



My Bapu, My sole  
and  
unceasing support



## Santosh Rale, Rajgurunagar (Hawaldar, Indian Army) July 2009

Hari Om! I am Santoshsinh Tanaji Rale residing at Rajgurunagar, district Pune. I am 33 years old, married with a 5 years old son. Since childhood, I had a burning desire to join the Indian Army and serve the nation. I had to face several obstacles in order to achieve this. I continued to have faith in God and kept trying my best. After taking massive efforts, on August 27<sup>th</sup> 1994, my dream turned into reality and at the age of 18 years, I travelled to Belgaum for my training. I kept on achieving several milestones one after another and in 2001; I excelled in the Commando course. After that, I was posted near the Kashmir border in a region called Kupoda.

My wife heard about Sadguru Shree Aniruddha Bapu in the year 2003 and she immediately informed me about him and asked me to chant “Om Mansamarthyadata Shree Aniruddhaya Namah” mantra. From the time I got this mantra, **I would chant this mantra whenever I would face any obstacles or difficulties.** In fact I had not even seen Sadguru Aniruddha Bapu in person until the end of year 2008.

At the time of my posting in Kashmir, on August 21, 2008, I received a tip that a large group of Terrorists was about to enter India. At 9 pm, my senior officials sent me with a battalion of eight soldiers to the location from where the terrorists were to enter India. On reaching there, I learnt that the terrorists had passed through the area a day prior. On the same night, I got the news that these terrorists were about 7-8 kms inside the Line of Control (LOC). The terrorists had started firing at a different Indian Army unit at dawn the next day. My unit commander officer immediately sent me there to help them.

Since the destination was far off, by the time I reached that place, it was 7 am and it was quite bright already. It was a dense forest and one could hear massive firing which stopped my progress towards the area. I stood



there, absolutely alert and continued chanting the mantra. By then, it was nine o'clock in the morning and firing was still continuing in full swing. My blood was boiling with rage to kill those terrorists but being in the middle of a dense forest, I just could not see the terrorists. I stood there and prayed to Bapu's that I should be able to shoot at least one terrorist that day. Bapu listened to me.

I had 7 soldiers with me. I took two of them with me and asked others to stay put. I moved ahead half a kilometer. There was a steep hillock ahead of us and the forest was also quite dense. I went ahead and waited near a stream. Three terrorists had were also hiding at the same spot. By then it was 10 in the morning and coincidentally, my wife was performing Bapu's Paduka Poojan at home at the very same time. Suddenly, those three terrorists came running and firing towards us. I immediately became alert and within the first 10 seconds, I was successful in shooting down two of them. One more terrorist was still hiding at the same spot. The firing continued. I had asked Bapu to give me just one terrorist but he offered me three of them. I once again requested Bapu to protect each and every one of my colleagues. And truly, in that entire encounter, none of my colleagues even got a scratch.

The entire day of 22<sup>nd</sup> of August passed by, the night passed by as well. All of us stayed put there. I had consumed no water or food for almost two full days. However, the real hunger I felt was to push the third terrorist over to the Realm of Death. On the third day, I found the third terrorist as well and in an intense encounter, I managed to shoot him down.

Two days later, I was again made aware of two more terrorists moving around in the same part of the forest. My supervisor again chose me to handle the situation. He provided me with a group of 16 soldiers. I was calm and composed; I prayed to Bapu and then entered the forest area. The forest was so dense that even sun light was not able to penetrate through the foliage to reach the ground. One was unable to view anything even just a short distance ahead. I had been walking in the forest for almost an hour and a half. Other soldiers were walking behind me alert. Before I could fathom anything, one of the terrorists fired a round at me. However, not even a single bullet grazed me. All the soldiers stood still and took up



their respective positions. However, no one could see the terrorists. I took one of the soldiers with me and ordered the rest of them to retreat to a more secure place. I started walking ahead. I covered the next 50-100 m extremely cautiously. I had estimated that the terrorists were hiding behind a bush not more than 4-5 meters from me. The terrorist had seen me but I had not seen him. Seeing me slightly unprepared, one of the terrorists came right in front of me and started firing indiscriminately towards me with his AK 47. There was a large tree next to me and I immediately moved behind the trunk of that tree. There was hardly any distance between me and the terrorist. There was massive exchange of fire between the two of us. Since forest was dense, our bullets were not finding their mark. The terrorist was concentrating on shooting at me only, so my colleague took advantage of the situation and shot him with 2 bullets. The terrorist stopped firing for few seconds. For a moment, I thought that during the heavy exchange of fire, I must have been injured at several places but due to Sadguru Bapu's blessings, I was not hurt at all. Finally I moved ahead and finished off that Terrorist as well. In the said mission a total of 13 terrorists were neutralised.

By Bapu's blessings, I got many such opportunities and I immensely enjoyed the experience. The Army recommended my name to the government of India, for the "Keerti Chakra", an award to commemorate bravery. I was declared as the recipient of the "Keerti Chakra" on January 26, 2009 by the president and I received the same on March 19, 2009.

I would like to tell you only one thing, in this mission, my Bapu saved me from phenomenal peril. Only my God can do this. His strength is unimaginable! I bow in front of the lotus feet of my Sadguru! **Truly, why would Bapu not rush to help a soldier fighting to protect his country from terrorists!**

ANUBHAVS

HARI OM