



DR. RAMCHANDRA GODBOLE



Dr. Ramchandra Godbole is an eminent social worker, who has dedicated more than 40 years to the upliftment and healthcare of tribal communities. He served for 12 years in Maharashtra and for the past 30 years in Chhattisgarh, working alongside his wife. A full-time worker of the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, he is currently the President of “Banphool,” an organization in Bastar that focuses on malnutrition and health issues among tribal children. He has rendered invaluable service by living and working in the remote and Naxal- affected tribal region of Bastar in Chhattisgarh. By staying among the people and understanding their realities firsthand, he has ensured that essential healthcare reaches those who otherwise have little or no access to medical facilities. He has consistently carried out the noble humanitarian task of saving the lives of tribal patients, who often endure life- threatening illnesses for months without treatment.

2. Born on 18th June, 1960 in Satara district, Maharashtra, Dr. Godbole completed his schooling, college education and BAMS (Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery) degree in Satara. After completing his studies, he began his medical service by starting a clinic for the tribal Bhil community in Nashik district through the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram. He later served for eight years as the head of Maharashtra's village-level Health Worker Scheme. During this period, he supervised primary healthcare services for tribal communities across ten districts with the support of 660 health guards, making a significant impact at the grassroots level.

3. In 1990, soon after their marriage, Dr. Godbole and his wife Smt. Sunita Godbole decided to move to Bastar to serve tribal communities medically. At that time, Bastar was one of the most underdeveloped regions in India. He started a clinic at Barsur in Dantewada district, near the Abujhmad forest. Extremely poor tribal patients would walk long distances through forests to seek treatment. Many had suffered without care for months due to lack of access to medical facilities. Serious cases often required referral to the government district hospital located 75 kilometers away for specialist examination. Through persistent follow-up and dedicated care, he successfully treated approximately 3,000 critically ill tribal patients in the first 12 years of his service in Bastar.

4. In the next phase of his work, Dr. Godbole shifted from running a fixed outpatient clinic to organizing medical check-up camps in remote forest areas. Over the past 15 years, 114 health camps have been conducted in Bastar with the help of specialist doctors from various places, enabling more than 9,000 patients to receive long-pending medical examinations. Among them, 400 critically ill patients were admitted to the district hospital and when necessary, to a charitable hospital in Raipur, 400 kilometers away. Continuous follow-up ensured successful treatment and saved many lives. Most of the treatment expenses were supported by the Krutadnyata Trust in Pune.

5. In recognition of his social service, Dr. Godbole has received several honors. In 2001, he and his wife were awarded the Seva Gaurav Award by Natu Pratishthan in Pune. He was also honored with the Swami Vivekananda Award in Mumbai and the district administration of Dantewada has presented the couple with a certificate of appreciation.



SMT. SUNEETA GODBOLE



Smt. Suneeta Godbole is an eminent social worker, who has devoted more than 40 years to the upliftment and welfare of tribal communities, consistently working for their health and development. She served for 12 years in Maharashtra and for the past 30 years in Chhattisgarh alongside her husband, Dr. Ramchandra Godbole. By living and working in remote and Naxal-affected regions like Bastar, she has played a vital role in making healthcare accessible to marginalized tribal populations.

2. Born on 25th April, 1959 in Pune, Smt. Godbole completed her entire education there. Driven by a deep interest in social service, she earned a postgraduate degree in Master of Social Work (M.S.W.). During her student years, she actively participated in the anti-Emergency movement and was imprisoned for one and a half months. After completing her education, she began working in tribal areas of Thane and Raigad districts, focusing particularly on girls' education while living within those communities.

3. In 1990, soon after her marriage to Dr. Ramchandra Godbole, Smt. Godbole decided to move to Bastar in Chhattisgarh to serve tribal communities. At that time, the region was extremely underdeveloped. Her husband began running a clinic at Barsur in Dantewada district, near the Abujhmad forest. In the second phase of their medical work, instead of limiting services to a fixed outpatient clinic, they began organizing medical check-up camps in various remote locations to reach those living deep inside forest areas. She has been an active and energetic participant in all these initiatives. By learning the local tribal languages, Gondi and Halbi, she established direct and meaningful communication with the people. This helped build strong trust, especially among tribal women, whose participation in health programs increased significantly due to her efforts.

4. Smt. Godbole worked tirelessly for many years to ensure that tribal girls could complete their education while staying in hostels run by the Vanvasi Vikas Samiti. She organized training sessions for health workers and women on preparing nutritious meals, conducted sewing classes to promote self-reliance, and held camps for adolescent tribal girls. Repeated medical camps revealed persistent problems such as malnutrition from birth and malaria among children under ten years of age. Concerned by this, she initiated focused programs on nutrition and health awareness in schools. After providing nutritious food, she ensured six months of consistent follow-up. Over the past five years, her efforts have helped 460 children from 24 villages overcome malnutrition. Each year, around 2,000 children from 37 schools across three districts of Bastar participate in malnutrition prevention and health awareness initiatives. Awareness campaigns on sickle cell anemia are also conducted alongside these programs. In addition to her grassroots work, she served for five years as an official member of a quasi-judicial board with powers equivalent to a First Class Judicial Magistrate for the protection of children's rights. She has also chaired a government committee for preventing sexual harassment at the workplace and served as a member of district-level committees of the Police and Forest Departments.

5. In recognition of her contribution to social service, Smt. Godbole and her husband received the Seva Gaurav Award from Natu Pratishthan, Pune, in 2001. In 2017, she was honored with the Bayā Karve Award and the Dantewada district administration has also awarded the couple a certificate of appreciation.