

**A BRIEF ABOUT**  
**DR. D. VEERENDRA HEGGADE,**  
**DHARMADHIKARI, SRI KSHETHRA DHARMASTHALA**  
**and Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha)**

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Dr. Dharmasthala Veerendra Heggade, Dharmadhikari of Shri Kshethra Dharmasthala is a well known visionary of our times. Born on 25<sup>th</sup> November 1948 as the eldest son of the then Heggade of Shri Kshethra Dharmasthala, Veerendra took the mantle as Dharmasthala Heggade in the year 1968 at a tender age of twenty.

Ever since Dr. Veerendra Heggade has remained a keen student of humanity, understanding complex nature of human behavior. He has been guiding the multitude of devotees visiting Dharmasthala and seeking solace with his wisdom and helping them to face the world.

Dr. Veerendra Heggade is married to **Smt. Hemavathi**, who is also engaged in social service more specially women empowerment. The couple have a loving daughter in **Shraddha Amith** married to a business man Mr. Amith from Bangalore. Dr. Heggades granddaughter **Manya** is very dear to Dr. Heggade. At the age of 76, Dr. Veerendra Heggade still works like a young man, keeping himself active for almost eighteen hours in a day. New ideas of social service and building the society come out from Dr. Heggade's mind all the time. People from all walks of life including planners, politicians, academia, administrators, the privileged and the unprivileged seek guidance from Dr. Heggade for bettering their works.

Dr. Veerendra Heggade has dexterously blended spiritualism with the materialistic world. He is a multifaceted personality excelling in service to God as the head of the temple, in administration as the chief of many programmes promoted by him, kind in thoughts and compassion in daily life to those who visit him. He is the architect of modern Dharmasthala. As the chief of Manjunatha Swamy temple he has implemented several unique programmes for the spiritual upliftment.

Within Dharmasthala itself he has modernized the temple administration and care for the devotees. As a result the small village called **Dharmasthala** has become a shining jewel in the map of Karnataka. Dharmasthala is the abode of Lord Manjunatha Swamy. Besides the temple

of Chandranatha Swamy and a gigantic monolithic statue of Bhagwan Bahubali measuring 39 feet are also located in Dharmasthala. In fact the statue of Bhagwan Bahubali which was erected by Dr. Veerendra Heggade in the year 1982 for which act he is termed as **Abhinava Chavundaraya**. Infrastructures built by Dr. Veerendra Heggade provide quality lodging facilities to 25,000 devotees every day. The huge **Annapoorna dining hall** dedicated to the society in the year 1981 can feed 5,000 people at a time. The modern kitchen of Dharmasthala is well acclaimed for its hygiene, quality and service. It can serve upto 60,000 people a day.

Dr. Veerendra Heggade regularly meets common people to hear their grievances and guide them. He gives direct charity as per the need. He also provides charity to community activities. He has organized many a public programme like the Kannada Sahithya Sammelana, Thulu Sammelana (literary festivals), Kissan Mela (farmers fare) with aplomb.

Dr. Heggade is a connoisseur of ancient temple architecture, historical monuments and antiques. He has promoted **Dharmothana Trust** for renovation of historical buildings in the State of Karnataka. Till date more than **283** temples, Jinamandhiras have been renovated to their old glory. He has developed large museums in Dharmasthala to preserve the heritage of the country. The vintage car museum promoted by Dr. Heggade is a cynosure of the car loving public. He is a keen photographer too.

Dr. Veerendra Heggade has institutionalized charity by promoting several organizations dealing with multiple requirements of human society.

The SDM education society promoted for quality education of which Dr. Heggade is the President has forty education institutions under its management including Ayurveda colleges, Naturopathy, dental, engineering, medical, law, business management colleges.

Dr. Heggade, initiated **mass marriage programme in 1971** where in eligible couples come to Dharmasthala for marriage in a group. The marriage ceremony is conducted for all the participants in the mass marriage by the temple free of cost. This has helped the poor people no end as they were spending huge amounts on marriages and becoming debt ridden. Sofar **12,777** couples have entered into wedlock in Dharmasthala mass marriage programme. This initiative of Dr. Heggade is now being replicated at several places in Karnataka state by other leading personalities.

The **Rural Development Self Employment Training Institute (RUDSETI)** conceived and promoted by Dr. Veerendra Heggade is a unique experiment in public, private partnership for social service. This programme implemented as a joint venture between Dharmasthala and nationalised Syndicate and Canara bank trains the unemployed youth and handholds them to become self employed. **Started in the year 1982**, the RUDSET concept has become a national programme with Govt. of India advising all the banks to open one RUDSET in each district of the country. The national academy of RUDSETI promoted by the Govt. of India has the honor of the services of Dr. Veerendra Heggade as its Chairperson. The Twenty Seven RUDSETIs promoted in Seventeen different states of the country have successfully helped more than **5,82,108** unemployed youth to become respectable citizens of the country. It trains the All India RSETI Institutes directors for quality training.

Government of India through MORD has directed all the Banks to establish one institute in every district of India on the model of RUDSETI. Also requested the RUDSETI under the Presidentship of Sri Heggade to monitor the performance of these SETI's. A monitoring cell has been created with a chief Project Co-ordinator. At present 630 institutes are training unemployed youths in the country.

The **Shri Kshethra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project (R.) (SKDRDP)**, another well known experiment of Dr. Heggade started in 1982 is engaged in organising the small farmers, the poor women into Self Help Groups (SHG) for accessing various services at their door steps. This programme has mobilized **5.3 million** families in the state of Karnataka into **6,41,759** SHGs who have a cumulative savings of **Rs. 4,112.00 crores** and a loan turnover of **Rs. 1,31,994 crores**. The micro finance, the micro insurance and micro enterprise services of SKDRDP have transformed the village life.

Dr. Heggade is deeply interested in sustainable energy programmes. All the guest houses in Dharmasthala have solar water heater installations which produce **1,25,000** liters of hot water every day. The streets of Dharmasthala are lit by solar lamps. The giant biogas plants in Dharmasthala supply cooking gas to the kitchen of Dharmasthala. Besides the SKDRDP has been encouraging poor people to acquire sustainable energy assets. So far more than **4,34,414 families** have purchased different sustainable energy equipments through the micro credit programme of SKDRDP.

Another area of Dr. Heggade's interest is the prevention of alcoholic abuse. Having realized that alcoholic abuse is a true enemy of the poor people, Dr. Heggade has promoted **Janajagruthi**, a movement in which public opinion is created against alcoholic abuse.

Conduct of scientific community deaddiction camps in large numbers have de-addicted thousands of labourers and made their families a happy home.

Dr. Heggade is the recipient of **Padmavibhushan citation by Govt. of India, Padmabhushan citation by Govt. of India. The Kannadiga of the year by ETV, most important Kannadiga by Vijaya Karnataka, the Karnataka Rathna citation by the Govt. of Karnataka in 2009.**

He has received **three doctorates from the Mangalore University, the Dharwad University and Rajiv Gandhi Health University, honorary fellow of Royal College of physicians (FRCP) of the University of Glasgow, U.K. Rajarshi citation from Dr. Shankardayal Sharma, the Hon'ble President of India. The RUDSET and SKDRDP experiment has received FICCI award. The SKDRDP won the Changemakers award for its unique experiments. It has also received the coveted FICCI and IMC award. Many coveted institutions have honoured Dr. Veerendra Heggade.**

The SKDRDP is also won the **Ashden International Gold Award** for Initiatives in Renewable Energy awarded by the Ashden Foundation, London in 2012. This award is also considered as the Green Oscar.

Dr. Heggade is received **Nadoja Citation** by Hampi Heritage University in 2010. **Jindal International Award** in the field of health including drugless healing through **Naturopathy, Yoga and Ayurveda in 2011. Devraj Urs Award** for service to backward community by the **Government of Karnataka in 2011. Honored with "Maharathna Puraskar" on 19-8-2016 at Mangalore on the occasion of Golden Jubilee Celebration Felicitation day of Gaokarna Partagali Jeevothama Matadisha Sri Vidyadhiraja Tirtha Sri Padavader Swamiji.**

Dr. Heggade has participated in several conferences in different parts of the world as a member of the world conference of religion and peace. He is widely travelled having visited Europe, US, Asia, Africa and Australia several times.

Dr. Veerendra Heggade radiates a positive influence on all the people he meets. He recognizes the importance of the different pillars of democracy and more specially the civil society and values each one of them. He believes that everybody is equally important in the world and that everybody can contribute to making this universe a better place to live in.

## SRI D.VEERENDRA HEGGADE AND HIS ACHIEVEMENTS

- ❖ Dr.D.Veerendra Heggade, Pattadhikari, Sri Kshethra Dharmasthala.
- ❖ Born on 25th November 1948 as the eldest son of his illustrious father Sri Rathnavarma Heggade, former Dharmadhikari and M. Rathnamma.
- ❖ Ascended as 'HEGGADE' of Sri Manjunatheshwara Temple, Dharmasthala on 24th October 1968 at the age of 20.

### As the temple head

- ❖ **Annadana :**  
As a tradition, free lunch and dinner is served daily to more than 25,000 pilgrims at Annapoorna Bhojanalaya, (Free Dinning Hall)
- ❖ **Nyayadana :**  
Devotees reconcile and resolve their conflicts in the presence of the Heggade and accept his verdict as an divine adjudicator.
- ❖ **Vidyadan and Aushdadan** are practiced regularly through quality education in the Educational Institutions and free Medical service in the Hospitals as well as in the Mobile Hospital.

### As founder of social institutions

- ❖ **Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Educational Trust (Regd.) and S.D.M. Educational Society (Regd.),** - President, Ujire. Manages Primary School, High School, General Degree Colleges, Law College, Engineering, Medical, Dental, Ayurvedic, Naturopathy College and Hospitals and Management Development Institute.
- ❖ **Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Medical Trust (R),** Dharmasthala- Founder President- Manages Eye Hospital, General Hospitals and a Mobile Hospital.
- ❖ **Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Dharmothana Trust (R.)** Dharmasthala- Founder President-Undertakes the Renovation of ancient Temples and Monuments of Karnataka and till date more than **283**temples were renovated.
- ❖ **Shanthivana Trust (Regd.),** Dharmasthala- Founder President- Established for the Promotion and propagation of Yoga and Naturopathy through clinical training and development. Three nature cure hospitals have established.

### Religion and religious harmony

- ❖ After 300 years a Bahubali single stone statue was carved and transported to Dharmasthala. This 39 feet high monolithic statue of **Bhagwan Bahubali Swamy** was installed at Dharmasthala and conducted Maha Masthakabhisheka ceremony in **1982, 1995, 2007 and 2019**
- ❖ The **Manjunatha Swamy temple** was completely renovated in 1991 and reinstallation ceremony was conducted.

- ❖ A grand temple for **Lord Chandranathaswamy** was completed and renovated in 2001.
- ❖ Contributes for Religious Harmony through his regular Lectures, editorials and columns in leading news papers.
- ❖ Publication of more than **25,00,000 copies** of Kannada moral education books in the last years to be distributed for High School students. Competitions are held every year for the students on topics selected on moral themes and prizes awarded to the best students in each school for propagation of moral, ethical values in students.
- ❖ Post-Card Art competition is held annually for the students and the public to promote art and awareness on the subject of competition.

### **Cultural heritage**

- ❖ Manages a Yakshagana cultural troupe with history of over 200 years. Contributed to the revival of "**Yakshagana**" by maintaining pure traditional approach to Yakshagana with a training centre. (Folk art of Karnataka).
- ❖ "**Manjusha**" Museum displaying rare collections of Indian and International antiques and contemporary rare and valuable collections.
- ❖ A '**Vintage Car collection of Dr. Heggade**' has working vintage classic cars belonging to 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- ❖ "**Sri Manjunatheshwara Samskrithi Samshodhana Prathistana**", where **6,050** Palm-leaf and Paper manuscripts are preserved. It includes **2995** Kannada Manuscripts. Researchers are allowed to use the collection.
- ❖ Since 1972, Free **Mass Marriages** are conducted in Dharmasthala every year with the objective of avoiding huge expenses and the Dowry system. So far, **12,777 couples** are married in mass marriage.
- ❖ Constructed Marriage Halls (Kalyan Mantaps) at Bangalore, Kallahalli, Bhadravathi, Mysore, Shravanabelagola and Bantwal for the benefit of middle class and low-income people to conduct marriages.

### **Rural development initiatives**

- ❖ In 1982, established the **Rural Development and Self-Employment Training Institute (RUDSETI)** in collaboration with Syndicate Bank and Canara Bank to train the rural unemployed youth for Self-Employment and Volunteers for Rural Development. Since then **27** Branches of the RUDSETI were established all over India. Upto **February 2024**, **5,82,108** youths have been trained and settlement rate is **73%**. This model has attracted the attention of the central government. Under NRLM (National Rural Livelihood Mission) the Govt. of India has undertaken to replicate the RUDSETI model in **586 districts** of the country. Dr. Heggade has been requested by the government to head the monitoring committee to supervise these institutes.

- ❖ Introduced a **Sri Kshethra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project, (SKDRDP)** in 32 districts of Karnataka state and Kasaragod District in Kerala comprising of **30,000** Villages and urban towns. The project is facilitating empowerment of **5.3** million families in Agriculture, transfer of technology, women empowerment, housing, alternative sources of energy, income generating activity, micro finance, education, health, total sanitation and Health Insurance.

### **Yoga movement**

To propagate Naturopathy, Yoga and Moral Education, **5,100 Teachers** of High Schools and Primary Schools were trained. Teachers in turn train more than **5 Lakh students** every year in Yoga, Moral and Spiritual Education. **20,00,000 books** distributed to Students in **15 districts** till now.

**Guinness world records** – The largest Yoga Class involved 62,824 participants and was organized by Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade, President of Shanthivana Trust (R.) Dharmasthala (INDIA) in 47 locations across Dhakshina Kannada and Udupi District of Karnataka State, India on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2013.

### **RECOGNITION AND AWARDS**

- ❖ **Padmavibhushan-2015** citation by His Excellency the President of India for Socialwork.
- ❖ **Padmabhushan-2000** citation by His Excellency the President of India for social work and communal harmony.
- ❖ **Karnataka Rathna-2009** the highest civilian award in the state of Karnataka in recognition of his social work.
- ❖ **Rajiv Gandhi Award-2007** by regional congress committee Mumbai.
- ❖ **Nadoja-2010** citation by the Hampi Heritage University.
- ❖ **Rajarshi** citation 1993 by the then His Excellency the President of India, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma.
- ❖ **Jindal International Award -2011** in the field of health including drugless healing naturopathy yoga and Ayurveda.
- ❖ **Basavashri Award – 2009** by the Govt. of Karnataka.
- ❖ **Devaraj Urs Award-2011** for service to backward community by the Devraj Urs Backward Classes Development Corporation, Govt. of Karnataka.
- ❖ **Kannadiga of the year-2004** popular award instituted by M/s E.T.V.
- ❖ **Rajyothsava award-1985** by the Department of Kannada and culture, Government of Karnataka.
- ❖ **Samyama citation 2010** by the Karnataka temperance board, Bangalore
- ❖ **Honorary FRCPS 2005** the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow, U.K.
- ❖ **International Award-2005** by Giants International, Mumbai.
- ❖ **Sir M. Visvesvarayya Memorial Award -2011**, Federation of Karnataka Chambers of commerce and Industry, Bangalore

- ❖ **Lalitha Kala Academy award -2008**, Bangalore
- ❖ **Devi Ahilyabai National Award-2013** Ahilyotasav Samithi, Indore
- ❖ **Honorary Doctorates** from
  - Mangalore University-1994.
  - Karnataka University - 2010.
  - Drew University, U.S.A – 2010.
- ❖ **Doctor of Science - 2007** Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences.
- ❖ Honored with the prestigious Devi Ahilya Puruskar - 2013 at Indore
- ❖ Honored with “**Bhagwan Mahaveera National Peace Award**” on 18-08-2021 for the year 2019-20 by Government of Karnataka.
- ❖ Nominated by Hon'ble Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi ji as Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) in July 2022.
- ❖ Award of “**Change Maker Award**” honour by Government of Karnataka in Bengaluru on 07-11-2023
- ❖ Award of “**Navanakshathra Felicitation 2024**” by T.V.9 News Channel on 24-08-2024 at Bengaluru in recognition of unique services in Religious and Social fields.
- ❖ **Awards won by the Institutions managed by Dr. Heggade.**

#### 1. S.D.M. Institution

- a) Shri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Institute for Management Development (SDMIMD) received the accreditation from Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), USA for their flagship management programme – Post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM).
- b) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt of India bestowed the prestigious Best Institution Award to SDM-Mangalajyothi Integrated School ®, Mangalore under the category – Empowerment of the Disabled through Integrated Education

#### 2. SKDRDP –

- a. FICCI Award – **1995**
- b. Indian Merchant Chambers Award - **1999**
- c. NABARD SHG state Award – 1999 and **2000**
- d. Changemakers award for Microfinance **2008**
- e. Changemakers award for Micro insurance **2008**
- f. Microfinance institution of India award **2010**.
- g. Honored with the prestigious **ASHDEN Award** by Ashden sustainable solutions London on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012 for popularizing the use of Solar energy and Biogas energy through SKDRDP
- h. “**Pingara**” Rajyothsava award : **2010**
- i. Chaudri Charan Singh Award : **2003**
- j. Spandana Award for Janajagruthi programme : **2000**
- k. IMC (Indian Merchants Chamber) Award : **1998**
- l. SKOCH Financial Inclusion and Deepening Gold Award : 2014

#### 3. RUDSET –

- a. FICCI Award – 1995
- b. SIDBI award 2011 for promotion of small and micro enterprises.



## **PROFESSIONAL**

### **Colleges Managed by Society and trust**

- S.D.M. college of Arts, Commerce & Science, Ujire
- S.D.M Law College, Mangalore and J.S.S Sakri Law College, Hubli.
- S.D.M. College of Ayurveda and Hospital Udupi, Hassan and Bangalore.
- S.D.M College of Engineering and Technology, Dharwad.
- S.D.M College of Dental Sciences and Hospital, Dharwad.
- S.D.M. Cranio Facial Hospital, Dharwad.
- S.D.M College of Naturopathy & Yogic Sciences, Ujire
- S.D.M. Medical College & Hospital, Dharwad
- S.D.M. College of Physiotherapy Dharwad.
- JSS K.H Kabbur Institute of Engineering, Dharwad.
- S.D.M Institute for Management Development, Mysore

### **HOSPITALS**

- S.D.M. Medical Hospital, Dharwad.
- S.D.M. Ayurveda Hospital Mangalore and Chickmagalore.
- S.D.M Ayurveda Pharmacy. Udupi and Hassan
- S.D.M. Nature cure Hospital, Dharmasthala., Parika (Manipal) and Bengaluru
- S.D.M. Hospital, Ujire

### **OTHER INSTITUTIONS**

- Yakshagana Training Centre, Dharmasthala.
- Middle Level Training Centre (M.L.T.C.) for Anganawadi Supervisors
- National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development, New Delhi.)
- Manjushree Printers, Ujire.
- Nethravathi Fine Arts Training Centre, Ujire.
- S.D.M Industrial Training Centre, Venoor, Samse and Ujire.

### **TRUSTS MANAGED BY DHARMASTHALA :**

- SDM Education trust
- SDM Education society
- Siddavana Gurukula
- Rural Employment Self Employment Training Institutes (RUDSETI)
- Shri Kshethra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project (SKDRDP)
- Shri Dharmasthala Siri Gramodyoga Samsthe (SIRI)
- Medical Trust
- Shanthivana Trust
- Dharmothana Trust
- Ayurvedic pharmacy, Udupi