



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Sharadkrishna Thakre's vision told him that the root causes of poverty lie in uncontrolled population and lack of quality education. The LHP initiatives aim at achieving this vision.

Corporate social Responsibility (CSR) is a term 'in vogue' these days. There is one strikingly different entrepreneur in the rather 'away-from-highway' town, Solapur who has been interpreting CSR in his own manner for quite a long period of time. He is Sharadkrishna Thakre, Managing Director of Laxmi Hydraulics Pvt Ltd, popularly known as LHP.

CSR is often supposed to mean 'the responsibility of the corporate sector for a healthy society.' Sharadkrishna Thakre goes a step further and interprets CSR not as just the responsibility of the corporates; but as the 'sole purpose of business'. This zealous missionary attitude of looking at CSR has been adopted at LHP, the electric Motor manufacturing company brought up by him since 1981. The same attitude is responsible for several optimistically positive changes, which are evident in Solapur today, which has proved beneficial to the people of Solapur. And that time is not far when this will bring about total social transformation in a wider section of society.

Here are only a few instances of what miracles can happen if such an attitude is adopted by any corporate organization.

LHP manufactures high quality flame proof and standard Motors up to 355 frame and pumps and is recognized as a major industry in Solapur. This 'National Quality Award' winner company has ISO 9000-2000 certified world class manufacturing set-up with capacity of 20,000 motors per month.



*Mr Sharadkrishna Thakre
MD, Laxmi Hydraulics Pvt Ltd*



Blood Donation Camp

The Beginning

When Sharadkrishna Thakre, an engineer from Dhulia, per chance came to Solapur to pay a casual visit to a friend in 1980, his mind was grieved to see the rueful, derelict state of this 'one-time-prosperous-textile-hub'. People were migrating to larger cities in search of employment. Sharadkrishna Thakre chose Solapur for setting up his company as he felt it is his duty to generate employment for the people. (The term 'CSR' was, perhaps, unheard of at that time, 25 years ago!) And employment he did generate. Today, LHP provides bread and butter, directly or indirectly, to at least 5,000 families in the vicinity of Solapur.

Once, the responsibility was realized, attitude developed and ends were fixed, automatically the means were evolved. For Sharadkrishna Thakre, his immediate family and society has always been the LHP Team members. Being convinced that 'social reforms begin from your own family', various schemes and activities were introduced in LHP, which touched every aspect of life in a very constructive way. The schemes and activities aim at improving the family members' health and education, fighting evils such as growth in population, pollution and addictions. The response of the LHP Team has always been most positive and enthusiastic and their participation whole hearted and voluntary.

Health

For instance, blood, which is a basic necessity of the sick and ailing. LHP has been consistently holding blood donation camps annually for several years. As a result, LHP is a reliable source banked upon by blood banks in the city.

Today LHP has been turned into a tobacco-free zone which has dissuaded LHP team members from falling prey to harmful addictions of tobacco.

Sharadkrishna Thakre has developed a team devoted to setting up a 500-bed charitable, super speciality hospital in rural area of Solapur district. He

is also supporting this through personal funding and devoting quality time to ensure the speedy progress.

Sharadkrishna Thakre's vision told him that the root causes of poverty lie in uncontrolled population and lack of quality education. This dedicated corporate leader who believes in 'practice rather than preaching' foresaw the welfare of society and decided to give extra increment to his employees who practice family planning. This benefit is extended to 96 employees so far.

LHP is situated in MIDC Chincholi zone in which the Govt. ESIC (Employees' State Insurance Corporation) schemes are not applicable and as a result workers engaged in Industries there are deprived of getting medical aid at affordable fees. Sensing this basic need of his workers, LHP has arranged a private dispensary within its factory premises.

Non-refundable financial assistance for major medical treatment / operation to dependents of employees who are not in a position to bear expenses is also provided by LHP.

Education

Perhaps, a unique experiment in India! LHP employees' children who score more than 85% marks are given special scholarships encouraging even team members from lower social strata to provide quality education to their wards. School children's natural talents are given an outlet through various competitions at LHP, which always receive thumping response by the young ones. This scheme started in year 2006 and number of children who are awarded these scholarship this year is 70.

Such acts seem small, but they certainly highlight the conviction that 'charity begins at home' and will ultimately change the future, usher in prosperity and a self-sufficient generation.

Sharadkrishna Thakre does his share in the field of education by being the advisor of some reputed



Children scoring high marks being awarded special scholarships

engineering colleges in and around Solapur. LHP has adopted the ITI at Pandharpur for bringing about an elevation in the standard of education imparted there and for assured employment.

LHP has also provided financial support to build a school building and infrastructure for computer training in a rural area school in north Maharashtra.

LHP offers full educational support to few selected meritorious students who can not afford engineering education at Solapur Engineering College and also supports by job offers.

Rain Water Harvesting

LHP takes pride in practicing several eco-friendly, anti-pollution industrial practices. Rainwater is regularly harvested by this environment-friendly corporate organization of Solapur, still labeled as a drought-prone, arid area. A huge lake constructed in Mr Thakre's private farm accumulates precious rainwater and helps thousands of acres of land of neighboring farmers in making it extremely fertile.

Other Initiatives

For getting clean and green surrounding, abundant trees are planted within and around LHP and 2,000 potted plants are donated to hospitals and neighboring industries. LHP provided financial help to build a hostel for destitute women, who were deprived of economical and financial support from their families. To rehabilitate the physically challenged persons, LHP offers job opportunities.

LHP has also proposed to the Pandharpur Police that it will bear all expenses for getting ISO certification for the Police for organising Kartiki and Ashadhi Pandharpur Yatra as the same will benefit the Police to manage Lakhs of devotees (Varkarees) effectively every year.

No wonder, the people of Solapur City had chosen Mr Thakre the best Solapurean of the year in 2007. Mr Thakre regards this as an acknowledgement for his work. He aspires multiplying LHP's turnover to 500 crore by year 2015 and according to him, this would be his best contribution to the society as it will create immense employment to the natives.