



The Path to Progress through Unity – My Journey

By Geeta Gulabrao Paydelwar

A woman is not just someone who takes care of her family — she is capable of guiding the entire society.

With this belief, my sisters and I started the organization **“Yuva va Mahila Perki Sangathan, Kamptee”** in 2010.

Together, we joined hands and began our journey toward **social upliftment and empowerment**.

Our Objectives

- To unite the Perki community
- To take a firm stand against dowry and dowry-related deaths
- To curb violence against women and female foeticide
- To bring together young men and women for community development

Though the Perki community is small, true strength emerges only when every family becomes connected to the whole.

Building Trust Through Savings

Our sisters in Kamptee were inspired by the women of Nagpur.

We were economically weak, but by coming together and saving small amounts, we created big changes.

1. *Monthly Fund of ₹200*

- Each woman contributed ₹200 per month.
- Needy sisters were given financial help at 3% interest.
- Later, the total amount and interest were shared equally among all.

“Our money, our needs, and our benefit.”

2. *Firecracker Fund (₹100 per month)*

- During Diwali, utensils, sweets, and firecrackers were distributed to all members.
- Celebrating joy together — that was the true sparkle of our Diwali!

3. VC – Voluntary Collection

- Contributions ranged from ₹250 to ₹5000.
- Help was extended for education, marriage, business, and healthcare.
- No one had to borrow money at high interest again.
- Immediate help was given to those in urgent need; others received assistance in turn.

4. Creation of Larger Funds

- Funds of ₹500, ₹2000, and ₹5000 were created in different categories.
- A total fund in lakhs was raised.
- Women gained **employment, financial stability, and confidence** while staying at home.

Struggles and Success

In the beginning, we faced opposition from within the community.
But we did not give up, because we knew —

“The poor become poorer and the rich become richer, only when trapped in the web of interest.”

So we decided —

“If our community stands together, helping one another, we can surely achieve progress.”

Cultural Activities

Along with community work, we organized various cultural programs:

- International Women’s Day
- Haldi-Kunku Ceremony
- Kojagiri Pournima Celebrations
- Anti-Dowry Dance Performances

In **2013**, during one such Haldi-Kunku program, **MLA Chandrashekhar Bawankule** attended as the chief guest.

He announced a **grant of ₹10 lakhs** for a community center.

At that moment, we proudly proved —

“We are no less than anyone!”

Journey Towards Nagpur

After Kamptee, my journey extended to Nagpur.

- Started **VC initiatives** there in 2014.
- Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, we ran online VC successfully.
- Whether in education, health, or personal crises — women continued to support each other with unity and strength.

The Present

Today, through our initiatives

“Nirmal Perki Mahila Mandal” and **“Krishna Savings Group,”**
we manage a **monthly VC fund of up to ₹1.5 lakh.**

Many sisters have gained

employment, savings discipline, self-confidence, and recognition in society.

My Message

Now, at the age of 60, when I look back, I realize —

“If we stay united, work sincerely, and serve selflessly,
any community can rise and prosper.”

Dear young women,

Money, position, and prestige fade away with time,

but the **satisfaction of working for society** — that is the true wealth of life.

Inspirational Thoughts

- “A great fruitful tree always bends low — just like a truly wise person is always humble.”
- “Hatred never ends by hatred; only friendship can end hatred.”
- “Actions done with pride bear no fruit,
but those done with sacrifice yield great rewards.”

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“Unity is the true path to progress.”