

# Rajagopal P.V.

PV Rajagopal (known as Rajaji) is from a Gandhian family and schooling in south India and he came to the northern part of India in 1970 during Mahatma Gandhi's 100 birth centenary. Rajaji began his work on non-violence when he spent 6 years working with the dacoits (outlaws) in Chambal region of India. In 1976 more than 500 people gave up arms and moved into settled life and much of this was the result of hard work of Rajaji and others. From here he spent the next fifteen years building the capacity of rural youth through training programs and different initiatives. In 1993 became the Secretary of Gandhi Peace Foundation, and subsequently was the Vice-Chair. In the mid-1990s the work of Rajaji was galvanized into a mass movement. In 1999-2000 he began to carry out long-marches across the country in different states. In 2007 he carried out the largest non-violent march which was known as the Janadesh 2007. In this he led 25,000 on a one-month march from Gwalior to Delhi. In 2012 Rajagopal will be leading a march of 100,000 people to the capital of the nation to demand peoples control over land and livelihood resources.



**Date of Birth:** 6<sup>th</sup> June 1948

## **Place of Birth**

Thillankery, Cannanore district of Kerala State

## **Address:**

Ekta Parishad

P2/A Jangpura Extension

New Delhi-110014

Mobile No : +91-9993501112

E-mail: [rajagopal@ektaparishad.com](mailto:rajagopal@ektaparishad.com)

Website: [www.ektaparishad.com](http://www.ektaparishad.com), [www.jansatyagraha.org](http://www.jansatyagraha.org)

## **Educational Qualifications:**

- ☞ Diploma in Agricultural Engineering in Nai Talim system of education
- ☞ Diploma in traditional art and music from a reputed organization in Kerala
- ☞ Visharat in Hindi
- ☞ Comparative field study on educational methods (Nai Talim Vs Folk High School system) in The Netherlands

## Work Experience:

- 1970 – 1976 As **Secretary** of **MGSA** (Mahatma Gandhi Seva Ashram) Jaura, Morena, Madhya Pradesh, actively engaged in **mass-surrender and rehabilitation of dacoits in Chambal** region of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.
- Organized **regional and national youth training** programmes to promote the concept of **non-violent action for social change**. Undertook educational and rural development activities in Chambal region to re-establish peace.
- 1976-1978 With Gandhi Ashram **Chuchuyimlang** (State of Nagaland, northeast border of India) to **promote village industries to create employment** for Naga youth and also to promote peace in the region.
- 1979 As a **consultant** to Nehru Seva Sangh Banpur, State of Orissa, in their development work.
- 1980-1985 As **President** of two major voluntary organizations in Madhya Pradesh (**PRAYOG**, based in Raipur, **Navarachana** based in Jabalpur). Both these organizations were actively engaged in a process of training village youths to become social workers.
- As **National Convener** of **P C I** (Partners Council India), a network of voluntary bodies that were engaged among the poorer section of the society.
- As **Asia representative in inter-continental council** set up by BAM - International (Headquarters in Paris) to promote the concept of International solidarity and partnership in developmental action with a **special focus on poverty eradication**.
- 1985-1990 Promoted and supported various initiatives in Madhya Pradesh as President of four major voluntary bodies. (Prayog, Navarachana, Grameen Vikas Pratishthan and Grameen Yuva Abhikram).
- As **Enquiry Commissioner of the Supreme Court** on Bonded Labour issues releasing and rehabilitating more than 6000 bonded laborers in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh
- As **President of ORDBL** (Organization for Release and Development of Bonded Laborers) in the State of Tamil Nadu (to be continued).

Engaged in **promotion of State and National level Federation** of Voluntary Organizations, i.e. Federation of Voluntary Agencies in Madhya Pradesh, Voluntary Action Network of India (VANI), etc.

1990-1993

As convener of Peoples Organization EKTA PARISHAD to promote the concept of people as main players in democracy, non-violent action for socio-economic change and people's capacity to make the state accountable. Also coordinated a campaign for land reform in Madhya Pradesh.

1993-1997

As a **Secretary of Gandhi Peace Foundation**, New Delhi, actively engaged in a process of peace making in areas where armed conflicts were going on. (continued as Board Member)

As a **Treasurer of South-South Solidarity**, a voluntary body specially created to link voluntary agencies and workers within southern countries (**Head office, New Delhi, India**)

As a **Secretary cum Treasurer of Focus on the Global South**, a body set-up to promote micro-macro linkage in analysis and action. (**Head office Bangkok, Thailand**)

As a **Board Member of INASIA**, a network of voluntary bodies of Asia with its **head office in Colombo, Sri Lanka**.

As a **Convener of N C C R W** (National Campaign for Rural Workers) under which Peoples Organizations, Voluntary Bodies and Trade Unions came together to address the problems of the unorganized sector. (till the end of 1996)

As a **Chair** of India's north region advisory committee of **C A A** Community Aid Abroad, an Australian NGO supporting voluntary efforts in India.

As a **President** of **CHARKA** an organization set up by a well known social worker late Sanjay Ghosh to sensitize the media towards the work of voluntary bodies and also to support involvement of young upcoming journalist in rural development work.

1997-2000

As a board **member** of **Gandhi Bhawan** based in Bhopal, an organization providing support to large number of voluntary bodies and peoples organizations in Madhya Pradesh.

As **President** of Madhya Pradesh **Sevak Sangh**, a Gandhian – Sarvodaya body, specially set up to support the workers in their continues development.

As a **Secretary** of **CESCI** (Centre For Experiencing Socio-Cultural Interaction) based in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. That promoting the concept of International Solidarity among institution and individuals engaged in poverty eradication.

As **National Convenor** of **EKTA PARISHAD**, a mass based organization actively working in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand and Bihar the central belt of India on the issue of peoples control over livelihood resources.

President of Manav Jeevan Samitee- An organization committed to provide skill training to youth.

1999 – 2008

As a **Founder and Managing Trustee** of **Ekta FoundationTrust** based in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.the organisation created that promoting the concept of economic empowerment of rural artisans/traditional craft producers and with providing marketing linkages and International Solidarity among institution and individuals engaged in poverty eradication.

2001

**Member** of **State level Task Force** constituted by the Govt. of Madhya Pradesh for solving the land issues in Madhya Pradesh

**Member** of **Madhya Pradesh Bio-diversity Board** constituted by the Govt. of Madhya Pradesh

**Member** of **Anti Liquor Board** constituted by the Govt. of Madhya Pradesh

2003 -

Director of Biore India Limited, Khargone, Madhya Pradesh

2004

Actively involved in coordinating rehabilitation of Tsunami effected people of Tamil Nadu and Kerala

2005

Elected as a **Vice Chairman** of **Gandhi Peace Foundation**, New Delhi, actively engaged in a process of peace making in areas where armed conflicts were going on.

2006

**Jury member** in the **National Innovation Award** Committee

**Member** of the project **Steering committee** set up by **Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India** (NGO Section)

**Member** of **National Council of Rural Institute** under the **Ministry of Human Resource Development**

**Member of the sub committee on land relations** constituted by the **Planning Commission, Government of India**

**Member of the Investigation Team (PESA Area)** constituted by the **Ministry of Panchayat, Government of India**

**India Co-ordinator** for the campaign Disarmament to combat poverty. A campaign jointly organised by France, India and Pakistan

**Convenor** of South Asia Peace Alliance (**SAPA**) jointly organised by India, Nepal, Pakistan, Srilanka its secretariat based in Delhi.

2007 **Chairman** of the Selection Committee for Vice Chancellor for Gandhigram Rural Institute, Dindigal, Tamil Nadu

2008 **Member** of National council for Land reforms under the chairmanship of Prime Minister of India

**Member** of the Palestine Tribunal , an international ground engaged in peace between Israel and Palestine

**Member of Barcelona Consensus-** An international group trying to resolve conflict and promote peace across the Globe

**Founding Member and President** of Sambhav- An organization working among the Saharia tribes of Chambal Ghati.

**President** of Pragati Organization in Bihar working with the marginalized communities

2010 **President** Kshitij Organization in Chattisgarh

**President** of Dharma Bharati Mission- A national organization working for eradication of Cast, Corruption and Hunger

Board Member – Dignity International- An international organization working with urban poor with its Headquarters in Jakarta

Involved in Peace Process in Assam and North East of India

President of many voluntary bodies in Malwa, MP, Gaya and Bihar

2011 **President** of Kerala Gram Nirmaan Samitee- A network organization working for empowerment and employment of women in 5 districts of Kerala.

**Manager** of Basic Education School- Promoting Nai-Taleem Education and Nai-Taleem Teachers Training

**Special Invitee** of Sarva Seva Sangh- A national body of Gandhian organization.

**Member** of Gandhi Seva Sangh- An organization working to promote Gandhian literature especially on Nai Taleem

**Member** of the Planning Coming Working Group for the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan on Disadvantaged Farmers

Board Member of National Advocacy Center, Pune

Member of Institutional Ethics Committee of the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Institute for the Physicall Handicapped, New Delhi

### Campaigns Organized

- 1999 – 2001 Organized “**Bhoo-Adhikar Satyagraha Padyatra**” in **Madhya Pradesh**, covering more than 3000 kilometers in 190 days **10<sup>th</sup> Decemebr 1999 to 18<sup>th</sup> June 2000**) to ensure right to live with dignity for tribals and dalits, with the support of many landless peasants.
- Organized “**Bhoo-Adhikar Satyagraha Padyatra**” in **Bihar** from **11<sup>th</sup> September to 11<sup>th</sup> October 2001**. The padyatra covered 500 kilometers traveling through many villages across six districts of Bihar.
- 2002 Organized on People’s **Campaign Against Injustice and Violence**” covering 216 kilometers from **15<sup>th</sup> April to 1<sup>st</sup> May 2002** in Morena district of **Chambal Valley**
- 2003 Organized “**Bhoo-Adhikar Yatra**” in Chhattisgarh from **30<sup>th</sup> January to 28th February 2003**
- Organized “**Bhoo-Adhikar Yatra**” in Bundel Baghelkhand Region of Madhya Pradesh
- Organized “**Bhoo-Adhikar Yatra**” in Mahakoshal Region of Madhya Pradesh
- 2004 Organized “**Bhoo-Adhikar Satyagraha yatra**” in Orissa from **30<sup>th</sup> January to 11<sup>th</sup> February 2004**. The padyatra covered seven districts traveling through many villages across two regions (Central & Western) of Orissa.
- 2005 Organized “**Bhoo-Adhikar Yatra**” in Gariabandh area of Chhattisgarh

2006 Organized “**Bhoomi Adhikar Yatra**” in the tsunami affected area of Tamil Nadu

Organised Chetawani yatra from Gwalior to Delhi on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October

Organised a Dharna in Jantar mantar, New Delhi on the 16 - 20<sup>th</sup> of October

2007 Organised many national level campaigns on land and livelihood issue  
Organised Janadesh 2007 a Historical march on land and livelihood rights.

Organised and led the Janadesh Yatra where 25000 people did foot march from Gwalior to Delhi on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October to 28<sup>th</sup> of October around 350 kilometers.

**Special Mention:** Traveled through various countries of the world, addressing hundreds of groups on issues related to marginalized people and the need for non violence as a method for change.

Organized training sessions in European countries on non violence in practice

Organized hundreds of youth camps in different parts of India to train youths as social workers.

**Publications:** Published more than hundred’s **articles**, mostly in Hindi-language on various subjects pertaining to development approach, and its impact which were carried by a number of newspapers and magazines.

Editor of a monthly publication **EKTA Sandesh** (Voice of Unity),  
Mainly to give voice to the voiceless.

Editor of a monthly news letter **e-news** mainly to give voice to the voiceless.

Editor of a Bi-monthly publication **Ahimsa-Nonviolence**, to promote the concept of peace and non-violence, published from Madurai, Tamil Nadu

As one of the contributing editors of People’s Centered Development Forum in U.S.A.

**Book lets:** Voice of Hope and Voice for Change (English)– A collection of articles by

Rajagopal P.V. published by National Center for Advocacy Studies,  
Pune

Land for Life (English) A collection of village data during the foot  
march by Rajagopal P.V. published by National Center for Advocacy  
Studies,  
Pune

Main ne Dekha Hain (Hindi)-A collection of village stories during the  
foot march by Rajagopal P.V. published by Ekta Parishad

Pagdandiyom par paav (Hindi)-A collection of village people's story  
during the foot march by Rajagopal P.V. published by Ekta Parishad

Main Gulamon ki Basti se Gujar raha hoon (Hindi)-A collection of  
village based story during the foot march by Rajagopal P.V. published  
by Ekta Parishad

Main ne Dekha Hain (Hindi)-A collection of village based story during  
the foot march by Rajagopal P.V. published by Ekta Parishad

Jo Ghar Khoya Apana (Hindi)-A collection of village data during the  
foot march by Rajagopal P.V. published by Ekta Parishad

Sab ki apani Ho Jameen (Hindi)-A collection of village data during the  
foot march by Rajagopal P.V. published by Ekta Parishad

### **Communication for Change (Audio/Visual on Rajagopal)**

- Film of Janadesh in English, Hindi, Spanish, German and French
- Book on Rajagopal by Mr. Julius a known book writer in German.
- Film by Belinda on Orissa footmarch
- Film by Vikram on Rajagopal and his initiatives
- Film by Praveen Pagare on Peoples Movement Processes
- Many interviews in Indian and international newspapers, and magazines.

### **Awards:**

2008 Friend of the Poor award by Orissa Culture & youth organisation  
K. Janardhanan Pillai Endowment award – Kerala

2010 Swaraj Millenium Award by Swadeshi, Kerala

2011 Award for achievements in the social field by Purnodaya Trust in  
Trissur, Kerala

Krishi Gaurav Award by Patanjali Pratishtan , Uttar Pradesh





