



# The Indian EXPRESS

JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

SINCE 1932

THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 2020, PUNE, LATE CITY, 16 PAGES

₹5.00 WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

## Sushant Singh Rajput's death was heart-rending: Magsaysay Award winner Dr Vatwani

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**

PUNE, JUNE 24

FOR MAGSAYSAY Award winner and psychiatrist Dr Bharat Vatwani, the suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput recently was heart-rending, as the doctor has himself struggled with depression and suicidal thoughts earlier.

Dr Vatwani, who heads the Shradha Rehabilitation Foundation that works towards rescuing mentally ill and destitute persons, and reuniting them with their families, said he had not interacted with the actor but his conscience compelled him to share some of his thoughts.

"I have been through depression myself... been to counselling... been suicidal myself. I sat through a whole night with medicines adequate to snuff the light out of me, and till today I not 100 per cent sure what prevented me," Dr Vatwani told *The*

*Indian Express*.

"The mind is far too complex to be analysed by the best of psychiatrists... If a person comes out of depression or suicidal ideation, the credit does not and should not go either to the patient or the treating psychiatrist. This is because the causes of human personality and human emotions are multi-fold. While none can be discredited, none can be ascribed as being the gospel truth either. Right from neurotransmitters to biology to genetics to early childhood experiences to family support to society support to drugs to your sun sign... everything contributes to personality and emotions. Add to that our... fate and our destiny... Everything adds up," Dr Vatwani said as he shared his views on social media.

He recalled his own experience when, several decades ago, he was on his way to meet social activist Baba Amte and met a mentally ill person, who was in chains and wandering. "This...

spurred me to start a rehabilitation centre at Karjat and culminated in me receiving a Ramon Magsaysay Award," Dr Vatwani, said adding that sometimes he was still the same guy who was yet to give a second glance to the mentally ill closer home.

"The human mind is truly unfathomable. Moods, emotions and thought processes are in a state of constant flux. And it is this, this state of flux, which is not acceptable to the majority within us. We define ourselves as successes or failures, not realising, not accepting that both ends of the spectrum reflect us," he said.

"We are all of us, each and every one of us, on the same spectrum. It's just that society gives undue importance to success and successful people. Odd numbers are well and truly enshrined within the even. Let's hold on to that reality and acknowledge Sushant as just another one of us," he urged.