

SHRI. DATTATREYA DESHPANDE NIMONKAR

VETERAN DEVOTEE OF SHIRDI SAI BABA PASSES AWAY

12th Jan 2012



Veteran Shirdi Sai Baba Devotee Shri Dattatreya Deshpande Nimonkar, 95 years, popularly known as Datta passed away peacefully on 11th January 2012 at Nimon - a village, 20 miles from Shirdi, Maharashtra.

He was Shankar Rao Raghunath Deshpande alias Nana Saheb Nimonkar's nephew. Shri. Dattatreya Nimonkar had prophesied his journey to Baba, when he visited Shirdi a week before his death to bid farewell to one of his very close friend, he did not visit Sai Baba's Samadhi Temple. When questioned, he explained that since he will be going to Baba in few

days, so why now! Just, before the start of Datta's funeral procession, an anonymous devotee from Shirdi came to Nimon Village and applied the Sacred Sandalwood paste (which was applied on Sai Baba's Idol in Shirdi) on Datta and also put a Shawl (that was put on Sai Baba's Samadhi in Shirdi) on him.

How Sai Baba graced his blessings on Shri.Dattatreya Nimonkar

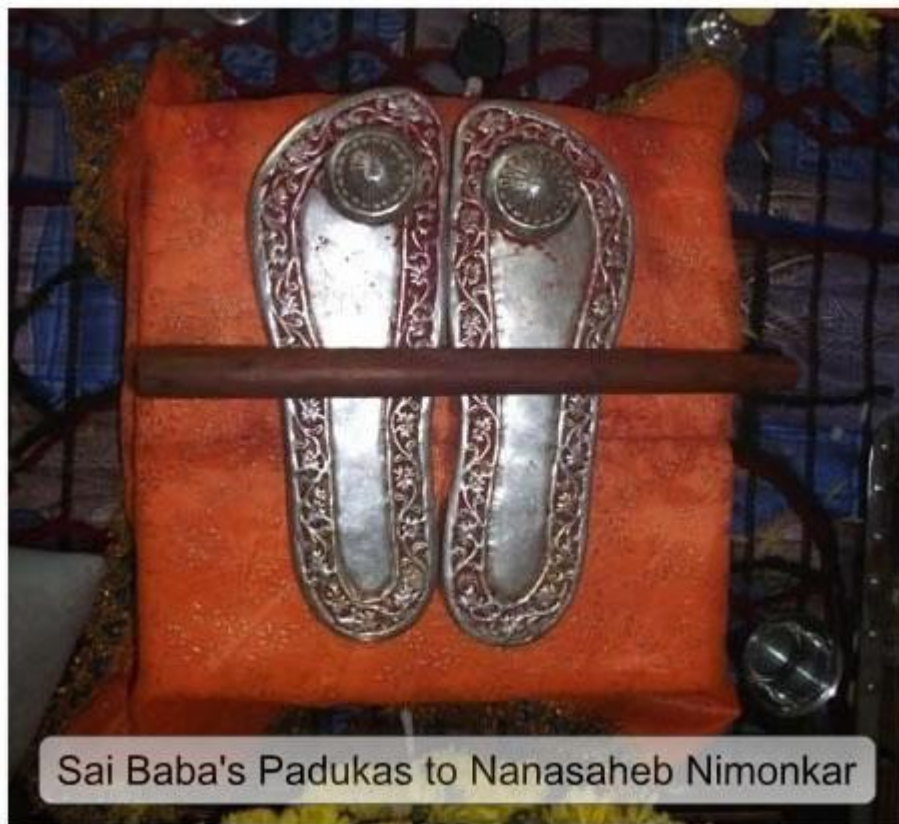
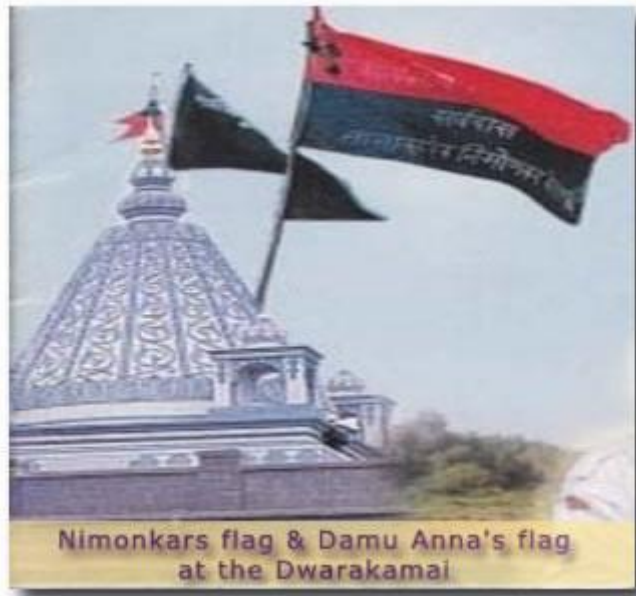
The ancestors of Shri. Dattatreya Nimonkar hailed from Nimongaon in Maharashtra, so they were called the Nimonkars. They were Deshpande by caste. Nimon or Nimongaon is a village about 20 miles away from Shirdi in Maharashtra. His grandfather, Shri. Nana Saheb Nimonkar, was Madhavrao Deshpande's (Shama's) paternal uncle. Shama and his ancestors also hailed from Nimongaon. When Shama was 2 years old they moved to Shirdi.

Shri. Balwantrao (Shama's father) got Nana Sahib to Shirdi for Baba's darshan and since then Nana stayed on in Shirdi. Nana Saheb's nephew, Dattatreya was born in December of 1917 when plague was playing havoc in Poona. So Nana Sahib's son, Shri. Somnath Shankar Deshpande, (C.I.D. Inspector at Poona), decided to go to Nimongaon along with Gopalrao, his 3 year old son because his brother's wife had been recently delivered of a child in Nimongaon. On the way they stopped at Shirdi to have Sai Baba's darshan. When they were about to leave, Baba gave Udi to them and said, "Porala Jiva Love" i.e., "Save the child". Somnath thought that Baba had blessed his child Gopalrao, so he gave him the Udi.

On reaching Nimongaon, Somnath found his brother's new born baby to be in extreme bad health, and all hope of its life was given up. The child, only 12 days old, was blue and cold, and was gasping for air. It was then that Somnath realised that Baba had given him Udi to save Dattatreya's life. Frantically he searched for the Udi but could not find it as it was lost during the journey. So, Somnath took the child and sent a fervent prayer to Baba to save the child.

Baba came to his aid and after 15 minutes, the body temperature of the baby returned to normal and the breathing grew steady. And soon the baby's condition improved and was later named Padmakar. When Padmakar was 2 months old, he was taken to Shirdi to have the darshan of Sai Baba. Baba Himself took the Padmakar in His lap and said "Here is my Datta" (God's gift). Hence Padmakar was named as 'Datta'. Datta was a bright lad and studied up to 7th standard in Marathi medium school. He participated in all the activities of the village & as his civic duty he voted during the elections.

He owned vast acres of land, and he made a living by farming.



Shri. Dattatreya Deshpande Nimonkar was the uncle of Shri.Nandakumar Revannath Deshpande Nimonkar, who is the present guardian of the holy Padukas given by Sai Baba himself to Nana Saheb Nimonkar in 1898 but were allowed for public darshan only after 2008, when Baba advised Shri. Nandakumar in his dreams to do so.

Also since the first Ramanavami celebrations in 1911 @ Shirdi, it was Nana Saheb Nimonkar, followed by the descendants of Nimonkar's who supply the Green Embroidered flag every Ramanavami, which along with other Flags is hoisted on the roof of Dwarakamai.

Source: saiamrithadhara.com