



# National Film Archive of India

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting  
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## Interview of Veteran Make-up Artist Sahadevrao S. Tapkire by Babu Watve

**Babu Watve :** Sahadevrao, where were you born?

**Sahadevrao :** Nashik.

**Babu Watve :** Nashik, in which year?

**Sahadevrao :** December 1909.

**Babu Watve :** December 1909, means you are now 78 years of age.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Babu Watve :** Ok, what was your education?

**Sahadevrao :** There was not much of an education.

**Babu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** Whatever education I got was when I went to Phalke. He only taught us to read and write.

**Babu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** That was all.

**Babu Watve :** So when did you go to Phalke's company?

**Sahadevrao :** I think it was the year 1915 or 16. I was eight years old at that time.

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**Bapu Watve :** Ok, because I think that as per my information, Phalke's company started in the year 1912. So you joined in after 3-4 years.

**Sahadevrao :** His first two films were released in Mumbai.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok, Raja Harishchandra was the first.

**Sahadevrao :** And then Lankadahan, Krishnajanma were made here at Nashik. Then he started Kaliyamardan. In that Kaliyamardan, Sonutai was playing Krishna.

**Bapu Watve :** What

**Sahadevrao :** Sonutai means Mandakinibai.

**Bapu Watve :** That is his daughter.

**Sahadevrao :** We called his daughter Sonutai with affection.

**Bapu Watve :** Called Sonutai.. ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Since she was playing the role of Krishna, he wanted boys of her age.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** I think she was 3-4 years younger than me.

**Bapu Watve :** That is right. She is now seventy-five years old. So it is correct.

**Sahadevrao :** So at that time they announced in the papers for that.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** They want boys of that age to play Gopas, the companions of Krishna.

**Bapu Watve :** In which newspaper it was given?

**Sahadevrao :** I do not remember it.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** Because I was not of suitable age, I was very young.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.. of 7-8 years of age. So Sahadevrao, did you read that advertisement?

**Sahadevrao :** I did not know. My father read it.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** My father was here in Nashik. From a middle-class family, but happy, normal and intelligent. We were all from farmer class.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** But more educated within that class.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes. What was your father's occupation?

**Sahadevrao :** He was a doctor in Kamala Nehru.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Then he knew a fair amount of astrology and was a worker of Arya Samaj here.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes...yes...

**Sahadevrao :** Because of that he had a fair idea about society, how one should behave.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** So on reading the advertisement he felt that there is no problem if my children go to this in the present times.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok...

**Sahadevrao :** But everyone else was opposed on the topic of cinema.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, true.

**Sahadevrao :** Because whoever went into cinema, was as well as going out of his caste.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes. Like one who goes into theatre, goes out of his caste.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, the situation was like that. As he was of a reformist outlook, he introduced us to someone. Me and my elder brother who was 3 years older than me.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So we both were taken there.

**Bapu Watve :** I think this must have happened in the year 1919...

**Sahadevrao :** 1900

**Bapu Watve :** 19

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, maybe. And then at Phalke. On seeing me, Phalke was very pleased.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** He said that I am a good match for his daughter.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm...

**Sahadevrao :** He said to my father "He is suitable, so we will take him. What are your expectations?" Then our father said only that the children have no education. So if you can give them education, you can take them and make use of them as you wish.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** So we joined there and the film life started and...

**Bapu Watve :** What was your salary decided at that time?

**Sahadevrao :** At that time Rs. 10 for me.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, and for your brother...

**Sahadevrao :** Same 10 rupees. 10 rupees for both of us.

**Bapu Watve :** But your part was that of companions of Krishna, the Gopas etc...

**Sahadevrao :** Gopas... So that film got completed and after completion...

**Bapu Watve :** No, but do you remember seeing that film Kaliyamardan?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.. because we were living there. Whatever was shot every day, it was seen on the screen after two days and then proceed...

**Bapu Watve :** That was the method of Phalke..

**Sahadevrao :** It was at that time.

**Bapu Watve :** So you were able to see that.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes. Then what happened, probably Phalke had such an affection for me since childhood, he felt that this boy should be with me always.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** So he told my father, that now we are in this town, then he used to stay in a bungalow called Haudacha Bangala, so he said why he should come and go every day?

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** In the meantime, we will teach him something.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Will tell him something, so now let him stay here only, with us.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** So I stayed with that family, so much so, that I became one of the family members.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** And what happened because of that, he gave me some guidance about what to do, how to do when there is a trial.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** And for the last 40, 50 years till today, I am working on that.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** And whatever now..

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** I am getting two meals a day is because of that.

**Bapu Watve :** How was the behaviour of Phalke in-home... discipline..

**Sahadevrao :** Yes..

**Bapu Watve :** How was the behaviour of Phalke in the home, means was he strict or loving?

**Sahadevrao :** He was quite strict. He used to get very angry but one fact cannot be overlooked or falsified.

**Bapu Watve :** This means he was quite intimidating at home.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes. Quite a terror at home.

**Bapu Watve :** And he behaved like that in the studio also.

**Sahadevrao :** And ten times loving also.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, this is important.

**Sahadevrao :** Another big virtue was that he was totally vice-free and used to teach the same to us. This film industry has got a bad name, film and theatre. People like us should give it a good name.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** For that one must behave properly,, live properly.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** And do one's work with honesty.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** If you do as I tell you, your life will be good.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok, then what happened after Kaliyamardan?

**Sahadevrao :** What happened after Kaliyamardan, was that there was some issue with his partner, I do not know details, but..

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes you were still a child then.

**Sahadevrao :** There were some disputes with the partner.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, disagreements.

**Sahadevrao :** Disputes started. This Vamanrao Apte

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** And Gokuldas.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Another partner was there, I don't remember his name.

**Bapu Watve :** Was it Mayashankar Bhatt?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes Thakkar.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes Mayashankar Thakkar.

**Sahadevrao :** There arose some disputes and two parties

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** Half party of Phalke and half of Vamanrao.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** What Vamanrao did that

**Bapu Watve :** Vamanrao means Vaman Shridhar Apte

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, Vaman Shridhar Apte.

**Bapu Watve :** Owner of the Kohinoor Mills.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Bapu Watve :** Was he called Tatyasaheb?

**Sahadevrao :** So he used to provide finance to Phalke and partnership..

**Bapu Watve :** Was he called Tatyasaheb?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Bapu Watve :**

**Sahadevrao :** And then some disputes happened in their partnership, about money, about

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** And they started telling him that Baba, we will not tolerate this.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** You should work as per our opinion. He said 'though you are providing money, I am not your slave. I am an artist.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** I lived with that thought till the last. I will not cross my limits. If I do not get your work, if you do not give me money, I will not be bothered. And then there remained two parties. In Phalke's party were we technicians, numbering about 100-125 at that time.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** So half were in Phalke's party and half in Wamanrao's party.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** So Phalke told, if this is the case, then you. If anything happened which Phalke did not agree with, he would totally cut it, break it. He left, said 'I do not want anything from you, I do not need the company. I am leaving right now. They thought he will go or even stay back or go to Kashi Phalke said, I do not need it.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** And he left. After leaving he went and stayed at Kashi for a year. We people were waiting...that he will come back, do something.

**Bapu Watve :** So you were idle till that.

**Sahadevrao :** We were idle then.



**Bapu Watve :** Meaning unemployed.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, unemployed. And then the other party felt his absence, their work started getting stuck.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Now they saw that all those days the instruments are brought here, all the people are there but they could not work it out. Then that Mayashankar and that Gokuldas and they somehow talked it and brought Phalke here, saying that they will do as you say and he runs the company.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** But he was not willing to listen.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Phalke said I do not need anything. Said 'If I feel so, I will start another theatre or business.

**Bapu Watve :** I see..

**Sahadevrao :** And he did not listen to anything. Then again we were.... Then he collected whatever bits and pieces and he had written a play long ago.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** It was Sangeet Madhuri.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok. Sangeet Madhuri.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes. And that play was written. It became so long that it used to run for two days.

**Bapu Watve :** My god..

**Sahadevrao :** Half today and half tomorrow.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok, was there music in it?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, music was there.

**Bapu Watve :** Who had composed music?

**Sahadevrao :** And he took us to that party.

**Bapu Watve :** Then who had composed the music?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes..

**Bapu Watve :** Who had composed the music?

**Sahadevrao :** Music was composed by him only.

**Bapu Watve :** I see..

**Sahadevrao :** And he was such a clever man, all qualities, all skills, all he had in his hands. He was a good artist.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes...

**Sahadevrao :** Good artist.

**Bapu Watve :** Artist..

**Sahadevrao :** Good photographer.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Good writer, a good director and plus he was this..

**Bapu Watve :** Plus he was a make-up artist.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Bapu Watve :** Was a make-up artist.

**Sahadevrao :** He was everything.

**Bapu Watve :** He was an editor.

**Sahadevrao :** Phalke knew everything.

**Bapu Watve :** He was everything.

**Sahadevrao :** And he took on all people, taught them like small children and the rewards of that are here. Another thing I want to say with pride is that I used to feel very proud that I was in the first company in India. There was no other company at that time. I was the first employee and I am the one till the end. Others who were with me have gone.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok, then what role did you play in that drama?

**Sahadevrao :** Then after I stayed with him, then in the drama there was a small character called Narya, I used to play that role.

**Bapu Watve :** But did you have any song?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Bapu Watve :** You had a song?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.. and in that, if there was any dance etc., then in that group or in a public song, and used to do what he told to do.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes...

**Sahadevrao :** And lastly, even this Narya had made such an impression in Pune that when we used to go along a road in Pune, then the children used to follow me, "Narayan ji ki jai, Narayan ji ki jai."

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** So at that time whatever work he gave, to do it to the best of my ability, as per his instructions. I stayed with him, he did not let me go home for long.

**Bapu Watve :** So he used to treat you as his son.

**Sahadevrao :** Like a son. And his own children were away from him and did not get along well but he did not let me go.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok...

**Sahadevrao :** Me and Sonutai were always with him.

**Bapu Watve :** And then what happened after the play?

**Sahadevrao :** Since it used to play for two days, it did not do well.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, right.

**Sahadevrao :** And what he had written

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** That was against the theatre

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.. so it was a criticism against the theatre.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes criticised the theatre... so how many people will see that

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** So he got fed up, now what would be the income? Then they said that we have started a company. Whatever material is with me

**Bapu Watve :** Yes...

**Sahadevrao :** You take all that... so at that time Babasaheb Kulkarni.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** His brother in law Antoba Karandikar

**Bapu Watve :** Phalke's..

**Sahadevrao :** Because as I am criticising the theatre activity, I cannot do the play.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So you do it.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** So we all made a group at Mumbai and started play. Natya Kala Darshak was the venture.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** And Sharda, Viratnay, Manovijay like that...

**Bapu Watve :** Yes Manovijay.

**Sahadevrao :** And Ram Rajya, we performed 4,5 plays like that. So in Sharada, I played the role of Vallari. That role of Vallari became very famous in the Mumbai region.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** And in that period there was an offer from Gandharv Company.

**Bapu Watve :** Wow!

**Sahadevrao :** We will pay what you say, but send that boy to us. So our people like Vaman, Antoba etc. said, with us the valuation is low.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** So we cannot do that.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** Then it went on like that. We moved around Mumbai, Thane, and carried on with those plays for about one and half year.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** Then what happened that there started disagreements within us, and because of these disagreements, the company was on the verge of closure. At that time started a Gujarathi play in Mumbai, Netichand Dwarkadas.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** So the place where we were living, that bungalow was his.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** He came to see our rehearsals, so he said to me, Antoba, Baburao Kokale, my brother, these 5-6 people that I would keep these.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** And you close your company. We will bear all the expenses, you come to us.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** So they started a play called Rana Pratap in Hindi at Mumbai. So in Hindi..

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm...who started it?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes...

**Bapu Watve :** Who started it?

**Sahadevrao :** Netichand Dwarkadas... So he started doing plays in Hindi at that time and in Rana Pratap the comic character

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** Now that comic means what they had done was in our Punya Prabhav the comic

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** Kankan, Kinkini etc. The same they translated in Hindi. So in that, they gave me the character of Kinkini.

**Bapu Watve :** So a female role once again.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes..So what happened, it did very well in Hindi. So he kept me on Rs. 50.

**Bapu Watve :** Om..

**Sahadevrao :** Kept me on.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, but who played the role of Rana Pratap?

**Sahadevrao :** The role of Rana Pratap was first given to Antoba Karandikar.

**Bapu Watve :** Antoba Karandikar

**Sahadevrao :** But he could not do well in Hindi.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** After him, they took a Gujarathi from their party and there were two Parsis with me.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Kankan and what is the other..

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** And the role of Kinkini was given to me.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** So there were two-four songs in that. At that time to teach me Hindi and the song and dance they appointed three masters.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok...

**Sahadevrao :** And after the preparation, they liked my Hindi. They said that you talk very well but the rest of your group cannot speak well.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** So they cut out everyone and retained only me.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** There were about 10-12 shows.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** So in these 10-12 shows they used to give me ten rupees promotion for each show.

**Bapu Watve :** My god..

**Sahadevrao :** They said 'You get applause'

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** People are so pleased.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** So for every show they gave me ten rupees as promotion.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** And at that time there were one Goharbai and one Banne were the good drama artists.

**Sahadevrao :** So, what that Goharbai used to do, she used to dress me up, comb my hair, makeup etc. She said that if you are doing so good work, I will do all this in my own hands.

**Bapu Watve :** So, Goharbai means the one with Balgandharva..

**Sahadevrao :** No, I think this Goharbai was with Chandulal Shah.

**Bapu Watve :** Maybe

**Sahadevrao :** I do not remember her well..

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** But at that time she used to play the role of the daughter of Rana Pratap on the stage.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** Then she said, “Why do you do the makeup in the general makeup room? You come and sit with me.”

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** Said “I will do your makeup, dress you up.”

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** So she used to do that. She explained how to do all these things, so that was some help to me and I stayed in that party.



**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** And it was good.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** Then what happened, my brother was cut out, all others were cut out.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** Then my father began worrying, that how to keep the boy all alone there.

At that time he thought that they will run away with the boy, it used to happen in those days.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, with small children.

**Sahadevrao :** Children were kidnapped, people of drama companies were poached, all this used to happen then.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, it used to happen.

**Sahadevrao :** So he used to think that someone will kidnap this boy. So he said “I do not want your drama, I do not want your money. I will take away my boy.”

**Bapu Watve :** In which year this took place?

**Sahadevrao :** See, I think it was about the year 21 or 22.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..meaning 1921-1922.

**Sahadevrao :** And then we came here. After coming here..

**Bapu Watve :** That means you lost contact with the cinema for some time.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.. and we came back to Nashik. After coming to Nashik, these people requested Phalke and started the company again.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, restarted.

**Sahadevrao :** And after I came back, Phalke called me back “You come to us.”

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** And then it started again. So after that Mahabharat, Pandavpratap, Santmalika, two-three Hindi films, like that many ones, I think nearly about 100 films were done.

**Bapu Watve :** By Phalke?

**Sahadevrao :** Phalke's.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, right, there are 100 films of his.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, and at that time, the timing of the film was like, now Ganesh Janma is only 8 days away,

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** Or Ganesh Chaturthi, then in 8 days, then the film was on the screens on Ganesh Chaturthi.

**Bapu Watve :** Such...

**Sahadevrao :** Used to release the film in 15 days.

**Bapu Watve :** So fast...

**Sahadevrao :** When Datta Jayanti was approaching, by preparing 8 days in advance, he started making films in 8,8; 15,15 days. The name of the company was, it was called Karkhana (factory).

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Like a factory, the picture was prepared and showed on screen.

**Bapu Watve :** And the films were doing well.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes and after that...

**Bapu Watve :** But I ask a question in between, were you with Phalke at the time of Lanka Dahan?

**Sahadevrao :** No, it was done before I came.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok...

**Sahadevrao :** Lanka Dahan and Krishna Janma were finished and then I went there.

**Bapu Watve :** But Lanka Dahan was a big hit at that time.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes very much.

**Bapu Watve :** Then Setubandhan was his last film.

**Sahadevrao :** That Setubandhan is afterwards after the company closed...

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** Again there were some disputes and the company was closed. Phalke was given production of nine

**Bapu Watve :** Oh!

**Sahadevrao :** He had a partnership in that. He was given a salary of Rs. 500, all facilities,

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Car, etc. Was all given and bungalow, and pay whatever expense he demanded.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** And he was kept like that. But even with that, whenever any orders came, that we want something today, we want this movie or that movie, then he used to lose his temper. He used to say, no bossing on me. If everything is done as I say, then it is all right, otherwise, I will go off again.

**Bapu Watve :** Otherwise I will go off again.

**Sahadevrao :** I will go again and he went off again..

**Bapu Watve :** Oh God

**Sahadevrao :** After he left we were left, orphans. Then Wamanrao said, “Now I do not have any interest in this business. Whatever equipment is here, I give to you.”

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** And if all of you want to do anything together, you can do it. So before this,

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** At Mumbai one ----- a film was started.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes

**Sahadevrao :** So for that film, they required a makeup artist. And till that time what I used to do was I was acting in film, small or big roles. But when I looked at my face in the mirror, I felt myself that I was not going to become a hero or anything like that. That is not my strength. So I must learn something, so from the start, I had more interest in this makeup.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** And Phalke sir used to instruct me, do this, do that.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** If it is done like this it will be better. So I developed this hobby. I was acting myself in the company and in the spare time, when someone said to apply this moustache, apply this beard, some girls said to do good makeup for us, then I did that.

**Bapu Watve :** So you learned the art of makeup by yourself.

**Sahadevrao :** By myself, no one taught me. Then I got a hobby. I collected all pictures of Raja Ravi Varma and prepared an album. All means, how Ram should be, how Pushkar should be, how Janak should be, how Tukaram was like, how Shivaji was like, all is actually shown in that.

**Bapu Watve :** Raja Ravi Varma

**Sahadevrao :** Before that, there were only ideas

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** But the true picture was shown by Ravi Varma. So when I got into a habit, that whenever I came across a picture by Ravi Varma, I studied it and it became a hobby for me.

**Bapu Watve :** Became a hobby.

**Sahadevrao :** So I learnt a lot from that and whatever I did, I showed it to Phalke sir. He used to say “Keep all this with you and show me something new every day.”

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** And with it, if he felt anything missing, he used to tell me, do it like this, this is wrong, this is not right.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** How is Shivaji, how is Tukaram’s turban, how are his moustaches, if you do this, make that turban for anyone then Tukaram, a man with medium height, it is given a beard, he is Shivaji..

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, Shivaji..

**Sahadevrao :** So all these details, he taught us.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes...

**Sahadevrao :** And when this company here shut down, some of our people here went to Mumbai, Datar etc., went. So at that time that company needed a makeup artist so they took me there.

**Bapu Watve :** In which company?

**Sahadevrao :** That company in Film City, I do not remember the name correctly, but there was Naipalli..

**Bapu Watve :** Nayampalli.

**Sahadevrao :** Was it Nayampalli?

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, Nayampalli.

**Sahadevrao :** Nayampalli, so he was the main artist there and had a dark black complexion. So the picture they made was that I do not remember, but the picture was that the hero is handsome during the day,

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** Becomes terrible in appearance in the night.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, means the idea must have been taken from Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde.

**Sahadevrao :** Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, but this was a mythological film.

**Bapu Watve :** No the concept must have been taken from that.

**Sahadevrao :** Hmm... so the idea was something like that. So the role of the terrible person was played by Nayampalli and there was another, one Vasudev Rao who used to play the handsome hero. And his heroine..

**Bapu Watve :** This Vasudev Rao, was he from the South?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, Vasudev Rao...

**Bapu Watve :** Because there is an artist named Vasudev Rao there, Shobha....

**Sahadevrao :** No, not now, I think he might not be alive now..

**Bapu Watve :** Ok...Ok...

**Sahadevrao :** At that time they saw me. What they did, when I went there, they told me that first, you show us this, the terrible appearance..

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** Now I said, what to do, so I told them, “Not today, I will do it tomorrow.”

So I went to the painting room there. There were all the colour plates. In that colour plate, there are green, yellow, red colours, I collected all of them. Whatever little material was required, I did it and showed them the makeup the next day. After showing that we got down from the makeup room to go to the studio, so on the way, the time was 2-3 a.m. and it was dark. So when he was coming down on the stairs, after looking at him, the fellow fell down with fright, with his legs apart. So I said, my makeup is...

**Bapu Watve :** Has been successful.

**Sahadevrao :** So I was convinced that this is accepted by the people. So they saw it and completed it in the film.

**Bapu Watve :** But what was the salary they gave?

**Sahadevrao :** Sixty-five then.

**Bapu Watve :** 65.

**Sahadevrao :** And when those people agreed to it, I also began to feel that I can work here. And since this film was getting completed there, that group of ours, what they did was in the name of Godavari, Godavari Films, all the priests there were finance people, they gathered them and collected money from them. 10 from someone, 20 from someone, 25 from someone..

**Bapu Watve :** Oh!

**Sahadevrao :** Collecting like that, decided to start a film.

**Bapu Watve :** Meaning at Nashik

**Sahadevrao :** They said you only help us for the outside, we have everything else, we can make a film with this material.

**Bapu Watve :** Which film they decided to make?

**Sahadevrao :** They did Sati Sulochana.

**Bapu Watve :** Sati Sulochana! Yes in that company..

**Sahadevrao :** And after it started the group here also got stuck up without me, because the system here was that makeup artist is not only makeup artist... all-rounder, doing all jobs, that is the system. Cameraman means not only cameraman. We had a cameraman named Annasaheb Salunke, he who had done a part in Harishchandra..

**Bapu Watve :** Taramati.

**Sahadevrao :** The role of Taramati was done, he was that Annasaheb Salunke. Also, Mama Shinde who played Hanuman in Lanka Dahan.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Later they became director there.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok, was there a Mama Sane also?

**Sahadevrao :** Who?

**Bapu Watve :** Mama Sane

**Sahadevrao :** Mama

**Bapu Watve :** Sane, Sane.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, yes, Sane Mama.

**Bapu Watve :** Sane Mama had become director

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, yes and there was Appasaheb Patwardhan of Sangli.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** He was a good artist. He had a big hobby of theatre and he was from a great family.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.



**Sahadevrao :** And at that time he was with us, he was kept as general manager.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** So he used to work as well as general manager.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** So like this, collecting money from the priests, they started Godavari Films and then they got stuck for a makeup artist..

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Then all those priests came to the studio to take me.

**Bapu Watve :** Means where did they come? To Mumbai?

**Sahadevrao :** Came to Film City in Mumbai. So there was a shooting going on at Film City. These priests came there with a horse etc., so everyone started telling them, don't shout, don't talk, go slowly. Then they got my address and came there. They told me, "We are tired of wandering everywhere. Now things have stopped only without you, so you should come, doing whatever." So I said, "How can I come, my agreement is there, that till the film is completed, I am tied to them."

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** So you go and ask them. If they are giving permission, I am ready to come with you.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** So all these people went to them and said, 'like this everything is ready, so can you release him? We will benefit from this.' So they said yes.

**Bapu Watve :** So in Film Centre they said yes to you, gave permission for you to go to Godavari Cinetone, so did you leave Mumbai and come to Nashik?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, came to Nashik, and at that time preparations for my marriage also happened.

**Bapu Watve :** No, but you came here, but did you get any more salary than Film Centre, or at least equal to that?

**Sahadevrao :** Where, at Nashik?

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** There was not any increase in salary at Nashik, I got 35 rupees only.

**Bapu Watve :** Wow!

**Sahadevrao :** With the intention that for me alone anyone else should not lose because everyone was having.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So said, there should not be a loss.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So I said I will do one film with you, stay with you, then after that, you release me.

**Bapu Watve :** But what was the salary at Film Centre?

**Sahadevrao :** Where?

**Bapu Watve :** Film Centre.

**Sahadevrao :** At Film Centre, 65 at that time.

**Bapu Watve :** 65, yes, you told that some time ago.

**Sahadevrao :** And then after coming here, the film was started. So at that time, the group here had Mama Shinde director, as a writer and assistant director, there was Shirwadkar.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, meaning our poet Kusumagraj.

**Sahadevrao :** The great renowned poet of Nashik.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So at that time he, then in that (Baburao Patil-Ram) (Shirwadkar-Laxman), and assistant director and writer.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok Shirwadkar.

**Sahadevrao :** Shirwadkar, and he is a gentleman.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** And intelligent but at that time he did not have much fame.

**Bapu Watve :** Did not.. yes right.

**Sahadevrao :** So the film started. In that I did the makeup of all, then completed the work till the end.

**Bapu Watve :** But what role did you play in that film, that Sati Sulochana?

**Sahadevrao :** Played the role, meaning did whenever and whatever required.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** Means played the role myself and when required, like a monkey or a demon. So what we had, we used to have individual boxes, and in those boxes were all sets. A monkey, a demon, Radha, a queen, a maid, all those sets were there. In those days, girls did not work. Then started at the time of Sati Sulochana.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Maybe before that.. but you know what parts came to me, second or third grade, meaning never of a main hero or heroine.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** So in Sati Sulochana at the end, there was a scene, that a bard is going along a road, singing.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So it was seen that in recording nobody's voice was matching.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** So Bapu sir called me.

**Bapu Watve :** Bapu sir meaning Bapurao Ketkar.

**Sahadevrao :** Ketkar, and he called me to take a test of my voice. He said, beautiful voice.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** Then what he did was he gave the role of that bard to me. He is singing a song on the road and in that describing the city, Ram and Ravan, he is going along. So he filmed the song on me.

**Bapu Watve :** So you sang in the movie and there was no playback then.

**Sahadevrao :** No playback, direct.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes direct, and then?

**Sahadevrao :** And then suddenly the film was completed. These priests were used to getting money every day, we could not give that because we did not have this thing.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes that is right.

**Sahadevrao :** It was not there. So when the money was stuck, they all panicked, that we will get only, they could not hold on, to release the film, do its publicity....

**Bapu Watve :** But the shooting was completed?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes the picture was completed.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** And the film as such was seen by all of us.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** But it took some time to get a customer from Mumbai for it.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes, meaning for the business calculations, there was too much of a hurry.

**Sahadevrao :** And this film was made talkie.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** And there is no talkie before that. Before the talkie picture picture, when Hindustan company was established..

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes.

**Sahadevrao :** In the end, Phalke had turned a silent film into a talkie by dubbing.

**Bapu Watve :** Setubandhan.

**Sahadevrao :** Setubandhan.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** And after it, this.

**Bapu Watve :** But I think Setubandhan did not do well.

**Sahadevrao :** No, it did not do well. It was like that, during the dispute, no one paid any attention to it. These owners, because of the dispute of finance, could not pay attention to it and sell the film well. Otherwise, it was a very good film.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok. Means the trick scenes in that were shot very well.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes they were very good and in those scenes, the tricks were such that you cannot see like that till today, and Phalke had..

**Bapu Watve :** Phalke had expertise in that, in the trick scenes. Correct.

**Sahadevrao :** Everything used to run on trick scenes at that time. And he never told anything to anyone by insulting him or saying what you are doing is not correct. No one had the courage to take. Once, at the time of Setubandhan, we were going along

Mumbai road, so what happened then, he wanted a black curtain. What he said wanting a black curtain, it was a black and white picture. Now at that time, we had some idea about a curtain, whether black or white. So we did not get a black curtain. I used to drive also, at that time.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So to do the makeup of these people, but the driving licence in the pocket and take them for outdoor.

**Bapu Watve :** Wow

**Sahadevrao :** So I used to drive. Phalke and Shinde Mama were sitting in the back. They had difficulty, to bring a big black curtain. Saying everything is stuck because of that. We have a white curtain. So while driving, I just said, 'Dada, shall I say something?' You have the daring to talk to everyone. So I said it is a black and white picture. The effect made by a black curtain will be the same effect made by a white curtain.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** So I said can't you do it with a white curtain. He said it is right. Slightly bigger effect. Doing some plus-minus the effect of black and white will be the same. Using white will give a little light effect. Using black will give little deep effect. That can be accommodated. So he said now let us go back from here. And he shot the three Marutis, standing on a mountain, with a leg on the mountain, and it became a success.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** So like this, we got to learn a lot then.

**Bapu Watve :** And I think he used to give encouragement like that, otherwise others say, 'What you have to do with this, don't speak.'

**Sahadevrao :** Never. He supported us that anyone can make suggestions as he thinks fit. He never said I am a big person. Said I will not fight with you, I fight with the bigwigs of Mumbai.

**Bapu Watve :** Owners from Mumbai.

**Sahadevrao :** Big people.

**Bapu Watve :** But the Ganga Avtaran was sir's last film.

**Sahadevrao :** But I was not there at that time.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes... You were not with Phalke then, you were in Mumbai at that time.

**Sahadevrao :** At that time I was doing two pictures at Pune, one Telugu and one Kannada, so I was not there at that time, he had gone there.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.. so what happened to Sati Sulochana?

**Sahadevrao :** Then after completion of the picture Sati Sulochana, their disputes started again. They wanted the money immediately, then they started troubling these people, saying will carry away the rolls.

**Bapu Watve :** Oh god.

**Sahadevrao :** Or take this thing and in the end started doing that. Some used to carry away the rolls, some used to steal the camera from the studio, demanded their money. Now in this dispute, I did not have any place. You carry on your fights, what I have to do..

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** At the same time my marriage was fixed. So these people had told me that we will not give you any cash but we will do all expense of your marriage.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** And we will come for your marriage and get the marriage done. So at that time when the picture was going on, my marriage also took place at the same time.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** And marriage was done, the picture got completed and the disputes between these people started. So I said now I cannot get involved in this. Now I have my household, responsibility has increased, and in that, I got an offer from Mumbai once again.

**Bapu Watve :** Now I ask another question, who played the role of Sati Sulochana?

**Sahadevrao :** She... what was that girl's name..

**Bapu Watve :** Anusaya?

**Sahadevrao :** No. Not Anusaya. She was a girl from Pune.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** Means Bapusaheb had done selection.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes. Bapusaheb means Bapurao Ketkar.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes by Ketkar, I don't remember the girl's name.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok, tell me if you remember.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, then after that you...

**Sahadevrao :** Then I got an offer from Chandrarao More and then after going to Film City finally I was fixed on a salary of 75. Shirajali Hakim, Aundhkar etc. were the new acquaintances. I went there because of Baburao Datar, since he was Shivaji previously, he also was a make-up artist.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.



**Sahadevrao :** So he could not cope with the two jobs. So he said, 'You look after the make-up.' Now with me here and I was there for the first time, and he said I could not cope with that...

**Bapu Watve :** The writing was by Vishnupant Aundhkar and he had played the role of Chandrarao More also.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Bapu Watve :** Other artists I think, V. Nandrekar and Amina.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Bapu Watve :** V. Nandrekar and Amina.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, Amina and Arolkar was director at that time

**Bapu Watve :** Arolkar.... yes.

**Sahadevrao :** And because of his contact gave the first chance to Jayashree.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes Jayashree Shantaram.

**Sahadevrao :** Shantaram.

**Bapu Watve :** This means she became Shantaram later.

**Sahadevrao :** And at that time here Jaikar etc. Some ceremonial sessions used to be done. So at that time first role, meaning heroine but the second heroine.

**Bapu Watve :** Second heroine.

**Sahadevrao :** Lahan and Baba Nandrekar hero and she heroine. So in this way, that picture was completed.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, and I think it did well.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, it did well and it was a very good picture and a very costly picture in those times.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** So at that time we were in Kolhapur for nearly 3 months with all.

**Bapu Watve :** For outdoor shooting.

**Sahadevrao :** For outdoor shooting and all preparations were done there itself and the picture was started. Nearly all outdoor was completed there and then to Mumbai.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So after coming to Mumbai that picture started. And the Sirajali Hakim and P. Pulayya got together and started one picture at Pune.

**Bapu Watve :** P. Pulayya was a very big person in South India.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Bapu Watve :** P. Pulayya that very big person in South India was there

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, big person, practically first director you can say.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** In those times director and technicians were very few.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** And at the same time there was a big technician called Ramnath Shekhar from Gemini. He was learning in Film City.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** And I was working there in Kannada at that time. So for a few days, he used to come and go there, and he used to see me, who is this make-up artist, how he is..

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** So I did not know English and he did not know Hindi. At that time we had some acquaintance. And after doing Chandrarao More I went to Pune. He said to

Sirajali Hakim that this picture is done like that, you come to Pune with me. So after going there completed the picture.

**Bapu Watve :** At Pune.

**Sahadevrao :** Hmm..

**Bapu Watve :** At Pune... Do you remember the name of the picture?

**Sahadevrao :** Subhadra, Kannada?

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, means Kannada.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes Kannada, another one picture again

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** Your... Balaji

**Bapu Watve :** Meaning Telugu

**Sahadevrao :** Telugu picture.

**Bapu Watve :** But do you remember the name of the artists at that time?

**Sahadevrao :** Hmm..

**Bapu Watve :** Do you remember the names of some of the artists from that movie?

**Sahadevrao :** Only the one doing the role of Subhadra, one Jayamma...

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** She was a good actress.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes. Jayamma was famous...

**Sahadevrao :** And she Yajmana like that... but very good...

**Bapu Watve :** But who did the direction of both these pictures?

**Sahadevrao :** P. Pullaya, both pictures.

**Bapu Watve :** P. Pullaya.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, he did that Balaji also. After completing Balaji...

**Bapu Watve :** But did you feel a difference?

**Sahadevrao :** What?

**Bapu Watve :** The makeup in our Marathi movies or Telugu and Kannada movies, did you feel any difference?

**Sahadevrao :** No, no difference as such.. And since they had few technicians, all that was with us. They were convinced of whatever we said, because there were no technicians there.

**Bapu Watve :** No, at that time there was no development in industry there.

**Sahadevrao :** At that time even Madrasi pictures also used to come to Kolhapur.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes... Kolhapur, Mumbai, Kolkata everywhere they used to do.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, used to come there.

**Bapu Watve :** In Pune also some were done.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, at Pune. So out of that 3, 4 pictures I did here. And after that this Ramnath Shekhar learned music in a good way and went to Madras.

**Bapu Watve :** To Madras.

**Sahadevrao :** And at that time Gemini studio, which is known as... studio, at that time it was run by somebody else, so at that time VAsan bought that studio and started new.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Doing a new picture, one picture started, one picture was completed and then bombing started. Madras war had started.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So at that time what he did, he closed the studio and told all technicians, that you take the half salary and stay here, and when things cool down, we will start

the picture again. Till that time you stay on half salary. Saying this he had stopped the company.

**Bapu Watve :** In which year this thing happened?

**Sahadevrao :** I think it was in 42...43.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, means at the time of the Second World War.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, at that time. And this picture was getting completed, here started with speed. What he did was, called the people again and started the picture. Then these technicians went there. That Ramnath Shekhar told S. S. Vasan that there are technicians known to us, we will bring them here. A good man...

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** At that time Aundhkar sent me to this

**Bapu Watve :** Prakash Pictures

**Sahadevrao :** Prakash Pictures. So the story was by Aundhkar.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes. Vishnupant Aundhkar was the writer.

**Sahadevrao :** So in that, while this picture was getting completed, that picture got completed.

**Bapu Watve :** Were you in Bharat Bhet?

**Sahadevrao :** Hmm..

**Bapu Watve :** Were you in Bharat Bhet?

**Sahadevrao :** I was not in Bharat Bhet.

**Bapu Watve :** Were in Ram Rajya.

**Sahadevrao :** Was in Ram Rajya. So Ram Rajya picture was all completed. While completing that picture, these people made me an offer.

**Bapu Watve :** Gemini

**Sahadevrao :** Gemini. So at that time, some last scene were pending. All else was completed. Shobha Nair, and who was that artist from Prabhat?

**Bapu Watve :** Chandrakant.

**Sahadevrao :** Chandrakant

**Bapu Watve :** Chandrakant Mandhare

**Sahadevrao :** Yes Vinay

**Bapu Watve :** Vinay Kale

**Sahadevrao :** I was doing makeup of them.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So their work was completed. The last few scenes were remaining. So two telegrams came from them, you come immediately. So I informed them that I cannot go till our work is complete.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So they said, we will give you a salary of two hundred seventy-five. So I said it is not a question of salary. I have to complete my work. After that, we can talk.

**Bapu Watve :** But what was the salary given in Gemini?

**Sahadevrao :** 275 was the first offer.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Then here I had 65.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, means 65 was big here, in Mumbai

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** In Mumbai market, and I told these people, I cannot go till work here is completed, so there was Prabhakar Khanwalkar who knew me, so he was found by S.

S. Vasan and told, you know him, you are of one caste, of one town, so we give you all expense, give money with you and go there and bring him.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm...

**Sahadevrao :** So what they did, they gave one-two thousand with him and told that whatever his dues are there, or whatever he owes to the company give all the money and bring him immediately.

**Bapu Watve :** To Mumbai

**Sahadevrao :** To Mumbai

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** And so he sent that Prabhakar to Mumbai. And Prabhakar told to Vijubhai. He said you are doing well. If you do this, it will like helping a family. Your work will remain. So there was another makeup artist there. He said, if you say, I can also finish this work. So if he wants to go, let him go. So Vijubhai gave permission. So what I did... at first he thought that all this was false. He said, we give 65 rupees here and there it agreement of 275 rupees. He said what are you saying, those Madrasi people are fooling you. This letter was shown. The letter which was sent from there, so he said, the real need is for me here, but there is no need there, that is why this offer is given.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** Therefore 275 rupees salary. When I went there, I was in a hurry. At that time I had one son and one daughter.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** And when I thought of leaving Mumbai, my whole family started crying. Meaning brothers, sisters, all of them. Because at this time Madras is getting emptied and people are coming here. And really Madras had become empty then.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes.

**Sahadevrao :** No one was living there, so in such times you are going there, no one was agreeing to that. So I said, see this is a good chance now. Today the situation here is like this, so rather than looking to anyone for help or following up on anyone, let me try my luck. I will go alone..... so no one was listening to that. Then I said that I am definitely going. Then my wife started saying that after you go we will keep on worrying here, so you take us also there. Said that will be better so that no one has to worry, we will all go. I said if you are that determined, keep in mind that we have to take the children with us. So I said, if you are ready, come with me. So we started.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** Whatever we had in Mumbai, all our possessions were packed. Straightaway took the train to Madras and went. And at that time it was all deserted in Madras.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** On roads and after 6 all blackout. Could not make out whether this is a city or a jungle, totally dark.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm.

**Sahadevrao :** And decided to stay, confirmed. S. S. Vasan called me. He told me we will do this, do that for you. So I thought we have left Nashik, our Bombay, and come far away here, so he will get one movie done and then ask to go, that is what I thought.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm...



**Sahadevrao :** So I said to him, 'You keep me but you have to do an agreement with me.'  
Then he said, of what sort. So I said if you are giving me an agreement for three years,  
then I will stay.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** The condition of salary. I said if you keep me for three years at this  
salary, I will stay.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Otherwise send me back, I just said. So do you know what happened at  
that time... I do not know English, they don't understand Hindi.

**Bapu Watve :** Hindi.

**Sahadevrao :** And at that time they did not know Hindi at all. Nowadays at least it is  
understood somewhat, but at that time not at all. And those people with me who knew  
little English, Marathi like Prabhakar etc., they did some translation and used to tell.

**Bapu Watve :** Used to tell...hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** So what he said in English was understood by me but it was difficult for  
me to tell him. So after studying the expression, he looked at me keenly and said, what  
do you want. I said give me two years agreement in writing, then I will work. He said,  
"Look, all this agreement etc. depends on how our relations are, how they will remain  
to the end. If we do not agree and you agree, how you are, how we are, we will cut it. But  
I tell you as my verbal agreement that as long as Gemini Studio is there, till then you are  
here.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** When you say with your own will that you want to go, we can not tell that whether we will let you go. But till the Gemini studio is in Madras, till then you are here. Then for how many years' agreement shall I give you...

**Bapu Watve :** Ha ha ha..

**Sahadevrao :** I said now I do not want even one year's agreement, I have faith in your word. But after that, he himself told me that as per established procedure, you said three years, but in three years we will give you an increment of nearly 300 rupees.

**Bapu Watve :** Ha

**Sahadevrao :** And at that time those who were sent out, all those were called back, they were given half salary for six months which was outstanding and three months' bonus was given.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** And at the same time I was newly... and all these people were given bonuses and along with them I was also called to the office. It was not known why I was called to the office, the picture was not started. And he called me and three months' bonus was put into my envelope and exactly on the first date.

**Bapu Watve :** Salary

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.. last date, exactly the last date of the month. There was a record of 25 years and on that record company in future... was done. So he called me there. He gave the envelope into my hands. So what I wanted to say was I had no right to bonus till I completed one year. So what I did, I returned the envelope to him.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** Said, I have no right. Then I said, you give the money, I will spend it and then you will say that the money had come to you by mistake.

**Bapu Watve :** Ha.

**Sahadevrao :** So I returned the envelope to him. What they did after that, they gave the envelope to S. S. Vasan and told him, we made a mistake and called him in the office. They said, now it will be our insult, his insult, such a precedent will happen, what to do. He said, call him and give it to him, so it was given to me. Then they just kept me idle for a year.

**Bapu Watve :** No work, nothing.

**Sahadevrao :** After that, another picture was getting completed.

**Bapu Watve :** Do you remember which was it?

**Sahadevrao :** It was getting completed but I told him

**Bapu Watve :** No, do you remember the name of the picture?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes

**Bapu Watve :** Name of that picture.

**Sahadevrao :** Mangma

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Mangamshastra, that picture was yet to be completed.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** So till the picture started, their make up artist was one of Madras, sorry Kolkata

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Called Haribabu

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, Haribabu, yes

**Sahadevrao :** So Haribabu and I did not get along.

**Bapu Watve :** But Haribabu was also a good makeup artist

**Sahadevrao :** Good, but he was very egoistic. He never got along with anyone.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** Since this Ramnath Shekhar was the chief technician there, Shekhar was a recordist and art director.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** And Ramnath director and cameraman and at that time they were the main in Madras. There were none as intelligent as them. There were 2-3 from our Maharashtra but they did not create any impression there. Since this Ramnath Shekhar was there, I said to him that they are just keeping me sitting here. This is not sustainable. Let me return. Just taking a salary for nothing. So S. S. Vasani said what are you losing in that, who is losing, you or us. Said we have called you, given you our word. We will send your monthly salary to your home. If you want, you can come. Otherwise, we have given you a company car. Wander in the city, have a good time, take a rest in Madras, what else do you like.

**Bapu Watve :** Were you given a car?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes a car was given and a boy at home.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok, means the house was also given by them.

**Sahadevrao :** Because to help us as we did not know the language, one boy from the company.

**Bapu Watve :** Means accommodation was provided by them.

**Sahadevrao :** No, but they had told that you search the place, we will put in any hotel, then we will give you home.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Then we went to see a house, at that time all bungalows were empty.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Wherever we went, they used to say, 'You want to live here, give us a promise that you will not leave us, means you can live for free in this house.

**Bapu Watve :** Oh!

**Sahadevrao :** Because we need company. All Madras had become empty.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** So I said, we do not want for free. So one bungalow there, a good one with six rooms, a low height one, for 15 rupees per month at that time..

**Bapu Watve :** On rent?

**Sahadevrao :** On rent... and we lived there in that bungalow. Then that company car was there, for doing shopping etc., the company boy used to come. Then I did some work in one month. Till then I had no knowledge about the theories of makeup by Max Factor company. So what I did, while it was going there, I sat and studied, which numbers they used, for which colours they are suitable, which numbers will suit, I did all the study about the numbers of Max Factor while sitting there for one year. Then after this picture was completed, they started a picture named Aparanjee, that was one..

**Bapu Watve :** Aparanjee is Tamil.

**Sahadevrao :** Tamil, core dancer, so its heroine was your Pushpavalli that is this of yours, her mother.

**Bapu Watve :** Rekha's

**Sahadevrao :** Rekha's mother. That is her. That picture started, she is there in their album. So the picture started and it was good. Got recognition, after release, it made

good money and then one after another, pictures started in a queue. There I did about 30 Tamil pictures.

**Bapu Watve :** Did 30 pictures..

**Sahadevrao :** And about 10-12 Telugu.

**Bapu Watve :** Ha..

**Sahadevrao :** And

**Bapu Watve :** But do you remember some important names from them?

**Sahadevrao :** Hmm..

**Bapu Watve :** Important names from Tamil or Telugu?

**Sahadevrao :** From Tamil or Telugu some Ramrajya, means for the third time some of these pictures came. Ramrajya, Bhakt Bhotana, then Pati-Patni.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Vrinda Jalandhar

**Bapu Watve :** Ok...

**Sahadevrao :** Thus mythological type pictures were done there. Then the Hindi market started. The first film was Chandralekha.

**Bapu Watve :** Chandralekha, yes of 1948.

**Sahadevrao :** After Aparanjee was done, Chandralekha was started. So Chandralekha became the costliest picture in India at that time. Because there was no one who made a film by spending 30 lakhs of rupees at that time.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Nowadays they spent a crore of rupees, that is another matter.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes. This is from the year 1948.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Bapu Watve :** Meaning 40 years ago.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes. So that picture was started and the shooting was going on for seven years.

**Bapu Watve :** My god!

**Sahadevrao :** It was going on for seven years, and if some idea came, it was inserted daily. By this time another picture was started outside, and they got outside films. One Rajrajeshwari. There was one another company, there were some others. So I did some 15, 20 Telugu films there. Means outside the company but while in company I used to complete those pictures.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, as a makeup master.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, some Kannada, one or two Malyali pictures, like that it started in a queue, but I do not remember their names much. Then this was the first picture.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes Chandralekha. You told me, it was a huge picture, it did well and made many records.

**Sahadevrao :** And S. S. Vasan took lots of efforts for Chandralekha, and the movie was very good and its making was going on for seven years.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** He would not leave anything unless he had full satisfaction. Then whatever amount of money he had to spend. Because he had big financial backing.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Because he had big press there (Ananda Vikatan)

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** And at the same time he had started distribution office. So he was getting a lot of money from pictures

**Bapu Watve :** He also had publications? Chandoba etc. were his publications?

Chandamama?

**Sahadevrao :** No, Chandamama was not in his name. Chandamama was Vahuni's.

**Bapu Watve :** Vahuni's.

**Sahadevrao :** So this picture did well and he started getting lot of money, so he thought, we should start in Hindi market.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** So many people come, we will get such a big market. So we should try it once. So what he did, spent 1,00,000 rupees for that. Publicity. If one should get money, spend money. Money may go and money may come. But we will get a good market.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So we will take the Hindi market. So-called technicians of Mumbai. Only for recording, your music director and dialogue writer, who was called, I don't remember that.

**Bapu Watve :** Rajendra Krishna

**Sahadevrao :** Hmm..

**Bapu Watve :** Rajendra Krishna

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, Rajendra Krishna and others. Got the whole thing written from them

**Bapu Watve :** Rest of the technicians, editor were his?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes. And for dubbing, good artists from Mumbai were booked and the full picture was dubbed.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.



**Sahadevrao :** And the dubbing was done so perfectly, that Mumbai does not know till now, that this picture is dubbed.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes. Many people do not know it.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes. They did it so perfectly, each and every word.

**Bapu Watve :** Pushpavalli was there

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.. No, this Rajkumari.

**Bapu Watve :** Rajkumari and Ranjana.

**Sahadevrao :** Ranjana

**Bapu Watve :** Yes Ranjana.

**Sahadevrao :** And M. K. Radha.

**Bapu Watve :** M. K. Radha. Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So this picture was made so perfect, that it did well in Mumbai and everywhere.

**Bapu Watve :** It did well. There are many records.

**Sahadevrao :** So got money because of it. But do you know what happened because of it? Hindi market could not get us back. And the one benefit I got because of that was everybody in Maharashtra started recognising me.

**Bapu Watve :** Ha.

**Sahadevrao :** Then there were many papers here. I gave some interviews. But there were many mistakes in them. My name was written in place of others. But made many acquaintances that time.

**Bapu Watve :** But did you make another big movie like this Chandralekha?

**Sahadevrao :** And while this was going on, there was a big singer called K. B. Sundarambal from the theatre.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes I know that..

**Sahadevrao :** So for singing, she charged 2000 rupees for one day.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes.

**Sahadevrao :** 3000 rupees for one day of singing.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Such a renowned woman

**Bapu Watve :** Because I have heard that she charged one lakh rupees for acting in a film in those days.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, that one, she was the first heroine.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So they booked this K. B. Sundarambal who was charging one lakh rupees at that time. And like our Sant Janabai, there is Avya, that is a very famous story Avyayar, everyone young and old know it, lots of love in it. So taking up that subject they made a picture. That also in the making for three years.

**Bapu Watve :** How

**Sahadevrao :** A lot of money was spent on that. But since this woman sang very well, after the release of the picture, they got money, they got fame and got a prestigious place in Tamil.

**Bapu Watve :** Then after that again your

**Sahadevrao :** After that simultaneously our Hindi pictures started one after another.

**Bapu Watve :** Do you remember any names, for which you did makeup?

**Sahadevrao :** Do Dulhe

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** Do Dulhe was one film. What they did in that, they kept one heroine from Madras, and bringing artists from Bombay, got them to work and made that picture.

**Bapu Watve :** Who was the artist from Bombay in that?

**Sahadevrao :** That is what.... an old-time hero. I don't remember the name.

**Bapu Watve :** Then

**Sahadevrao :** After that 'Sansar'...

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** After Sansar started..

**Bapu Watve :** Sansar did very well.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes. Motilal, your Pushpavalli that is a mother of today's Rekha.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes. Means this Mr Sampat.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes. Means this Mr Sampat. And

**Bapu Watve :** But I think in that Sansar, there was M. K. Radha only.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.. And only your Motilal, with them, Bap Beta.

**Bapu Watve :** He was in Sansar also?

**Sahadevrao :** Not in Sansar, in this.

**Bapu Watve :** No, no, was in Sansar.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, yes, M. K. Radha.

**Bapu Watve :** And who was the heroine?

**Sahadevrao :** That Pushpavalli.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, ok, then after that, that Sampat, then?

**Sahadevrao :** Mangala

**Bapu Watve :** Mangala

**Sahadevrao :** After Mangala

**Bapu Watve :** Who was the heroine in Mangala?

**Sahadevrao :** Bhanumati.

**Bapu Watve :** Bhanumati. Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Bhanumati means now when a Hindi picture was made in Pune.. I mean  
Kannada

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** She had come for that. At that time this girl had come with only one set of  
clothes.

**Bapu Watve :** Oh!

**Sahadevrao :** But she has become such a big artist today, there are her own studios in  
Madras.

**Bapu Watve :** Great..

**Sahadevrao :** And she herself is a director and writer.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So, at that time, this Bhanumati was the heroine of Mangala.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes then..

**Sahadevrao :** Then Nishan.

**Bapu Watve :** Nishan was

**Sahadevrao :** In Nishan..

**Bapu Watve :** There was a double role by Ranjan in it.

**Sahadevrao :** Ranjan and your that.. These two heroes. One Tamil and one Hindi. In  
both pictures keeping these two heroes, and Bhanumati as the heroine, getting them to  
speak and dubbing it, they completed the pictures. That also did well.

**Bapu Watve :** Was Nageshwara there?

**Sahadevrao :** Nageshwara - music director.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.. after that which one?

**Sahadevrao :** After that Ghunghat.

**Bapu Watve :** That also did well.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, Ghunghat did well. Subject. I think there is some Hindi picture called Doobati Naiyya. In that your Bina Roy was heroine, then Aga, your present hero, that old hero...

**Bapu Watve :** Who?

**Sahadevrao :** Hero of Baiju Bawara.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.. Bharat Bhushan..

**Sahadevrao :** Bharat Bhushan, with these artists that picture was made. It also did well and one picture after another, they got good fame.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** After that Gharana.

**Bapu Watve :** Gharana. That also did very well.

**Sahadevrao :** That also did well. So in Gharana, taking Telugu heroine, all others Rajkumar, Rajendrakumar..

**Bapu Watve :** Ok...

**Sahadevrao :** All others, Minu Mumtaz..

**Bapu Watve :** Got the big artists of Hindi.

**Sahadevrao :** Lalitabai, taking all these it was completed. Then Gharana. Then in that Gharana, Vaijayantimala, Prithviraj Kapoor, Rajendra Kumar. That picture was done and it also did good business.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** So by completing all these pictures in line, there I did some 10-15 Hindi pictures.

**Bapu Watve :** In Hindi.

**Sahadevrao :** In Hindi, and then what happened, there an association.

**Bapu Watve :** No, no but every movie has your title.

**Sahadevrao :** There is a title for all pictures.

**Bapu Watve :** As Sahadevrao Tapkire..

**Sahadevrao :** Sahadevrao Tapkire, they gave me a special title till the end.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** Then the owners and the union of the workers. The union was founded there because as the Hindi market started there, those people got clever.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes.

**Sahadevrao :** And since the union party was started there were disputes between the owners and the workers.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Then they did a lot of demand we want this, we want that. We want a salary for so many years, so much bonus. So every year, after every picture, giving increments, finally they gave me a salary of 1000 rupees.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes..

**Sahadevrao :** And there was a group of 1000 people in the union. The permanent staff of Gemini Studio.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes.

**Sahadevrao :** All together

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** So this entire group was separate and I the only Maharashtrian was separate. I did not join that group. I said you are the people residing here. If he tells me to go, I will go, but till today, for 25 years, I am eating their food, I cannot go against him. They said, we have founded union, we can get more money, bonus, then you join us. I said I will not touch any money from you. I will not come to your group and I will do like the company and S. S. Vasani order me to do. If your company remains, I remain, if they tell me to go, I will go, but I will not join you to drag them in court. Because he had treated us with love like a father, like Phalke. Gave help till the end. Now my children are born after coming here. I have five children and two daughters, out of which the sons are born in Madras.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Their education, since there was no Marathi there, convent education.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm.

**Sahadevrao :** Till their marriage, all this expense is done by S. S. Vasani for us.

**Bapu Watve :** Great..

**Sahadevrao :** And I do not feel it is right to drag such a helping man to court. Tomorrow if I benefit because of you I will return it or donate it but I will not touch a single paisa of it.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes

**Sahadevrao :** But do not drag me to court against him. So what he did, S. S. Vasani had a record. Brought all records from film companies in Maharashtra, which company gave regular payments for 25 years.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** So in that, even record of Rajkamal was brought. So in their record there used to be a year when payments were missed. But he only missed one day in 25 years. When Gandhiji died, on that same date was our payment day, and on the same day, he died. Only that one. So on that record, this whole case failed.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So, with this strategy, the workers could not do anything. And Vasan realised that the workers, whom he treated as his own children, dragged him to court. On that day, even though I had a fever, I came to court. He felt it very much, so he said from today I stop the company. After that, he called me home..

**Bapu Watve :** What was the year when this happened?

**Sahadevrao :** Hmm..

**Bapu Watve :** What was the year when this happened?

**Sahadevrao :** I think this was in the year 41, 42, no... I think some..

**Bapu Watve :** No, it would be 52, 53, like that

**Sahadevrao :** In the year 62, 63.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes 62, 63.

**Sahadevrao :** This story must be of 62, 63.

**Bapu Watve :** So were you in Madras for a total of about 20 years?

**Sahadevrao :** 25 years, meaning after leaving Gemini Studio, I worked for Gemini for another 5 years as a freelancer.

**Bapu Watve :** So after Gemini also you were working in Madras.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, 5 years. So all these artists of Madras were not letting me go. They said if you get some more money than what salary you were getting in Gemini, what is your problem.



**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** They said stay, don't go. So in that Saroja Devi, that Vaijayantimala of yours, whatever movies of them were made in Madras, I completed their work.

**Bapu Watve :** I see, so you were doing their makeup.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes. And it was like this, go in the morning. After the work of makeup was completed, the company car would come. Their makeup was done. After completing work, come home. After working for two hours in the morning, I was free for the day. Plus along with that, I can take the house----- contracts, so they used to keep the makeup as per my dates. Baba, today, I have Saroja Devi's makeup in the morning, so if you schedule for the afternoon, I can come. If you give me dates with this facility, I will come. At that time my three, three...

**Bapu Watve :** Pictures you were doing.

**Sahadevrao :** Three pictures, only hero, heroine.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** I worked in the morning for two hours, free for the remaining day, that I used to feel good.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** After that, I stayed there for 5 years and then here at Nashik, I saw the place. When the elder daughter's marriage was done, then I bought the place here at Nashik. Then after that, some more land was bought and everyone liked the place. Then from Madras, I got the well dug, and it struck good water. Now what to do, so I told my son, now your education is completed. You get married. And told wife, I will build a bungalow. We will go and live there. You do your independent business.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** At that time my elder son was studying radio engineering. So S. S. Vasani had already asked me, that your son is a radio engineer, why don't you bring him to us. Radio engineer and our recording department are almost similar. So I said, Gemini Studio or any other studio. I said today, I am at one place for the last 25 years, and the recordist and the technicians there are also there only for 25 years. Today I see that unless they leave, he will not get a chance. Just as unless I go another makeup artist has no chance, like that. For how many years will this boy wait. Also whatever experience I am having of the cinema industry, I think the cinema industry is right for me only. I do not wish that my children should come into this line and my children also do not wish that. Now you are seeing that for the last 25 years when I force the children to come to the studio to see, they come, but they do not come of their own wish. So whatever it is I do not force them. So they should seek their business as per their thought. My job is their education, their marriage and place for living, that much I can provide, rest their future they have to seek. So like this, I sent my son here. For almost five years. I got the house built here for him to live. After that all. My eldest daughter's marriage took place at that time, that was also in Nashik and lastly the youngest daughter was there. While we were there, she was kept in the college here for education. In this college there was a gentleman from Nashik, named Bapusaheb Shinde, his son was also in this college. He saw this girl, and he said 'This girl is Marathi, if I marry, I will marry only her, or I will not marry for entire life.'

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** And the coincidence was that he was our relative, and like that the girl's marriage was fixed, I came here and in 8 days did the marriage of that daughter.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** Now I said it is good that at the time of me leaving, both my two daughters are here and five sons. Ultimately, I travelled here and there for 30-40 years and finally at Nashik, the place of birth, I should consider it as my luck.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes.

**Sahadevrao :** And secondly after all the expense for these children, education, marriage, house, place to do this, I had not much money left with me.

**Bapu Watve :** No right.

**Sahadevrao :** But everything worked out well.

**Bapu Watve :** No, no. But what you earned; you earned a lot.

**Sahadevrao :** No I did it by myself.

**Bapu Watve :** You stabilized your household.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Bapu Watve :** This is a big achievement.

**Sahadevrao :** And then my son was saying we do not want your help, your money, you just come here to live with us.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok, ok.

**Sahadevrao :** But these children requested so much and then afterwards I also thought that I should not also hold on much, there is no point in that. At that time, I had five pictures in hand.

**Bapu Watve :** At Madras?

**Sahadevrao :** At Madras. What I did, one day this son's letter came to me. I write to you every year, request you. But I feel bad. Today we see many times in the world, this person died of heart failure, that person died of heart failure. With luck, that should not happen, but if anything happens to you there, we will be weeping for life that my

father, my parents did not live with me. So I said he is feeling a lot. Now for whom I have to earn. So what I did, on the same night did all effort. Called the company car. Of all five companies. Whatever advances had come to me, I returned all the money. Cancelled all agreements. Gave a man to everyone, a make-up artist. There were ten assistants who had trained under me.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** At that time in Gemini Studio I had 12 assistants and all were educated, B. A., M. A.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.

**Sahadevrao :** Two ladies and two boys, that was the staff with us.

**Bapu Watve :** I see

**Sahadevrao :** Out of that 10-15 people were trained very well. I distributed that work among them, and giving them that work, I was going to say the last goodbye to Madras, and on the day before leaving S. S. Vasam passed away.

**Bapu Watve :** Oh!

**Sahadevrao :** Then I felt it more. I said in whose name and with whose support, we were living here. Now there is no point in living here and I did not feel good there, so I left all and came back to my birthplace.

**Bapu Watve :** In which year?

**Sahadevrao :** I think it was the year 63, 64.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..So Dadasaheb Phalke to Vasam that is your journey of the film industry.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Bapu Watve :** And now it is about 20 years since you are here.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, yes 15-20 years have passed.

**Bapu Watve :** But now you have no contact with the movies?

**Sahadevrao :** No, no, now I don't do anything and now it is not possible for me also. And the funny part is when I worked in that type, now to work in that type I cannot even take the brush in my hands. At that time all people used to say, even in Madras, that in which art school you obtained your education. I said I have no education; I was never educated in any art school. If you ask me to draw a line, I cannot draw a line by hand, but I draw lines on the face in a straight line, so much my hand has become proficient in that.

**Bapu Watve :** But what difference do you feel in the industry over there and over here?

**Sahadevrao :** Which

**Bapu Watve :** Meaning in Madras.

**Sahadevrao :** I got more freedom and respect in that industry compared to the industry here.

**Bapu Watve :** No but the discipline, overall behaviour of the artists.

**Sahadevrao :** I got to learn there and as I was more low profile than the people there, I had more freedom.

**Bapu Watve :** So particularly you got more respect there. The discipline is more there, than here isn't it?

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, it is more.

**Bapu Watve :** Or

**Sahadevrao :** In that, I tell you one thing, there was a small incident. After the picture Ramrajya was completed, there was a time that for one-two months, I had to stay at

home, so I came to Nashik. After coming to Nashik, Aundhkar recommended me to Prabhat Company.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** And someone told people like Damle, Fattelal, about me, so I went there. This happened after Ramrajya was completed.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes.

**Sahadevrao :** So after calling me, they said, we will appoint you with us. How much you will have. So I said I cannot tell anything myself, this was before Gemini. But I said, for the Telugu, Tamil pictures that I did, there are agreements, which I shall show you. So, I said you can pay what you wish. So they said these Telugu, Tamil people are outsiders, one can say when they will go back when they will leave the industry. Today Prabhat has a big reputation in Maharashtra. If you stay here, you will get recognition, you will get fame under the Prabhat banner. I said I don't want that, just tell me what you will pay. On that, they said we will give you 50 rupees salary.

**Bapu Watve :** Ha..

**Sahadevrao :** I said, today in that market, Tamil, Telugu people give me 150 rupees, you have seen it.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, yes

**Sahadevrao :** And in Bombay, those people give me 65 rupees and you are giving me 50 rupees. Now I cannot say more. If due to the wish of God, or luck, I have to touch your feet but today the situation is not like that. Staying under the banner of Prabhat, I cannot maintain my children. My household is growing, so all that expense; I cannot afford that. If the need arises, I will come, but today the situation is not like that. But

said, forgive me, but I cannot stay like that. So the situation is; where it grows, it does not sell.

**Bapu Watve :** So your real worth was recognized in the South.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, so when I told them like that, they felt it was not true. They said see, they may cheat you there; so I said no, I don't think so, I have some experience there.

**Bapu Watve :** No, but what was the experience of artists? Just like they do here, did our Hindi artists were exhibiting arrogance there, in Madras?

**Sahadevrao :** What?

**Bapu Watve :** In Madras also our Hindi artists behaved arrogantly?

**Sahadevrao :** But almost by the time I left, then I was nearly the last, because before that there were some technicians, but due to some reasons...

**Bapu Watve :** No, no artists meaning actors, the actress went there.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes

**Bapu Watve :** To work in your Madrasi meaning Hindi pictures.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes.

**Bapu Watve :** Like here, did they harass the producer there?

**Sahadevrao :** I was the first one to go there. Then Latabai came. Latabai Mangeshkar was not as famous then, but in Chandralekha etc. S. S. Vasan told that do not to be nervous here. We have your Maharashtra here, and he introduced me to her. 'Whatever you require, you tell him.' He told me that no want of her should be unmet. Keep our company's honour intact. Nothing should be unfulfilled for her. Like that all the Bombay artists, like Lalitabai, Durgabai, Leela Chitnis, Jayashree, Rajashree and Jayashree's daughter. At the same age when Jayashree came to me to work at the time

of Chandrarao More, at the same age her daughter Rajashree came to me to work for Gharana.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes Rajashree.

**Sahadevrao :** At the same age.

**Bapu Watve :** No, no, what I was asking was, Hindi artists of Mumbai harass the producer quite a lot.

**Sahadevrao :** Where?

**Bapu Watve :** Madras.. no, I mean at Mumbai

**Sahadevrao :** At Madras, they were used very well, given good respect. No not at all because there was no reason to give trouble. They quoted whatever figures that came to their mouth, demanded that and the same money was given to them. They did not earn that much in Mumbai itself.

**Bapu Watve :** Ha.

**Sahadevrao :** And then what happened at the end, was, when I decided to leave from there, I had made the acquaintance of your Rajendra Kumar, your Raj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar, all. So they said 'Why you are living there again, why don't you come to Mumbai'. So I asked them 'You have seen both the Bombay Market and Madras Market. There I was getting respect, and here all respect to me is on your makeup'.

**Bapu Watve :** Hmm..

**Sahadevrao :** So I said, the industry was in the hands of technicians there, means what the technicians say, you have to accept, here what you say, technicians accept. So there is no point in getting in this tussle. After coming here I said I take 1000 rupees salary there and after coming here work for 200-300 rupees. Said you can help me, but I don't want your charity, I should get from the company. Now getting that is not



necessary for me. After that when we came here, there were some old people from Phalke's days started getting some donations as honorary payment, so...

**Bapu Watve :** Government help.

**Sahadevrao :** Yes, then all of them who you visit and talk to, we're getting and get honorary payment.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok..

**Sahadevrao :** So these people came to me after I came here. What they told me 'After working for so many years, you were the main person of Phalke. The real deserving person is you rather than us. So you should get the honorary payment. So you make an application. So I said show me what application you have written. They have written this application. 'We have now become old. We find it difficult to feed ourselves. What do we do in this age.' So on reading that I said writing like this is an insult of my guru. Phalke was a guru to me, he taught his art to me, on that art we survived for so many years, and the children have done their education, these children are treating me like a king here.

**Bapu Watve :** Yes, it is an insult for those children also.

**Sahadevrao :** It is an insult for all. So I said, it is not the case that my children are not looking after me, no one is looking after me, I have become old, like that. So what we can do is they can call me with honour and even if they give me five rupees, they are like five lakhs to me. But giving an application and getting charity has not to point. Because of this, I did not go there. They did not call me and I also did not go.

**Bapu Watve :** I see, but now you are very happy?

**Sahadevrao :** Very happy. Now, this is the last phase. Just saying god's prayers. Children are looking after me. Sons, daughters, all of us. Finally, after doing all this

hard work, everyone is provided for. The place which was bought, a society is formed there because our first bungalow was not convenient for all as there were five sons, it was not sufficient for five families. So what we did, we made a society on half the property. So with a flat in the name of each, everyone has a property worth 2-3 lakhs in their name. They are managing their households. They are happy, they are supporting, feeding us. We are just doing pooja for the gods and spending our last times...

**Bapu Watve :** No, no the industry has given you a lot.

**Sahadevrao :** Hmm..

**Bapu Watve :** Film industry has given you quite a lot.

**Sahadevrao :** To tell the truth my final life was established because of S. S. Vasam.

**Bapu Watve :** I see, so one Dadasaheb Phalke

**Sahadevrao :** Dadasaheb Phalke and S. S. Vasam.

**Bapu Watve :** Vasam made your life.

**Sahadevrao :** And these two, Phalke treated me like a son and Vasam treated me like a relative. In no way there was never any insult, nothing was ever lacking. Not only me even my family, even he used to send the car home for my wife.

**Bapu Watve :** Ok.