

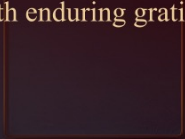
॥ Shrimant ॥



॥ Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Sarvajanic Ganpati Trust, Pune ॥



Being part of this
remarkable journey
is an honour
we shall treasure
for years to come,
with enduring gratitude





Devotional Gratitude



The true pillars of the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Sarvajanic Ganpati Trust were its founding visionaries - Founder President Late Tatyasaheb Godse, Founder Vice President Late Mamasahb Rasane, Founder Treasurer Late Shankarrao (Appasaheb) Suryawanshi, and Founder General Secretary Late Buvasahb Rasane. Despite facing severe hardships in life, their unwavering devotion to Lord Ganesha became the guiding force that inspired them to dedicate nearly six decades of selfless service at His lotus feet. It is their tireless commitment, integrity, and unwavering faith that transformed Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati into a revered name known across the world. Their noble legacy continues to inspire successive generations of trustees and volunteers to uphold the same values of honesty, transparency, and selfless service. Late Ashokbhai Godse and Shri Manikdada Chavan devoted nearly fifty-five years to the service of Bappa, while Shri Sunilbhai Rasane has served for almost five decades. Shri Hemantbhai Rasane and Shri Mahesh Suryawanshi have each dedicated around four decades, and the younger generation - including Shri Akshay Godse, Shri Amol Kedari, Shri Prakash Chavan of 'Suvarnayug Tarun Mandal', and numerous dedicated volunteers - continues this sacred tradition with equal commitment. These are not merely years of service, but a timeless legacy of devotion, dedication, and the preservation of a cherished tradition.

Sunilbhai Rasane, the current Chairman of the Trust, is admired for his unwavering spirit of service. Long before the temple attained its present grandeur and global recognition, when it was still modest in size, he would personally stay back late into the night to clean the temple with utmost devotion. For him, no task performed in the service of Lord Ganesha is ever too great or too small - a belief that continues to define his humility and dedication.

The temple's aarti, as it is experienced today - deeply devotional, soul-stirring, and capable of immersing every devotee in the divine presence of Lord Ganesha - is the creation of Sunilbhai Rasane. The aarti that thousands of devotees sing with reverence each day is imbued with his profound devotion and heartfelt emotions. His commitment extends far beyond composing the aarti. He remains personally involved in every aspect of the temple's administration, overseeing even the smallest details with exceptional care. Present at the temple every day, he ensures that devotees experience a smooth and fulfilling darshan. Regardless of the crowds or the demands of the day, Sunilbhai remains at the temple until its doors close, steadfastly dedicated to serving both Bappa and His devotees. The seed of devotion sown by the founding trustees has today blossomed into a majestic banyan tree of faith, tradition, and selfless service. Nurturing this enduring legacy, generations of dedicated volunteers continue to serve Lord Ganesha with unwavering devotion and humility. It is our heartfelt prayer at Bappa's divine feet that this sacred tradition of faith and service continues to flourish for generations to come.

Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Sarvajanic Ganpati Trust and Suvarnayug Tarun Mandal, Pune



॥Shrimant॥

As I became increasingly immersed in the creation of this commemorative volume, one thought grew ever stronger - that if there was a title truly worthy of this work in every sense, it could only be "Shrimant". For Shrimant signifies far more than material prosperity; it embodies maturity, wisdom, dignity, and an inner richness of spirit. It is this very richness that one encounters at every step in the legacy and living tradition of the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Temple and Mandal.

True richness never needs to be proclaimed - it reveals itself effortlessly, commands admiration, and leaves a lasting impression. As one turns the pages of this volume, that very experience unfolds. The Mandal's intellectual depth, spiritual elevation, artistic sensitivity, social commitment, unwavering ethical values, and cultured traditions reflect its true wealth. Equally evident are its dedication to preserving India's classical music heritage through initiatives such as Swarabhishek, its passion for spreading knowledge, commitment to environmental conservation, efforts towards social awareness, and meaningful contributions to the world of sports. Together, these facets embody the extraordinary richness that defines the Mandal.

Yet, one important truth deserves to be emphasised. This richness was neither inherited



nor attained overnight. It has been earned through the unwavering dedication of generations of trustees, volunteers, and sevakaris, whose tireless service, impeccable integrity, steadfast commitment to values, and transparent functioning have won the trust of every section of society. It is upon this enduring foundation of public faith that this remarkable legacy stands.

This is, therefore, not a fleeting prosperity but a timeless one - shaped by selfless service, spiritual devotion, and noble intent. To be a part of this spiritual and humanistic legacy is a matter of profound pride. It is a pride untouched by arrogance, rooted instead in humility and deep gratitude.

Milind Ghaisas





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Concept & Design
Adived Advertising Pvt. Ltd.

Creative Director
Milind Ghaisas

Art Director
Swati Ghaisas

Artworks & Post-Production
Yash Waghare

Proofreading
Jason Joseph

Processed & Printed At
Image Production

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This book is a humble offering, created with deep devotion and heartfelt reverence at the sacred feet of Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Bappa. We humbly hope that readers will embrace it with an open mind and a positive spirit. Creative liberty has been exercised wherever necessary in its making. No offence is intended to any individual or community; every word has been inspired solely by devotion and respect. No part of this book may be reproduced, republished or disseminated, in print, digital or any other form, without the prior written permission of the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Sarvajanic Ganpati Trust.

Footprints of Faith



As we offer this collector's edition at the sacred feet of Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Bappa as a humble floral tribute of knowledge, our minds are flooded with the radiant and deeply moving memories of a remarkable journey spanning several decades. In those precious moments, tears welled up in our eyes - tears not of sorrow, but of profound fulfilment, spiritual contentment, and boundless joy.

As we behold the magnificent banyan tree of humanitarian service that has blossomed today from the seed of faith and devotion sown in this sacred temple by Shrimant Dagdusheth and the venerable Lakshmibai under the divine blessings of Sadguru Madhavnath Maharaj, we are filled with awe and reverence. Witnessing this extraordinary transformation is a profoundly humbling experience, and it feels as though it is the reward of countless virtuous deeds accumulated over many lifetimes.

The success story of this extraordinary journey - from the festive inception of the Public Ganesh Festival to the magnificent construction of a permanent temple, accompanied by countless initiatives dedicated to the welfare of society - is truly unparalleled and one that deserves to be recounted with immense pride.





1893... The ceremonial procession of Lord Ganesha, carried in a horse-drawn chariot adorned with banana trunks - a traditional symbol of auspiciousness and prosperity - featured eminent personalities including Lokmanya Tilak, Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai, Shrimant Bhausaheb Rangari, Shivram Mahadev Paranjape (founder-editor of Kaal), Govind Daji Joshi, Baburao Godse, Somnath Sheth Gadwe, and several other dedicated pioneers of the movement.

The idol was consecrated in 1893, the very year Lokmanya Tilak initiated the Public Ganesh Festival movement. Following the demise of Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai, the stewardship of the festival was assumed by Suvarnayug Tarun Mandal in 1952.

At that time, Taty Godse, Mama Rasane, Appa Suryawanshi, Buva Rasane, Raghunath Maharaj Kedari, and their dedicated associates laid a strong foundation of transparency and ethical governance. Their foresight transformed the name 'Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati' into a symbol not only of faith and devotion, but also of integrity and public trust.

A shining testament to this commitment is the annual audited financial report of the Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Festival, where every contribution and every expense - from a single rupee to the smallest offering - is meticulously recorded with complete transparency. It stands among the earliest public Ganesh festivals to uphold such exemplary standards of accountability. Guided by the same spirit of social responsibility, the Suvarnayug Cooperative Bank was established to empower the working community and extend financial support to deserving families.





This marked the first major milestone in the Trust's journey of social service. Today, it is recognised as one of the state's most trusted cooperative banks - a golden fruition of this enduring vision and collective endeavour.

The Child Care Centre at Kondhwa, established for orphaned children and the children of Devadasis, has transformed countless lives. Its alumni include an ISRO scientist and professionals serving leading national and international organisations, many of whom now inspire and mentor the next generation - an enduring legacy of service and empowerment.

Moved by the thought, "Should those who make bricks for others' homes not have a home of their own?", the Trust established Ganpati Nagar Housing Complex on Sinhagad Road. This compassionate initiative stands as one of the most heartfelt milestones in its journey of social service. Established at Kondhwa in 2003, the Old Age Home is more than a place of care - it is a family bound by affection, where the heartwarming bond between grandparents and

children creates a beautiful legacy of love across three generations.

Every day, the Trust serves meals, breakfast and tea to over 3,200 patients at Sassoon Hospital, provides shelter for their relatives, and extends medical assistance to critically ill patients - an initiative supported by an annual expenditure of over Rs.30 million. This is a living expression of our commitment to compassionate service. Over the years, this spirit has found expression through numerous initiatives, including polio eradication campaigns, food distribution for Warkaris, mobile medical clinics, the Jai Ganesh Gyanvardhan educational programme, gallantry awards for soldiers, disaster relief, afforestation, and water conservation projects. The Trust has also nurtured sporting excellence. Through the Suvarnayug Sports Club, Sumati Pujari rose to captain the Indian Kabaddi team, while Deepika Joseph achieved the highest honour by helping India win the World Cup. Marking the Golden Jubilee of the prestigious Hind Kesari wrestling championship, the Trust successfully brought the tournament to Pune and organised it with exceptional grandeur and flawless execution. For us, every contribution received from society is dedicated back to society. Whether an offering made at the temple or a donation entrusted for humanitarian service, each becomes a sacred force for the greater good. This unwavering commitment to integrity and absolute transparency remains the hallmark of all our endeavours.



To preserve its unwavering values of discipline, integrity, and self-governance, the Trust adopted a comprehensive Code of Conduct. This pioneering framework has since become a guiding light for numerous Ganesh festival organisations across Maharashtra, reaffirming the Trust's role as a trailblazer in ethical and responsible public celebrations.

Encompassing the temple's vibrant festivals, the unique features of the sacred idol, its exquisite ornaments, devotees' experiences, and the harmonious integration of modern technology, this commemorative volume stands as a golden chronicle of Shri's divine grace.

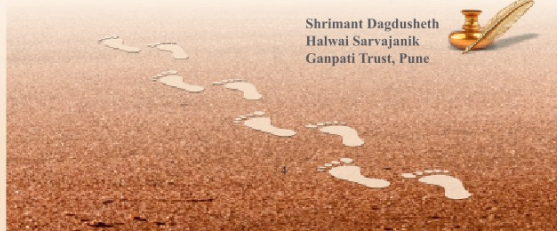
To carry forward the legacy of humanity nurtured by the generations before us is both a sacred privilege and a profound responsibility. We believe that only the boundless grace of Lord Ganesha has enabled us to fulfil this mission. This unwavering faith has kept our path free from conflict, discord, and politics, allowing our service to remain pure and purposeful.



It is this spirit that has continually strengthened the unwavering trust reposed in us by society and enabled us to uphold an unblemished reputation with dignity and humility. We offer a heartfelt prayer at the sacred feet of Lord Ganesha that this timeless journey of faith, service, and integrity may continue for generations to come.

This is not merely a collector's edition - it is a timeless chronicle of the faith of millions of devotees, their gratitude, and an enduring journey of selfless service to society.

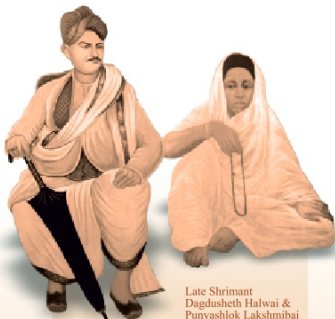
**Shrimant Dagdusheth
Halwai Sarvajanik
Ganpati Trust, Pune**



The Beacon of Devotion



Among the most eminent merchants of his era, Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai was a revered and influential figure in Pune's social landscape. He was also honoured as the city's first Sheriff.



Late Shrimant
Dagdusheth Halwai &
Punyashlok Lakshimbai
Dagdusheth Halwai

Around 1896, the dreaded plague swept across the land, unleashing unimaginable devastation. Thousands of families lost their loved ones, and countless homes were plunged into darkness. Dagdusheth's young son, too, succumbed to the epidemic. The unbearable loss shattered Dagdusheth and his wife, Lakshimbai, leaving them overwhelmed with grief.



॥ Yogabhyananand Shri Sadguru ॥
Madhavnath Maharaj

Only a few months after this devastating loss, Shrimant Dagdusheth also passed away. Left to endure an overwhelming void, Lakshimbai found solace in the guidance of her revered Guru, Shri Madhavnath Maharaj. Offering her strength and spiritual direction, he advised her to embrace the path of bhakti: "Worship Shri Dattatreya and Shri Ganesha, and seek a new purpose in life through their divine service. Just as children grow up to bring honour to their parents, these divine deities, too, shall bring enduring fame and glory to your family."

In accordance with her Guru's blessings, Lakshmi Bai commissioned a marble idol of Shri Dattatreya. The idol of Shri Ganesha had already been consecrated. With the consecration of these two divine deities began a new spiritual journey - one illuminated by unwavering devotion, steadfast faith, and complete surrender. It was then that the flame of divine devotion was truly kindled.

Time marched on, yet the festival continued with undiminished devotion even after the passing of Shrimant Dagdusheth. By then, it had become deeply woven into the hearts of the local community. The trading fraternity and residents came together in a spirit of selfless service, ensuring that this cherished tradition continued to flourish. A landmark chapter unfolded in 1952, when the stewardship of this glorious festival was entrusted to Taty Godse, Mama Rasane, Appa Suryawanshi, Buva Rasane, and their 'Suvarmayug Tarun Mandal', in recognition of their years of dedicated and selfless service. They inherited a priceless legacy and a treasury of just Rs. 300. Their true wealth, however, lay in their unwavering resolve, boundless enthusiasm, and the trust of the people. That intangible capital became the foundation of an extraordinary legacy. Determined to carry the glory of Shri Ganesha to every corner of the world, the volunteers devoted themselves wholeheartedly to their mission. Their collective spirit culminated in the Amrit Mahotsav of 1967. Against a fundraising target of Rs. 25,000, the



overwhelming love and generosity of Pune's citizens helped raise an impressive Rs. 40,000.

By then, the Ganeshotsav had grown far beyond the temple, becoming an inseparable part of the people's hearts. A defining milestone came in 1984, when Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati was enshrined at its present location in a modest shrine. From that moment, the neighbourhood flourished - commerce thrived, culture blossomed, and devotion deepened. Over the years, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Public Ganpati Trust became synonymous with faith, selfless service, and public trust. Its enduring legacy has been built on transparent governance, disciplined administration, and the tireless dedication of its volunteers. Looking back, this extraordinary journey stands as a lasting tribute to the path shown by a revered Guru and a sacred tradition nurtured by millions of devotees - an enduring symbol of faith and devotion in the sacred city of Pune.



An Inspiring Journey



Hailing from a humble family, Tatya's journey began with stringing flowers in a flower shop, running a small paan stall, and working as a



bank peon. Despite growing up in adversity and having only a modest education, he possessed an innate drive to lead and serve. At just fifteen, he founded Suvarnayug Tarun Mandal, inspiring a devoted team of volunteers who would stand by him for years to come. In those days, the Ganpati of Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai was installed in his residential lane in Budhwar Peth.

Tatya and the dedicated volunteers of Suvarnayug wholeheartedly supported the celebrations. In 1952, the complete



responsibility for organising the Ganesh Festival was formally transferred from the Panch Mandal to the Suvarnayug Tarun Mandal.



**Late Prataprao Baburao
Godse (Tatya)**
Founder President



**Late Digambarrao Keshavrao
Rasane (Mama Rasane)**
Founder Vice President



**Late Shankarrao Shivram
Suryawanshi (Appa Suryawanshi)**
Founder Treasurer



**Late Kashinath Dattatraya
Rasane (Buva Rasane)**
Founder General Secretary

A great responsibility now rested on Tatya's shoulders, shared by his trusted companions - Mama Rasane, Appa Suryawanshi, and Buva Rasane - who became the pillars of this collective endeavour.



Appa Suryawanshi and Buva Rasane, both government employees, devoted their evenings to the festival, working tirelessly alongside fellow volunteers after completing their daily duties.



Their means were modest - just enough to support their families - but their vision was extraordinary. They dreamt of taking the festival to the world, building a permanent temple for Lord Ganesha, and ensuring year-round darshan for devotees. Such lofty aspirations, nurtured in the most ordinary circumstances, could only be seen as the grace of Lord Ganesha and the wisdom He bestowed upon them.

With degrees in B.A. and LL.B., Appa Suryawanshi gave clear shape to Tatya's vision, while Buva Rasane brought discipline and structure to its execution.

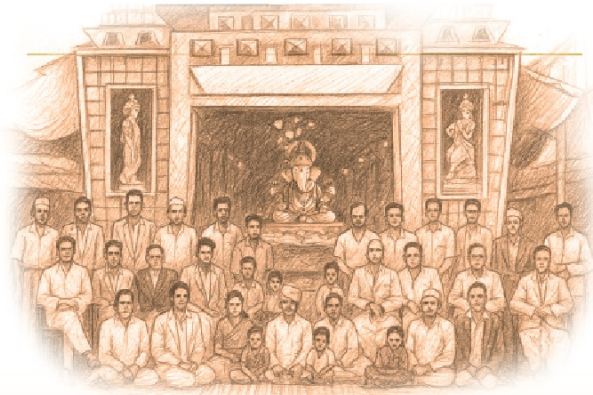
Together, they instilled discipline and transparency into the festival's administration. Their meticulous stewardship of every contribution earned Dagdusheth Ganpati a reputation not only for devotion, but also for integrity and public trust.

With Lokmanya Tilak's vision of public awakening and India's struggle for independence having fulfilled its purpose, the Ganesh Festival now called for a new direction.

Tatya's greatest challenge was to transform the Ganpati from a ten-day celebration into a year-round spiritual presence in the lives of the people. It was during this period that his remarkable foresight became evident. Religious programmes such as daily Ganesh worship, dawn shehnai recitals, and devotional bhajans by Smt. Alka Pendse were introduced, enriching the festival's spiritual character.

Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Mandal became the first Ganesh Mandal to establish the tradition of publicly presenting its annual statement of accounts, setting a benchmark for transparency and accountability.

The Mandal was the first to discontinue the practice of throwing 'gula' during festival processions, promoting an environmentally conscious, dignified, and disciplined celebration. This pioneering decision reflected its deep sense of social responsibility.



The Amrit Mahotsav (75th year) in 1967 marked a defining milestone in this journey. Surpassing the fundraising target of Rs. 25,000, the Mandal collected an impressive Rs.40,000 clear evidence that the festival had grown beyond its traditional boundaries to become, in the truest sense, the people's Ganpati.

Around this time, a series of public lectures was introduced to promote social awareness and education, addressing important issues concerning society and the state.

Free educational classes and skill-training programmes were introduced for children in the

neighbourhood. As society evolved, so did the festival. In 1984, the Mandal added a new cultural dimension by launching its Music Festival, which went on to become one of its most celebrated traditions.

As 1992 marked the centenary of the festival, the celebrations were extended from the customary ten days to an unprecedented 57 days. During this historic period, some of India's finest musicians and performers graced the festival, enriching it with unforgettable performances.

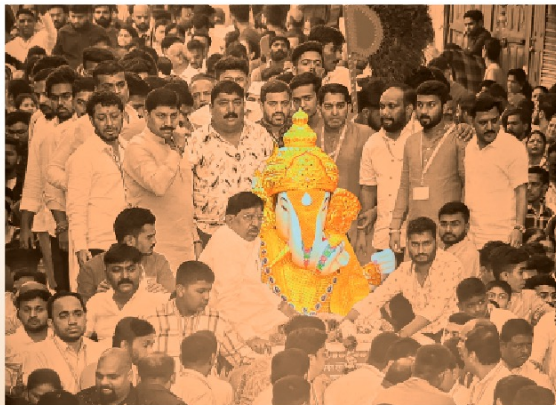


From Nothingness to a Universe of Creation

Today, Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Utsav Mandal stands as a beacon of prosperity, stability, and institutional strength - a distinction that is widely recognized and proudly acknowledged by the people.

Yet, when one traces the arduous journey behind this success, it becomes evident where its roots truly lie.

This enduring legacy rests on the tireless dedication of generations of volunteers, unwavering faith, selfless service, impeccable transparency, and the trust of the people. Rooted by those who came before, these timeless values continue to be nurtured by today's custodians.





The surroundings of the temple tell a remarkable story of resilience. Amid the bustle and congestion of Pune's crowded marketplace, and in the shadow of social challenges that



could easily have led many astray, a generation of dedicated volunteers chose a different path. Through perseverance, discipline, and unwavering faith, they rose above adversity to devote their lives to spirituality, selfless service, and the greater good of society.

Most of these volunteers came from humble, working-class families, where daily wages determined whether a meal would be served at home. Flower vendors, vegetable sellers, garland makers, domestic workers, and countless others transformed lives shaped by hardship into a legacy defined by dignity, devotion, and service.



For these volunteers, service is a sacred calling. Despite life's struggles, they devote themselves entirely to the Ganpati Utsav Mandal, often serving continuously for 36 to 40 hours, oblivious to hunger, thirst, and fatigue. Their deepest joy lies in ensuring that every devotee is cared for with compassion and devotion.

Life tested them, temptations arose, and opportunities for compromise presented themselves. Yet they remained steadfast, untouched by greed or misconduct - a testament to Lord Ganesha's blessings and the enduring values instilled by the generations before them. At the heart of Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Mandal lie two unwavering ideals - transparency and trust. Every offering received is regarded not as our own, but as a sacred trust belonging to Lord Ganesha, entrusted to us for the welfare of humanity. We are merely its custodians, committed to ensuring that every contribution is used with integrity and purpose. It is this uncompromising commitment that has earned the Mandal its reputation for impeccable probity. If these values of transparency, selfless service, tireless dedication, and noble conduct continue to guide every endeavour, then "From Nothingness to a Universe of Creation" will cease to be a mere phrase, it will stand as a living testament to what faith, integrity, and collective resolve can achieve. And in that moment, this humble volume will have fulfilled its purpose.



The Glorious Legacy of Lord Ganesha



Since 1893, the Shreemant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust has been celebrating the public Ganesh Festival, making it one of Pune's oldest and most revered institutions. Just as its name reflects a rich legacy, the evolution of its idols over the years reveals an equally fascinating journey through time. The festival was originally initiated in 1893 by Nagarseth Dagdusheth Halwai near the Bahuli Haud at Kotwal Chawdi. After his demise, his wife entrusted the same idol to the residents of the locality. Following the Amrit Mahotsav, the Mandal was transformed into a Trust and, in honour of its founder, was bestowed with the name 'Shreemant Dagdusheth Halwai'.

1893: The First Eco-Friendly Idol

Inspired by the public Ganesh Festival he witnessed in Gwalior, Nanasahab Khajgiwale shared the idea of a community celebration with Lokmanya Tilak. At a meeting of Pune's prominent citizens, it was resolved in 1893 to celebrate the festival at five locations across the city. The initiative received an overwhelming response, prompting Tilak to appeal through the daily Kesari for the festival to be expanded into a widespread public movement.

That same year, Dagdusheth Halwai installed an eco-friendly Ganesh idol crafted from papier-mâché at Kotwal Chawdi. Created by Shri Naik, the four-armed idol, seated in a graceful Sukhasana posture, held the Pasha and Parashu while radiating serenity and divine grace. At a time when warrior forms of Ganesha were prevalent during the colonial era, the choice of a benevolent, blessing-bestowing deity reflected Dagdusheth Halwai's thoughtful vision.

The first idol was worshipped for three consecutive years and is carefully preserved to this day at the Paranjape family's Eleven Maruti Temple.



The Sacred Idol of 1896

Following the demise of Shreemant Dagdusheth Halwai in 1896, his wife commissioned sculptor Shri Naik to create a second idol, modelled on the first, and entrusted it to the residents of the locality to continue the festival tradition. From 1897 onwards, the Ganesh Festival at Bahuli Haud came to be celebrated through public contributions, marking its evolution into a true community festival.

From 1952, the festival came to be organised under the leadership of local traders and dedicated community leaders, including Tatyasaheb Godse, Mamasahab Rasane, Shankarrao Suryawanshi, Kashinathrao Rasane, Laxmanrao Jamdade, Gajanan Kedari, Nivruttirao Raykar, Balkrishna Jamdade, and Dattoba Chavan. This second idol continued to be installed each year until the Mandal's Amrit Mahotsav in 1967.

By the time of the Amrit Mahotsav, the idol had become so fragile that one of its arms was on the verge of breaking, making it necessary to create a new one. Instead of being immersed, the original idol was carefully restored and preserved. Today, this historic second idol is enshrined with great reverence at the Ganesh Temple in the Trust's Child Care Centre at Kondhwa.



Against the backdrop of India - China War, the Mandal became the first to present a moving mechanised tableau depicting a war theme. This innovative initiative inspired several other Ganesh festival mandals to introduce animated tableaux as part of their celebrations.

The Endearing Idol of 1968

After the Amrit Mahotsav, discussions began on creating a new idol. Dr. Balasaheb Paranjape, Vice President of the Mandal, recommended the name of Nagesh Shilpi, a talented sculptor associated with B. J. Medical College. Nagesh had inherited the art of idol-making from his father, Shankarappa Shilpi. The Mandal's confidence in him was further strengthened after seeing the magnificent Nataraja sculpture he had created for the college.

Using a photograph of the earlier idol as a reference, Nagesh Shilpi was first asked to create a one-foot-tall prototype. The model was presented to the respected residents of the locality at Aryan Talkies, where it received unanimous approval. Following this, Nagesh Shilpi was entrusted with sculpting the full-sized idol in the same design.

Nagesh Shilpi was a master sculptor renowned for his expertise in the South Indian style. Among his notable creations were the idols of Tirupati Balaji and Chamundeshwari. He proposed installing a consecrated Siddha Ganesh Yantra within the idol, explaining that this tradition was believed to bestow the status of a spiritually awakened shrine (Jagrut Devasthan) upon the deity in South India. The Mandal readily accepted his suggestion.

A Siddha Ganesh Yantra, inscribed on a copper plate, was duly consecrated through Vedic chants and sacred fire rituals. On the day of a



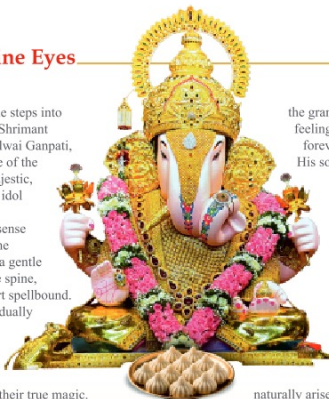
solar eclipse, Nagesh Shilpi ceremonially installed the Yantra within the idol at the confluence of the Mula and Mutha rivers. Over the following twelve months, the idol was sanctified through continuous Rudra recitations and sacred rituals. On 27 August 1968, P. P. Shri Gulavani Maharaj consecrated the new idol in accordance with Vedic rites, marking the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Dagdusheth Ganpati. Permanent temples dedicated to clay idols are exceptionally rare in India, making the Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Temple a remarkable exception. The first temple was built in 1984 at Budhwar Chowk in Budhwar Peth. As the number of devotees grew, a grander and more spacious temple was constructed on the adjoining site in 2006.

The Divine Eyes



The moment one steps into the sanctum of Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati, the first glimpse of the resplendent, majestic, and captivating idol evokes an overwhelming sense of awe. Its divine presence sends a gentle shiver down the spine, leaving the heart spellbound. As the gaze gradually settles upon the serene face of Lord Ganesha, His eyes begin to reveal their true magic.

Radiating boundless love, profound compassion, and celestial grace, they seem to speak directly to the soul. That luminous, emotion-filled gaze transcends words, touching the deepest recesses of one's heart. In that silent communion, devotion awakens, emotions overflow, and tears of reverence well up almost instinctively. Stand anywhere within the sanctum on the right, the left, or directly before Him and it feels as though those compassionate eyes are looking at us. Even in the briefest moment of darshan amidst a sea of devotees, countless hearts experience the same emotion: Lord Ganesha is looking at them with love, grace, and blessings. Many devotees say that even a fleeting glimpse of His face during



the grand procession leaves them feeling deeply fulfilled, touched forever by the divine power of His soulful gaze. It is as though those divine eyes gently reassure every devotee: "Walk the path of truth, work with sincerity, and strive for the good of all. I am always with you, and My blessings shall ever be upon you." Ever giving, never expecting anything in return, Lord Ganesha embodies unconditional grace. Yet one question naturally arises who could have created such extraordinarily expressive eyes? This

curiosity led me to seek answers from the trustees and senior members of the Mandal, and what I discovered was nothing short of astonishing. While sculpting the idol, it was unanimously decided that Lord Ganesha's eyes must appear flawless, lifelike, and profoundly expressive. Realising that neither clay nor marble could capture the desired brilliance, the creators chose to craft custom-made glass eyes. The search for the right artisan continued for several days, with several craftsmen presenting their prototypes. Ultimately, by unanimous consensus, this delicate and highly specialised task was entrusted to the veteran master craftsman, Shri Mahamuni.



The work began with detailed sketches, followed by a series of prototypes. It was an exceptionally intricate process, for glass eyes must be painted from within to achieve a natural depth, lifelike brilliance, and the sublime expression that breathes divinity into them.

The first 25-30 prototypes were created, but none proved satisfactory. Another 10-15 followed, and the pursuit of perfection continued until nearly 350 distinct prototypes had been created. Days of relentless efforts, sleepless nights, and countless refinements finally culminated in a pair of eyes that won everyone's approval. In that unforgettable moment, the artisans and all those present were moved to tears of joy and fulfilment a heartfelt tribute to their unwavering dedication.

The eyes that behold us today are the culmination of countless days and nights of tireless dedication and artistic devotion. Yet, beyond all human skill, their extraordinary beauty, lifelike presence, and profound expressiveness are, above all, a blessing bestowed by Lord Ganesha Himself. "Eyes like two diamonds, radiating light, exquisitely resplendent." The timeless verse of *Gosavisut Vasudev* seems to have found its way into the very soul of the master craftsman. Gazing upon Lord Ganesha's radiant eyes, one feels that he was not merely creating a pair of eyes - he was giving form to the luminous vision evoked in this sacred verse. So captivating is their divine brilliance that one cannot help but believe the artisan must have carried these very words in his heart and soul as he brought them to life.



The Eagle's Ascent



At a time when domestic pilgrimage and tourism in India were only beginning to flourish, people from Maharashtra often travelled to other states to seek the blessings of revered temples, undertake sacred pilgrimages, and experience spiritually significant destinations. Yet, one thought continually occupied the minds of the trustees of the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust: countless devotees around them were unable to embark on such journeys due to financial constraints. Moved by the simple yet profound resolve "If they cannot go to the pilgrimage, we must bring the pilgrimage to them" an extraordinary initiative was born.

It was from this vision that a unique initiative was born to bring the sanctity of India's revered

pilgrimage sites to devotees, free of cost, without requiring them to leave their city. During the ten days of the Ganesh Festival, the Mandal created breathtaking, lifelike replicas of some of the nation's most celebrated temples and sacred shrines. Year after year, these magnificent recreations became a cherished tradition, admired for their grandeur and artistic excellence.

From the Hawa Mahal of Rajasthan and the Konark Sun Temple to Pashupatinath in Nepal, the Shri Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, and the Meenakshi Temple in Madurai, the Mandal recreated iconic sacred landmarks with remarkable authenticity. Inspired by this pioneering initiative, numerous Ganesh Mandals followed suit, transforming Pune's



Ganesh Festival into a globally admired cultural spectacle. This visionary leap redefined the very character of the festival, giving it a new dimension and enduring legacy. To ensure every festival display was authentic and lifelike, Tatya personally took sculptors and artisans to the actual sites for detailed study and inspiration.

When concern for the people met the vision to create new opportunities, the Ganesh Festival evolved beyond devotion into a powerful platform for social impact and creativity. Perhaps this was the true essence of visionary

leadership. Did the trustees foresee what the next hundred years would bring? No one can say. Yet, their single inspired idea has transformed the festival into a thriving cultural and economic phenomenon, generating billions in economic activity across the state during these ten days a legacy that continues to grow.

The pinnacle of this remarkable journey came in 1992, during the Centenary Celebrations, with the creation of a magnificent replica of the Bikaner Royal Palace. It was a truly audacious undertaking an architectural feat on an unprecedented scale. While we anticipated that lakhs of devotees would come to witness it, the overwhelming response far surpassed all expectations, drawing many times the number we had envisioned.





The palace fountain was inaugurated by the legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar. Construction had begun three to four months in advance, with hundreds of artisans and workers labouring day and night to bring the vision to life. The project generated employment for many while providing artists with a prestigious platform to showcase their talent. The thoughtful use of evolving technology further enhanced the realism, making the entire spectacle remarkably lifelike.

During the festival, businesses in the surrounding area witnessed unprecedented commercial activity, with local trade reaching record levels.

Completing a project of such unprecedented scale within a strict timeline was an extraordinary challenge. Yet, driven by unwavering dedication and Lord Ganesha's blessings, every milestone was achieved seamlessly, adding another glorious chapter to the Mandal's legacy. Lakhs of devotees experienced this extraordinary creation firsthand, while distinguished visitors from India and abroad came especially to witness and applaud what was, for its time, a truly unparalleled achievement.



As times changed, so did the challenges. In the wake of unfortunate incidents across the country, public safety became a paramount concern. Responding with foresight, in 2011, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Sarvajnik Ganpati Mandal became the first festival organisation in India to provide an insurance cover of Rs. 50 crore for all devotees visiting during the festival, as well as residents and shopkeepers within a one-kilometre radius.

What a profound sense of responsibility. What remarkable compassion. What an unwavering commitment to the people. It is this extraordinary confluence of faith, service, and sensitivity that defines the Mandal's true greatness and why we call it "The Eagle's Ascent". A visionary leap that continues to inspire generations.

To mark its Centenary, the Trust organised the prestigious Hind Kesari wrestling championship along with kabaddi, kho-kho and mallakhamb competitions, health camps, blood donation drives, a 57-day music festival, inspiring lectures by eminent spiritual and intellectual leaders, and continuous religious ceremonies - making the celebrations truly historic.



A Beacon of Hope



Pune is celebrated as a city of learning, culture, and intellectual excellence. While it has emerged as a leading hub for information technology, its true identity has been shaped by the vision and legacy of extraordinary personalities - Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Mahatma Jyotirao and Savitribai Phule, Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, P. L. Deshpande, Shanta Shelke, Dr. Jayant Narlikar, Shantanurao Kirloskar, Baba Kalyani, and Babasaheb Purandare. Their enduring contributions have brought lasting distinction to Pune.

Despite their achievements across diverse fields such as art, education, research, music, and literature, these distinguished personalities share a common bond - an abiding devotion to Shrimant Shri Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati.

It is believed that the blessings of the Lord have guided not only their journeys but also the city's remarkable progress. Today, the iconic Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Temple and the vibrant, modern city of Pune stand together as enduring symbols that have profoundly shaped the city's identity and evolution.



This magnificent temple owes its origin to the sacred tradition of the Ganeshotsav. During the festival, the then President of India, the late Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, personally offered prayers and performed the Aarti of Lord Ganesha an unforgettable moment that reflected both the nation's reverence for the festival and its growing stature. In those early years, the Mandal possessed neither great financial resources nor imposing infrastructure. What it did possess, however, was an unwavering faith in Lord Ganesha and a spark of hope that burned brightly in the hearts of countless devotees. That spark gradually grew into an enduring beacon of faith, and it was this faith that ultimately gave shape to the temple.

Today, this grand shrine stands as a living testament to boundless devotion, the unwavering trust of millions of devotees, and decades of selfless service. Thousands of worshippers seek the Lord's blessings here every day, while millions visit throughout the year. During the Ganeshotsav alone, nearly twenty to twenty-five million devotees throng the temple, transforming the entire precinct into a vibrant celebration of faith. This extraordinary influx of pilgrims also generates livelihood opportunities for thousands, contributing meaningfully not only to Maharashtra's economy but also to the nation's economic growth (GDP). The temple is, therefore, far more than a place of worship. It is a remarkable confluence of devotion, faith, service, and progress an enduring source of



spiritual inspiration and a catalyst for social transformation.

The temple precinct has become a source of livelihood for thousands, supporting vendors, traders, farmers, transporters, and local businesses. The daily offerings of coconuts, flowers, and prasad reflect a vibrant ecosystem where devotion has nurtured a strong economic chain.

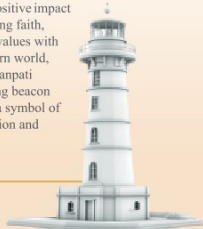
During Ganeshotsav, the influx of devotees from India and around the world energises a wide range of industries, including hospitality, transport, and local services. From its own workforce to countless vendors and suppliers, the temple sustains thousands of livelihoods. Thus, beyond being a centre of devotion, it has emerged as a significant force contributing to the economic progress of Pune and Maharashtra.



The Honourable Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, who advocates the vision of “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas” (Together with all, development for all), has himself visited this sacred shrine, performed the prescribed rituals, and taken an interest in the temple’s initiatives. This reflects that beyond faith and devotion, something truly extraordinary is taking place here a journey of holistic, balanced, and inclusive development.

The annual Music Festival is a fine example of this commitment. A ten-day celebration, it is executed with professional excellence from

stage and sound arrangements to hosting renowned artists and their teams. The constant presence of devotees throughout the day keeps the surrounding marketplace thriving, reflecting the temple’s positive impact in every sphere. Balancing faith, spirituality, and human values with the realities of the modern world, Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Mandal stands as a strong beacon of hope and guidance - a symbol of harmony between devotion and social responsibility.



A Golden Saga Woven by the Common People



Around 1970, the poor, the underprivileged, and those at the grassroots were often denied even a place at the doors of banks when they sought financial assistance or loans. This social disparity deeply troubled Tatya. One day, he attended a speech by Shri Yashwantrao Chavan on the theme of “The upliftment of the common people through the cooperative movement.” The ideology left a profound impact on him and inspired him immensely. Tatya made a firm resolve to establish a cooperative bank of the Mandal that would provide financial strength and support to the hands of the economically weaker sections of society. With this vision, he discussed the idea with Mama Rasane, Appa Suryawanshi, Buva Rasane, and Ulhas Shedje, and together they embarked upon this mission with great determination and enthusiasm.

However, establishing a bank was far from an easy task. To fulfil the stringent requirements laid down by the Reserve Bank of India, Tatya and his colleagues undertook relentless efforts. They went door-to-door, creating awareness about the importance of banking and encouraging people to invest in five-rupee shares. These efforts were never driven by personal gain, but by a noble vision to become a pillar of support for hundreds of needy families. Their unwavering dedication gave birth to the Suvarnayug Cooperative Bank, which went on to empower countless common people from street vendors and Mathadi workers to small traders earning the honour of being known as “the people’s own bank”.



**The Proposed Administrative Building of
Suvarnayug Cooperative Bank**
Bajirao Road, Pune



From a humble beginning with a modest capital of just Rs. 45 lakh and a team of only 18-20 employees, the bank has today emerged as a remarkable institution. With nearly 175 employees, more than 23 branches, technology-driven management, and a steadily growing turnover of Rs.1,500 crore, Suvarnayug Cooperative Bank stands as a symbol of vision and perseverance. With an ambitious roadmap ahead, the bank has set its sights on expanding its network across Maharashtra and achieving a turnover of Rs. 5,000 crore in the next five years.

Above all, the true purpose behind this remarkable growth remains the same to extend timely financial support to low-income communities, women's self-help groups, middle-class families, and small entrepreneurs. This unwavering commitment to social empowerment is the true essence of the bank's legacy.

Having overcome numerous challenges along its journey, the bank has grown stronger with the

blessings of millions it has served and the divine grace of Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati. Guided by the visionary leadership of its present Chairman and MLA, Shri Hemantbhai Rasane, it continues to march confidently towards a brighter future.

The true wealth of Suvarnayug Cooperative Bank lies not merely in its profits, but in the goodwill it has earned over the years supporting countless families, shaping the futures of young individuals, fulfilling dreams of owning homes, nurturing small businesses, and empowering women and self-help groups. This priceless legacy of trust and service is the bank's greatest asset.

From the wealth of blessings and trust emerged -
Suvarnayug Cooperative Bank



The Eternal Flame of Compassion

Social responsibility was one of the defining ideals that guided the lives of eminent industrialists J.R.D. Tata and Ratan Tata. The Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Public Ganpati Trust has embraced this very philosophy as its lifelong mission. Guided by an unwritten code of service, the Trust devotes 25% of its earnings to religious and spiritual pursuits, while the remaining 75% is dedicated to the welfare of humanity a remarkable testament to its enduring commitment to selfless service.

The Trust's social commitment finds expression through schools that nurture young minds, skill development centres that empower youth, child-care facilities that provide a secure haven, and a modern old-age home that restores dignity and care to senior citizens.



In healthcare, the Trust has transformed countless lives through free medical camps, medicines for the needy, and support for life-saving surgeries - an enduring expression of service to humanity.

By nurturing talent and inspiring excellence, the Trust has helped athletes realise their international dreams - including champions who have gone on to lift the World Cup.

An unwavering commitment to the planet, expressed through tree plantation, water conservation, and forest preservation.

Keeping the spirit of art and culture alive through Ganesh festival competitions and celebrated music festivals.

From Annadan (the sacred offering of food) and disaster relief to honouring the nation's brave soldiers, every initiative is inspired by one timeless ideal - Service to Humanity.

As new horizons unfold, the Trust continues to embrace them with vision, resolve, and a spirit of selfless service.

The Sacred Illumination

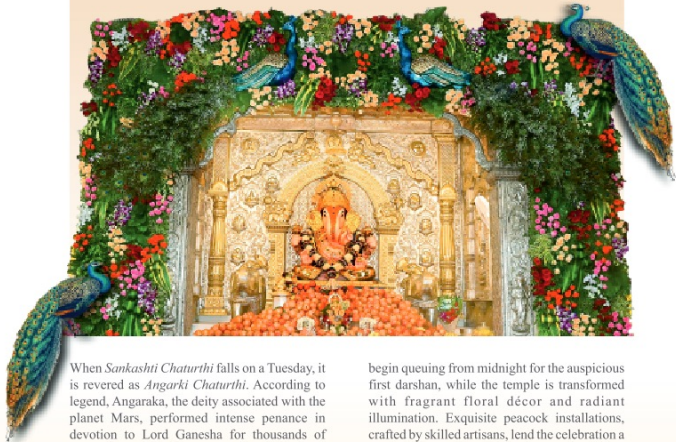


Some phenomena transcend the limits of human understanding, and are therefore perceived as miracles. Whether one firmly believes in them or not, whether one sees in them the touch of the divine or simply a wonder of nature, one truth remains undeniable - it can be witnessed and experienced. That truth is the extraordinary Festival of Divine Illumination, when the Sun himself comes to pay homage to Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati. His radiant golden rays descend upon the revered deity like a sacred ablution, creating a breathtaking spectacle of light, devotion, and divine grace.

This extraordinary Festival of Divine Illumination is witnessed every year during Uttarayana, around the sacred occasion of Magha Ganesh Jayanti. The first rays of the sun gently illuminate the silver idol placed before the main deity, before moving on to bathe the silver images of Goddesses Siddhi and Buddhi in a radiant cascade of golden light. What makes this phenomenon truly remarkable is its precision. The temple, built in 1984, now stands amid the dense urban landscape of modern Pune, surrounded by towering buildings. Yet, year after year, the sun's rays continue to find their way unobstructed into the sanctum sanctorum, reaching the sacred idols at almost the same time each year. Whether regarded as an architectural marvel or a divine miracle, the spectacle inspires awe in every witness. Across India, a handful of revered temples celebrate similar celestial alignments at specific times of the year. The Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Temple proudly stands among these sacred shrines. The Festival of Divine Illumination continues for two to three consecutive days, with the celestial spectacle lasting for about ten to fifteen minutes each day a fleeting yet unforgettable union of sunlight, devotion, & divinity.

Angarki Chaturthi





When *Sankashti Chaturthi* falls on a Tuesday, it is revered as *Angarki Chaturthi*. According to legend, Angaraka, the deity associated with the planet Mars, performed intense penance in devotion to Lord Ganesha for thousands of years. Pleased by his unwavering faith, Lord Ganesha granted him a boon that whenever *Chaturthi* coincided with Tuesday - the day of Mars - the sacred observance would forever bear his name and be celebrated as *Angarki Chaturthi*.

Angarki Chaturthi is regarded as the most sacred of all *Sankashti* observances. Scriptures believe that observing this single fast bestows the spiritual merit of all the *Sankashti Chaturthi* fasts performed throughout the year. At the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganapati Temple, the occasion is truly extraordinary. Devotees

begin queuing from midnight for the auspicious first darshan, while the temple is transformed with fragrant floral décor and radiant illumination. Exquisite peacock installations, crafted by skilled artisans, lend the celebration a regal charm, as though they have arrived from the royal landscapes of Rajasthan to pay homage to Lord Ganesha. At dawn, the temple resonates with the soulful strains of *Swarabhishek*, a devotional offering of Indian classical music. Sacred Vedic chants, the *Brihaspati Sukta*, *Ganesh Yajna*, and *Maha Abhishek* fill the atmosphere with profound spiritual energy. Adorned with exquisite floral arrangements and radiant illumination, the temple becomes more than a place of celebration; it transforms into a divine sanctuary where devotion, tradition, and Lord Ganesha's grace unite in perfect harmony.

**"They embraced the
child in my lap...
So I embraced the
whole world with a
mother's love."**

- Padma Shri Sindhutai Sapkal



I belong to Vidarbha. My daughter was born in a cowshed. As I wandered from door to door, begging for survival, I realised that instead of grieving over my own fate, I wanted to dedicate my life to easing the suffering of others. But one question haunted me - what about my own daughter?

At that moment, only one name came to mind - Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati. There, I met Tatya, a man with a mother's heart. I told him that I had studied only up to the fourth standard, had no one to rely on, and wished for my daughter to receive an education in Pune. I entrusted her to him, asking only that she be raised with love, dignity, and values.

Tatya admitted my daughter to Sevasadan, personally arranged her education, and the Trust took complete responsibility for her care. They did not merely support her - they became her family. Because the Trust embraced my daughter, I was free to become the mother of thousands of orphaned children. Had they not stood by me, the world would never have known Sindhutai Sapkal. Their contribution to my life's mission is beyond measure.

Today, I find great joy in seeing Tatya's legacy carried forward by Ashok Rasane and Mahesh Suryawanshi with the same spirit of selfless service. Their dedication ensures that this noble tradition will continue to soar for generations.

Footprints of Inspiration, Rays of Hope

On 20 October 1985, the Trust established the Child Care Centre at Kondhwa for the orphaned and underprivileged children of Devadasis women long rejected and marginalised by society as well as for the children of waste pickers and families living below the poverty line. During its first eleven years, Trustee Kakasaheb Gawade served as the Centre's Manager, nurturing it with unwavering dedication and care.

The Centre provides residential education for both boys and girls, with a strong emphasis on



nurturing character, values, and self-confidence, empowering them to lead lives of dignity and purpose.

Its success is reflected in the achievements of its students. One alumnus secured the top rank in the Higher Secondary Examination and now mentors children at the Centre. Another, Sunil Sherekar, serves as the Executive Chef at Courtyard by Marriott, Hinjawadi. Several alumni have earned MBA degrees and hold leadership positions in multinational



companies, while many others have established successful businesses of their own. From the margins of society to the mainstream of success, these inspiring journeys stand as a testament to the transformative impact of the Child Care Centre.

The Child Care Centre performs the invaluable mission of empowering children from some of society's most vulnerable backgrounds, helping them grow into confident, capable, and self-reliant individuals. Their achievements are a promise of a brighter future for the nation. It is this unwavering commitment that has made the Centre a beacon of hope for countless children in a remarkably short span of time.

Every need of the children at the Centre is thoughtfully cared for. They receive nutritious meals twice a day, notebooks and books for their education, clothing, physical fitness training, and access to a well-equipped library. Meticulous standards of cleanliness are maintained throughout the campus - from the kitchen to the residential quarters - while regular health check-ups and timely medical care ensure their overall well-being.



The true measure of the Centre's success lies in the lives it has transformed. Many children nurtured under its care now stand confidently on their own, earning their place through hard work and determination. Their journeys have become an enduring source of inspiration for generations to come.

The innocence of the children's bonds, their instinct to support one another, and the warmth of their selfless friendships are deeply moving. Here, no one is judged by their past, their background, or their caste and creed. Every child is nurtured with the timeless belief that humanity is the highest religion a value that takes root in every heart.



Today, many children who have grown up under the Centre's care say with heartfelt gratitude, "Coming here was the greatest blessing of our lives. Had we not found this home, we can only wonder where life might have led us."



The radiant smile of contentment on their faces and the quiet confidence they carry within are the Centre's greatest reward - its truest measure of success.





The remarkable success of these children fills the Executive Committee with immense pride. Behind every achievement lie years of unwavering dedication, selfless sacrifice, and countless personal compromises. Yet, the moment they witness these children soaring towards brighter futures, every hardship fades away replaced by the profound joy of lives transformed.

Here, bright futures are being shaped... and countless withered flowers are blooming again - no, not flowers, but children.





Shri Ganesh Jayanti (Magha Janmotsav)

According to sacred tradition, Lord Ganesha was born on *Vinayaki Chaturthi* in the lunar month of Magha. Hence, His divine form is revered as *Vinayaka*. Much like the Ganesh Chaturthi celebrated in *Bhadrapada*, Ganesh Jayanti in Magha is observed across Ganesh temples and sacred shrines with profound devotion, vibrant celebration, and unwavering faith.

At the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Temple, Shri Ganesh Jayanti is celebrated in an

atmosphere of profound sanctity and devotional fervour. One of the most cherished moments of the festival is when married women, adorned in traditional attire, ceremonially place the infant Lord Ganesha in a beautifully decorated cradle—a deeply moving ritual that touches every devotee's heart. The celebrations also include a *Ganesh Yag* (Yajna), followed by a sacred Abhishek of the idol, performed in accordance with the *Brahmanaspati Sukta*.



A ritual Abhishek as prescribed in the *Brahmanaspati Sukt*a



The Divine Birth of Lord Ganesha



Ganesh Yag (Yajna)



The Lord's Ceremonial City Procession

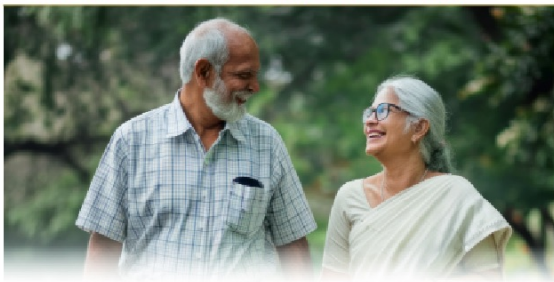


Adorned with colourful, fragrant flowers, the sanctum radiates divine beauty as the exquisitely decorated idol of Lord Ganesha shines with grace and splendour. A highlight of the day is the Lord's ceremonial city procession, where thousands of devotees gather in an expression of unwavering faith and devotion.

Devotees dressed in traditional attire, soulful hymns, resonant chants, and an atmosphere of joyous celebration fill the temple precincts with devotion and festive spirit. The sacred celebration of Shri Ganesh Jayanti leaves every devotee with a profound and unforgettable spiritual experience.



The Warmth of Care, A Temple of Humanity



Around the year 2000, the rapid expansion of the information technology sector opened global opportunities, prompting many young men and women from cities like Pune to settle abroad. Amid this wave of progress, a poignant social reality quietly emerged: the growing loneliness of senior citizens left behind.

Whether living alone at home or feeling isolated despite being surrounded by people, many senior citizens found themselves in need of care, companionship, and support. Responding to this growing need, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Public Ganpati Trust took upon itself the responsibility of becoming a pillar of support for elderly individuals who were otherwise destined for old-age homes.

Envisioned and meticulously planned by Mahesh Suryawanshi, the foundation stone for

the old-age home was laid in 2001. Just two years later, Pitashri was inaugurated by the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Sushilkumar Shinde, marking the fulfilment of a compassionate vision.

Tatya had clear reasons for entrusting this responsibility to Mahesh Suryawanshi. An engineer by profession, he had already demonstrated his vision and planning skills by preparing an outstanding cluster development master plan for the area surrounding the Ganpati Temple. The blueprint envisioned a majestic temple at its centre, complemented by a seven-storey residential complex, roads on three sides, a community hall, a gymnasium, and every essential facility. Tatya had long recognised Mahesh Suryawanshi's foresight and planning acumen. When the moment arrived, he entrusted him with this important responsibility.



Through relentless dedication and tireless effort, Mahesh Suryawanshi transformed this vision into reality. He believed, "These homes belong to Lord Ganesha, and therefore they should be as beautiful and dignified as a royal palace." Inspired by this conviction, the design incorporated graceful architectural arches, lending the complex a timeless elegance. More than just a residence, it offers senior citizens the quiet joy of living with dignity and a deep sense of fulfillment. Such was the generosity of spirit and warmth of heart behind this vision. Through Mahesh Suryawanshi, it was as though Lord Ganesha Himself created a magnificent palace-like abode for His elderly devotees.

Every floor is equipped with purified drinking water and a solar-powered hot water system that operates round the clock. Comfortable lounges with television, a well-stocked library, and beautifully landscaped gardens offer spaces for leisure and relaxation. Weekly film screenings, biannual pilgrimages to sacred destinations, and the daily strains of devotional music create an atmosphere of warmth, serenity, and belonging throughout Pitashri.



The old-age home was thoughtfully established within the Child Care Centre at Kondhwa, creating a space where grandparents could experience the love of children, and young hearts could grow in the warmth of their elders. Built not for self-interest but for the welfare of society, Pitashri stands as a timeless testament to compassion and humanity.



Today, Pitashri feels less like an old-age home and more like one large, close-knit family. As one elderly couple lovingly remarked, "Living here is like being in a living paradise." Their words speak volumes about the warmth, care, and contentment that define this extraordinary home.



Each evening, eager hearts wait for the children to arrive. As they teach them Shubham Karoti and sacred verses, they relive the innocence of their own childhood. Surrounded by love, warmth, and a sense of family, this truly is the home of Lord Ganesha - a place where anyone would be grateful to spend the twilight years of life.

Every meal is served with the comfort of home-fresh, wholesome food, hot tea, and timely refreshments. More than caregivers, the staff become family, nurturing every resident with genuine love and compassion.

With a warm smile, one grandmother lovingly remarked, "Your family may have six members, but mine has sixty-six. That is my true wealth - and the greatest blessing of Lord Ganesha."



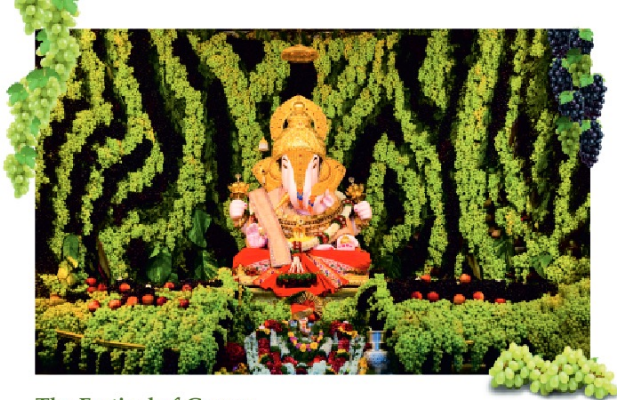


Each morning, children seek the blessings of their grandparents before setting off for school - a simple ritual that keeps timeless values alive. The temple at Pitashri enshrines the second idol of the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganapati Festival, attracting devotees from the neighbourhood. Today, this compassionate sanctuary is home to hundreds of senior citizens, united not by blood, but by love, care, and shared belonging.

The reason is simple no one here is ever a stranger. Through every joy and every sorrow, the Trust's volunteers stand beside the residents, caring for them as lovingly as their own children.

For our volunteers, caring for the elderly is not a responsibility - it is a way of life.





The Festival of Grapes

On the auspicious occasion of Phalguna Purnima (Holi Purnima), the temple precincts and the sacred sanctum of Lord Ganesha are adorned with an exquisite and distinctive display of grapes. This breathtaking decoration is created using an astonishing 2,500 to 3,000 kilograms of fresh grapes, transforming the shrine into a vibrant celebration of devotion, abundance, and natural beauty.

The décor is so natural and artistically crafted that, for a fleeting moment, devotees feel as though Lord Ganesha is enthroned amidst an endless vineyard serene, radiant, and infinitely compassionate. Against the lush green backdrop of grapes, delicate accents of yellow and red flowers create a harmonious composition,

reflecting the artist's refined aesthetic sensibility and masterful balance of colour and form.

The profusion of lush green hues evokes a profound sense of peace and serenity. Against this natural backdrop, the divine radiance of Lord Ganesha shines with even greater splendour, making every moment of darshan an experience to be cherished forever.

After the festival, all the grapes are distributed among devotees as prasad. Blending aesthetic beauty, devotion, and sacred grace, the Grape Festival leaves an enduring impression on every heart, making it one of the temple's most cherished celebrations.





Compassionate Care

One of Taty's long-cherished dreams was for the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Trust to establish its own hospital. However, recognising that building and sustaining a hospital demanded immense responsibility and long-term commitment, the Trust began exploring more practical and impactful ways to serve patients.

At this crucial juncture, a meeting between Dr. Ajay Chandanwale of Sassoon Hospital and Ashok Godse and Mahesh Suryawanshi proved to be a turning point. Soon thereafter, the Trust initiated a series of meaningful healthcare support initiatives supplying essential groceries for patients' meals, modernising the hospital kitchen with state-of-the-art facilities, and providing wholesome meals to patients' relatives at half the regular cost.



The Trust also donated an automated chapati-making machine capable of producing 1,000 chapatis per hour to Sassoon Hospital. This enabled fresh chapatis to replace bread in patients' meals, significantly enhancing the quality and nutritional value of their diet.

Additionally, 36 new meal-distribution trolleys were provided, transforming the hospital's food service with a modern, hygienic kitchen and an efficient meal distribution system that ensured patients received wholesome food with dignity.

The Trust undertook the complete renovation of the 5,000 sq. ft. kitchen at Sassoon Hospital, transforming it into a modern and efficient facility. Since 2013, nearly 3,200 patients have been served nourishing meals every day, including two wholesome vegetarian meals, light refreshments, and tea with biscuits.

The kitchen was further equipped with advanced chapati-making and vegetable-cutting machinery, donated by the Trust to enhance efficiency and hygiene. To support families accompanying patients from out of town, a dedicated rest house was also established, offering them comfort and respite during difficult times.





In May 2017, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Trust, in collaboration with the Mukul Madhav Foundation (Finolex), established a state-of-the-art 59-bed Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), providing advanced critical care for newborn infants.

Designed to provide comprehensive neonatal care - from mild and moderate cases to the most critical emergencies - the facility became Maharashtra's first NICU to feature a dedicated mothers' waiting lounge and a Mother's Milk Bank under one roof. Equipped with cutting-edge medical technology, it has earned recognition as one of the finest NICU facilities in Maharashtra.



The initiative also included a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), the renovation of five maternity wards with a total capacity of 66 beds, and the addition of 300-patient beds. To support postnatal recovery, new mothers are provided nutritious peanut laddoos and essential medicines free of cost.

Through all these initiatives, one truth stands out clearly: for the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Trust, service is not merely an activity - it is a value-driven pledge. Every endeavour is carried out with unwavering commitment to ethics, compassion, and disciplined execution, where compromise has no place. That is why this service reaches beyond institutions and touches people's hearts, nurturing a deep sense of trust. Today, that trust lives on in the blessings of millions, standing as an unshakable source of strength behind every trustee and volunteer of the Trust.





Devendra Fadnavis

Chief Minister of Maharashtra

By creating a rest house for patients' families, supporting the establishment of a state-of-the-art NICU, modernising maternity wards, and developing a world-class hospital kitchen, the Trust has undertaken projects that directly improve the lives of countless patients. It has exemplified the noble principle of returning every donation received from the people to society as the blessings of the Divine. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Chairman and the Board of Trustees of the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust for their exemplary commitment to compassionate and selfless public service.



At the inauguration of the renovated kitchen under the "Jai Ganesh Patient Care Initiative" at Sassoon General Hospital, in the presence of the then Health Minister Vijaykumar Gavit and the then Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar.



Dr. Ajay S. Chandanwale

Ex-Dean, Sassoon Hospital, Pune

Dr. Ajay Chandanwale worked tirelessly to enhance the reputation of Sassoon Hospital, strengthen public trust, and ensure better healthcare for every patient. In this journey, the support extended by the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust was far more than institutional collaboration - it was a heartfelt affirmation of his sincere efforts by society itself. This meaningful partnership reinforced his vision, inspiring him with renewed confidence, strength, and purpose.



Chaitra Shukla Pratipada (Gudi Padwa)
- Foundation Day of Shri's Temple





Gudi Padwa, the first day of the Hindu New Year and one of the three-and-a-half most auspicious *muhurtas* in the Hindu calendar, holds profound significance. For the Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Temple, the day is even more special as it marks the Foundation Day of the temple, making it a cherished occasion of both spiritual and historical importance.

From the break of dawn, the temple precincts resonate with devotion as melodious auspicious hymns welcome the New Year. The ceremonial *Brahmadhwaj* (Gudi) is reverently erected and

worshipped, while devotees, adorned in festive attire, gather to seek Lord Ganesha's blessings with joy and unwavering faith.

It feels as though Lord Ganesha Himself is bestowing New Year blessings upon every devotee. The sea of devotees gathered for darshan stands as a testament to unwavering faith, hope, and devotion. As heartfelt New Year greetings are exchanged, the temple comes alive with an enduring spirit of warmth, harmony, and auspicious energy.

On this sacred day, the temple is transformed by a magnificent display of vibrant, fragrant floral decorations that captivate every heart. Intricate floral artistry adorning the sanctum around Lord Ganesha is more than an expression of beauty - it is a masterpiece born of devotion. Lavish arrangements of fresh, luscious fruits further symbolise nature's abundance and heartfelt gratitude.

The entire atmosphere reflects a harmonious blend of devotion, tradition, beauty, and joy. At the Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Temple, Gudi Padwa is more than the beginning of a New Year - it is a heartfelt celebration of faith, heritage, and enduring devotion that leaves an everlasting impression on every devotee.



Temple Administration

The administration of the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Temple an enduring beacon of faith for millions of devotees is far more than an administrative responsibility. It is a sacred duty, performed with deep sensitivity, unwavering commitment, and profound devotion. Its governance cannot be confined to the framework of a private institution or the rigid structure of a government establishment, for this is more than a temple. It is a revered sanctuary of faith, hope, and the heartfelt devotion of millions.

Hundreds of dedicated personnel work tirelessly to ensure the seamless functioning of the temple. From finance and security to housekeeping and a team of learned, well-trained priests who conduct the sacred rituals, each one performs their role as an act of devotion. From the pre-dawn *Kakad Aarti* until late into the night, an unceasing stream of devotees fill the temple. Managing offerings and donations, accounting for contributions, and conducting pre-scheduled Pujas, Abhisheks, Yagnas, and other sacred ceremonies demands meticulous planning and flawless execution. Every ritual is performed on its appointed day and at its designated time, for behind each offering lies a devotee's faith, heartfelt prayer, and unwavering trust.

Following every sacred ritual, Prasad and the sacred *Angara* are carefully dispatched to devotees. Every gold and silver ornament offered to the Lord is meticulously documented



and managed with complete transparency. Significantly, these offerings are never auctioned. They embody the priceless devotion of countless devotees and are instead lovingly melted down and transformed into new ornaments for Lord Ganesha - a tradition as pure and enduring as 24-carat gold itself.

Devotees also reserve, well in advance, the privilege of sponsoring Lord Ganesha's daily attire.



Offered to mark birthdays, wedding anniversaries, and other cherished milestones, these garments are adorned on the Lord on the designated day with utmost care. They are then respectfully delivered to the devotees' homes. More than a sacred garment, each becomes a treasured keepsake from the temple an enduring blessing that is lovingly preserved for a lifetime.

When devotees offer wedding invitations at the sacred feet of Lord Ganesha, the invitation is reverentially placed before the deity by the temple priest. It is then received by the temple office, which sends the bride and groom a beautifully crafted letter titled Ganesh's Blessings a heartfelt message conveying the Lord's divine grace on the beginning of their new journey together.

Divine Benedictions (सुमंगल शुभाशीष)

We are deeply touched to receive your gracious invitation to this auspicious occasion - an offering woven with boundless devotion and heartfelt faith.

I, Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati the beloved son of Lord Shiva and Goddess Gauri, bearer of the Pasha and Ankusha shall be present, along with Riddhi, Siddhi, and My beloved celestial attendants, to shower the bride and groom with blessings for a joyous, harmonious, and auspicious married life.

I shall bring with Me a sky filled with joy, a life

rooted in fulfilment, and an ocean of prosperity, fragrant with peace and contentment. I shall bless you with the strength to serve humanity and bestow, from the sacred vessels of the ten directions, the immortal grace of everlasting success.

May this sacred union be free from every obstacle. May divine grace bless you with a lifetime of happiness, harmony, and prosperity.





This letter from the Temple Trust often moves the bride and groom to tears of joy. For behind it lies a truly extraordinary sentiment that Lord Ganesha Himself, accompanied by Riddhi, Siddhi, and His divine attendants, shall grace the sacred wedding ceremony and bless the newlyweds. The very thought fills the heart with profound gratitude and divine fulfilment.

This is not merely a letter; it is a divine blessing in written form, lovingly preserved by generations of newlyweds as an invaluable treasure for life. More than a gesture, it reflects the Trustees' profound compassion, sensitivity, and unwavering commitment to spreading joy and auspiciousness in society. A simple yet extraordinary initiative, it has touched countless hearts, earned innumerable blessings, and continues to inspire with its warmth and humanity.

Every process is meticulously recorded and documented, while ensuring that every donation entrusted to the temple for humanitarian service is utilised with integrity and accountability. With unwavering transparency and

uncompromising trust at its core, this philosophy defines the true essence of the temple's administration.

The entire temple premises is safeguarded by a comprehensive CCTV surveillance network, with constant vigilance maintained over all activities. Security personnel receive regular training in the latest technologies and modern security systems to ensure the highest standards of preparedness. A distinctive tradition continues to this day: the temple's security guards are drawn exclusively from traditional *Talims* (wrestling gymnasiums). This enduring practice pays tribute to Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai himself, who was a passionate wrestler and trained in these *Talims* - keeping alive a legacy deeply rooted in the temple's history and heritage.

Every facet of this administration reflects the Trustees' foresight, values, and unwavering commitment. More than an efficiently managed institution, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Temple stands as an inspiring model of faith, discipline, and compassion.



A Spiritual Journey of Faith



The *Ashtavinayak Yatra* is a revered pilgrimage to the eight sacred abodes of Lord Ganesha across Maharashtra. It symbolises the seeker's journey to overcome the eight inner flaws desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride, jealousy, possessiveness, and ego - through surrender at the feet of Lord Ganesha. Tradition holds that the pilgrimage begins and concludes at the Moreshwar Ganpati Temple in Morgaon, signifying spiritual completion. As devotees proceed towards the sanctum, they are first blessed with the graceful darshan of Goddess Mahalakshmi and Shri Nagn Bhairav.



Devotees then receive the blessings of Goddess Siddhi, Goddess Buddhi, Laksha and Labha. The sanctum also houses the revered Ganapatya sages Mudgala and Bhurshundi, the deities Moda and Pramoda, along with sacred symbols such as Om, the Swastika, the Sun, the Moon, the Peacock, and Pancheshwar.



Artistically crafted silver representations of the Ashtavinayak grace the sanctum. The beautifully adorned silver idol used for the daily rituals stands before the original 134-year-old Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati idol, majestically enthroned on a golden seat with his hand raised in eternal blessing.

The assembly hall is adorned with intricate silver embellishments, while its ceiling features eight ornate petals symbolising the *Ashtavinayak*. Enhanced with air conditioning through devotees' support, the hall is further enriched with elegant Ganesh motifs overhead.



A Distinctive Temple of Ganapatya Architecture

The temple's octagonal design symbolises mastery over the eight inner flaws. Rising nearly 81 feet, it is crowned with an auspicious

kalash-shaped spire. Crafted by skilled Rajasthani artisans in the distinctive Ganapatya style, the temple blends architectural grandeur with spiritual elegance. Intricate Ganesha motifs adorn every element, reflecting its rich artistic and devotional heritage.



Graced by the Shankaracharya

On the auspicious occasion of Gudi Padwa in 1984, Jagadguru Bharati Tirtha of the Sringeri Sharada Peetham inaugurated the temple with a sacred Ganesha Puja. Since then, the temple has been graced by the visits of several Shankaracharyas and revered saints, enriching its enduring spiritual legacy.



The Symbolism of the Temple Exterior

Silver sculptures of Moda, Pramoda, and the divine Mushaka at the entrance warmly welcome devotees. The red granite flooring symbolises the Earth element, while the yellow stone represents the Sun and the inner Self. Crowned with a kalash-shaped spire and a saffron flag, the temple evokes the timeless truth of the all-pervading Ganesha Tattva. Intricate carvings along the boundary walls further enhance its architectural beauty.

Ganesha Revealed Through Devotion

Just as Lord Ganesha at Ballaleshwar in Pali is believed to have manifested in response to the devotion of His ardent devotee Ballal, the deity here is revered as Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati in honour of the unwavering devotion of Dagdusheth Halwai. This enduring tradition beautifully reflects the oneness of the devotee and the Divine. Today, the temple welcomes countless devotees from across India and around the world.



Vallabhesh Mangalam

A Sacred Celebration on
Chaitra Shukla Dwitiya



It is believed that when Swanandanath desired to manifest in multiple divine forms, He invoked His *Yogamaya* to fulfil that cosmic will. This divine *Yogamaya* came to be revered as Goddess Vallabha. As the beloved consort of Morya, She is affectionately known as Vallabha - the Beloved. *Chaitra Shukla Dwitiya* is therefore revered as the sacred day commemorating the divine manifestation of Goddess Vallabha and her celestial union with Morya, adorned together in all their resplendent glory.

On this auspicious day, the divine wedding of Lord Ganesha and Goddess Vallabha is celebrated with regal grandeur, deep devotion, and boundless joy. Devotees eagerly await the *Saptapadi* - the seven sacred steps, revered as the most solemn and significant rite of a Hindu wedding. Witnessing this sacred ritual of Lord Ganesha and Goddess Vallabha is a profoundly moving spiritual experience. A magnificent



wedding pavilion, exquisitely adorned with vibrant, fragrant flowers, is specially created for the occasion. The enchanting floral décor transforms the temple into a spectacle of beauty, while the auspicious melodies of the *Shehnai* and traditional ceremonial drums fill the air with devotion and celebration. This unique, divine, and deeply emotive wedding ceremony is a cherished spiritual feast for every devotee fortunate enough to witness it.



Chaitra Vadya Panchami (Mogra Mahotsav)



The Mogra Festival, celebrated on the first *Panchami* of the waning fortnight (*Krishna Paksha*) in the Hindu New Year, is one of the most graceful and spiritually uplifting celebrations at the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Temple. Revered as *Vasantik Uti*, this exquisite festival is a sublime expression of devotion, beauty, and artistic excellence, embodying the freshness, purity, and joyous spirit of spring. Preparations begin three to four days in advance. Nearly 100 to 150 women and 80 to 100 skilled artisans, each a master of floral craftsmanship, work with unwavering devotion and meticulous precision to create an awe-inspiring floral spectacle. The sheer scale and extraordinary variety of blossoms used in the decoration reflect the grandeur of the celebration, transforming the temple into a breathtaking sanctuary of fragrance, elegance, and divine grace.

The floral décor is a magnificent artistic creation, crafted using nearly five million fragrant mogra (Arabian jasmine) blossoms. Complementing them are 3,000 to 3,500 bunches of roses, 1,500 to 2,000 bunches of lilies, around 2,000 kilograms each of marigolds and chrysanthemums, 20,000 champak flowers, 100 kilograms of rose petals, along with Lotuses, *Jai*, *Juhi*, Hibiscus, and nearly 1,000 *Gulchhadi* blossoms. Every flower is thoughtfully arranged in perfect harmony, resulting in a breathtaking floral masterpiece that fills the temple with divine fragrance, vibrant colours, and an atmosphere of serene devotion.



Amid this fragrant floral splendour, the silver idol of Lord Ganesha is ceremonially anointed with the sacred *Uti* paste. The temple resonates with the soulful strains of *Uti Bhajans*, deepening the spirit of devotion and creating an atmosphere of profound serenity.



The intricate floral patterns, harmonious colour palette, and meticulous craftsmanship stand as a true testament to the artisans' mastery. Viewed from every angle, the breathtaking décor leaves visitors spellbound.

The enchanting fragrance of millions of mogra blossoms permeates the entire temple precinct, creating an atmosphere of extraordinary serenity and charm. It evokes the feeling of

wandering through a divine garden in full bloom, where every breath is filled with fragrance and every heart is immersed in peace, joy, and devotion.

The Mogra Festival at the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganapati Temple is far more than a celebration - it is a harmonious confluence of innovation, artistic excellence, and timeless tradition. Each year, it offers devotees a unique and deeply moving experience, reflecting the temple's enduring cultural legacy and unwavering spirit of devotion.







A Journey Towards Revitalisation

For two consecutive years, the rains had deserted Purandar Taluka, plunging the entire region into the grip of a severe drought. Drinking water became critically scarce, farmlands withered and cracked under the relentless sun, while livestock struggled for want of water and fodder. An overwhelming sense of despair, helplessness, and uncertainty cast a shadow over the lives of the people.

The Pingori village dam was no different. Years of accumulated silt had drastically reduced its water storage capacity, leaving little scope for groundwater recharge. Recognising the gravity of the situation, Baba Shinde of the region brought it to the attention of Mahesh Suryawanshi, who immediately placed the matter before the Trust. Chairman Ashok Godse, along with the trustees, promptly visited the village and inspected the dam firsthand.

The Trust's office bearers then met the then Divisional Commissioner, Prabhakar Deshmukh, for detailed deliberations. It was unanimously resolved that a recurring crisis of

this magnitude demanded a permanent solution rather than temporary relief measures. Determined to bring lasting change, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust took upon itself the responsibility of implementing this long-term initiative.

Pingori village was identified as the ideal location for this initiative. Nestled amidst the hills, its dam held immense potential for enhancing water storage. However, decades of accumulated silt had severely diminished its capacity, with no desilting work having been undertaken for nearly forty years. Despite the enormous financial commitment involved, the Trust willingly assumed responsibility for this transformative project.

To generate local employment and create new opportunities, the project actively engaged the village community. Heavy machinery was deployed to undertake the massive desilting operation.





The initiative was visited by the then Chief Minister, Devendra Fadnavis, who recognised the Trust's efforts as one of the finest achievements under the *Jalyukt Shivar* initiative.



Farmers and labourers from the village worked tirelessly, day and night, to make the project a success. Baba Shinde played a pivotal role in mobilising the community and coordinating the effort, while the then *Tehsildar* of Purandar, Seema Holkar, extended valuable administrative support.

This collective effort transformed despair into hope, fostering a spirit of unity that rose above differences. Considering the project as Ganpati Bappa's Prasad, villagers, farmers, and labourers worked with unwavering dedication. Their efforts increased the dam's water storage capacity from 290 million litres to 510 million litres, creating a lasting source of water security for the region.



The assured availability of water enabled farmers to harvest two crops a year. As groundwater levels rose, the landscape turned lush once again and the region's greenery was revived. With sufficient water reserves to meet the needs of the next two years, villagers have

also diversified into dairy farming, medicinal plant cultivation, and other sustainable livelihood opportunities.

The then *Sarpanch* of Pingori, Pallavi Bhosale, expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the Trust and urged other villages to come together for similar initiatives. The project's success inspired neighbouring villages to embrace sustainable water conservation measures such as rainwater harvesting, stream rejuvenation, and drip irrigation.

The moment the Trust assumed responsibility for the project, it instilled a renewed sense of confidence among the villagers that their water crisis would finally be resolved. The Trust's unwavering commitment to completing every initiative it undertakes had already earned the people's faith. What began as a development project soon became a new lease of life for the village, ushering in a new dawn of social transformation where hope, optimism, and renewed vitality replaced despair.

This initiative not only brought water to the village but also restored its faith in life. More than a water conservation project, it became a landmark movement that empowered an entire community, rekindling hope, resilience, and the spirit of renewal for generations to come.

Pushtipati Vinayak Jayanti (Festival of Tender Coconuts)



Pushtipati Vinayak Jayanti is celebrated on the auspicious full moon day of *Vaishakh*, commemorating the divine manifestation of Lord Ganesha in the form of Vinayak. As foretold by Goddess Parvati, He incarnated to vanquish the demon Durmati, whose tyranny had spread across the earth, the netherworld, and the heavens, restoring righteousness and cosmic harmony.

The temple marks the occasion with the unique *Shahale Mahotsav* (Tender Coconut Festival).

As a prayer for timely rains and agricultural prosperity, farmers offer a *Maha Naivedya* of 5,000 tender coconuts to Lord Ganesha.

Adorned with lush green tender coconuts, graceful foliage, and coconut palms, the temple transforms into a serene celebration of nature. Amid this verdant setting, the tranquil presence of Lord Ganesha creates an atmosphere of profound peace and divine bliss.





The temple's exquisite décor, crafted entirely from natural elements, is one of the defining hallmarks of Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Temple. Every arrangement is designed not only to delight the eye but also to touch the soul, reflecting the unwavering dedication and artistic vision of the temple's artisans and volunteers.

The occasion is marked by sacred rituals, including the *Shri Ganesh Yag*, *Brahmanaspati Sukta Abhishek*, and the soulful *Swarabhishek* in the early morning, filling the temple with an atmosphere of devotion and spiritual harmony.

The following day, the tender coconuts offered to the Lord are distributed as prasada to patients at Sassoon Hospital - a beautiful expression of the temple's enduring belief that true devotion finds its highest purpose in selfless service.



The Darkest Day in History

In 1988, Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati - the cherished deity of millions and an enduring symbol of faith - was subjected to a malicious act by anti-social elements, an unimaginable incident that shook the hearts of devotees.

As news of the incident spread, it sent shockwaves across Pune. Within moments, the outrage swept through Maharashtra, leaving the entire state deeply anguished. Streets witnessed widespread unrest, posing a formidable challenge for the government to restore peace and normalcy. One question echoed in every mind: "How could such an act take place in a cultured city like Pune?" It was a sentiment shared by all, for the incident had profoundly shaken the hearts of the people.

Amidst these extraordinarily tense and challenging circumstances, the trustees and volunteers of Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Mandal remained steadfast and composed. The temple was meticulously cleaned, the idol of Lord Ganesha was ceremonially purified in

accordance with sacred traditions, and the temple was reopened for devotees' darshan. Even as normalcy was restored at the temple, unrest continued to spread across the state, compelling the authorities to deploy the State Reserve Police Force and requisition additional central security forces to bring the situation under control.

Against this backdrop, Taty, Mama Rasane, Appa Suryawanshi, and Buva Rasane took a resolute decision. Recognising the need for a lasting solution rather than a temporary response, they united Hindu leaders and Ganeshotsav volunteers under a common platform. In the presence of Jyotirbhaskar Salgaonkar, a landmark meeting was convened in Pune, culminating in the establishment of the *Rashtriya Ganeshotsav Mahamandal*. Appa Suryawanshi subsequently drafted a comprehensive 40-point Code of Conduct, providing clear and thoughtful guidelines for the responsible celebration of Ganeshotsav.





40-Point Code of Conduct

1. Install the idol of Lord Ganesha at all locations across Maharashtra at the same auspicious time.
2. Perform the Aarti of Lord Ganesha simultaneously at 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.
3. This festival belongs to the Hindu faith.
4. Take pride in your religion.
5. Take pride in saying, "We are Hindus".
6. Replace film and Western music, rumba, samba, breakdance, and similar entertainment.
7. Play devotional songs and melodious Indian music.
8. Maintain permissible noise levels and prefer traditional musical instruments over loudspeakers.
9. Please refrain from consuming alcohol during the festival.
10. Please avoid gambling and similar activities during the festival.
11. Give your festival a national character.
12. Celebrate the festival in its true religious spirit.
13. Promote a socially-conscious Ganeshotsav throughout Maharashtra.
14. Organise cultural programmes.
15. Promote Ganeshotsav as an effective platform for public education and social awareness.
16. Dedicate yourself to the service of humanity, while remembering that God is above all.
17. Support the underprivileged and vulnerable.
18. Undertake projects that promote social welfare.
19. Support the restoration of Maharashtra's historic forts and ancient temples.
20. Preserve the sanctity and serenity of the temples in your locality.
21. Present exhibits that promote social awareness during the festival.
22. Avoid hurting anyone's sentiments during the festival.
23. Use Ganeshotsav contributions to support those affected by floods, excessive rainfall, and drought.
24. Extend assistance to needy patients.



25. Celebrate the festival in a spirit of inclusiveness.

26. Conduct the immersion procession peacefully and with discipline. Let all festivals be free from Dolby sound systems.

27. Avoid indecent and derogatory acts during the immersion procession.

28. Enhance the dignity of the procession by maintaining its sacred atmosphere.

29. Celebrate a festival that brings joy to all.

30. Encourage contributors, women, and respected citizens to participate in the procession, and treat everyone with respect.

31. Organise daily recitations of the *Atharvashirsha* by students at dawn.

32. Display portraits of Lokmanya Tilak and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in the festival pavilion.

33. Hoist the saffron flag of Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj and Sant Tukaram Maharaj at the festival pavilion.

34. Discontinue inappropriate practices during the festival.

35. Preserve the sanctity of Lord Ganesha, our revered deity.

36. Transform your Mandal into a permanent centre of service to humanity.

37. Establish a gymnasium in your locality.

38. Start free study centres for underprivileged students.

39. Remember that society is greater than the individual, and the nation greater than society.

40. Sponsor the education of meritorious students from disadvantaged backgrounds.





That the trustees, under Tatya's leadership, established the Mahamandal amid such a turbulent, unsettling, and emotionally charged period is truly remarkable. The 40-Point Code of Conduct was conceived against a backdrop of wounded public sentiment, social unrest, and political pressure. Yet, instead of allowing these circumstances to deepen divisions, the trustees transformed adversity into an opportunity for constructive, far-sighted action - an enduring testament to their maturity, courage, and visionary leadership.

The 40-Point Code of Conduct had the potential to transform the very character of Ganeshotsav in the years to come. Even today, it continues to serve as a guiding framework for fostering a cultured, disciplined, and exemplary festival tradition. If embraced by all public Ganeshotsav Mandals, this Code of Conduct has the power to ensure that Ganeshotsav remains an enduring model of faith, culture, and social responsibility for generations to come.





In the *Ganapatya* tradition, just as the months of *Bhadrapada* and *Magha* hold profound spiritual significance, the *Sheshatmaja Ganesh Jayanti*, celebrated on *Jyeshtha Shukla Chaturthi*, is revered as an equally sacred and auspicious occasion. More than a festival date, it is a day to commemorate the divine incarnation and sacred deeds of Lord Ganesha, who manifested to uphold *dharma* and restore righteousness.

While engrossed in the great task of creation, Lord Brahma became captivated by His own creation. In that state of divine illusion (*maya*), a child emerged from His nostril. At the very sight

of the child, Brahma became even more deeply enchanted and named him *Mayakara*. Showering him with boundless grace, He bestowed innumerable boons upon him. In time, the demon *Viprachiti* proclaimed *Mayakara* the king of the demons. Empowered by his extraordinary boons, *Mayakara* conquered the Earth and the celestial realms. As his arrogance and might reached their zenith, he launched an assault on the netherworld as well. Such was the power of his blessings that even the gods found themselves helpless before him. In the end, Lord Shesha surrendered completely and invoked Lord Shesha, seeking His divine intervention.



While Lord Shesha was absorbed in deep meditation, Lord Ganesha manifested from the power of his penance in the divine form of *Shri Sheshatmaja*, appearing at midday on *Jyeshtha Shukla Chaturthi*. This sacred incarnation embodied pure divine consciousness, manifesting to vanquish *adharma* and uphold *dharma*.

In this very incarnation, Lord Ganesha commanded the divine mouse endowed with the combined powers of the *Pancha Ishwaras*: Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh (Shiva), the Divine Mother, and Surya to become His sacred vehicle for the destruction of the demon *Gajasura*. Mounted upon this celestial *Mushaka*, Lord Ganesha vanquished *Gajasura*. It was for this reason that this divine incarnation came to be revered by the sacred name *Shri Mushakaga*.

Shri Sheshatmaja Ganesh Jayanti is not merely a mythological episode, but a divine symbol of devotion, surrender, and grace. This sacred celebration inspires devotees with the timeless



message of the triumph of *dharma* over *adharma*, humility over pride, and unwavering faith in Lord Ganesha's blessings during challenging times.

On this auspicious day, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Temple conducts sacred rituals such as *Ganesh Yag* and *Sahasravartan*, while Bappa is adorned amidst grand arrangements of fruits, exquisite garments, and artistic ornaments. The specially crafted turban-shaped crown embellished with golden adornments enhances the divine splendour of the idol. Beyond a mere celebration, this festival offers devotees a deeper understanding of spiritual traditions and creates a profound experience of devotion and fulfilment. The grandeur and uniqueness of such meticulously planned festivals reflect the vision of the trustees, dedication of the volunteers, and the temple's rich legacy of service and devotion. Thus, *Shri Sheshatmaja Ganesh Jayanti* stands as a glorious celebration of faith, tradition, and the exemplary management of the Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Temple.



Akshaya Tritiya (Mango Festival)



One of the three-and-a-half most auspicious Muhurats (sacred occasions) in the Hindu calendar, Akshaya Tritiya holds immense spiritual significance. On this pious day, a Mahaneivedya (grand offering) of 11,000 mangoes is offered to Lord Ganesha at the Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Temple. Seated amidst heaps of these vibrant saffron-hued mangoes, Bappa appears even more radiant, serene, and divine. The reflection of the mangoes' golden-orange hues on the silver and gold ornamental backdrop at the rear creates a soft, delicate saffron glow, enhancing the grandeur and elegance of the entire décor.

The makhar (decorative floral canopy) crafted with green leaves amidst the yellow-orange hues of mangoes, adorned with a border of vibrant red roses, creates such a captivating colour harmony that one's heart is instantly immersed in its enchanting beauty.





The temple's divine décor creates an enchanting illusion of Bappa strolling through a lush, blossoming mango grove, leaving devotees spellbound. Thousands of devotees eagerly seek this sacred darshan. The mangoes are later distributed as prasad, accompanied by devotional programmes such as *Swarabhishek*, *bhajans*, and *kirtans*. This magnificent creation and its meticulous execution reflect the tireless dedication of the art directors, artists, and volunteers behind it.

The following day, these mangoes are distributed as prasad among devotees, patients, elderly residents of old-age homes, and specially-abled individuals.



Shri Sharadesh Mangalam



In the Ganapatya tradition, Lord Ganesha's two divine powers are worshipped as Devi Siddhi and Devi Buddhi. While Devi Siddhi represents His power of action, Devi Buddhi, who manifests during the autumn season (Sharad Ritu) with a soothing, moon-like radiance, is revered as Sharada.

The divine union of Lord Ganesha and Devi Sharada, symbolising wisdom, grace, and auspiciousness, is celebrated as “Shri Sharadesh Mangalam”. On the sacred occasion of Akshaya Tiritiya, their royal wedding ceremony is celebrated at the Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Temple with immense devotion. The temple resonates with the melodious notes of the shehnai and the chanting of Mangalashtakas.

The idols of Lord Ganesha and Devi Sharada are ceremonially placed on the wedding altar, adorned with rich attire and precious ornaments. A grand offering of sweets and traditional delicacies is presented as naivedya, marking this divine celebration of love, wisdom, and devotion.





The enchanting décor, adorned with floral garlands, festive *torans*, and traditional banana stalks at the entrance, lends the temple a magnificent wedding ambience. Amid the chanting of “*Shubhamangal Saavadhan*” and sacred *Mangalashtakas*, the divine wedding ceremony is solemnised with traditional rituals. So unique and captivating is this celebration that even international visitors gather to witness it, as such extraordinary rituals, grandeur, and artistic décor are rarely seen elsewhere.

Under the guidance of learned priests, the entire wedding ceremony is conducted with regal



grandeur and in accordance with sacred traditions. Thousands of devotees gather to witness this divine celebration, which concludes with a heartfelt Aarti of Lord Ganesha and Devi Sharada. The exquisite floral décor created for this royal wedding adds to the magnificence of the occasion, making it a truly unforgettable spectacle.



Humanitarian Initiatives



Greening Initiative



With the vision of transforming the Wari route, the Ashtavinayak pilgrimage route, and major highways across Maharashtra into lush green corridors, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust undertook a record-breaking tree plantation drive, planting 5 million saplings. To ensure their healthy growth and survival, protective tree guards were installed at numerous locations as part of the initiative.

Long-living and environmentally beneficial tree species such as banyan, peepal, tamarind, and mango were planted as part of the initiative. Its primary objective is to create a continuous green canopy along both sides of roads and highways across Maharashtra, fostering a more sustainable and ecologically vibrant landscape. A special highlight of the initiative was the plantation of 50,000 saplings along the Palkhi pilgrimage route, offering a lasting gift of greenery to this sacred path.



Jai Ganesh Disaster Relief Initiative



Fodder Distribution

Recognising that drought relief requires more than short-term assistance, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust took a long-term approach by supplying high-quality fodder to ten villages in Purandar Taluka. The villagers, viewing the initiative as a sacred service, extended their wholehearted support, making the campaign a remarkable success.

As part of the initiative, sugarcane, green fodder, and maize fodder were provided for livestock. In addition, sustainable measures such as afforestation and drip irrigation were planned to ensure long-term environmental and agricultural resilience. The free fodder provided by the Trust for livestock in drought-affected regions was more than just relief - it became a vital lifeline, helping sustain countless animals through challenging times.



Nimgaon Ketki - Shelter for Hailstorm-Affected Farm Workers



At Nimgaon Ketki in Indapur Taluka, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Trust constructed 300 sq. ft. permanent homes for farm workers whose lives were devastated by a hailstorm. More than just providing shelter, this initiative offered these rural families a renewed sense of security, dignity, and hope - a lasting sanctuary blessed by Lord Ganesh.

This support extended far beyond the construction of homes - it restored hope, renewed confidence, and brought stability to the lives of the affected families. A testament to Lord Ganesh's divine grace, the Trust rekindled hope and illuminated the lives of families struggling through adversity with the promise of a brighter future.



Free Ambulance Service



In 1989, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust launched a Free Ambulance Service for patients within the Pune Municipal Corporation limits. The primary objective of this initiative is to ensure that those in need receive timely medical assistance during emergencies.

This 24x7 Free Ambulance Service is available at no cost within the Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation limits. Outside these limits, beneficiaries pay only the diesel cost.

Throughout the year, 12 fully equipped ambulances remain operational under this service, providing a lifesaving support system for thousands of patients. Driven by a spirit of compassion and humanity, this initiative continues to stand as a remarkable example of the Trust's unwavering commitment to community service.



A Lifeline for Drought-Affected Regions



Water Tanker Facility

Recognising the acute daily need for water in drought-affected regions, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust supplies nearly 1,00,000 litres of water every day, free of cost, to hamlets and villages across Purandar Taluka in Pune district. This initiative provides vital relief to families facing severe shortages of drinking water.

Under the same Water Tanker Service, trees planted along the Wari route, major roads, highways, and Palkhi halts are regularly watered, ensuring the sustained success of the Trust's green initiative. By supplying 1,00,000 litres of free water daily to drought-affected areas of Purandar Taluka, the Trust has created a model initiative that serves people, nurtures nature, and upholds the spirit of faith with equal commitment.

**One Lakh Litres of
Water Distributed
Daily**

Jai Ganesh Water Conservation Initiative



A Pioneering Initiative

In 2015, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust, in association with 350 Ganesh Mandals, launched the desilting of the Khadakwasla Dam under the guidance of Colonel Suresh Patil, whose commitment to the Green Theme initiative helped shape this pioneering environmental effort.

The initiative combined desilting, tree plantation, Shramdaan, and public awareness, significantly increasing the dam's storage capacity and providing Pune with nearly a month's additional water reserve. Recognised by the Government of India as a pioneering initiative, it inspired similar desilting projects across the country. Similar desilting initiatives were launched.

**Pune gained an
additional month's
water reserve**





Empowering Self-Reliance Through Skills



Industrial Training Centre

In August 2004, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust established an ISO-certified Industrial Training Centre at Kondhwa, Pune. Recognised by the Central and State Governments, it provides skill-based vocational training to unemployed rural youth, enabling them to build sustainable livelihoods.

The centre offers theoretical and practical training in skills essential for small-scale industries. With the capacity to train around 100 students at a time, it has empowered nearly 2,000 students to become self-reliant.

The Industrial Training Centre continues to equip students with hands-on experience, modern training methods, and industry-oriented skills, emerging as an effective platform for skill development and employment generation.

Wings to Aspirations



Wings to Aspirations

With the aim of increasing the representation of Maharashtra's students in the Union Public Services (UPSC), the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust, in collaboration with GyanDeep Academy, offers free UPSC coaching to aspiring civil servants.

Under this initiative, deserving and meritorious students are selected through an entrance examination and interview. The programme aims to enable Marathi students to pursue prestigious civil services such as the IAS and IPS, nurturing future administrators dedicated to serving the nation.





Where Faith Meets Care



Healing Hands on the Ashadhi Wari

Since 1989, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust has been providing mobile medical clinics, specialist doctors, medicines, and ambulance services to Warkaris during the Ashadhi Wari. This humanitarian initiative is carried out under the guidance of Dr. Balasaheb Paranjape.

Today, these free medical services are provided along the Palkhi routes of *Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj*, *Sant Tukaram Maharaj*, and *Sant Sopandev Maharaj*. The initiative also includes free eye check-ups and distribution of spectacles for Warkaris.

Supporting this sacred pilgrimage with dedicated healthcare, the Trust's service has become a source of comfort and reassurance for millions of Warkaris.



Annadan: A Sacred Service on the Wari



Jai Ganesh Annadan Seva

During the Ashadhi Wari, the Palkhis of Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj and Sant Tukaram Maharaj, proceeding towards Pandharpur, are warmly welcomed near the temple in Pune with a shower of flowers. On this spiritually vibrant occasion, Warkaris are lovingly offered Bundi Prasad as a gesture of devotion and respect.

During the Wari halt in Pune, breakfast is served to around 20,000 Warkaris, while 25,000 Warkaris at Walde receive Bappa's Mahaprasad through the Suvarnayug Tarun Mandal. This Annadan Seva reflects the Trust's selfless service, devotion, and compassion towards society.





A Testament to Humanity



Jai Ganesh Disaster Relief Initiative

During times of disasters such as floods, earthquakes, and droughts, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust has always extended a helping hand in the spirit of humanity. The Trust provided timely food, water, shelter camps, and financial assistance during the Koyna and Panshet earthquakes, Latur-Killari earthquake, Mowad floods, as well as in disaster-affected regions of Konkan, Vidarbha, and Ambegao.

The Trust contributed Rs. 51 lakh to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund for disaster-affected communities and extended special assistance to malnourished tribal families. Standing by people in times of crisis, the Trust has become a symbol of timely and compassionate humanitarian service - providing food, clothing, and relief to those in need.

Jai Ganesh Water Conservation Initiative



Honouring Valour, Celebrating Gratitude

Recognising that true valour lies in safeguarding the nation and society, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust has always honoured the brave soldiers who sacrifice their lives for the country. In 2010, children associated with the Trust expressed their gratitude by sending Rakhis to soldiers.

The Veer Matas and Veer Patnis of 200 martyrs from the *Maratha Battalion* were honoured with Rs. 25,000 each, *saree-choli*, and the 'Jeevan Gaurav Award'. This initiative strengthened the bond of respect, gratitude, and solidarity between the armed forces and the Trust.

This initiative became more than a tribute - it became an inspiring journey towards building a sensitive and grateful society.



Veer Matas and Veer Patnis of martyred soldiers are honoured with Rs. 25,000 each and a traditional saree & a blouse piece.



Polio Eradication Campaign



Vaccination: A Lifeline for Every Child

Following the disease outbreaks of 1989–90, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust took the lead in supporting the Polio Eradication Campaign in rural areas. For nearly 18 years, the Trust made a significant contribution to the campaign across Pune district. To ensure vaccines reached remote and hilly regions inaccessible to government vehicles, the Trust provided a Tata 608 vehicle for vaccination outreach.

The service effectively reached remote regions such as Bhimashankar, Junnar, Khed, and Panshet, making a significant contribution to the Polio Eradication Campaign.

The campaign's success rate rose from 50% to 95%, safeguarding the lives of thousands of tribal and farm workers' children.



Leprosy Rehab. & Self-Reliance Centre



Self-Reliance Through Skill Development

The Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust donated approximately Rs. 60 lakh to the Dr. Jal Mehta Memorial Industrial Cooperative Society for the Disabled at Yeolewadi, Pune. The centre manufactured Tata truck components and bandages for Sassoon Hospital and the Yerawada Mental Hospital, providing sustainable livelihood opportunities for its beneficiaries.

The Trust's support revived the factory, empowering nearly 300 families to achieve social and economic self-reliance.





The Golden Touch of Devotion

- Dajikaka Gadgil

Dajikaka Gadgil and P. N. Gadgil did not merely craft these ornaments for Lord Ganesha - they created them with profound devotion. Dajikaka's deep reverence and affection for both Lord Ganesha and Tatya resonated through every word he spoke.



"The then Member of Parliament, Vitthalrao Gadgil, approached us with a simple request: 'Please create the ornaments for Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati.' From that day onward, we have crafted every ornament for the Lord - from the ear ornaments and trunk necklace to the *Pitambar* adornment. After all, He is the One who gives us everything. We have always considered this our humble service. By Lord Ganesha's grace, everything in our lives has prospered".

"Tatya Godse was an extraordinary devotee of Lord Ganesha. His reputation was immense, and I held him in the highest regard. I would often joke with him, 'Tatya, if you were ever unwell and a doctor took your X-ray, all they would see is Lord Ganesha!'" The ornaments adorning Bappa are fashioned entirely from the gold and silver lovingly offered by devotees, reflecting the Trust's unwavering belief that every offering is sacred. These ornaments stand as the highest tribute to the devotion and faith of countless devotees.

Ganesh Festival

(Bhadrapada Shukla Chaturthi to Anant Chaturdashi)

In the cultural and spiritual life of Maharashtra, the Ganesh Festival is far more than a celebration - it is a living symbol of faith, devotion, and collective consciousness. In the sacred city of Pune, the festival evokes an even deeper sense of spiritual fervour and emotional connection. The Ganesh Festival of Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati has transcended the boundaries of the city to earn recognition across India and around the world as a benchmark of devotion, discipline, selfless service, and exemplary management. Preparations for this divine celebration begin many days before the arrival of the idol. Every moment reflects dedicated penance, every decision is guided by foresight, and every action is infused with unwavering devotion.



As soon as the ceremonial Bhoomipujan of the pavilion is performed - the sacred space where, over the next ten days, the prayers, devotion, and aspirations of millions of devotees will converge - the atmosphere is filled with a profound sense of sanctity.



The beautifully adorned idol of Lord Ganesha arrives in a magnificently decorated chariot, accompanied by the rhythmic beats of traditional instruments. The joy that lights up the faces of the Trustees and volunteers at that moment is truly beyond words.

On the auspicious morning of *Bhadrapada Shukla Chaturthi*, Lord Ganesha is ceremoniously consecrated. In keeping with tradition, the sacred ritual is performed each year by a revered spiritual leader. At that moment, every devotee feels as though Bappa Himself has taken His divine seat in their hearts. Prayers are offered for peace, harmony, unity, and goodwill in society, after which the doors are opened for devotees to seek the Lord's blessings.





Recitation of Atharvashirsha

(Second Day of the Ganesh Festival – Rishi Panchami)



Introduced in 1987 to encourage greater participation of women in the festival, the Mass Recitation of the *Ganapati Atharvashirsha* has become a remarkable expression of collective devotion. The sacred chants of thousands of women create a deeply spiritual and mesmerising atmosphere. In 2025, nearly 35,000 women participated in this divine gathering, reflecting its profound spiritual impact. It is widely regarded as one of the most extraordinary events of the festival.

Even before dawn breaks on *Rishi Panchami*, an extraordinary spiritual energy awakens across Pune. From as early as 2:00 a.m., thousands of women, dressed in traditional attire, gather in quiet devotion for this sacred observance. As the

chant of “*Om Gam Ganapataye Namaha*” merges with the resonant recitation of the *Ganapati Atharvashirsha*, the atmosphere becomes charged with divine vibrations. In those moments, the women transcend the role of devotees, becoming spiritual seekers united in prayer, meditation, and unwavering faith – a powerful celebration of feminine spiritual strength. Every woman's face radiates a unique inner glow – one born not of outward beauty, but of deep spiritual devotion. With the sacred name of Lord Ganesha on their lips, devotion in their eyes, and selfless prayers in their hearts, they become immersed in divine worship. This is not merely a moment of enthusiasm, but an experience of profound inner peace and spiritual fulfilment.





This unique spiritual initiative was recognised by the India Star World Record, and the event was awarded a certificate by Dr. Deepak Harke. Yet, its truest recognition lies in the sense of peace and spiritual fulfilment reflected in the heart of every participating woman.

From the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati festival pavilion to Nana Wada, the entire stretch transforms into a vast sacred arena, where thousands of women offer their devotion through collective prayer. As the ceremony concludes with the *Aarti*, the atmosphere is immersed in divine bliss. Time seems to stand still, sending a thrill through the soul and bringing tears of devotion to many eyes.

The participation of women from Pune, Mumbai, Latur, Kolhapur, Nashik, the Konkan region, and many other parts of Maharashtra reflects the far-reaching spiritual significance of this sacred tradition. Dedicated to the celebration of feminine spiritual strength, this collective act of worship has continued uninterrupted for many years, growing with each passing year in scale, depth, and divine splendour.

Every action should be guided by wisdom, awareness, and thoughtful intent - this is the essence of this spiritual practice. In today's rapidly changing world, it inspires women to awaken their inner strength and resilience. It is for this reason that the initiative has earned admiration both in India and abroad.



Ganesh Yaag (Yajna)

Throughout the ten-day festival, several sacred rituals are conducted, with the Ganesh *Yajna* being one of the most significant. The *yajna* begins after the consecration of Lord Ganesha in the festival pavilion and is performed in both the traditional Maharashtrian and South Indian (*Dakshinaty*) Vedic traditions.



Brahmanaspati Sukta Abhishek

During the ten-day festival, Lord Ganesha is ceremonially anointed each dawn with the sacred *Brahmanaspati Sukta*, a hymn especially dear to Him. The ritual is performed with deep devotion before the worship idol by Vedamurti Dhananjay Ghatge Guruji and his team.



Abhishek (ceremonial bathing of the deity)

During the ten-day festival, *Abhishek* is performed for Lord Ganesha every day from dawn until evening in the festival pavilion.



Throughout the ten-day festival, a variety of religious and spiritual programmes are organised alongside the *Ganesh Yajna*. These include *Surya Namaskar* and *Ganapati Atharvashirsha* recitation for children, *Agnihotra* demonstrations and awareness sessions for senior citizens, as well as discourses on spiritual and cultural themes. The objective is to inspire society by reinforcing that devotion is not merely an act of worship, but a way of life.

Atharvashirsha Recitation

To instil the practice of reciting the *Ganapati Atharvashirsha* from an early age, schoolchildren participate in daily recitations throughout the ten-day festival. The sacred chanting enhances concentration, memory, and intellect. *Prasad* is lovingly distributed to the students each day with the support of Ganesh devotee Rajeshji Savla.



Surya Namaskar

Surya Namaskar is a scientifically structured and holistic practice that forms an integral part of India's cultural heritage, harmonising the body, breath, and mind. To preserve this timeless tradition and inspire the younger generation to embrace its health benefits, hundreds of schoolchildren perform *Surya Namaskar* with devotion during the Ganesh Festival.





Agnihotra



Agnihotra, the sacred Vedic fire ritual performed at sunrise and sunset, holds a revered place in India's spiritual and cultural tradition. The offerings made into the sacred fire, regarded as a symbol of the Divine, are believed to promote environmental purity, mental well-being, and spiritual upliftment. Accompanied by Vedic chants, the ritual is said to dispel negative energies and create an atmosphere of peace, purity, and positive vibrations.

To introduce the younger generation to the spiritual, cultural, and scientific significance of this ancient tradition, live Agnihotra demonstrations are conducted during the festival. These demonstrations highlight the wisdom of the Vedic sages, humanity's harmonious relationship with nature, and the enduring value of spiritual practice. The union of sacred fire, mantras, and devotion fills the surroundings with serenity and a profound sense of the divine.

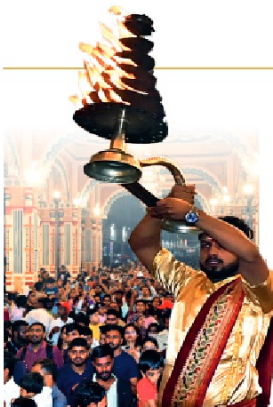


A Heartfelt Welcome to the Shri Morya Gosavi Palkhi



Shri Morya Gosavi undertook a pilgrimage to Morgaon every *Vinayaki Chaturthi* for the *darshan* of Shri Mayureshwar. According to tradition, Lord Mayureshwar appeared to him in a divine vision and promised, "I can no longer bear to see you endure this arduous journey. Henceforth, I shall come to you." Thereafter, the idol of *Shri Mangalmurti (Prati Mayureshwar)* was discovered in the *Ganesh Kund* at Chinchwad and consecrated by Shri Morya Gosavi. Since then, during *Magha* and *Bhadrapada*, the sacred idol is carried in a *Palkhi* to Morgaon. On its return journey during *Bhadrapada*, the *Palkhi* traditionally visits the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganapati Festival Pavilion, where it receives a heartfelt welcome, making it one of the festival's most cherished spiritual traditions.





Sacred Ganga Aarti

The magnificent, divine, and soul-stirring Ganga Aarti, performed every evening on the sacred ghats of Varanasi and along the holy River Ganga, is far more than a religious ritual - it is a living experience of spiritual purification, devotion, and timeless tradition.

The chanting of Vedic hymns, the sound of conch shells, glowing lamps, and the synchronised movements of the priests create an atmosphere of profound devotion and serenity. For devotees, the Ganga Aarti is an unforgettable spiritual experience.

The sacred tradition is brought to the festival each year by Himanshu Shukla and his team, who regularly perform the Ganga Aarti in Varanasi. Their presence in the festival pavilion lends an authentic and deeply spiritual essence to the ceremony. They perform the Ganga Aarti with remarkable discipline, deep devotion, and in accordance with the Vedic tradition. The glow of countless lamps, the resonance of sacred chants, and the devotion of the gathering recreate the spiritual aura of Varanasi, filling the festival pavilion with an atmosphere of peace, purity, and divine grace.





Mantra Jagar / Satyavinayak Puja

The recitation of Vedic hymns is an ancient tradition believed to invoke divine blessings on auspicious occasions. During the festival, a devotional *Mantra Jagar* is conducted in the festival pavilion, creating a spiritually uplifting atmosphere.

Satyavinayak Puja is a sacred form of Lord Ganesha's worship, much like the *Satyanarayan Puja* dedicated to Lord Vishnu. To encourage greater participation in this revered tradition, arrangements are made for devotees to perform *Satyavinayak Puja* at the festival pavilion.



Maha Aarti

The evening *Maha Aarti* during the festival is a deeply moving and divine experience. As thousands of devotees gather, the entire area comes alive with faith and devotion. The soulful chanting of "*Sukhharta Dukkhardt*" fills the air, often bringing tears to the eyes of the faithful. It is a moment that cannot be described in words - it can only be experienced and cherished in the heart.





श्रीमंत दगदुशुट हनुमान् मूर्ति, गणपती ट्रस्ट, पुणे

सुखनीयता तलवा मंडळ

सर्व गणेश भक्तांचे सहर्ष स्वागत

ॐ

शिव
गणेश

ॐ

शिव
गणेश



A Confluence of Devotion and Valour

Every year during the Ganesh Festival, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust extends a special invitation to the brave soldiers who tirelessly guard the nation's borders, along with their families, to seek the blessings of Lord Ganesha. Officers and personnel of the Indian Army Southern Command, accompanied by their families, participate in the sacred celebrations with deep devotion. On this occasion, heartfelt prayers are offered for the safety, strength, and well-being of the nation's defenders.

In this deeply devotional atmosphere, the *Aarti* is performed collectively, creating a truly moving moment as prayers are offered alongside the brave soldiers who dedicate their lives to the nation. Through this annual initiative, the Trust continues to strengthen the spirit of patriotism while fostering an enduring bond with the men and women of the Armed Force.

Devotion, Dignity, and a Prayer for Safety

Every year during the Ganesh Festival, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust respectfully invites members of the transgender (*Kinnar*) community to perform the Darshan and Aarti of Lord Ganesha, reflecting the Trust's commitment to honouring their rightful place in society. References to the worship of *Yakshas* and *Kinnars* are also found in ancient Hindu scriptures. Dressed in traditional attire, the *Kinnar* devotees offer their prayers with deep faith and devotion. On this occasion, special prayers are offered for the safety of women and girls, and for every woman to be blessed with dignity, protection, and respect. The *Kinnar* community also offers a humble prayer to Lord Ganesha that they may continue to receive the honour of performing this sacred Aarti in the years to come.



Anant Chaturdashi

The ten days pass in the blink of an eye. As *Anant Chaturdashi* dawns, an indescribable sense of longing fills the hearts of the volunteers, knowing that the time has come to bid farewell to their beloved Bappa.



The idol of Shri Ganesha is placed on a specially decorated chariot for the immersion procession.



The air reverberates with the chants of “*Ganpati Bappa Morya... Pudhchya Varshi Lavkar Ya...*” as the immersion procession begins in an atmosphere filled with deep emotion and devotion. Millions of devotees gather on both sides of the route to have a final glimpse of their beloved Bappa before the immersion - some standing on terraces, some on rooftops, and even atop trees.





Even a momentary glimpse of Bappa fills every devotee's heart with a sense of fulfilment and gratitude. Receiving the devotee's heartfelt salutations and witnessing the tears of their devotion, the procession reaches the immersion site, where the worship idol is immersed with deeply emotional reverence and devotion.



Once the idol leaves the festival pavilion, the atmosphere within becomes so quiet and solemn that it feels almost lifeless. A sense of emptiness fills the very place from which no one wished to depart - but within that emptiness lies the hope and anticipation of welcoming Bappa again the following year.

The social, cultural, and awareness initiatives organised by the Mandal during the Ganesh Festival form the very essence of this celebration. Beyond devotion, this festival carries the message of social responsibility, values, service, and unity. It is a celebration of faith, a tribute to culture, and a path towards spiritual growth.



From Soil



to Humanity

The people who spent their days and nights crafting bricks for others' dream homes had no home of their own.

It was a harsh and heartbreaking reality. The brick kiln workers endured humiliation and exploitation on a daily basis. Their wages were routinely delayed, and even their water supply was withheld. Such relentless injustice became an inseparable part of their everyday existence.

Witnessing these hardships firsthand, Shankarrao Madke and the then Trustee, Appa (Murlidhar Londhe), resolved to transform the lives of the brick kiln workers. A devoted devotee of Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati, Shankarrao Madke was well acquainted with Taty, Appasaheb Suryawanshi, and Mamasahab Rasane through his regular visits to the temple. Together, they brought the workers' plight directly to their attention.

A proposal was placed before the Trust to help the workers secure permanent homes by offering housing loans through the Suvarnayug Bank. However, on careful consideration, it became clear that such loans would be beyond their means. With meagre wages and barely enough to meet their daily needs, repaying the loan with interest was simply not a realistic possibility.

At that moment, the Trust took a remarkably magnanimous decision:

"Set aside all concerns about the loan. We will make it happen. The only request is that the housing settlement be named 'Ganpati Nagar'."

That moment proved to be nothing short of divine for the brick kiln workers. Taty, Appasaheb Suryawanshi, and Mamasahab Rasane became guardian angels in their lives. With no personal gain to seek and no desire for recognition, they were driven solely by the spirit of compassion and humanity.

This was no easy task. Shankarrao Madke worked tirelessly to secure the necessary approvals, complete the documentation, and navigate the government procedures. At last, a modest dream was transformed into a remarkable reality. Before long, a beautiful and well-planned housing community named Ganpati Nagar came to life.



The handover of the homes at Ganpati Nagar took place in the gracious presence of the then Chief Minister, Shivajirao Patil.



It marked the dawn of a new chapter. Today, many children from the community have gone on to pursue higher education, several have become entrepreneurs, and many others have built dignified and successful careers.

Amar Chavan, a resident of Ganpati Nagar, is a testament to this transformation. Today, he owns a successful advertising agency and provides employment to five or six people. This is the true measure of lasting social change.

Today, every smiling face in the community is the true reward for this noble endeavour. And when those smiles are seen, they do not fill one with pride - they humble the heart with profound gratitude.

This is more than a story of homes - it is a story of humanity. For the greatest achievement of this endeavour was giving hope and dignity to those whose hands had spent a lifetime building homes for others.



Festival Management



Recognised in India and abroad as a benchmark in festival management, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Festival is a remarkable celebration. Here are some of the key elements behind its meticulous planning and flawless execution.

Preparations for the festival, held annually in August-September, begin several months in advance. The Trust and Festival Committee conduct a series of planning meetings, assigning dedicated teams and clearly defined

responsibilities for every aspect of the celebration. This structured approach ensures seamless coordination and flawless execution.

Every aspect of the festival is meticulously managed - from security, décor, cultural programmes, and prasad distribution to donations, daily rituals, and, most importantly, efficient crowd management for the thousands of devotees.



Managing crowds and traffic during the festival is the greatest challenge. Over the ten-day celebration, nearly 15-20 million devotees visit the temple, with around 1.5-2 million seeking darshan each day. Despite this immense scale, the Trust's volunteers, police, and members of various social organisations work in close coordination to ensure safe and orderly crowd management.

The foremost priority is to ensure that every devotee experiences a smooth, comfortable, and satisfying darshan. As the face of the festival, volunteers receive special training in assisting devotees with courtesy, discipline, and compassion. Once the festival begins, many serve tirelessly around the clock for all ten days.

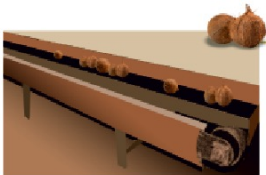
From the mass chanting of the *Atharvashirsha* on *Rishipanchami* to every religious ritual, each event is meticulously planned in advance. All necessary permissions - from the police, fire

department, Pune Municipal Corporation, and electricity authorities - are secured well before the festival, ensuring its seamless and efficient execution.

To ensure the safety of devotees, specially trained emergency response teams remain on standby throughout the festival. A fully equipped intensive care unit is set up within the temple premises, with ventilators, essential medical equipment, and round-the-clock availability of doctors and nurses. In case of a medical emergency, ambulances are kept ready for immediate transfer to nearby hospitals.

Preparations also include securing financial support for the festival. Discussions, meetings, and coordination with sponsors begin well in advance to ensure the smooth execution of the celebrations.

A dedicated committee oversees the arrival and immersion processions. Every detail - from the ceremonial chariot, *dhol-tasha* ensembles, flags, volunteers' uniforms and turbans to decorative lighting and power supply arrangements - is meticulously planned to ensure that each procession is conducted seamlessly and with grandeur.



A remarkable example of the Trust's foresight is the automated conveyor belt system for transporting coconuts, installed with the support of devotee Makarand Savgaonkar. Coconuts offered at the Lord's feet reach the rear gate in just 10-15 seconds via the conveyor belt and are loaded directly into transport vehicles, ensuring swift and efficient handling.

Earlier, coconuts would accumulate in towering heaps, creating severe space constraints and operational challenges. The automated conveyor system has streamlined the entire process, making it faster, more efficient, and well organised. Even during Ganeshotsav, when millions of coconuts are offered, devotees enjoy an uninterrupted and hassle-free darshan, while the seamless management enhances their sense of peace and spiritual fulfilment.

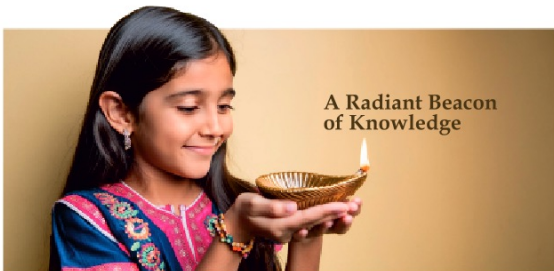
At the heart of this vast and meticulously managed festival lies the divine grace of Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati. Every volunteer firmly believes that the wisdom to make the right decisions and the strength to fulfil every responsibility are bestowed by Lord Ganesha Himself.

Built on meticulous planning, unwavering teamwork, and selfless devotion, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Festival has evolved beyond a religious celebration into a shining model of value-driven management. Every decision reflects foresight, every system is shaped by experience, and every action is an offering of sincere service at the feet of Lord Ganesha.

Despite welcoming millions of devotees, the festival is marked not by chaos or ego, but by discipline, coordination, and a spirit of selfless service. For the volunteers, this is not merely a responsibility but a sacred vow. Fatigue fades in the joy of serving devotees and Lord Ganesha. Here, management is not driven by systems alone - it thrives on humanity, compassion, and unwavering devotion.

The festival conveys a timeless message: true greatness is shaped not by resources, but by vision and values. When meticulous planning, discipline, and devotion come together, extraordinary achievements become possible. More than a celebration, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Festival stands as an enduring source of inspiration - guiding society, inspiring generations, and reaffirming that service is the highest form of worship.





A Radiant Beacon of Knowledge

The alarming rise in student suicides deeply disturbed Mahesh Suryawanshi. As a Trust committed to social welfare, he believed it was imperative to take meaningful action to address this growing concern. Through careful observation, he identified the key causes as an unhealthy nurturing environment, mounting mental stress, and the lack of proper values and emotional guidance. He believed that holistic development, counselling, healthcare support, and opportunities for self-expression could help students overcome negativity. This vision gave birth to two pioneering initiatives - Sanskar Varga (Value Education Classes) and "A Letter to Bappa." Schools were then identified to implement the programme. Mahesh Suryawanshi found an equally committed partner in Ashok Godse, whose shared vision transformed 1 + 1 into 11. Together, they presented the concept to Tatya.

Blessing the initiative, Tatya remarked, "Since this noble endeavour will come to life through Bappa's grace, let it bear Bappa's name." With his encouragement, the initiative was launched without delay.

The Trust partnered with nearly 37 schools, installing special letter boxes that encouraged students to write their thoughts, worries, and aspirations to Lord Ganesha. These heartfelt letters provided valuable insight into their emotional challenges, enabling timely guidance and support.

This initiative evolved into the Jai Ganesh Knowledge Enrichment Campaign. In its very first year, the Trust selected 500 academically talented yet underprivileged students and assumed responsibility for their education and essential needs.



Dr. A. L. Deshmukh

Renowned educationist Dr. A. L. Deshmukh served as the mentor for this initiative. He recalls that Tatyta was always committed to ensuring that children from the grassroots had access to quality education and a nurturing environment in which to grow.



Dr. Sanjeev Dole

Dr. Sanjeev Dole, President of the Pune Homeopathy Association and Managing Trustee of the Mohan Thuse Eye Hospital & Research Institute, Narayangaon, has long combined his medical practice with dedicated social service in the field of eye care. He was entrusted with the medical component of the Jai Ganesh Knowledge Enrichment Campaign, and his association with the initiative was established through Dr. Vinayak Rupanvar.



Dr. Bharat Desai

Dr. Bharat Desai observes that counselling is still an unfamiliar concept for many. In today's fast-paced world, even adults often struggle to find direction, making it even more difficult for young minds to understand and cope with their emotional challenges. To provide students with the guidance they needed, the Trust entrusted Dr. Desai with leading the counselling component of the Jai Ganesh Knowledge Enrichment Campaign.



Arun Bhalerao

The Sanskar Classes were designed to nurture students' hidden talents, build their self-confidence, and foster their overall personality development. The curriculum and structure of these classes were thoughtfully developed by Arun Bhalerao.



The impact of the initiative became evident within its first year, with students achieving remarkable success in the Class X and XII examinations. Encouraged by these results, Tatya dedicated a building behind the temple to the programme, which came to be known as Ganpati Sadan. Today, it also provides free coaching for UPSC and MPSC aspirants, with over 50 computers and internet facilities made available to support their learning.

The success of the initiative was further reflected in the 2012 Higher Secondary (Class XII) results, with students under the programme achieving a 100% pass rate. Seven students scored over 80%, while the others secured marks in the 50-60% range. The study centre at Ganpati Sadan has since become a valuable resource for students preparing for competitive examinations.

Established in 2004, the ITI offers courses in Electrical, Fitter, Welding, and Turner trades. Through campus recruitment by leading companies such as Tata, Bajaj, and LG, it has consistently achieved 100% placements.

Initiatives such as the Jai Ganesh Vocational Junior College in Kondhwa, e-learning facilities, technology-enabled education in rural



schools, and safe drinking water systems have significantly enhanced the quality of education, student enrolment, and parents' confidence.



Through the Jai Ganesh Knowledge Enrichment Campaign, over 550 meritorious students in Pune have received comprehensive support, while more than 1,000 students have completed higher education and become self-reliant. Offering education from traditional disciplines to Artificial Intelligence courses at little or no cost, the initiative continues to expand. What began as a compassionate vision has today become a radiant beacon of knowledge, illuminating countless lives.





"Seven Decades of Devotion, a Musical Offering, and an Enduring Bond with Lord Ganesha."

- Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar

Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati is a fulfiller of wishes, a deity who grants devotees' heartfelt prayers. His endearing and enchanting form captivates the heart in an instant. I have been blessed to seek His darshan for more than seven decades.

My association with the temple began in 1941, when my father, Pandit Deenanath Mangeshkar, performed near Bahuli Haud during the Ganesh festival. I, too, sang on that occasion, and it was there that I first met Tatyasaheb Godse. Over the years, whenever I visited Pune for performances, he would invariably invite me for the Ganpati aarti, and I would always make it a point to attend. During the temple's Centenary Celebrations in 1992, I had the privilege of inaugurating the fountain before the magnificent replica of the Bikaner Palace. My mother and all of us Mangeshkar siblings attended the celebrations out of our deep affection for Tatyasaheb. At his insistence, I also

sang a song on that memorable occasion. Jagadguru Shankaracharya of the Dwarka Peeth had graced the celebrations with his blessings, making the event truly unforgettable. Through Lord Ganesha, Tatyasaheb devoted six to seven decades to selfless service of society. His extraordinary legacy of devotion and service will continue to inspire generations, and his dedicated colleagues have carried forward that noble mission with the same commitment.



A Melodious Journey Through Music



Taty believed that honouring and rehabilitating workers was only part of the responsibility. True service also meant fostering their overall growth, not just meeting their material needs. Around 1980, although music festivals were affordable, he realised that a large section of society still could not afford to experience them.

This vision led to the launch of the Shrimant Dagdusheth Music Festival in 1984, with the aim of giving the common people an opportunity to enjoy world-class music free of cost.



The Dagdusheth Halwai Music Festival began at the open grounds opposite the Datt Temple in Budhwar Peth. From its very inception, the festival's legacy was illuminated by performances from world-renowned maestros such as Pandit Bhimsen Joshi.

The festival was scheduled to be held annually from Gudi Padwa to Ram Navami. From 1984 to 2025, it has featured performances by some of the world's finest vocalists, instrumentalists, and dancers, including Pandit Alla Rakha and Ustad Zakir Hussain, Lata Mangeshkar, Hridaynath Mangeshkar, Pandit Jasraj, Pandit Shivkumar Sharma, Sudhir and Shridhar Phadke, Asha Khadilkar, and many other celebrated artistes.





What began on the street outside the Shri Datt Temple in Budhwar Peth later moved to the grounds of Shaniwar Wada and is now hosted in a modern auditorium. While the venue has evolved over the years, the enthusiastic response from music lovers has remained unwavering. The Trust's broad vision for music, its deep passion for preserving this art, and the way the younger generation is carrying this legacy forward continue to inspire and move audiences.

The festival brought the rich traditions of classical, theatre, and devotional music to every household in Pune. A landmark moment came in 1992, when its Centenary Festival was celebrated - an event worthy of being inscribed in golden letters in Pune's cultural history. While the music festival usually lasted five or six days, that year it continued for an extraordinary eight weeks, transforming the entire city into a vibrant celebration of music.

The festival was so grand and unprecedented that it could well have earned a place in the Guinness Book of World Records. Widely acknowledged by the music fraternity, it was hailed as a truly historic event - "Na Bhuto Na Bhavishyati" - one without precedent and unlikely to be repeated.





Inspired by this music festival, many young people have developed a deep appreciation for music. They are immersing themselves in learning instruments such as the tabla, harmonium, and sitar, while many are also pursuing Indian classical music under the guidance of accomplished gurus. Increasingly, people are realising that music is not merely to be heard - it is to be experienced, allowing its subtle nuances to resonate within. This cultural awakening is nurturing discerning listeners - true connoisseurs of music - who appreciate and cherish its finer nuances

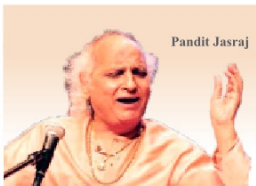
This is perhaps the true fulfilment of the vision cherished by the trustees of the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust and their dedicated associates. Their dream of nurturing the tradition of music, empowering future generations, and seeing melodies from Pune resonate across the world is steadily becoming a reality. The festival's enduring legacy shines

brightly through the countless gifted artists who continue to enrich the world of music.

The festival has successfully carried the legacy of music to the next generation, and its impact is evident today. Pune continues to produce a new generation of brilliant musical talent, and much of the credit goes to the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust. The dedication and passion with which these young artists pursue their musical journey stand as the true testament to the festival's enduring vision and success.

Every initiative of the Trust continues to create new opportunities, open professional avenues, and inspire a new generation of enthusiastic young volunteers. This, indeed, is one of the greatest achievements of the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust and its dedicated team.





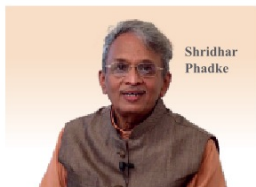
Pandit Jasraj

At the 1992 Centenary Festival, virtually every leading artist in India performed on this stage, making it an extraordinary celebration of music. Even the revered Shankaracharya graced the occasion. I sang with complete devotion, and when my performance ended, Tatyā embraced me and said, "Keep singing like this!"



**Hridaynath
Mangeshkar**

For the past 32 years, I have had the honour of presenting the concluding performance at the Dagdusheth Halwai Music Festival. Tatyā Godse would always tell me, "No matter how great the artist who performs at this festival, its finale will always be yours." True to his word, he upheld that promise for 32 years.



**Shridhar
Phadke**

I first performed at this festival in 1992. The night before my performance, I was suffering from severe stomach pain. I travelled from Mumbai after taking medication, but by the time my turn came around midnight, the pain had become unbearable.

Seeing my condition, Rambhau asked what was wrong. When I told him, he simply said, "Don't worry. Pray to Lord Ganpati - everything will be fine." I prayed with complete faith, and I can say with absolute honesty that the pain stopped instantly. I then went on to perform without any difficulty, and the concert turned out to be truly memorable.





I first performed at the Dagdusheth Halwai Music Festival in 1987, and since then I have had the privilege of performing there every year without a break. I consider this opportunity to serve through music as a blessing bestowed by the grace of God.

I vividly remember one concert where I sang continuously for five hours. The performance went on until 3:00 a.m., yet not a single member of the audience left. I remain deeply grateful for the immense love and affection that music lovers have shown me over the years.

The affection and respect we received from Tatya, Mama, Appa, and Buva are continued by the new generation now leading the Trust. They have upheld the same warmth, support, and grandeur in organising this festival. Over the years, this has created an unbreakable bond between us and the Dagdusheth Halwai Music Festival.



The Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust has always felt like my maternal home. I have often said that everyone associated with it is like my own family. Tatya instilled such strong values in the next generation of the Trust that they continue to serve with the same selflessness and dedication. That is a matter of immense pride.





Ganesh Jayanti - Umangmalaj

(Kartik Shuddha Chaturthi)

When the impurities of ego and attachment are removed from within, the pure, serene and divine self-realisation that emerges is called '*Umangmalaj*'. According to mythology, Goddess Parvati created Ganesha from the impurities of her body, and He later received an elephant head and became known as *Shri Gajanana*. In this form, Ganesha is worshipped as *Umangmalaj*. These stories symbolise spirituality - our intellect is Parvati, and the layer of ego and attachment covering it is the impurity that must be removed.

When ego and attachment are removed, the divine realisation of '*Umangmalaj*' is attained. The flower symbolises the mind, while the coconut represents the intellect. Just as a coconut resembles the structure of the human head, offering it to the Lord signifies surrendering our intellect. This festival celebrates the purification of the mind and intellect and humbly placing them at the feet of *Shri Gajanana*.



Shri Nagnabhairav Janmotsav

(Kartik Vadya Ashtami)

Kartik Vadya Ashtami is a spiritually significant day in the *Ganapatya* tradition, believed to mark the divine manifestation of Lord *Shri Nagnabhairav*. Considered the son of Lord Ganesha's divine energy, *Shri Nagnabhairav* represents supreme consciousness, free from the bonds of illusion.

The term "*Nagna*" refers to one who has shed the veil of illusion (*Maya*). Since Lord *Shri Nagnabhairav* embodies this state of pure consciousness, the word "*Nagna*" is included in His name.

The word '*Bhairav*' is derived from the concepts of '*Bhaya*' (fear) and '*Rava*' (sound or expression). It represents the immense, all-pervading divine power through which all forces of creation - gods, demons, and humans - perform their duties not out of fear, but in accordance with cosmic discipline and order. Lord *Shri Nagnabhairav* exists beyond every form of illusion (*Maya*) and remains untouched by any worldly limitations.

Being eternally immersed in the devoted service of Lord *Shri Mayuresh*, He is also known as '*Mayureshwar*'. As the divine protector who safeguards devoted followers of Lord Ganesha and shields them from adversities, He is revered as the 'Supreme Guardian of the Righteous'.

On this sacred birth celebration, Lord *Shri Nagnabhairav* is worshipped with traditional rituals at the temple from early morning. An



offering of *Panchpakwan* (five sacred delicacies) is made, followed by a devotional *aarti*. Thousands of devotees gather for darshan on this auspicious day. Sunday is considered the special day of His worship, 21 is His sacred number, and jaggery and coconut are regarded as His favourite offerings.

Through the grace of Lord *Shri Nagnabhairav*, devotees attain both worldly happiness, contentment, and prosperity, as well as spiritual elevation. Hence, He is revered as the '*Bhukti-Pradata*' - the giver of worldly blessings, and the '*Mukti-Pradata*' - the one who guides devotees towards liberation. Lord *Shri Nagnabhairav* represents the divine union of worldly fulfilment and spiritual liberation.



A Legacy of Tradition

Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Bappa stands as a radiant symbol of faith, tradition, and social consciousness. More than a revered deity, He is the custodian of 134 years of cherished devotional traditions. Dagdusheth Halwai was such an extraordinary devotee that Lord Ganesha is today recognised across the world by his name - a timeless testament to the profound power and enduring legacy of his devotion.

Ever since the consecration of Lord Ganesha's idol, the temple has upheld an unbroken tradition of sacred rituals. Devotional practices such as the *Atharvashirsha* recitation, *Ganesh Yagya*, *Maha Abhishek*, *Satyavinayak Puja*, *Sahasravartana*, and the *Atirudra Mahayajna*

infuse the temple with a profound sense of peace, positive energy, and divine spiritual vibrations.

1893: The Beginning of a Divine Tradition

Inspired by *Sadguru Madhavnath Maharaj*, Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai initiated a sacred tradition of devotion to Lord Ganesha in 1893. Over the past 134 years, this humble beginning has flourished into a magnificent legacy. Today, the temple draws millions of devotees throughout the year, who come to seek the blessings of Dagdusheth Bappa.



The Legacy of Lokmanya Tilak's Vision

In the same historic year, Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak laid the foundation of the *Sarvajanik* (Public) Ganesh Festival. Built on the three pillars of freedom, social unity, and public awakening, this inspiring tradition has today spread across 175 countries, carrying Lord Ganesha's message of unity and cultural pride to the world.

Keeping the Flame of Social Enlightenment Alive

The Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust has carried forward Lokmanya Tilak's vision of social awakening, adapting it to changing times. For over 134 years, it has inspired generations through *Chaturmas* discourses, lectures on the glory of Lord *Ganesha*, *Wari*, and the *Shiv Jayanti* lecture series, fostering knowledge, culture, and social awareness.



A Tradition That Unites the World

Today, the Ganesh Festival is no longer just an identity of Pune or Maharashtra - it has become a global celebration. Through this sacred festival, devotees across the world are united by an invisible bond of faith, transcending the boundaries of language, nationality, and culture.

A Legacy of Artistic Excellence

A distinctive hallmark of the Dagdusheth Ganesh Festival is its magnificent replicas of renowned temples from across India. With breathtaking illumination, intricate craftsmanship, and creative artistry, these displays offer more than visual grandeur - they create an unforgettable experience for visitors of all ages. This enduring tradition not only celebrates India's rich cultural heritage but also strengthens the spirit of national pride.





The Pinnacle of Devotional Tradition

Each year, the *Pran Pratishtha* (consecration) of Lord Ganesha is performed by eminent spiritual leaders. On *Rishi Panchami*, thousands of women gather to collectively recite the *Atharvashirsha* and offer the *Maha Aarti* to Bappa - a truly sublime expression of devotion. Today, this sacred tradition has been embraced by numerous *Ganesh Mandals* across Maharashtra, highlighting the power and significance of collective worship.



The Grand Immersion: A Glorious Tradition

The day of *Ganesh Visarjan* is a magnificent confluence of devotion, culture, and grandeur. The arrival of Dagdusheth Bappa on a beautifully illuminated ceremonial chariot is the highlight of the procession. Drawn by ten pairs of bullocks, the chariot symbolises India's agrarian heritage, a tradition preserved for over a century. Accompanied by the resonant rhythms of traditional musical ensembles and the thunderous chants of devotees, the procession becomes a vibrant celebration of faith and cultural pride.





A Legacy of Melody and Rhythm

The *Prabhat Band* of *Bandopant Solapurkar*, *Darbar Band* led by *Iqbalbhai Darbar*, the *Develekar Brothers* on the *nagara*, and *shehnai* maestro *Pramodji Gaikwad* - today, their third and fourth generations continue to participate in the *Ganesh Visarjan* procession. Their enduring involvement reflects the true spirit of the Ganesh Festival: a celebration that belongs to people of every caste, creed, and faith - an ideal that is not merely proclaimed, but experienced.



A Bond of Devotion

The cherished traditions of offering a coconut or gold to Lord Ganesha in fulfilment of a vow continue with the same unwavering faith even today. These acts are more than rituals - they reflect a deep emotional bond between the devotee and Bappa.



A Legacy of Selfless Service

The volunteers of *Suvarnayug Mandal* are the true pillars of this enduring tradition. From the generation of *Tatyasaheb Godse*, *Mamasahab Rasane*, *Appasaheb Suryawanshi*, and *Appasaheb Rasane* to the present fourth generation, their selfless service has continued uninterrupted. Built by the community and dedicated to the community, this tradition stands as a remarkable model of temple management and public service in India.



A Tradition That Transcends Time

Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Bappa is more than a part of history - He is a living legacy. Rooted in faith, devotion, values, art, and selfless service, this timeless tradition continues to shine with undiminished brilliance, inspiring generations and transcending the boundaries of time.

The Divine Projection of Spiritual Energy

(Atirudra Mahayagna)



The *Atirudra Mahayagna* is organised with the sacred intention of creating peace, goodwill, and harmony across the entire world. The *Atirudra Yagna* is not merely a religious ritual; according to Vedic scriptures, it is a highly powerful process of spiritual energy manifestation. This sacred *Yagna* brings purity, balance, and positivity at the level of individuals, families, and society. Wherever the *Atirudra Yagna* is performed, the atmosphere is believed to become purified, human consciousness is awakened, and qualities such as efficiency, focus, and inner awareness are enhanced.

According to Vedic tradition, 11 *Brahmavirindas* chanting the *Rudra mantras* 11 times constitute a *Laghu Rudra*; 11 *Laghu Rudras* make one *Maharudra*, and 11 *Maharudras* together form an *Atirudra*. This powerful *Yagna* is believed to purify the atmosphere, eliminate negativity, enhance well-being, and promote harmony among all living beings. Considered the highest form of collective spiritual awakening, the *Atirudra Yagna* creates positive and far-reaching effects at the level of communities and nations, fostering peace, balance, and goodwill in the world.



With this sacred objective, the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust Temple conducts various religious rituals during this 11-day celebration, including *Rudra Havan*, *Ganesh Yagna*, *Mahalakshmi Havan*, and *Shri Sukta* chanting. A grand *Homa Kund* is constructed in the temple's assembly hall, where the *Yagna* is performed with the participation of 65 *Brahmavrindas* (Vedic scholars) under the guidance of Vedmurti Nataraj Shastri.

The *Yagna* concludes with *Purnahuti*, invoking the 33 crore deities and offering sacred materials and medicinal herbs through prescribed Vedic rituals.

During this period, sacred water from holy rivers such as the *Ganga*, *Yamuna*, *Indrayani*, *Panchganga*, *Ashtavinayak kshetras*, and *Rameshwaram*, along with water from 21 sacred *kundas*, is used with Vedic chants. Additionally, 21 Ayurvedic herbs are offered in the *Homa*. The sacred waters are used for *Shri Ganesh Abhishek*, with prayers for global welfare, peace, and a healthy society. This *Atirudra Mahayagna* stands as a unique and profound spiritual experience for devotees.



Tulsi Vivah



The sacred *Tulsi Vivah* ceremony is organised by the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust. The celebrations begin with the worship of Lord Krishna at the Dagdusheth Ganpati Temple, followed by a traditional procession carrying the *Tulsi Vrindavan* and the idol of Lord Krishna on a beautifully decorated chariot. The procession, accompanied by music and lined with intricate rangoli designs, culminates at the *Sakhare Maharaj Math* in *Mandai*, where the wedding ceremony is performed in a deeply devotional atmosphere.

Tulsi Vivah symbolises the ceremonial marriage of the sacred *Tulsi* plant with *Shaligram*, Lord *Vishnu*, or His incarnation, Lord *Krishna*. Observed from *Prabodhini Ekadashi*, it marks

an important Hindu ritual, as *Tulsi* is believed to be especially dear to Lord *Vishnu*. The day also concludes the *Kakad Aarti* tradition that begins on *Kojagiri Purnima*. Hundreds of women devotees from the *Aarti Mandal* participate with great devotion, adding to the sanctity and grandeur of this auspicious celebration.





Annakot (Tripurari Purnima)

Tripurari Purnima, the sacred full moon of the holy month of Kartik, is celebrated at the temple with the grand and visually magnificent *Annakot* festival. On this auspicious occasion, Lord Ganesha is offered a *Maha Naivedya* comprising 521 delectable sweet and savoury delicacies. The offering is further enhanced by an exquisite display of vibrant, artistically

arranged fruits, creating a breathtaking spectacle of devotion and abundance.

The *Maha Naivedya* is lovingly offered by devotees out of their own faith, devotion, and joy, reflecting their deep reverence and unwavering belief in Lord Ganesha.





During this celebration, the temple is transformed by a breathtaking display of illumination. Around 1,25,000 oil lamps, stretching from the temple spire to the sanctum, bathe the entire premises in a radiant glow, leaving devotees spellbound. The lamp-lit temple, vibrant rangoli patterns, and courtyards adorned with fragrant floral garlands create a truly divine spectacle, evoking the grandeur of a celestial palace descended upon earth.



After sunset, the *Maha Naivedya* is reverentially distributed to devotees as prasad. Blending devotion, beauty, abundance, and spiritual grace, the *Annakot* celebration leaves devotees with a profound sense of joy and fulfilment.



Hemant Rasane

(Member of the Legislative Assembly)
General Secretary,
Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Trust

I had already been actively involved in social service through *Suvarnayug Tarun Mandal*. About twenty years after the temple was established, a decision was made to expand it, and the expansion was inaugurated on the auspicious occasion of *Dussehra*. Initially, there were plans to construct the expanded temple on a site near the original location, in the Majoor Adda area. However, due to certain obstacles, the proposal could not materialise. Subsequently, an alternative site adjacent to the *Faraskhana* was identified and taken forward.

At the time, I was serving as a Municipal Corporator and represented this very area. Tatyasaheb entrusted me with the responsibility of securing the Municipal Corporation's approval for the proposed site. With the unanimous support of all the members, I was able to get the resolution passed in the General Body - a blessing that I attribute entirely to Bappa's grace. I consider myself truly fortunate that Bappa chose me to play a part in this sacred endeavour. It remains one of the greatest blessings and honours of my life.



Raju Sheth Sankla

Chairman and Managing Director,
Siddhivinayak Group

In 1971, Shree magazine published an interview with Tatyasaheb Godse, in which he shared the complete story of Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati. Reading that interview gradually drew me closer to the temple and its divine legacy.

After I entered the construction business, I launched a housing project at *Bijli Nagar, Chinchwad*. Not a single flat was selling, and I was on the verge of suffering huge financial losses. The fear of failure and loss of reputation weighed heavily on me. During that difficult phase, I came to seek Bappa's blessings during the Ganesh festival. Within a few weeks, a company booked 100 flats at once for its employees, and soon all the remaining flats were sold. I firmly believe this was nothing but Bappa's divine grace. There are many such experiences that I could share.

However, the greatest blessing of my life came when the Trust entrusted me with the responsibility of rebuilding the temple. As a builder, I have constructed hundreds of homes, helping people realise their dreams. But being chosen to build the eternal abode of Lord Ganesha Himself felt like a sacred responsibility bestowed upon me by the Lord.

The positive energy that guides my life comes from this temple, and whatever I have achieved is, in my heart, the blessing of Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganpati Bappa alone.



From a Temple of Worship to a Temple of Service to Humanity

We are privileged to witness the inspiring journey of social service undertaken by the Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Sarvajanik Ganpati Trust. With Morya's blessings, we are confident that this journey will continue to flourish, touching and transforming countless lives in the years ahead.

With the ever-growing number of devotees, we envision a world-class spiritual and cultural destination at Warvadi, Purandar, spread across 36 acres - bringing together, under one roof, an international museum dedicated to Bappa, a spiritual centre, Vedic school, gaushala, old-age home, childcare, healthcare and educational facilities, along with enhanced darshan, parking, accommodation and online services.

To be entrusted with the opportunity to undertake such diverse initiatives in Bappa's service is, for us, nothing less than a divine blessing. Our humble prayer is that we may continue to serve with the same devotion, humility and selflessness, today and for generations to come.

Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Sarvajanik Ganpati
Trust and Suvarnayug Tarun Mandal, Pune





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An Enchanting Fragrance of Devotion

It fills me with immense pride to see how the seed of faith and devotion sown by Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai through Ganeshotsav in 1893 has today blossomed into a magnificent tree, whose divine fragrance has reached every corner of the country and beyond. This enduring fragrance of faith has become an integral part of the Mandal's intellectual richness, artistic sensitivity, social commitment and spiritual pursuit. At its very heart, this fragrant essence of devotion ultimately bows in reverence at the feet of Shrimant Dagdusheth Ganraya. This is the eternal truth and there is no doubt that this divine fragrance will continue to illuminate and inspire both the present generation and generations yet to come.



**Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai
Sarvajanic Ganpati Trust, Pune**

Ganpati Bhavan, 250, Budhwar Peth, Pune - 411002
Ganpati Sadan : +91 20 24496464 / +91 20 24492000
contact.dhgt@gmail.com
www.dagdushethganpati.com

