

Biography of Chief Guest

Shri Chandi Prasad Bhatt is a Gandhian environmentalist and social activist, who founded Dasholi Gram Swarajya Sangh (DGSS) in Gopeshwar in 1964, which later became a mother-organization to the Chipko Andolan (Hug the Trees Movement), in which he was one of the pioneers. The aim of this Sangh was to organise fellow villagers in Gopeshwar for employment near their homes in forest-based industries, making wooden implements from ash trees and gathering and marketing herbs for ayurvedic medicine and to combat vice and exploitation. Along with Shri Sunderlal Bahuguna, he gave momentum to the Chipko Andolan, one of the few environmental struggles that had a large number of village women participating in it, which ultimately led to revision of forest policies. He was appointed a member of the 'National Forest Commission' in 2003, which reviewed all existing policies and legal frameworks relating to forest management and submitted its report to the Government in 2005.

He was greatly inspired by Gandhian leader Jayaprakash Narayan and involved himself in the Sarvodaya movement and Gandhian campaigns of Bhoodan and Gramdan and organising villages for economic development and fighting liquor abuse throughout the Uttarakhand. Shri Bhatt is the recipient of Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership (1982), the Padma Bhushan award by Government of India (2005) and the Gandhi Peace Prize (2013).

He is known for his work on subaltern social ecology, and considered one of the India's first modern environmentalists. He continues his struggle to save the environment through the activities of DGSS. Email: cpb.gopeshwar@gmail.com, eph_dgsm@rediffmail.com