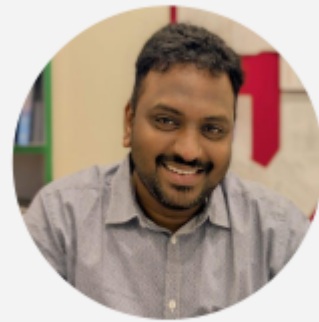


Jnana Prabodhini Competitive Examinations Centre, Pune.

**Celebrating journey of its alumnus
on account of
Tridashakpurti Varsha 2025-26
(30 years of establishment)**

Mayur Khaire

- JPCEC 2011 batch
- Presently working as CEO Muktangan Trust, Mumbai
- MSc in Development Practice, TISS, Mumbai
- PGDM in Operations, Welingker Institute of Management, Mumbai.
- PG Diploma (Mass Media), SPPU, Pune
- B.E. (E&TC), SPPU, Pune.



Mayur Ashok Khaire is originally from Solapur. His entire schooling, up to the 12th standard, took place in Solapur. He attended Hari Bhai Dev Karan Prashala in Solapur for his school education. Following his schooling, he pursued his college education at Sangameshwar Mahavidyalaya, also in Solapur. After completing his studies in Solapur, he went on to Vidya Pratishthan in Baramati to study engineering. There, he completed his four-year degree in Electronics Engineering. It was from Vidya Pratishthan in Baramati that he secured a campus placement with Cognizant Technology Solutions.

Within Cognizant, Mayur worked for several years as a Business Intelligence Developer and in Data Warehousing. This role provided him with significant exposure to numerous international clients. He worked with clients such as Novartis Pharmaceuticals, a pharmaceutical company. He also had exposure working with Avon, a consumer goods client. Additionally, he worked with a client in the finance domain during that period. His work at Cognizant involved extensive technical tasks, including working with databases and

front-end reporting tools like Informatica IBM Cognos, Metastrategy, Ab Initio, , among others.

Family Background

Mayur's family background was described as typical of a lower middle class family with minimal resources. His father retired while Mayur was still pursuing his engineering degree. His father worked as a machinist at Kirloskar Shivaji Works company in Solapur. After gaining some work experience and saving money from his job, Mayur made the decision to prepare for the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) civil services exam. He decided to use his savings to dedicate one to two years to full-time preparation for the exam.

UPSC for Social Impact

Several reasons motivated Mayur's decision to pursue UPSC. One significant factor was the atmosphere in which he grew up during his childhood. His grandfather was a freedom fighter. His grandfather also ran his own educational institution. Furthermore, his grandfather was involved in many social activities, and this had a constant influence on Mayur. Another reason was his growing lack of interest in his desk job after working for two to three years. At that time, he heard the ideas of many influential people related to UPSC. Listening to them, he felt that the civil services was a challenging field. He felt it would not be a mundane sort of job. Instead, he believed it would involve working for people. This desire to work for people was a key driver behind his decision.

After deciding to prepare for competitive exams, Mayur considered how he would approach the preparation and how he came to join a specific center. He mentioned having some prior information about such centers. He actually visited two or three centers at that time. Initially, his plan was not to quit his job entirely for the preparation.

While exploring options, some students told him that Jnana Prabodhini Competitive Examination Center in Pune was good. He visited Jnana Prabodhini without any prior connections or friends already preparing there. When he first visited, their interview process was already quite active. He had an interview with Savita Tai at that time. He recalls this being around the year 2011.

He noted that usually in the context of UPSC preparation, centers offer packages covering prelims, mains, and interview stages, but it is uncommon for a center to select candidates based primarily on an interview before admission. He found this aspect unique to Prabodhini.

He mentioned that one of the reasons he decided to give Prabodhini a chance was that they conducted interviews with students first and then selected them for admission. He felt that this approach did not seem overtly commercial. This impression that the process wasn't heavily commercial was a reason he chose the center.

Upon joining Jnana Prabodhini in 2011, Mayur's experiences at the center began. He describes the initial foundational base he received as very structured and good. He learned from previous students who would come and teach. Interacting with them provided him with information about the general field of UPSC. He learned about the different steps involved in the UPSC process. He also gained insight into how the actual work is done after getting selected. Practical aspects of life and the job became clear. They shared information not just about the ideal world but also about the practical realities and the difficulties encountered while working. The foundational modules he completed there for the prelims were beneficial. He felt he got the right kind of direction from this preparation.

However, reflecting on the input received, he feels that Prabodhini places a strong emphasis on self-study. He noted that while guidance is available, the primary focus is on self-preparation. He believes this is the most important aspect of the process at Prabodhini. He feels the process at Prabodhini, through practices like meditation (Upasana) or one-to-one interactions, compels one to understand oneself. Because the students are filtered and selected, they are often serious about their studies. The main advantage of this environment is the peer group. Discussions and conversations with fellow serious students help keep one motivated.



Mayur trekking along with his JP batchmates(with Amit Khatavkar, IRS, Amit Mane, IDES, Vishwajeet Yadav, IAAS, Sumant Kamble founder of Dimension IAS) in the Sahyadri's

A significant part of Prabodhini's approach is experiential learning, which happens outside the classroom. Mayur recounted one such experience: he went to Gadchiroli as part of a team/group. He contrasted this experience with classroom learning. He believes that starting the batch with such an experience would provide much greater motivation. It would also help in clearing up any preconceived notions people might have about competitive exams. This kind of experience acts as an opener and forces a reality check. It helps you understand that things are not always as you assume them to be when you are on the field. He considered this field experience the best part of the entire process.

In his first attempt, his prelims exam was cleared. At that time, the exam pattern required two optional subjects. His optional subjects were Public Administration and History. He noted that both optionals were quite substantial, and History in particular is a very large optional subject. He admitted he was obviously not fully prepared for these optionals. He had also not taken any coaching classes for his optional subjects. Therefore, in the first attempt, he found it difficult to grasp the sheer scope of the syllabus. The exam pattern was older at that time. According to that pattern, he had very little time available for writing practice. In fact, he had limited time even for preparing the subjects themselves.

When he cleared the prelims for his second attempt, a challenging personal situation arose simultaneously. His father was diagnosed with cancer at that very time. His entire focus shifted away from his studies and towards his father's health. The whole process involved constant travel between Solapur and Mumbai with his father for treatment. He described this period as very stressful. He was also simultaneously pursuing a one-year diploma from Ranade. Despite all this pressure, he gave the attempt. However, he felt he could not do justice to his preparation or the exam under those circumstances.

Looking for a Change

After this, Mayur faced a situation where he could no longer afford to study full-time. His savings had been depleted by that time. His father was also no longer there. This meant he had to find some work. Fortunately, at that same time, he passed the PMRDF (Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellows) exam. He was lucky to get Jammu & Kashmir, the state he had desired to work in. He gave all his subsequent UPSC attempts (three in total) while working. He gave all three prelims from Jammu. He also gave all three mains exams.

PMRDF Fellow – Jammu and Kashmir

The conversation then shifted to the transition from focusing solely on UPSC to joining PMRDF. When asked about this transition, Mayur stated that he did not have a second option. He was fortunate that he got a job that was connected to social work/development in a way. He felt this was a very good thing for him. Since he had no other option, the question of having a second thought about the transition simply did not arise. He joined as a PMRDF in 2014. He served as a PMRDF for about three years.

Mayur then elaborated on his experiences during his time as a PMRDF, focusing on his posting in Jammu & Kashmir. He mentioned that Jammu & Kashmir was his first-choice state, and he was assigned there. His motivation for choosing J&K was rooted in his nationalistic perspective. He felt that while sitting in Maharashtra, people often say that Jammu & Kashmir belongs to India and not Pakistan. However, he realized that most Indians did not know the opinions of the local people there, the situation they lived in, their difficulties, or their local problems. At that time, many incidents were occurring, and the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) was always in the news. The impact of AFSPA on the living conditions and development there was often discussed. He wanted to go there himself and see the reality. He also viewed it from the perspective of India being a secular country. He felt that how India treated a Muslim-majority state within the country was a true test of whether India was genuinely deserving of being called secular or not. He reasoned that in states where the majority population shares the same religion as the national majority, it is easy to say that law and order are maintained properly. However, he believed that how you treat a particular state where another religion is in the majority compared to the rest of the country is the real test. It was a litmus test of secularism that he wanted to witness firsthand.



Mayur Khaire and other officials interacting with local villagers and building rapport for welfare work in Rajouri, J & K

Upon reaching Jammu & Kashmir, he was assigned to Rajouri district. Rajouri is a district attached to the Line of Control (LoC). It is located near the LoC. Working there provided him with extensive exposure. He spent one and a half years in Rajouri. During that one and a half years, approximately four Deputy Commissioners were transferred and replaced. He stated that all of them were supportive. However, explaining what PMRDF is and what his role entailed would take two to three months each time a new Deputy Commissioner arrived. Initially, people sometimes viewed him with suspicion, perhaps as a spy from the central government. This perception was due to the socio-political structure of the state. However, gradually, he and other fellows earned credibility by demonstrating sincere work and achieving some results.

He ultimately focused on working on a couple of specific schemes in the district. These included the MGNREGA scheme. He also worked on the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture scheme. As part of his work, they adopted a village. The village was named Langer-Gania . It was located right next to the LoC in the Nowshera sector. He described the village as being so close to the LoC that you could literally see the LoC fencing from there.



Mayur Khaire training women from SHGs in Langer Gania Panchayat

When they first entered Langer village, they realized that to gain the trust of the local people, they needed to establish credibility first. They decided to start by working with a school. They adopted a school in the village. By working with the school, they managed to bring the attention of the Deputy Commissioner, along with considerable resources and block-level officers, towards the problems faced by these schools. These problems were then resolved. They also started providing additional curriculum activities for the children. For instance, they taught computers to the students and provided other guidance. This work helped them establish credibility among the parents. The Sarpanch and everyone in the village were very supportive. They leveraged the convergence of MGNREGA and Horticulture schemes. They implemented social forestry and horticulture plantation work through MGNREGA. They were also able to use MGNREGA for necessary labor, construction, and repair work for the schools. They were able to achieve quite a lot through this approach.

Mayur had an opportunity to present his work. He presented the work he did in the village during a review meeting held by the District Guardian Minister. In Jammu & Kashmir, each district has a 'Guardian Minister' who conducts a review meeting every year. He presented how he was working in that village. Around the same time, Jnana Prabodhini had started a project called Gyansetu, led by Vivek Ponkshe Sir. Mayur connected with Ponkshe Sir. He even brought some volunteers from Prabodhini's Gyansetu project to the district. He presented all this work at the meeting, showing how they were collaborating. Fortunately, Mr Naem Akhtar, the Education Minister and who later became the Minister for PWD was also present. In this meeting, the Principal Secretary, the State Project Director for Education, and the Director of Education Jammu were present. He began interacting with these higher

officials. He was then called to Srinagar to work as aid to the Education Minister and started reporting to the Principal Secretary, Mr Shaleen Kabra.



**Jnana Prabodhini's GyanSetu Program for school students in Rajouri
organised by Mayur Khaire as a PMRDF**



**Mayur Khaire and other PMRD fellows with then education minister of
J&K - Mr. Naem Akhtar**

Beginning of Jammu Kashmir Knowledge Network

These officials presented him with a specific problem related to improving the quality of education. They wanted to know what could be done. At that time, the Central Government had provided digital infrastructure to approximately 250 schools through the ICT Project, which is a component of Samagra Shiksha. However, the challenge was how to utilize this infrastructure because no one at the schools knew how to use the computers. The computers were often kept switched off or were broken and wouldn't start. So, Mayur conceived a

program to address this. The program was named Jammu & Kashmir Knowledge Network (JKKN). Through this network, they started connecting all these schools that had the ICT centers.



**Mayur Khaire interacting with school students in
Jammu-Kashmir under ICT Project**

During this period, the incident involving Burhan Wani took place in Jammu & Kashmir, leading to a complete lockdown across the Kashmir valley. Schools were shut down, and this was back in 2016—long before the Covid-19 pandemic. At that time, JKKN utilized the digital infrastructure they had already established to begin online classes and lectures. They connected schools from the Jammu region with those in the Kashmir region, separated by the Pir Panjal range, fostering cross-regional and cultural exchange. Students interacted by sharing their experiences—students from Jammu spoke about life in their area, while those from Kashmir shared their own, creating a sense of mutual understanding and positive engagement.

This initiative received strong institutional support from senior officials, including the then Director of Education, Mr. Shah Faisal; the State Project Director, Mr. Saugat Biswas (currently Secretary in Arunachal Pradesh); and the Financial Commissioner of Jammu & Kashmir, Mr. Shaheen Kabra. With their encouragement, the program ran very successfully.

Additionally, efforts were made to connect accomplished individuals from Kashmir—entrepreneurs, researchers, and professionals settled outside India—with college students and recent graduates. These interactions were deeply inspiring, as the achievers shared their journeys and the ways they overcame challenges, particularly those stemming

from the turbulent 1990s. This created a strong sense of hope and motivation among the youth.

The Jammu & Kashmir Knowledge Network program had a lasting impact. The program is still running. It also became a case study for the Samagra Shiksha program itself. When they would attend the PAB(Project Approval Board) meetings of Samagra Shiksha in New Delhi and present the state's budget (which covered everything from higher education to midday meals and school education), they were asked to write a case study about the Jammu & Kashmir Knowledge Network. This case study is still available on the Samagra Shiksha website. This program also led to securing much more funding for ICT initiatives. While they started with 220 schools, the budget multiplied significantly, and they were projected to perform well.

Beyond the Knowledge Network initiative, they launched several other collaborations and training programs in partnership with the Education Department of Jammu & Kashmir. They worked with the education NGO *Pratham* in Kashmir and signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with the Kaivalya Education Foundation and Vikramshila. They also invited Professor H.C. Verma from IIT Kanpur, renowned for his book *Concepts of Physics*, to support teacher training efforts.

With the help of a PMRD Fellow and IIT Kanpur alumnus who had strong connections with local teachers, they designed and implemented a large-scale training program on key science topics for 15,000 teachers across the state. Educators from all districts—from Ladakh to Jammu—participated in the program, which was coordinated by 30 district coordinators.

This experience proved to be a tremendous opportunity for professional growth and exposure, offering deep insights into the educational landscape of Jammu & Kashmir and significantly broadening his perspective on education.



Mayur Khiare conducting training of teachers in J&K

Crucially, his time as a PMRDF provided him with significant insight and perspective on bureaucracy. He learned how officers interact with each other. He observed how attitudes and behaviors change as one reaches higher levels of authority. He gained an understanding of how decisions are made. He learned how literally a single word or a written document can either bring or cause the loss of crores of rupees in the state budget by influencing central government decisions. He saw that the central government has its own priorities, which may differ from where the priorities should ideally be. Decisions are influenced by various factors, not always directly apparent. Within this system, he also witnessed the helplessness of some IAS officers at times.

During his tenure, Governor's Rule was implemented in the state. He had the opportunity to interact with the Governor, N.N. Vohra, two or three times and Governor Satyapal Malik. Governor Vohra also appreciated their work. He personally visited the school they worked with. They live-telecasted the Governor's visit to all the schools connected by the network. Students were able to interact with the Governor through this setup. Mayur was able to do this kind of work for three years. He described it as the best experience of his life. He initially thought it would be his biggest motivation for his last UPSC attempt.

However, the experience at PMRDF had the opposite effect regarding his motivation for the last UPSC attempt. He realized that UPSC is not the *only* golden opportunity available. He understood that there is a lot more than one can achieve and do outside of that specific career path. He also realised the limitations and downsides of the bureaucracy. Consequently, he

lacked the motivation for his last attempt. He took the exam simply because it was his final allowed attempt. After that, he changed his career path.



**Mayur Khaire and other PMRD Fellows with
Hon. PM Shri Narendra Modi**

Changing Gears - Lend a Hand India

Following his time at PMRDF, Mayur moved to Mumbai. His next role was with Lend Hand India. He shared his experience and role there. When he joined Lend Hand India, it was a relatively small organization. Immediately upon joining, he was given responsibility for six states. These states included Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana, and Pondicherry. He was also given responsibility for Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, where he had previously worked.

This role presented a different kind of experience. Previously, he was part of the government system. Now, he became part of a non-governmental system working alongside the government. This naturally came with its own hurdles. He learned how much patience is required if you want to get something done, such as bringing about a policy-level change or convincing government officials about something. This was his first experience working outside the government to influence the system. Through this, he started to understand the priorities of officials. He learned how to approach them, how to convince them, and how to influence the government system to bring about changes.

In each of the states he was responsible for, there were PMU (Project Management Unit) teams that worked with the state government. The heads of these PMUs reported to him. All this work was focused on vocational education or skill education. He had to understand the

entire system or ecosystem of vocational education. This involved understanding what NSQF (National Skills Qualifications Framework) and NSDC (National Skill Development Corporation) are. He had to learn about the different qualifications, how they are defined, how the syllabus is created, and what Sector Skill Councils and Job Roles entail. He also learned about the approval processes, how to distinguish between good and bad vocational training providers, and the potential ulterior motives they might have. Working with the government required him to maintain a neutral stance. He had to avoid favoring anyone and ensure that their own work was perfect. He guided all the teams accordingly.

Additionally, he headed a national-level program on vocational education. This program was implemented in 11 states. It involved a Multi Skill Foundation Course.. The program was run in approximately 100 schools across the states. He oversaw all the work related to this program, including training, certification, and government coordination. He felt that this experience at Lend Hand India was complementary to his experience within the government as a PMRDF.



Mayur Khaire on behalf of Lend a Hand India along with other officials during signing of MoU with J&K administration.

He specifically highlighted the significant benefit he received from the Prabodhini network while working at Lend Hand India. He worked with very high levels of bureaucracy, including Principal Secretaries and Project Directors. Sometimes, Prabodhini officials/batchmates connected him with specific officials. He noted that there was a trust factor involved. Officials were more likely to give him access and listen to what he had to say because he came via the Prabodhini network. He also mentioned that if he ever faced any difficulty, he could quickly reach out to Vivek Sir. Vivek Sir could immediately tell him about

officials known to him who could help. Simply stating that he knows a particular officer provides a lot of credibility. Furthermore, telling one officer that you have worked with another officer also opens many windows and helps in navigating the system. He reiterated that this network greatly helped his work.

Experience of Working in and out of the government

Working outside the government, according to Mayur, involves the biggest frustration of trying to get officials to understand your point of view and motivating the entire system to act. Getting things done requires a significant skill set. How effectively you do this is crucial. When you are not a part of the government, you often have to navigate many egos. Even if you have direct connections with a Collector or a Secretary, you often have to deal with and potentially bypass the PAs (Personal Assistants) sitting outside their office. Even knowing the main officer doesn't always prevent difficulties at lower levels. Section Officers and Superintendents at every level can create hurdles, sometimes simply saying, "Sir has said this work needs to be done". At the same time, you must avoid appearing like you are bossing people around. People generally dislike being ordered around. He characterized this as a very significant challenge.

However, despite this main challenge, working outside the government offers a lot of autonomy. You have the freedom to exercise your creativity and work on your innovations and ideas. This autonomy is often possible due to the private capital or CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) funding that supports non-profit organizations. These funders often seek new and innovative approaches. Thus, there are great opportunities to work on innovative projects.

In contrast, when you are inside the government system, getting work done can be easier. Because you are a part of the government, officials tend to trust you more. You are not seen as an external third party. However, being part of the system means you are subject to scrutiny. There is a defined set of procedures that must be followed. This adherence to procedure often takes a lot of time to get things done. Mayur identified the biggest problem within the government system as the lack of a performance basis. Everything tends to be based on seniority. He views this seniority-based system, rather than performance, as the biggest hurdle within the government.

At IISER – building a research ecosystem

After Lend Hand India, Mayur transitioned to a role at IISER (Indian Institute of Science Education and Research). His role was Head of Project Management for a project called iRISE. He explained that iRISE stands for Inspiring India in Research, Innovation, and STEM Education. The full form is: Inspiring India in Research, Innovation and STEM Education.

The iRISE program had four components. The first component focused on providing training to Science teachers from 5th to 8th grade. The training was on activity and/or inquiry-based learning. This involved preparing the complete content for the training. They would enter into agreements with different state governments, such as the Government of Maharashtra, Government of Bihar, and Government of Uttarakhand, to execute the training.



Mayur Khaire conducting a workshop for Science teachers at Science City, Ahmedabad.

The second part of the program, ECR (Early Career Researcher) Strand, focused on building 21st Century Skills in PhD STEM scholars. Often, STEM PhD scholars are highly focused on their specific field of research. They may lack skills related to Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). They might not know how to promote their research to the industry. They may need guidance on connecting with the industry. They might lack skills in writing proposals for funding or approaching research incubators, startups, or venture capitalists. The second component aimed to build these essential skills in PhD scholars. For this part, they had to

identify implementation partners. Through a sourcing and tendering process, the National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) in Pune became an implementation partner.

The third component focused on fostering Thought Leadership through a dedicated forum. Every six months to a year, a theme is selected—for example, Sustainability. The Thought Leadership Forum brings together a diverse group of scientists, academicians, and industry leaders to collaborate on the chosen theme and develop a policy white paper. Under the Sustainability theme, the forum examined India's target of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2070 and explored the roles that industry and academia must play to reach this goal. The committee for this theme was chaired by Padma Shri awardee Dr. S. Sivaram, former Director of NCL and a renowned scientist with numerous patents to his name.

The fourth component of iRISE programme was CxO Forum. The forum was composed of CxO-level officers from industry, scientists, and academicians. This forum aimed to connect academic research with industry. The first CxO forum was headed by the Chairman and Managing Director of Forbes Industries, Dr Naushad Forbes.



**Mayur Khaire, the Head of PMU, iRISE initiative with Padma Shri
awardee Prof. Arvind Gupta**

Mayur described his experience at IISER iRISE. It was a unique experience to work in the Higher Education domain. He worked closely with many scientists. He also gained an understanding of the challenges within academic institutions. He saw the extent of bureaucracy present there as well. He explained the tedious processes involved in procurement through GeM (Government eMarket place). He noted that the funding received from the Central Government is often rigid, leaving limited scope for innovation. This is in contrast to working with flexible funding. At IISER iRISE, they also had external funders,

including Tata Technologies, the British Council, the Royal Society of Chemistry, and Tata Trusts. Mayur was the secretary for a board-like body, which was the Steering Committee for the project. He had to attend meetings at the board level. This was his first exposure to how work happens at the board level, understanding their expectations and how meticulous they are about details. This experience broadened his perspective on education, allowing him to see the entire chain from Anganwadi education, through schooling, and up to higher education.

Current Inning at Mukangan Education Trust

Presently, Mayur is the CEO of Mukangan Education Trust. Mukangan has been working in the field of education for 22 years. The trust provides free education. They run seven schools that are affiliated with the BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation). They operate these schools in a unique way. Their teachers are recruited from the local community. They train these individuals for three years, after which they become primary school teachers. Initially, these teachers may not be formally qualified with B.Ed. or D.Ed. degrees. Some might have only passed the 8th standard.

Working at Mukangan, Mayur gained more insights into teaching and learning. He realized that whether education is good or bad depends heavily on the quality of the teacher. He believes that all students are good, and there are no bad students. The crucial factor is how good the teacher is and how effectively they can connect with the students. This requires skills that go beyond just holding degrees. Even with good degrees, if a teacher cannot connect, it doesn't help much. At Mukangan, he found that individuals from the community who have a passion for education can genuinely nurture passionate students. They can be trained effectively. He also realized that to teach the curriculum well, a teacher needs knowledge that is two levels above what they are teaching. And if we really look at it practically, to teach students in Grade 5, a teacher primarily needs subject knowledge and conceptual clarity roughly equivalent to the Grade 8 level. Having a BSc or MSc degree is not essential if the focus remains on the concepts covered in the textbooks. What matters more is a genuine passion for science and the pedagogical skills to effectively communicate those concepts. He also observed that the school syllabus itself exposes children to a relatively limited range of topics.

His past experiences have been beneficial in his current role.. Mukangan has over 2400 alumni who have passed out from their schools. There is a need to create awareness among

them about higher education. He feels it is necessary to expose these children to possibilities in higher education from the 8th standard onwards. If this exposure is not provided early, their surroundings and social structure significantly influence their choices. For instance, students in Mumbai largely tend to opt for the Commerce stream because their social environment is oriented towards it. Relatively few students in Mumbai choose to pursue fields like Technology or Science.

His experience in STEM education and working with IISER has allowed him to contribute more significantly to the Science department at Mukhtangan. He has been able to bring methods learned from his previous roles into Mukhtangan. He has focused on imparting these skills to the teachers. He has also been able to implement innovations in curriculum execution, such as project-based or activity-based learning.

Another significant advantage from his past experience is the ability to take the learnings from Mukhtangan's 22 years of experience to the government or mainstream education system. His background working with the government has been instrumental here. They have signed MoUs with District Collectors and Municipal Bodies. They are working to teach the methods developed at Mukhtangan to teachers in government schools. Because he knows the "highway" for working with the government, it is easier. He understands the necessary path, how to approach officials, what they need, and the general dos and don'ts. Leveraging this knowledge, they are now working with Nanded District, including Anganwadis. They are also working in the Dehu Road Cantonment areas. Furthermore, they are working with teachers in approximately 250 after-school centers across five districts in Chhattisgarh. He credits his previous experience base for making all these initiatives possible.



Muktangan signing MoU with Shri. Abhijit Raut, District Collector, Nanded (also a JPCEC Alumnus).

Mayur repeatedly emphasized the immense benefit of the Prabodhini network in his work. He stated he cannot highlight this fact enough. He also mentioned the general benefit of networking. Networking makes many things easier. Specifically, if someone is a Prabodhini student, they tend to respond quickly. There is no prejudice or doubt in their mind that the approach is solely for personal gain. He sees this as a very significant advantage.



Muktangan receiving award for its outstanding work in education from former Secretary, Ministry of Coal and HRD Mr. Anil Swaroop

Future Vision

Looking ahead, Mayur shared his vision for the future. Reflecting on his journey of about 11-12 years, during which he has gained experience from the ground level up to policy making, he is now thinking about his next steps. He aims to blend the spirit of Prabodhini's goal ("Roop Palatu Deshache," meaning 'the face of the nation must change,' which is reflected in their work) with his personal ambitions.

One thing that he 100% wants to do is to start his own school. He explained that everything he is learning, reading, experiencing, and observing in various roles within the education sector leads him to realize many possibilities. He sees ways that things could be done differently and better. He is also observing many parallel experiments happening in schools elsewhere and talks to people involved in them to understand how that work is done. He also observes the growth of his own son, who is four years old. Looking at his son's development through the lens of education, he sees what things should be done, what works, what doesn't, and the gaps in the current education system. As an example of a gap, he mentioned Social Emotional Learning, which is only now starting to be discussed widely. He contrasted this with an institution like Prabodhini, which has incorporated such aspects into its education model from the very beginning after thorough consideration. He feels there are many such things that can be done in the field of education. He considers starting his own school not a grand goal, but something simple, achievable, and within his capabilities.

Regarding his career ambitions, Mayur stated that he no longer has a desire to work for a specific position or primarily for money. He feels that the level he has reached financially is sufficient for his needs. From now on, he will only pursue work that he is passionate about. Currently, his greatest interest is in finding ways to better integrate the Socio-emotional aspect into education. He is interested in making the learner more autonomous. He noted that currently, students learn subjects like History, Science, or Math due to the system's structure, exams, or compulsion. He wonders if a child were given a choice, they might choose to do something entirely different. He cited examples of educational experiments like Summerhill School in the UK, positive experiments in Israel, and the exemplary Rishi Valley School in India. However, he pointed out the problem of access; these models are not accessible to children in rural areas or to everyone. He wants to find ways to bring such ideas into mainstream schools. He believes this doesn't necessarily require significant resources. It primarily requires a willingness to understand and see things differently. He finds it puzzling

why this fundamental aspect – understanding oneself and how to deal with society – is not a central part of the education system. He acknowledged that figures like J.P. Naik, Kothari, and even Kasturirangan in the new education policy have mentioned this aspect. However, he strongly feels it should be the central idea of education. He hopes he can contribute something in this direction.



Mayur Khaire along with his son Malhar and wife, Shalaka, RBI Grade B officer and also a JPCEC Alumnus

JPCEC In Future

The most important thing he suggested, which he noted has already started in a structured way with some WhatsApp groups initiated by Vivek Sir, is to utilize the network of past students much more effectively. He believes more structured work in this direction would be highly beneficial. He drew a parallel to the Maharashtra Mandals in various cities that organize many activities. He suggested starting similar structured initiatives for specific regions or districts, considering that Prabodhini students come from all districts of Maharashtra. Through these initiatives, some of Prabodhini's good programs could be taken to those areas. Alternatively, the skills of students from the network could be leveraged for the benefit of those regions.

His second suggestion for Prabodhini addresses the issue of many students who spend years in competitive exams and get stuck in that cycle. He observed that some students waste many years without ever truly understanding what is needed. These students appear for attempts for 10-12 years and remain caught in that cycle. Their life revolves around this cycle, and they are often unaware of the world beyond it. He suggested that Prabodhini could support these students, or general students who are struggling, perhaps through a "learn and earn" model,

similar to the Shiksha and Kamva (Earn and Learn) scheme. This could involve learning through engaging in activities while simultaneously problem-solving and earning something. He noted that some students, after leaving the exam preparation cycle, have started their own ventures, such as a study center or a restaurant. He suggested that Prabodhini could provide support to such initiatives as well. Mayur concluded that these two areas are key things he feels Prabodhini should focus on going forward.



Vivek Sir, Savita tai at Mayur's home in Mumbai along with Mayur Khaire, his wife Shalaka Khaire (RBI grade B officer) and Akshay Patil (IRS) with his wife Smruti Pusadkar (Tahalsidar) - all four JPCEC Alumni