



Vicharata Samuday Samarthan Manch

VSSM is an organization which came into being with mission to give social identity, citizen's right, education, health facilities, housing, livelihood and basic facilities of daily life to Nomadic and De – Notified tribes

I AM DEDICATING A 'RAMKATHA' TO OUR NOMADIC AND DE-NOTIFIED BROTHERS: MORARIBAPU

POINTS TO PONDER

Total Nomadic and De-notified communities- 40

Extremely marginalized communities- 14

Estimated population – 40 lacs

Estimated children population – 15 lacs

Once their services were integral to the society

Their traditional occupations have crumbled

They lead wandering life in search of livelihood

They stay in hutments and shacks dotting the peripheries of villages, towns and cities.

They are not part of any revenue village, town or city.

The villagers see them as criminal tribes

Have been victims of government, political apathy and societal neglect

They are not part of any specific demographic categories of government

No special impetus by the government for their development

They do not have any citizenry documents to prove their identity

They have never been part of any census till 2011

Majority of their children are out of school.

They have no homes or farmlands

The above-mentioned facts are of the Nomadic and De-notified tribes of Gujarat aptly christened: 'People Without Addresses'. They are very much part of our social and cultural fabric however, they society has failed embrace their existence and acknowledge their presence. We have chosen to shun them and have broken their confidence in us.



Since the year 2005, VSSM has been striving to give identity, dignity and voice to the various Nomadic and De-notified communities of Gujarat. The various initiatives of VSSM both at the grassroots and policy level have been instrumental in empowering the lives of thousands of individuals from these communities. The initiatives are designed to realize



the human and citizenry rights of these communities. However, all these efforts face continuous resistance from the society and administration alike. They are unwilling to cooperate. The villagers are always resistant towards allowing these communities to be part of the village. They do not allow government to sanction plots in village these communities have been staying for decades, the government/authorities create hurdles in processing various applications.

VSSM through its years of working closely with these communities has come to believe there is an immediate need for the society and authorities to change their attitude towards these communities. It is imperative for them to recognize that like communities Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribes these communities also require special impetus for development. VSSM through its aggressive lobbying and advocacy tries to influence the mindsets of society and authorities alike. Hence, when Respected Shri. Moraribapu, a very influential religious and spiritual leader decided to dedicate a 'Ramkatha' to the people from Nomadic and De-notified communities it was welcomed with feeling of honor and relief. We knew that when Res. Shri. Moraribapu advocate's the right of these communities; it will have far reaching impact on the mindset of the society.

It was the year 2010. Shri. Moraribapu was at Rajghat, Delhi when he announced his decision to deliver a 'Ramkatha' for the individuals of Nomadic and De-notified Tribes. 'We are celebrating 50th year of Gujarat's existence. I have decided to do a few programs to mark Swarnim Gujarat celebrations. I have been approached by VSSM to spend a day with the Nomadic and De-notified tribes but today I make this announcement that I will spend not one but nine days for these communities. I am at Rajghat, have been speaking about the principles and work done by Gandhiji, Vinoba. Gandhiji worked tirelessly to change the attitude of people towards the untouchables. He christened them Harijans. People embraced them once Gandhiji talked about their inclusion. My dais believes in the principles of such greats. If the belief vested in us is not respected, it will become a criminal act, we will become culprits of 21st century. We will make efforts to ensure that a Ramkatha

happens for these communities this year itself (It should be noted that to host and take dates for Ramkatha by Shi. Moraribapu one has to plan for 4-5 years).'

The Ramkatha did happen in that year itself, on 12th to 20th March 2011. Since the event positive shift in the attitude of the political parties, government authorities, bureaucrats and society at large is clearly visible.

Mittal Patel
14 March 2010