

Thane VEDH 2018

Glimpses by – Dhanashree ketkar.

Shunya te shikhar or **From zero to top (peak)** was the theme of the 26th Vedh conference held on 7,8 and 9 Dec 2018 at the grounds of Shiv Samarth School,Thane. Enthusiastic students , parents and teachers attended it in large numbers.

Extra spice was added to this year's VEDH song by accompaniment of drum set and Guitar. Dr. Anand Nadkarni interviewed the guests and Dr. Deepika Dabke summarized the sessions.

1 .Deepak Ghaisas was the first guest at VEDH 2018. He has done CA, ICWA and CS .He feels innovation should lead to activation. He thinks zero is also very important because anything divided by zero leads to infinity. He said once you are on the top you should think about new beginning again and start from zero. Every year we should do some better and different work ,at least 25% different from last year. One should convert threat into opportunity and carry the whole team to the top. His former company iflex had specialization in banking software and was operating in 138 countries, later it was merged with Oracle. Then he entered biotech business and next on his wishlist is nanotech .

2. Well-known theatre personality and actress **Rohini hattangadi** was our next guest. She graduated from NSD (national School of drama). She is very nostalgic about the days at NSD as she enjoyed as well as learnt a lot about acting there. They were taught that even if you are a person in a crowd you should think about the character of that person and then act. She is well known for her role of Kasturba Gandhi in the Oscar winning movie 'Gandhi'. she received sangeet natak academy award in 2004.

3. **Magsaysay award winner Bharat Vatwani and his wife Smita** were the last guests of 7th December. They are psychiatrists and the founders of '**Shraddha foundation**' which serves mentally ill patients who are found wandering on the streets. In 1988 it had started with 40 patients and till now they have treated 7000 patients of which 5500 are rehabilitated and returned to their homes. He feels 'shraddha' and 'saburi' that is 'trust and patience' are very important while treating these patients.

4. Eighth December started with young **Abhijit Thorat**. A book named '**Slumdog CA**' is written on his life. As his father had abandoned the family he had to work hard .At the age of 10 he worked at a brick kiln where he received only two and half rupees for carrying 500 bricks . Thereafter he started selling guavas, old newspapers etc and supported his education. His mother's employer inspired him to become CA. He worked day and night and achieved his goal. Now he has started his own CA firm. He feels that just living for oneself is an offence and one should do some good for the society. He has started an NGO 'Nadaan parindey' which works for poor and deserving children. It helps them in achieving their dreams of becoming CA ,IAS etc .

5. **Sharda Bapat** had done BA in English and diploma in computer application and had no connection with medical field till 36 years of age .At that time her mother was very ill and because of that she got interested in medical field. She decided to become a doctor but first she had to give 12th standard exam from science stream . After a lot of hard work and 2 years practical training in Philippines she got permanent registration as a Doctor at the age of 44. In her free time in Philippines she even learnt to fly an aeroplane. Along with medical profession she has varied interests like organic farming and playing

piano . She is an perfect example of how curiosity coupled with courage leads to success. She said “ I value compassion over ambition and I prefer cooperation to competition . Everything is interconnected, you cannot harm others without harming yourself.”

6. Shriyans Bhandari is a young boy of 24 years who has done his Masters in business entrepreneurship from Boston USA. he has founded a startup named '**Greensole**' where old shoes are converted to new usable footwear. Starting with 40 shoes per day now they convert 15,000 shoes per day .The footwear thus created are then donated in 15 States to needy. He has got backing from 50 corporates for his business. Running marathons, bird watching and photography are his hobbies .He has written a book 'Birds of Aravali'. He feels that taking your idea to the end is very important . He is also working as a director in a residential school in Udaipur.

7. Mandar Anant Bharde who owns **MAB aviation**, is a commerce graduate and was a journalist and documentary filmmaker. While making a documentary on 'Pandharichi wari' he required a helicopter for his shoot but could not get it , which led him to start the charter plane company by himself .Motto of his company is “99.99 is not equal to 100” , which shows his love for perfection. He has started cargo service in gulf and joyrides in Mumbai and Maharashtra. For the joy rides he has invented some novel ideas like 'Explore the Marathas' which cover important forts like Shivneri , Raigad etc. He wishes to build a network of helicopter ambulance service in India .He is also experimenting with the idea of 'seed bombing' - in which seeds mixed with soil will be spread over large areas using helicopters.

8. Snehal Londhe and her husband worked around the world at top positions but both of them wanted to do something for a poor man in their village Hingangaon of Kavathe Mahankal situated in Sangli. They decided to start a glove manufacturing plant. So they worked as a laborer in China for a month to get the necessary training. '**Payod industry** ' (which means a cloud filled with water) has given 300 glove making machines to villagers. The gloves made by villagers are then packed at the factory of 'Payod industries' and exported to Japan. 'Payod Agro' along with 'Tata swasth jal abhiyan' is working on water purification plants in villages.

9. Anuradha Prabhudesai is a retired Bank professional. She has started '**Lakshya foundation**' for building a bridge between soldiers and civilians. She has delivered more than 1200 lectures to schools and various other groups about the sacrifices of our soldiers. She says that for your tomorrow soldiers give their today .

10. Kaustubh Diwegaonkar stood **first in Maharashtra** and **15th in all India in IAS exam**. He had failed at first attempt but afterwards he prepared his own notes for studies and succeeded. He has worked at various places like Thane, Gadchiroli, Jalgaon, Latur. In Gadchiroli 1400 villagers were given 'vanhakk' (i.e. right to using Forrest land) under his tenure. In Jalgaon he guided 1000 teachers to make digital curriculum for standard 1st to 8th.

11. Even though **Niranjan Paranjpe** is a mechanical engineer he has worked in computer field for 13 years. Initially he worked with 'Infosys' and 'Thoughtworks'. Then in 2010 he co-founded **C42 engineering**. Famous 'Rubymonk' software is developed by his company for learning Ruby programming

language. Now he is CTO at GO-JEK, Indonesia . GO-JEK is an application platform and has grown from 30,000 users to two crore users in a short time.

12. **Pradnya Keskar's** husband Narayana Peesapaty was concerned with too much use of plastic and started research on developing edible spoon. After experimenting for a year he came up with good quality edible cutlery. They named it '**Becky's**' edible cutlery. But with no background of marketing they were not able to sell it to masses and were heavily under debt. Just then a short film on the product was made and it went viral. It solved their problem and orders started pouring in. After establishing technical side of the business they now wish to hand over the company to someone with marketing expertise. At the end of this interview it was revealed that Pradnya is suffering from 4th stage of cancer. But she was all smiles and facing it courageously.

13. **Ujjawal Nirgudkar** has been selected as a member of Academi of Motion picture of Arts and sciences in 2017 and is the first jury for Oscars' awards from India as a member at large . He is also first Indian to get patents in film technology. He completed his chemical engineering from UDCT Mumbai. He had a long career at the 'Filmcenter Laboratory'. He is now works as technical advisor to 'National Film Heritage Mission'.

14. **Bindumadhav Khire** was engineer by profession and worked in IT field for many years. He is a prominent LGBT activist. He works for awareness and rights of LGBT community. He has written books like 'Partner' and 'Indradhanu' on this subject.

15. **Disha Pinky Sheikh** was born as a boy but now she feels comfortable as a lady. She is abandoned by her family but is now very happy with her Guru and clan. She writes meaningful poems. Her thoughts are wiser than many so called learned people.

16. **Ravi Bapatle** was a Journalist. Once he saw a small boy dying due to HIV and felt the need to work for such children. His friend donated him a place for hostel for HIV children. But the villagers were against it and tried to pull down the building. But he persisted and now looks after 82 children. He wants to create HIV village which according to him means 'Happy Indian Village.' His children have formed a dance troupe and have performed 59 dance shows around Maharashtra to raise funds for the institution. He has plans to do Jarbera flower plantation by the children and for the children. He needs a bus for transporting these children to their schools. An appeal was made to the public for raising funds.

These three days of sixteen back to back sessions gave us a lot of food for thought.

None of these guests were born with a silver spoon, so everyone worked hard to reach their destination. They learnt a lot during the journey and also enjoyed the process. They emphasized the importance of team work. After reaching one top level they may keep on searching for another top level. All are socially aware and in some way or the other want to make this world a better place.

After watching such programs some of us may feel overwhelmed but as rightly pointed out by one of the guests everyone should do his bit and reach our own top.