and

sees the patients individually. He has lunch with the tribal students between 1 and 2 pm in the afternoon. Later till 7 pm, he is busy in the clinic where he conducts minor surgeries and visits tribal complex. Later, he performs administrative work for an hour and half and has dinner with the tribal students. He devotes one hour for study between 9 and 10 pm, so that he gets updated information about medical systems. He spends large part of his time in Clinical Diagnosis, Laboratory diagnosis and treatment, in addition to Supervising, Monitoring, teaching and carrying out research along with his team members.

Dr. Sudarshan pays particular attention to the special problems of the tribals such as Snake bite cases, Mauling by bears, Pneumonia, Tuberculosis and Acute Respiratory Infections. The Soliga tribal people suffer from Sickle Cell Anemia and Dr. Sudarshan has developed a low cost electrophoresis machine for diagnosing the disease. He has also built the healthcare system on the strengths of traditional knowledge available in the tribal areas. The secret of his service is that he is empowering the people to manage their own health through the provision of knowledge. He has trained tribal girls as Auxiliary Nurse & Midwife (ANM) and posted them in the Tribal Sub-centers. These nurses undergo 18 months course. Thus the rural area is self-sufficient in nursing resource. He has also developed low cost management system for Epilepsy in the Primary Healthcare Centre (PHC). He has introduced Dental Healthcare and Cancer Control in the PHC. He is providing quality healthcare to the people by the introduction of low premium health insurance for all the people living below poverty line. He suggests that medical colleges should teach their students to develop sensitivity to the suffering of the patients. They also need to modify the treatment approach for the poor who cannot afford costly treatment. The aim of the medical education should be to facilitate application of medical technology for providing best care to the poor at the most affordable cost. Dr. Sudarshan says 'the greatest joy, he experienced was when he resuscitated a patient whose lungs and heart had stopped and when he sees the smile on the face of poor patients who come to the hospital with blindness (cataract in both eyes) and walk out with full vision after the cataract surgery. Country needs thousands of Dr. Sudarshans for providing healthcare to our rural citizens.

When we see the life of Dr. Venkataswamy and Dr. Sudarshan who championed the cause “prevent avoidable blindness” and “tribal healthcare”, there are many other avoidable healthcare issues that come in front of us? How can we avoid totally Malaria? How can we eliminate TB? How can we make IMR and MMR near zero? In India, we have to ensure that there is no occurrence of infection such as HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B&C due to the re-use of syringe and the needle. Can we free future generations from occurrence of heart diseases at an early age? Can we make artificial organs for giving quality of life to those who need them? Can we provide better quality of life to our senior citizens? How to educate people in preventive care? How to keep the environment clean? How to reduce the costs of medicines and make it affordable to the common man? How to ensure spurious drugs do not enter the market? As you see, if you have to find satisfactory answers to these questions, we have to address together many aspects like medical innovation, training, technology, sanitation, nutrition, public awareness and ethics together.

I hope every one you will take a page today, write in a page, one sentence. That one sentence could make a difference in your life. That sentence is “What I will be remembered for?”

### **Inauguration of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Vivekananda Girijana Kalyana Kendra at BR Hills on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

Tribal development - a mission

I am delighted to be in BR Hills beautiful environment and interact with the tribal members and children and BR Hills mission team members.

#### *Rural Tribal development and Vision*

There is a general tendency among many people to live in cities and particularly the graduates in medical, engineering and management would like to serve in urban areas and cities and not even in towns where higher learning centre, technological institutions and medical facilities are converging. Of course, there

are exceptions. In such an environment, it is inspiring to see how a MBBS doctor has put all his dreams in mainstreaming the tribal citizens of Karnataka for the last 25 years through Vivekananda Girijana Kalyan Kendra (VGKK), at BR Hills. When I visited BR Hills in 1998 and now, I find substantial new developments in this area has taken place. I can see that "New Tribal Hospital", Roads and education environment and above all the earning capacity of the tribal citizens have been increased with the technology resource centre as a base. Dr. H. Sudarshan, is an inspiring architect of this societal transformation. The mission what you with your team have started is spreading in many parts of the country including the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Arunchal Pradesh. The nation is grateful to you Dr. Sudarshan and your team, selecting difficult regions and making a difference to the people by your own way of life, which started in a small hut in the same region. I assure Dr. Sudarshan, wherever I visit, I will spread the successful mission of yours. My greetings to VGKK and their partners on the occasion of their Silver Jubilee Celebrations.

#### *Another moving experience in the country*

When I am with you, I am also reminded of a unique mission of one of my friends in Andhra Pradesh. This is the life of Prof M.R. Raju of Peddamiram village. Prof Raju's life is indeed a great example, how a famous nuclear scientist working in Los Alamos Laboratory, USA decided to transform the village Peddamiram and its surroundings, with the support of his family members. With his assets, he started the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Medical Trust in that village. In a decade, he and his team supported by volunteers from various institutions from India and abroad, have brought great change to the people in the village. Particularly he targeted character building and upliftment of the children in the age group of 3 to 5 years. This has totally transformed the village atmosphere and the drop out rate of the children in schools has come down from 70% to less than 30%. They are receiving creative learning in a harmonious atmosphere. A confident young population is emerging in the village. In addition, two hospitals, one for cancer diagnosis and treatment particularly cervical cancer among tribals and the second one for

treatment of eye diseases have been commissioned in the village. I had visited Peddamiram recently and seen the development progress. I would like to mention that Prof. Raju and his team are doing such an important noble mission silently in Peddamiram with the participation of State government. Both of them Dr. Sudarshan of BR Hills and Prof Raju of Peddamiram are indeed the inspiring examples for rural and tribal development.

### *One Village One Product*

I would like to mention the handicraft promotion work taking place at Chhindwara and Seoni in Madhya Pradesh with governmental and JETRO of Japan, cooperation for the promotion of "One Village, One Product". Here the development of interior life style articles is taking place with suggestions from JETRO (Japan) technical experts. After prototypes the products are made and they are being sent to Tokyo market for presentation in exhibitions for getting a feedback from the users. The feedback is used to further improve the product for making it acceptable for sale in the international market. A similar model has been followed between Thailand and Japan which has resulted in the development of 26 products being produced in 26 villages with a large annual turn-over. In BR Hills, there are 128 tribal hamlets, the idea of "One Village One Product" can be adopted. This will help village wise product availability and technology added, that can become a competitive commercial product for the national and international market.

### *Bamboo Mission*

In order to commence this type of handicrafts product mission, people in the BR Hills may embark on a Bamboo mission. This mission envisages an integrated programme of expansion of plantations of Bamboo species, the scientific management, and promotion of community level value addition and entrepreneurship. Bamboo Mission is supported by Planning Commission. This will enable presenting the raw material for the industries and the industry to access and apply modern technology for producing globally competitive new generation bamboo products. This includes setting up of clusters of small value addition processing units, near the resource for employment generation and

benefit to the local small entrepreneur. Processed raw material suitable for ultimate use in industry/handicraft sector will be required, for economizing handling cost of raw material to the location of industry proposed to be set up in different parts of the State.

VGKK can work with institutions like National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, Indian Institutes of Management, Industrial Houses and the banking systems to generate number of Bamboo enterprises in different PURA clusters of BR Hills. The aim should be to create an international market for bamboo products.

Now let me talk about the another mission which will bring rural prosperity, particularly using the waste land in the Hilly region of BR Hills, that is Jatropha cultivation for bio-diesel production in at least 1000 acres of BR Hills.

#### *Jatropha - Biofuel: Hill & Plain Terrain Employment Generator*

The Government has decided to permit mixing of 10% bio-fuel with regular diesel. This has opened up new opportunities for employment and wealth generation to farmers including hill areas. BR Hills area has certain amount of wasteland. Multi-purpose trees such as Jatropha can grow well in wasteland with minimum input of water. Once grown the crop has a fifty years of life. Many initiatives have been taken for cultivation of Jatropha in different States.

Farmers have started cultivating Jatropha in many areas. But they have certain problems such as low productivity, non-availability of standardized good seeds, technical advice, non-availability of information about oil extraction and esterification equipments and lack of knowledge about prospective purchasers of Jatropha seed or Bio-fuel. To enable the farmers to work without interruption, there is a need to take a comprehensive view of the total chain from Jatropha plantation to efficient extraction, esterification and marketing. While these issues are being taken up, the research and development personnel and entrepreneurs, financial institutions can become partners of the farmers. VGKK may like to

interact with Tamil Nadu and Karnataka Agricultural Universities and examine the suitability of Jatropha plantation in this region. This will provide large scale employment for the farmers in plantation, crushing, esterification, blending and production of large variety of value added products like Jatropha cake, glycerin and certain medicines.

### *BR Hills PURA*

I would suggest VGKK to consider creation of BR Hills PURA encompassing all the tribal hamlets (128) in this region which has a population of over 20,000. PURA envisages Provision of physical connectivity, electronic connectivity, knowledge connectivity leading to economic connectivity. Knowledge connectivity and economic connectivity to a certain extent is already being provided by VGKK to the tribal population. All we need is to provide physical connectivity and electronic connectivity for the region in partnership with State Government and certain socially minded institutions. This will enable bringing into focus skills in cottage industry, dry land agriculture, production of honey, handicrafts, processed foods for which core competence exists among tribal citizens. This PURA will create market avenues for the products. Now, I would like to administer eight point oath to the BR Hills Tribal citizens assembled here.

1. Children are our precious wealth
2. We will give equal importance to male and female children in providing education and their rights for growth in our society.
3. For health and prosperity we will have a small family.
4. Earnings come out of hard work. We will not waste it in gambling and liquor.
5. We will tell our children about the importance of education as learning gives knowledge and knowledge makes children succeed.

6. We will jointly protect our forest and prevent pollution.
7. Trees and water bodies are our wealth, we will protect them.
8. We will become role models for our children.

Now, I would like to discuss certain experiences, which will be of interest to children.

### *Bird story and my profession*

I had a teacher when I was studying in 8th class at the age of 13. I had a teacher, Shri Siva Subramania Iyer. He was one of the very good teachers in our school. All of us loved to attend his class and hear him. One day he was teaching about bird's flight. He drew a diagram of a bird on the blackboard depicting the wings, tail and the body structure with the head. He explained how the birds create the lift and fly. He also explained to us how they change direction while flying. Nearly for 25 minutes he gave the lecture with various information such as lift, drag, how the birds fly in a formation of 10, 20 or 30. At the end of the class, he wanted to know whether we understood how the birds fly. I said, I did not understand how the birds fly. When I said this, the teacher asked the other students whether they understood or not. Many students said that they also did not understand. He did not get upset by our response since he was a committed teacher.

Our teacher said that he would take all of us to the sea shore. That evening the whole class was at the sea shore of Rameswaram. We enjoyed the roaring sea waves knocking at the sandy hills in the pleasant evening. Birds were flying with sweet chirping voice. He showed the sea birds in formations of 10 to 20 numbers. We saw the marvelous formations of birds with a purpose and we were all amazed. He showed us the birds and asked us to see that when the birds fly, what they looked like. We saw the wings flapping. He asked us to look at the tail portion with the combination of flapping wings and twisting tail. We noticed closely and found that the birds in that condition flew in the direction they desired. Then he asked us a question, where the engine is and how it is powered.

Bird is powered by its own life and the motivation of what it wants. All these things were explained to us within Fifteen minutes. We all understood the whole bird dynamics from this practical example. How nice it was? Our teacher was a great teacher; he could give us a theoretical lesson coupled with a live practical example available in nature. This is real teaching. I am sure many of the teachers in schools and colleges will follow this example.

For me, it was not merely an understanding of how a bird flies. The bird's flight entered into me and created a special feeling. From that evening, I thought that my future study has to be with reference to flight and flight systems. I am saying this because my teacher's teaching and the event that I witnessed decided my future career. Then one evening after the classes, I asked the teacher, "Sir, please tell me, how to progress further in learning all about flight." He patiently explained to me that I should complete 8th class, and then go to high school, and then I should go to engineering college that may lead to education on flight. If I complete all my education with excellence, I might do something connected with flight sciences. This advice and the bird flying exercise given by my teacher, really gave me a goal and a mission for my life. When I went to college, I took Physics. When I went to engineering in Madras Institute of Technology, I took Aeronautical Engineering.

Thus my life was transformed as a rocket engineer, aerospace engineer and technologist. That one incident of my teacher teaching the lesson, showing the visual live example proved to be a turning point in my life which eventually shaped my profession.

Now, I would like to administer a seven point oath to the children. Can you repeat it with me? Are you ready?

1. I realize, I have to set a goal in my life. To achieve the goal, I will acquire knowledge, I will work hard, and when a problem occurs, I have to defeat the problem and succeed.

2. As the youth of my nation, I will work and work with courage to achieve success in all my tasks and enjoy the success of others.
3. I shall always keep myself, my home, my surroundings, neighbourhood and environment clean and tidy.
4. I realize righteousness in the heart leads to beauty in the character, beauty in the character brings harmony in the home, harmony in the home leads to order in the nation and order in the nation leads to peace in the world.
5. I will lead an honest life free from all corruption and will set an example for others including my home to adopt a righteous way of life.
6. I will light the lamp of knowledge in the nation and ensure that it remains lit for ever.
7. I realize, whatever work I do, if I do the best, I am contributing towards realizing the vision of a developed India 2020.

Once again let me greet the members of VGKK during their Silver Jubilee Year. My best wishes to VGKK and its partners for success in their mission of bringing in prosperity, peace and happiness to rural India. May God bless you.

### **Excerpts from Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam's speech in Hyderabad in 2005**

Video at <http://in.youtube.com/watch?v=rLCjma3Sfhs>

<http://www.icbs.com/iit/abdul-kalam-speech.htm>

I have a THIRD vision, India must stand up to the world. Because I believe that unless India stands up to the world, no one will respect us. Only strength respects strength. We must be strong not only as a military power but also as an economic power. Both must go hand-in-hand. My good fortune was to have worked with three great minds. Dr. Vikram Sarabhai of the Department of space, Professor

Satish Dhawan, who succeeded him and Dr. Brahm Prakash father of nuclear material. I was lucky to have worked with all three of them closely and consider this the great opportunity of my life.

Why is the media here so negative? Why are we in India so embarrassed to recognize our own strengths, our achievements? Why are we in India so embarrassed to recognize our own strengths, our achievements? We are such a great nation. We have so many amazing success stories but we refuse to acknowledge them. Why? We are

the first in milk production. We are number one in Remote sensing satellites. We are the second largest producer of wheat. We are the second largest producer of rice. Look at Dr. Sudarshan; he has transferred the tribal village into a self-sustaining, self-driving unit. There are millions of such achievements but our media is only obsessed in the bad news and failures and disasters.