



Bringing our country's youth into the mainstream of nation and society is my objective – Dr. Ashok Kumar Gadiya

Dr. Ashok Kumar Gadiya originally hails from Chittorgarh District of Rajasthan. He has been residing in the National Capital Region of Delhi for the last 35 years. After his B.Com, Dr. Gadiya completed his CA. Subsequently, he also obtained a PhD. Married to Shrimati Asha Devi, Dr. Gadiya has two sons – Arpit, who is an engineer by profession, and Amit, who is a Chartered Accountant.

A writer and social thinker, Dr. Gadiya is an educationist by profession. He believes that our society is in such a miserable condition today because of some politicians, bureaucrats, industrialists and unsocial elements. He thinks that the structure of our social system should be such that it is controlled by the people rather than being merely appointed by the people. A new movement is required to bring about this change, and this movement is possible only if educated youth of this country who are truly inspired by Indian ethos come forward to make it happen. Hence, Dr. Gadiya envisages an educational system for the youth of our nation that not only provides higher education but also links the edifice of education to the noble ideals of Indian tradition espoused by the sages and social thinkers of this country. Dr. Gadiya has been continuously engaged in bringing the youth into the mainstream of society through such a noble educational system. Here are the excerpts from an in-depth interview that delves into Dr. Gadiya's life and his contribution to society:

Q. We have heard that you are a practicing chartered accountant, and that you have a CA firm. You are also very much devoted to this profession and you have a sound income from this. Can you tell us something about this?

A. Yes, I am a chartered accountant. I have been practicing as a CA since 1986, and I bear my own expenses and those of my family from the income I generate from my CA practice.

Q. Why and how did you enter the education sector?

A. I had an ardent desire since my student life that I should do something for the young generation. As soon as I got some free time after establishing my CA practice, this desire to educate the youth (boys & girls) got hold of me again. So in 1997-98 I, along with my close friend Shri Ashok Kumar Singhal, set up an institution for higher education.

Q. Can you tell us about the educational institutions you are associated with?

A. I am the Chairperson of Mewar University. I am also the chairperson of Mewar Institute of Management as well as Mewar Law Institute. In addition, I am the founding member of more than half a dozen educational institutions, Mewar Girls College and Nursing College.

Q. What are your aims and objectives in the field of education?

A. I am constantly making efforts along with my friends and colleagues to ensure that the new generation gets employment-based education so that they either get decent jobs or they become entrepreneurs themselves. In addition to getting the right education, the mindset of our youth needs to be aligned with the mainstream of our nation and society. If that is done, our youth will become not only successful citizens of the country but also true patriots. The youth must be sensitized to social issues in order to play the role of responsible citizens. That sums up my aims and objectives in the field of higher education.

Q. What have you thought about the students belonging to backward and poor sections of the society?

A. All the educational institutions set up or run by me are continuously engaged in providing the best education to students from backward and economically poor sections of the society. You will be delighted to know that out of 12,000 students, nearly 75% are from backward and poor sections of the society. I wish to make these students as competent and talented as those from resourceful and higher strata of the society. The students from backward and poor sections of SC / ST, OBC and others should be able to compete on the basis of their talent and not any special concession provided on compassionate grounds for their social uplift.

Q. How successful have you been so far in achieving these goals?

A. You will be glad to know that I have been extremely successful in achieving my goals. Thousands of students from my educational institutions, who were from backward and poor sections (SC & STs) of the society, have passed out since the year 1997-98, as Lawyers, Managers, Teachers, Engineers, etc. They are holding responsible positions and playing a very positive role in the society.

Q. How many students are there in your institutions, and what courses are they pursuing?

A. There are around 12,000 students altogether in all our educational institutions. Nearly all the students are from rural background. They are studying at all levels: graduation, post-graduation, PhD. Almost all the subjects are related to technology and are employment-friendly. Engineering, law, Management, Teacher Education, Pharmacy and Computer Science are the main subjects taught among the many courses run by our institutions. Students from all over India are studying in our institutions.

Q. How many students are there from J&K and why they have opted your University?

There are around 800 students from J&K running all courses offered by the University. They are all from rural J&K and from disturbed areas. We are providing quality education to them under Prime Minister's Scholarship programme.

Q. What have you done for the education of girls from backward and poor sections of the society?

A. You will be pleased to know that in Chittorgarh, which is also my birthplace, we have been running a girls college, Mewar Girls College, especially for the girls of the poor and backward sections of the society. Girls receive education here that is not only steeped in Indian culture and tradition but also an education that makes them gain employability with modern skills.

Q. What plans do you have for those students from backward and poor sections of who could not either pass their class 10 or who gave up education after passing class 10? How do you plan to get them educated and make them employable?

A. You have asked me a very good question. We have set up a skill development center, which runs 78 courses. The center aims at providing 200 hours of training and helps these students get employment. We do not charge any fees for this. Instead, the students get an honorarium of Rs. 2000. This is done under various employment-friendly schemes of the Government of India.

Q. Do you have any other programmes which helps the students to get Training and employment?

Yes. We do have. We are collaborating with Government, Non-governmental and reputed institutions in the country and abroad. These collaborations include faculty exchange, foreign students admission, consulting and others. In addition to these courses which create employment to girls immediately are also offered.

Q. What are you doing for nation building and social reforms through education?

A. All our educational institutions impart education that inspire students and train them to become patriotic and learn about social reforms needed in our society. We organize various Jayantis of our National heroes and National festivals with great fervor in which everyone participates. The objective behind this is to develop a deep sense of respect for our National heroes and follow the path shown by such heroes. Our educational institutions organize seminars, workshops and plays on such national themes from time to time. The purpose is to sensitize students to social issues and help them to grow the desire to work for the society. We also try to instill a sense of nationalism by organizing sports, extension activities and athletic events.

Q. What is the social responsibility of universities and educational institutions?

A. Their social responsibility is to provide employment-friendly education, instill a sense of nationalism and respect for national heroes and sensitize them to social issues. In brief, their objective should be to prepare responsible citizens and connect them with the national mainstream to provide higher education with quality to compete with other University students and also to provide need based, value based Higher education.

Q. Do you get competent and experienced teachers?

A. It is very difficult to get teachers who are really competent and experienced. There is an absolute dearth of such teachers. We take young teachers who are promising. We give them sufficient training and exposure so that they deliver their best. The avenues for the experienced and senior teachers are wide open. Due to mushroom growth of institution, experienced and senior teachers with quality are not much available.

Q. What do you do for the training of your teachers?

A. We organize a week-long training camp for teachers before the start of a new session in which they receive all kinds of training. This training is provided by our trained and senior experienced teachers with in-depth knowledge. We also send our teachers to attend seminars and workshops as well as undergo training outside of the university. We follow the NAAC policy of providing quality education through training. We provide training on our campus, depute them to Academic staff colleges in India, refresher courses and to training institutes.

Q. What are the training and employment opportunities for the students passing out of your institutions?

A. To provide training and employment opportunities is a built in phenomenon in our curriculum. Students from every course in our educational institutions are sent for 21-45 days training in various organizations. This training is provided in renowned government-recognized organizations. Additionally, the students are also called for placement by various companies. All students have to undergo a compulsory six month industrial internship in their last semester. It is our experience that students get jobs on their own after completing such training successfully.

Q. It is said that students coming out of today's educational system do not have the competency of getting a suitable job in industry and business organizations. How do you help your students to overcome this difficulty?

A. This is a good question. It all depends on the curriculum designing. We take a three-pronged approach to help students to overcome this. Firstly, it is compulsory for our students to attend personality development classes. Secondly, training is compulsory for our students. Thirdly, it is a must for our students to complete their internship from institutions which follow this three-pronged approach always produce competent and employable youth. It is only those institutions which do not pay attention to these three aspects where students face difficulty in getting employment.

Q. What is your opinion on unemployment, corruption, caste and class feelings, communalism, terrorism, robbery and violence against women, and how do you think these problems can be solved?

A. It's a very relevant question. I personally believe in one thing, i.e., casteless society. The one and only solution to all these problems is to provide appropriate education to our youth, give them good opportunities of employment and connect every youth with the mainstream of our life and society. If we can do these successfully, then these problems will get solved on their own. But if we fail to do so, then these problems will further grow in the future. If we provide good value based education, youth will answer and solve the above problems, when they become the party to decision making the above questions, will be answered.

Q. How do you feel living among the youth?

A. It feels great to be living among the youth. It reminds me my college days where I was participating in all Students Activities. I do not feel my age living among them.

Q. What are your plans for the future?

A. My entire life is dedicated to provide quality higher education to the young generation. I just wish to accomplish all those tasks and fulfill all the responsibilities that will contribute positively to the progress of our nation and society. I wish to ensure that the young generation gets good and qualitative education and international opportunities. They get the right employment. The students from downtrodden sections are placed in a good employment, decision making in Nation building and live on their value system, my desire is fulfilled. I also wish to align the youth of our nation with the mainstream of our nation and society. That's the only goal that I have in my life. My entire life is inspired by the ideals of Swami Vivekananda.

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