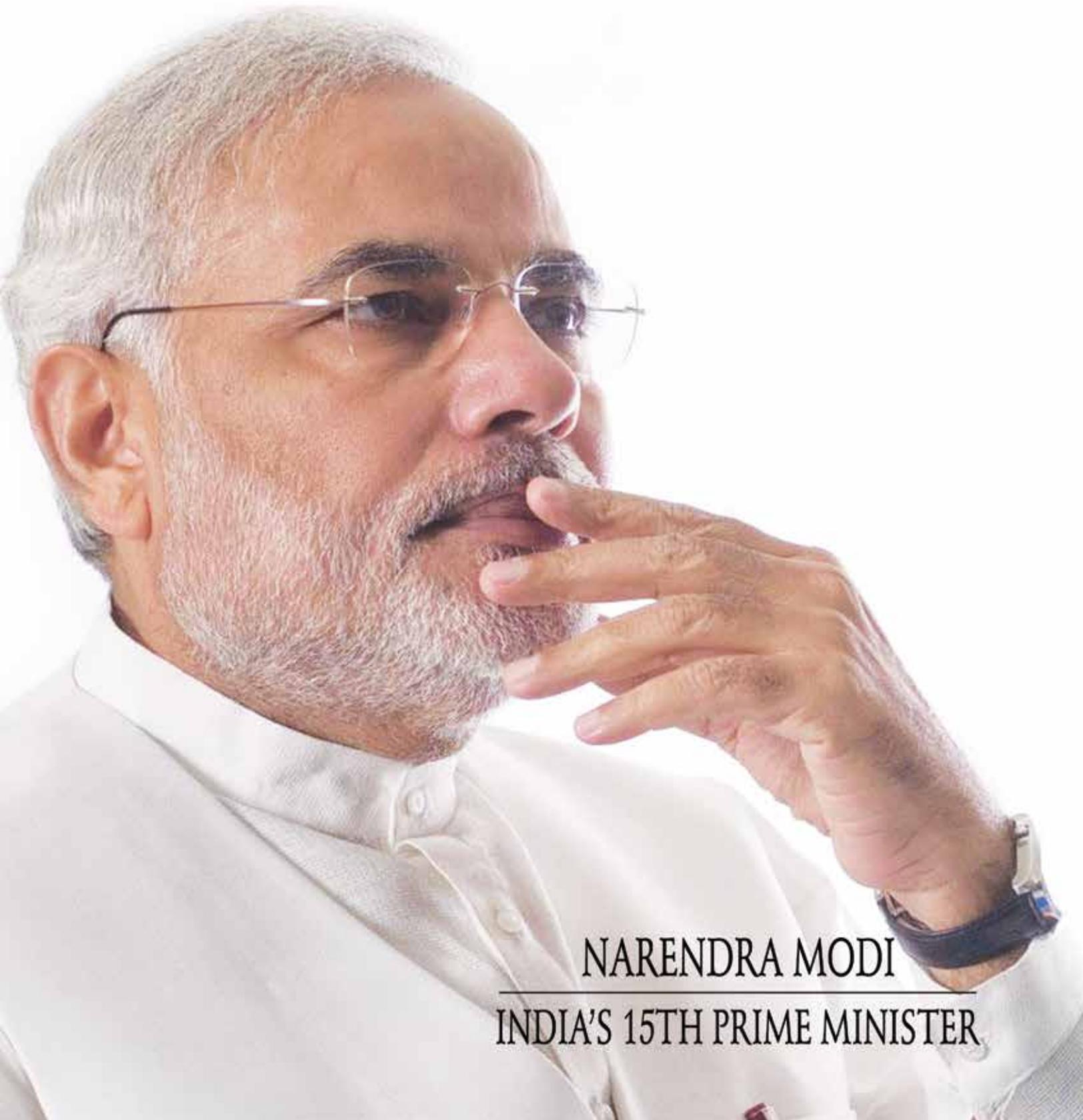




July 2014

A PUBLICATION OF **THE SANMAR GROUP**



NARENDRA MODI

INDIA'S 15TH PRIME MINISTER



## **The Sanmar Group**

9, Cathedral Road, Chennai 600 086.

Tel.: + 91 44 2812 8500

Fax.: + 91 44 2811 1902

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TCI Sanmar Chemicals S.A.E.

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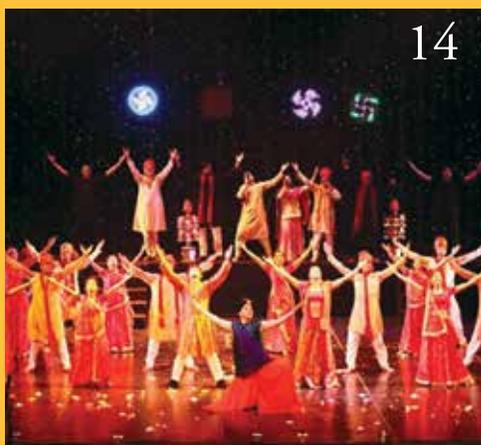
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# The 2014 Lok Sabha Elections

We all know that India is the world's largest democracy. The scale of operation in conducting a national election here is staggering. The recent Lok Sabha (or the lower house in Parliament) election saw a contest for 543 seats representing 814 million voters. (The US has 193.6 million and the UK 45.5 million). Electoral rolls were prepared in 12 different languages, and the number of candidates at some poll booths ran into scores.

Some 537 million votes were cast in the polls held in nine stages over five weeks from 7 April to 12 May 2014 and the results were announced on 16 May. The voter turnout was a record high with 66.40% even surpassing the 64% polling witnessed in the 1984

polls after the assassination of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. And 16 out of the 35 states and Union Territories reported a higher female voter turnout than male participation.

It was a historic win for the National Democratic Alliance led by BJP's Narendra Modi. It won 336 of the total 543 Lok Sabha seats, with the BJP crossing the magic 272 mark comfortably on its own winning 282 seats, with no need for support from its electoral allies to form the government. This is the first time in the 67-year old history of independent India that a non-Congress party has won a simple majority on its own.

After a decade of public angst over economic slowdown, high inflation,

charges of rampant corruption and a string of scandals, the ruling Congress party was handed its worst defeat, winning only 46 seats. Congress President Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi were the only two Congress candidates to win from Uttar Pradesh.

Narendra Modi was sworn in as the 15th Prime Minister of India in the forecourt of the majestic Rashtrapati Bhavan, Delhi, in the presence of heads of states of all the SAARC nations.

The general election cost the government Rs 3,426 crore, which is 131% more than the Rs 1,483 crore spent on the 2009 polls.



# Narendra Modi

## India's 15th Prime Minister

Narendra Damodardas Modi, is the 15th and current Prime Minister of India, the first Prime Minister born after the country's independence. He was sworn in on 26 May 2014 at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.

Modi was the prime ministerial candidate for the BJP in the recent Lok Sabha elections, and in fact the plank on which the campaign was conducted. It was Modi vs. the Congress all the way. Though known to be a Hindutva adherent, he stressed development as the most important electoral issue before the nation.

A prominent leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Modi served as Chief Minister of Gujarat from 2001 to 2014. In the parliamentary elections, he contested from two centres, Baroda in Gujarat and Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. After a massive victory at both places, he decided to represent Varanasi as its Member of Parliament (MP).

This is the first time since the Rajiv Gandhi-led Congress party swept the 1984 parliamentary elections that a single party has won an absolute national majority, ending a long

period of coalition governments at the Centre.

Since his resounding victory, Modi has shown a welcome inclination to move away from the acrimonious election campaigning style of both his party and the Congress, by appearing to be an inclusive, sane voice of moderation, with the intention of carrying friend and foe alike in his mission of developing India's potential as an economic power.

In an original move, Modi invited the leaders of SAARC countries to his swearing in ceremony for his ministerial colleagues and his own assumption of office as Prime Minister. Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, too defied his critics back home and took advantage of the opportunity to take a step towards strengthening the ties between the two countries, which have been under considerable strain of late. Modi's subsequent visit to Bhutan has also been welcomed by all concerned as a step in the right direction.

His inaugural address to Parliament was a remarkable exposition of very well articulated policy statements stressing the need for the ruling and opposition parties to work together for India's progress. A clean India, the use of technology to improve the



lot of our farms and farmers, removal of red tape to facilitate speedy execution of projects, empowerment of women and minorities, friendly relations with the states in a spirit of cooperative federalism, and the cleaning of rivers were among the priorities he listed in a speech that impressed everyone.

A vegetarian with a frugal lifestyle, Modi is a known workaholic. He generally speaks in Hindi on public occasions and tends to draw large crowds as a powerful orator, with a sharp sense of irony that he uses to poke fun at political opponents.

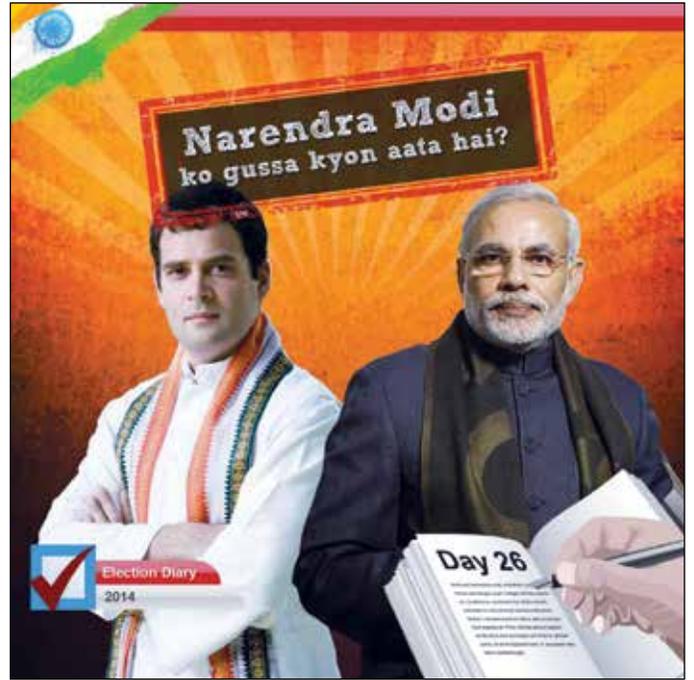
Modi was born on 17 September 1950 in a family of grocers belonging to a backward community, in Vadnagar of Mehsana district in the erstwhile Bombay state, now in Gujarat. The third of four children born to Damodardas Mulchand Modi and his wife, Heeraben, Modi helped his father in selling tea at the railway station, later running a tea stall with his brother near a bus terminus.

Narendra Modi completed his schooling in 1967. At school, he

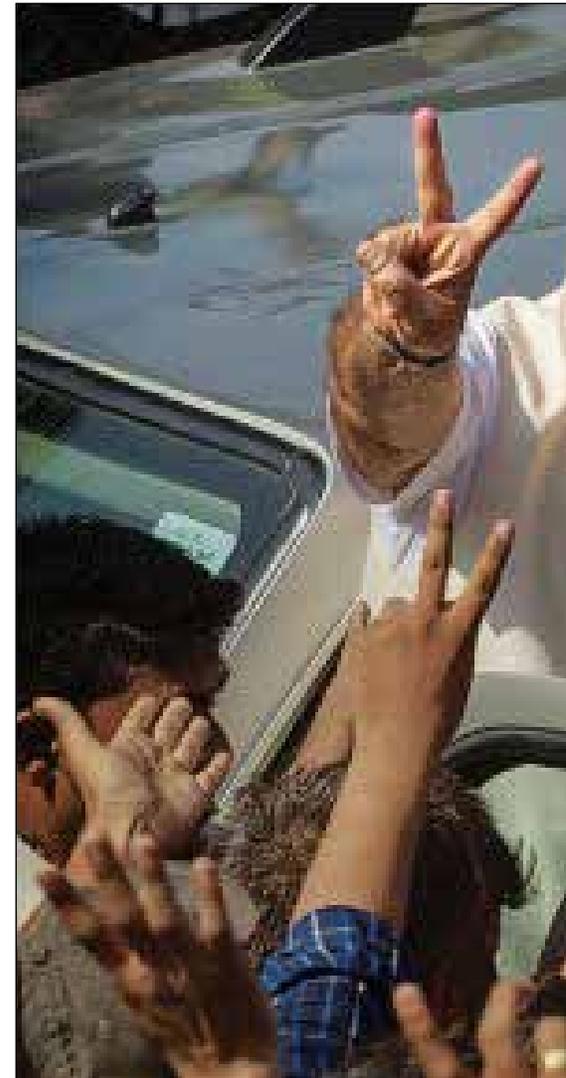
had been a keen debater and interested in theatre.

He joined the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) at an early age and came under the influence of Lakshmanrao Inamdar, his political guru and mentor. He also came in contact with Vasant Gajendragadkar and Nathalal Jaghda, leaders of the Jan Sangh who later founded the BJP's Gujarat state unit in 1980.

Following orthodox tradition, Modi became engaged at the age of 13 and married Jashodaben Chimanal when he was 18. The couple spent very little time together and were soon estranged because Modi decided to pursue an itinerant life of abstinence in the true manner of a young RSS member.



After leaving home at the age of 17, Modi went to the Ramakrishna Mission ashram in Rajkot and then to the Belur Math near Kolkata, before settling



down at another ashram set up by Swami Vivekananda in Almora, in the Himalayan foothills. (He still continues to visit Belur Math occasionally and talks about his reverence for the Ramakrishna Mission).

Two years later, he returned to Vadnagar and after a brief halt at his house, left again for Ahmedabad, where he lived and worked in a tea stall run by his uncle. There, he again came into contact with Lakshmanrao Inamdar at the RSS headquarters in the city. He then worked in the staff canteen of Gujarat State Road Transport Corporation until he became a full-time pracharak or propagandist of the RSS in 1970.

Modi graduated in 1978 with an extramural degree in political science

through distance education from Delhi University. In 1983, still a pracharak in the RSS, he completed his Master's degree in political science from Gujarat University. Modi formally joined the RSS after the Indo-Pak War of 1971. He was soon given charge of Sangh's student wing, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, in Gujarat.

During 1975-1977, when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declared a state of national emergency and opposition leaders were jailed and political organisation including RSS were banned, Modi went underground in Gujarat, often disguising himself as a Sikh, saint, or elderly man. He printed and sent booklets against the central

government to Delhi. He was responsible for the conduct of agitations and covert distribution of the Sangh's pamphlets. He was an active participant in the movement against the Emergency led by Jayaprakash Narayan. He was made the general secretary of the Gujarat Lok Sangharsh Samiti and his primary role was to coordinate between activists in the state.

The RSS assigned Modi to the BJP in 1985. While Shankersinh Vaghela and Keshubhai Patel were the established names in the Gujarat BJP at that time, Modi rose to prominence after organising another BJP leader Murli Manohar Joshi's Kanyakumari to Srinagar Ekta yatra (Journey for Unity) in 1991.





In 1988, Modi was elected as organising secretary of BJP's Gujarat unit, marking his formal entry into mainstream politics. His electoral strategy was central to BJP's victory in the 1995 state elections.

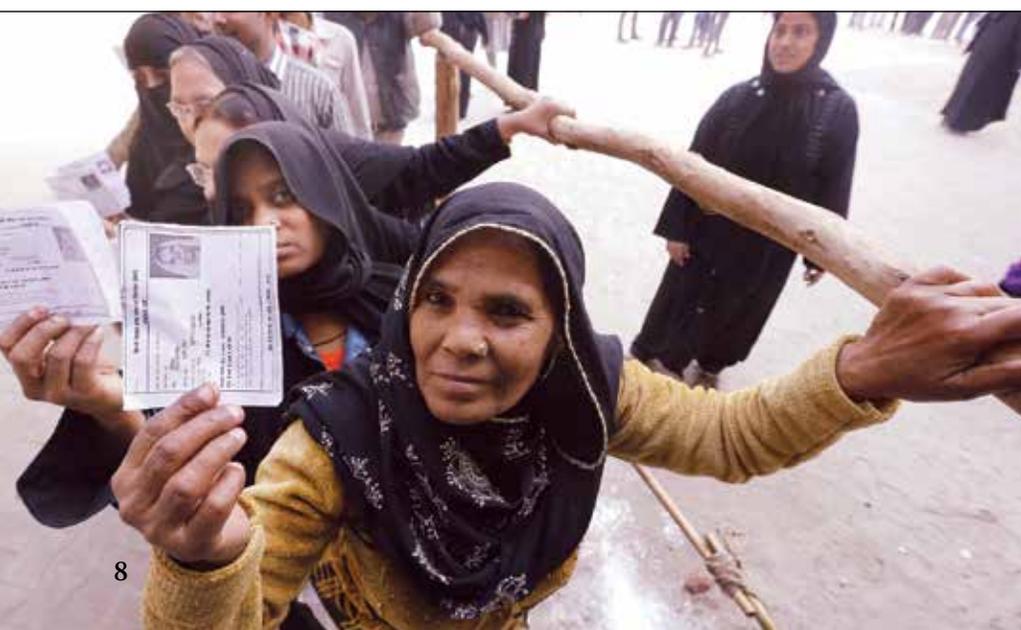
Elected National Secretary of the BJP and transferred to New Delhi in November 1995, Modi was promoted to the post of General Secretary (Organisation) of the BJP in May 1998.

Modi was appointed the Chief Minister of Gujarat on 7 October 2001, with the responsibility of preparing the BJP for elections in December 2002. As Chief Minister, Modi's ideas of governance revolved around privatisation and a small government, which stood at odds with the "anti-privatisation, anti-globalisation position" of the RSS.

Modi's government has worked to brand Gujarat as a state of dynamic development, economic growth and

prosperity, using the slogan "Vibrant Gujarat".

Modi is arguably the most effective communicator in Indian politics, with an able team assisting him in the skilled use of social media. He first interacted with netizens on Google+ on 31 August 2012, with the chat session broadcast live on YouTube. The event made Modi the first Indian politician to interact with netizens through a live chat on the Internet.



A strong man who pulls no punches in a political debate, Modi has now promised to focus on governance, postponing "doing politics" to his final year in power four years down the road. Much is expected from this man of results at the national level. He proved himself as Gujarat Chief Minister. India waits with bated breath even as he promises to deliver on the international stage.

*V Ramnarayan*

# Brickbats to Bouquets

Chief Minister Modi's administration was criticised for the riots in Gujarat in revenge for a train fire that took several Hindu lives at Godhra railway station. The Special Investigation Team appointed by the Supreme Court of India, however, exonerated him of all charges of guilt in the massacre.

Though Modi has been labelled by sections of the media as a controversial, polarising and divisive figure, British economist Jim O'Neill, author of the BRIC report, wrote on his blog that Modi is "good on economics", one of the things that "India desperately needs in a leader".

According to a 2009 article in *The New York Times*, "Mr. Modi has assiduously sought to reinvent himself from a scruffy mascot of Hindu nationalism to a decisive corporate-style administrator".

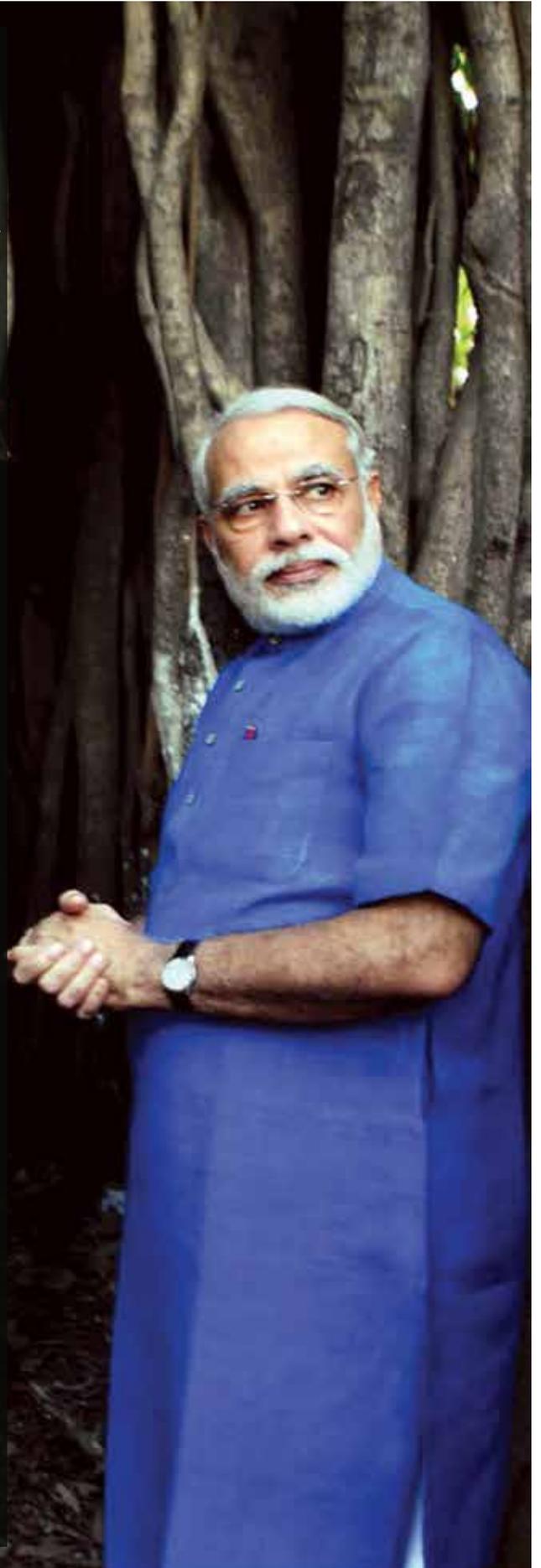
In 2011, the Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry, impressed with the development of Gujarat, invited Modi to visit Pakistan and address prominent business leaders. They also asked him to consider a flight between Karachi and Ahmedabad, on account of the historical cultural and economic relations between the two regions of Gujarat and Sindh.

In August 2013, financial analyst Chris Wood, chief strategist of CLSA, wrote that "the Indian stock market's greatest hope is the emergence of Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi as the BJP's prime ministerial candidate".

In 2013, the Wharton India Economic Forum (WIEF) at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania cancelled a keynote video-conference speech by Modi after some Indian-Americans lobbied against Modi. The USA denied Modi a visa.

In April 2014, in a move described as "unexpected", senior Pakistani diplomats told *The Daily Telegraph* that Modi is their preferred choice for the Prime Minister of India, "as he could provide the strong leadership necessary for peace talks".

The United Kingdom refused to deal with Modi for a decade following the 2002 violence but lifted its diplomatic boycott in October 2012. Later, in March 2013, the European Union also ended its boycott.



# Another milestone in Chemplast's history

## Million-ton mark achieved in PVC manufacture

22 April 2014 marked another milestone in the history of Chemplast Sanmar. This date, the 150th

shipment carrying the millionth ton of VCM from Mitsubishi, Japan, successfully landed on the shores of

the Bay of Bengal near Chemplast Sanmar, Cuddalore. A team from Mitsubishi Corporation including Tatsuya Kiyoshi, Senior Vice President and COO and Takashi Yoshida, General Manager, Chlor-Alkali Unit, from Commodity Chemicals Division, Mitsubishi Corporation, Japan, Masakuzu Sakakida, Chairman & Managing Director, Wataru Kato, Director, Senior Vice President, Living Essentials Group and Hidehiko Kunitake, Director, Chemical Group from Mitsubishi Corporation India Pvt Ltd were present at Cuddalore to watch the shipment arrive.

Chemplast Sanmar, the second largest producer of PVC in India, imports Vinyl Chloride Monomer (VCM)—the feedstock for producing PVC—from Mitsubishi Corporation, Japan. On 12 May 2014, Chemplast Cuddalore, completed manufacturing a million tons of PVC.

A dinner was hosted by Vijay Sankar at the Sanmar Chennai Headquarters on 22 April in honour of the team from Mitsubishi Corporation, Japan and India.

Chemplast has built a Marine Terminal Facility (MTF) in the Bay of Bengal to import Vinyl Chloride Monomer (VCM) in cryogenic condition from Japan for its manufacturing plant located at SIPCOT Industrial



*Vijay Sankar greeting Tatsuya Kiyoshi.*

*Tatsuya Kiyoshi presenting a memento to Vijay Sankar.*





*A special memento for Mitsubishi Corporation Japan (L to r): Takashi Yoshida, Masakuzu Sakakida, Tatsuya Kiyoshi, Vijay Sankar, Ramkumar Shankar, and PS Jayaraman.*

Estate, Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu. Commissioned in 2009, this terminal is designed as per Oil Companies International Marine

Forum (OCIMF) guidelines and the Ocean Engineering Department of Indian Institute of Technology Madras. The operations are carried

out under the guidelines of the Tamil Nadu Maritime Board, Chennai, and Director General of Shipping, Mumbai.

*Marine Terminal Facility, Chemplast Cuddalore.*



*150th shipment carrying the millionth ton of VCM for Chemplast Sanmar, Cuddalore.*





*22 April 2014*

## 'India by the Nile' - Edition II

# Promoting cultural understanding between India and Egypt

After a successful first edition in 2013, India by the Nile, a festival that provides an avenue for dialogue and collaborative exchange between Indian and Egyptian performing arts, returned for the second consecutive year (1-20 April 2014) to cheer the politics weary people of Egypt in the cities of Cairo, Alexandria and Hurghada.

Women of Substance, the major theme of this year's festival, aimed at highlighting the challenges and similarities between women in India and Egypt.

TCI Sanmar Chemicals, S.A.E. was the lead sponsor for the festival, which

was scripted by Teamwork Productions in partnership with the Embassy of India, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and the Cairo Opera House.

"We have always enjoyed close ties with Egypt and there is a genuine fondness for Indian culture amongst the Egyptian people. But we can't get complacent and take things for granted. The festival is part of the embassy's pro-active approach to reach out to the Egyptian public and to promote cultural understanding," said Navdeep Suri, India's Ambassador in Egypt.

This year's festival was a large-scale event featuring musical shows,

well-crafted films, folk dances, and an exhibition of Indian women's traditional saris, and culinary specialities.

The festival took off with the colourful razzmatazz of a dazzling Bollywood Love Story at the Cairo Opera House. Multiple fun and energetic Bollywood dance workshops were conducted by the members of the cast of musical.

Marami Medhi, an expert in Kathak dance, narrated her story with movements, with Indian myths and legends in a typical thematic concert. Free Kathak dance workshops were also conducted.

*Press meet for 'India by the Nile' organised by Navdeep Suri, India's Ambassador in Egypt.*





presents



Event

Nagada, of the Indian folklore kettledrums, was performed by Rajasthani Josh and his troupe at Cairo and Alexandria. The mesmerising performance showcased folk traditions of Rajasthan using instruments like the Morchang, Nagara and Bamboo Flute.

Javed Akhtar, one of India's famous film lyricists discussed the Song in Indian Cinema. An Indian Film Panorama took place between 12 and 16 April.

Shabana Azmi, one of India's best known film stars and a social activist

on and off-screen, joined discussions in Cairo. A retrospective of Shabana's memorable films was screened.

Saris of India showcased the timeless garment as old as civilisations of India, the deceptively simple sari, and provided free lessons in sari draping.

India Inc presented the political cartoons of Sudhir Tailang famed for his unsparing political satire, at the Egyptian Modern Art Museum.

Literary figures exchanged Words on Water - engaging discussions at the Supreme Council of Culture. Among the renowned participants in the



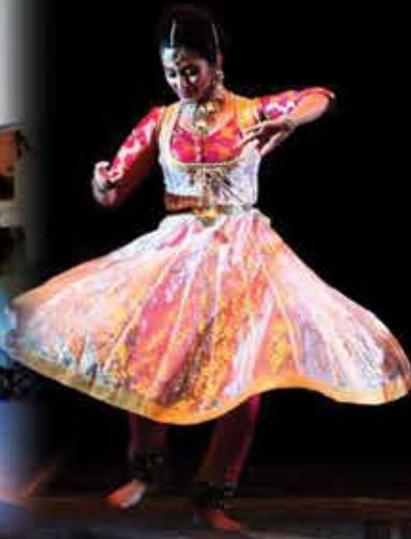
*PS Jayaraman, Chairman, TCI Sanmar Chemicals, S.A.E. Port Said, Egypt, addressing the Press on the eve of the 'India by the Nile' festival. He reiterated Sanmar's involvement in promoting Indian cultural activities in Egypt.*

discussions were Tailang and Urvashi Butalia, Indian feminist, publisher and historian.

As one of the most attended international arts festivals in Cairo since the 2011 revolution, India by the Nile added more layers to the Egyptian conscious, deepening the level of awareness of Indian arts.









*The victorious Jolly Rovers, winners of the TNCA first division league for the Raja of Palayampatti Shield.*

# Jolly Rovers win Palayampatti Shield yet again

Defending champions Jolly Rovers won the Raja of Palayampatti Shield for the fourth time in the last six seasons when they prevailed over Vijay CC in the final at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium on 31 March 2014.

Rovers retained the title by virtue of a better net run-rate (0.5210) through the season, excluding the final, than opponent Vijay CC (0.5168).

## History repeats itself

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, MARCH 31

They began as the defending champions and ended the TNCA first division season as reigning champs. Jolly Rovers, by virtue of possessing a better net run-rate (+0.5210) over their opponents Vijay CC (+0.5168), lifted the Raja of Palayampatti Shield for the second time in succession at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium on Monday.

Having required to just bat out the final day to defend their title, Rovers did it in style as they ended the day at 252 for three in 117 overs. R. Sathish (117, 195balls, 12x4s, 7x6s) and Napoleon Einstein (31, 267balls, 4x4s) added 155 runs in 68.4 overs to deny Vijay an unlikely win.

To their credit, Vijay tried every option they had in their sleeve — as many as eight bowlers used in the day— only to be successful on two occasions.

Ajay Kudua, assistant coach of Jolly Rovers, termed his team's show



**Having required to just bat out the final day to defend their title, Rovers did it in style as they ended the day at 252 for three in 117 overs**

as a phenomenal effort. "At the start of the day we fancied ourselves to chase down the target. But we were not able to carry on the momentum after losing a wicket early in the first session," he added. After lavishing praise on centurion Sathish,

Kudua reserved special words for Einstein who "curbed his natural instincts". "He had faced 267 balls to score 31 runs. In the context of the game his knock is a vital factor in us batting through the day without any hiccups," he said.

### SCOREBOARD

Vijay CC (1st Innings): 147  
in 75.5 overs

Jolly Rovers (1st Innings):  
147 in 49 overs

Vijay CC (2nd Innings):  
387/5 decl. in 96 overs

Jolly Rovers (2nd  
Innings):

K. Bharath  
Shankar b Balaji 56, M.  
Vijay c Abhinav Mukund b  
Rahil Shah 22, Napoleon  
Einstein c R. Rohith b  
Rahil Shah 31, R. Sathish  
(ret'd. not out) 117, C.  
Hemant Kumar (not out)  
O, K.H. Gopinath (not out)  
4. Extras (b6, lb4, nb12)  
22. Total (for three wick-  
ets in 117 overs) 252.

FoW: 1-72, 2-92, 3-247.

Bowling: L. Vignesh 20-4-  
57-0, L. Balaji 11-4-20-1,  
Yo Mahesh 14-4-33-0,  
Rahil Shah 39-20-78-2,  
Vijay Shankar 4-1-9-0, B.  
Aparajith 15-10-40-0,  
Abhinav Mukund 8-7-1-0,  
R. Prasanna 6-2-4-0.

## Backing young all-India talent an old Sanmar tradition

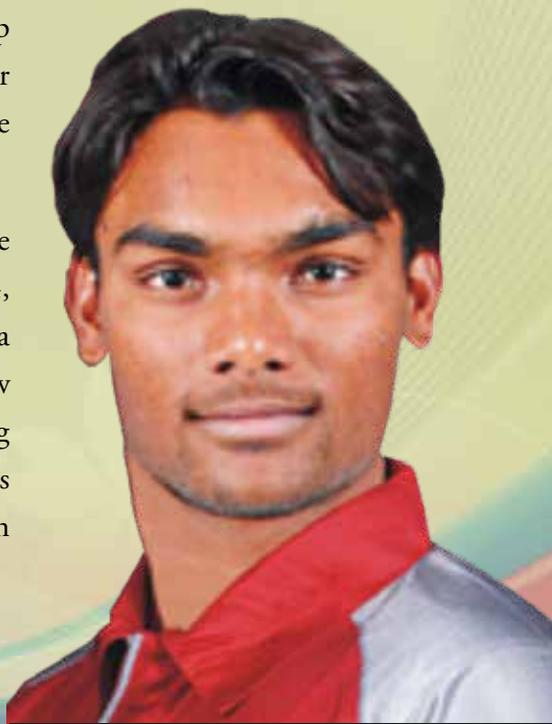
Jolly Rovers, the Sanmar team in the TNCA first division league is well known for unearthing not just local talent, but from all over the country. Local cricketers nurtured by it who have played for India include the likes of S Venkataraghavan, TA Sekar, L Sivaramakrishnan, Murali Vijay, L Balaji and Bharath Arun. From the rest of the country, the team can take credit for Harbajan Singh, Harvinder Singh, Sujith Somasundar, Tinu Yohanan and others who have donned India colours.

The J&K off-spinner Parvez Rasool and Punjab's rising star Manan Vohra are among Sanmar's new recruits this year while another Kings XI livewire, medium-pacer Sandeep Sharma has already played a stellar role in Chemplast's triumph in the all-India Corporate Trophy.

While all the three players will be playing in Australia in July 2014, Rasool has already represented India in One Day Internationals. The new season promises to be an exciting one, with the revised TNCA rules allowing the import of two outstation players by each team.



*Parvez Rasool*



*Sandeep Sharma*



*Manan Vohra*

# KS Narayanan Memorial Women's Futures Tennis

## Attracting the best of women's talent

The KS Narayanan Memorial Women's Futures Tennis was conducted at the Tamil Nadu Tennis Association (TNTA) Courts at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium from 7-12 April 2014 for prize money of USD 10,000. This is the second consecutive year the tournament is being conducted in Chennai.

Prarthana G Thombare, Natasha Palha, Rishika Sunkara, and Xi-Yao Wang (China)—ranked between 400 and 650—lead the field. In keeping with the trend in this year's KS Narayanan memorial ITF women's championship, Prarthana G Thombare wriggled her way out of tight positions to overcome a resolute Eete Maheta 4-6, 6-3, 7-6(5) in a long-drawn (three hours and 34

minutes) nery contest decided on thin margins.

Earlier, Vijay Sankar, Organising Committee Chairman, said in a press release on 31 March 2014 that 'the event attracted India's best women's players, alongside a contingent of overseas players from Europe and Asia.'

MA Alagappan, President, TNTA, congratulating N Sankar for supporting the event for the second continuous year, said that 'this gesture shows the deep passion that Sankar and his family have for the game of tennis. I am confident the quality of Indian youngsters will take advantage of the home conditions to do well.'

B Visweswaran of The Sanmar Group was the Chief Guest and handed over the prizes to the winners.



(L to r): R Karthik, SB Prabhakar Rao, B Visweswaran, Eete Maheta, Prarthana G Thombare, Shreeram Gokhale and CBN Reddy.



# CSR activities at Chemplast Cuddalore and Karaikal

Chemplast Cuddalore carried out a host of CSR activities this quarter. They include:

- Provision of furniture to schools at Sonanchavadi and Semmankuppam Panchayats.
- Donation for providing drinking water at Chitrapettai Village.
- Fishnets handed over to Rasapettai Panchayat.

Barrels handed over to the collectorate at Karaikal for use in the Solid Waste Department.



*S Velmurugan, President, Thiagavalli Panchayat, Cuddalore District receiving contribution to drinking water provision at Chitrapettai Village.*



*Fishnets being handed over to Rasapettai Panchayat at Cuddalore.*



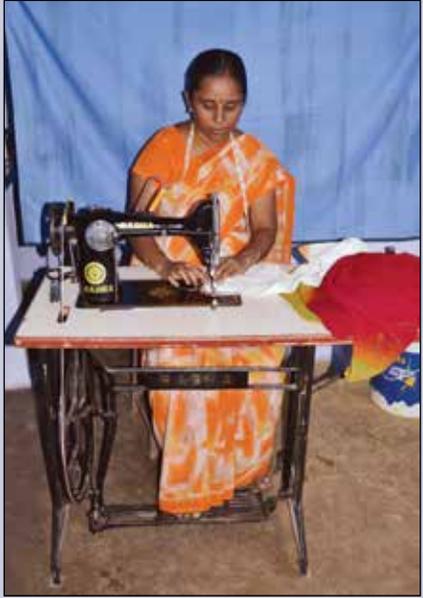
*Head Mistress, Sonanchavadi, receives furniture in the presence of A Ramachandran, President, Semmankuppam Panchayat.*

# Chemplast Mettur tailors programme to women's empowerment

Chemplast Sanmar Mettur has been organising free training in tailoring since 2010 for the local women of Kozhipannai and Thangamapuripattinam. Nearly 254 women were trained from Kozhipannai centre and 112 women from Thangamapuripattinam. Presently, 20 women from Kozhipannai and 48 from Thangamapuripattinam are attending this training. After successful completion many become empowered to start their own tailoring units.

*“I joined free tailoring classes conducted by Chemplast...now I am trained to stitch for my relatives, friends and others. I am thankful to Chemplast for this opportunity.”*

V Akila, Thangamapuripattinam.



*Women attending tailoring classes at Thangamapuripattinam.*

# Sri Sankara Schools' versatile students excel

**Sri Sankara Vidyashramam Matriculation Higher Secondary School**, Tiruvanmiyur, secured the first three state ranks in Biochemistry in the Standard XII examination conducted by the Government of Tamil Nadu.

Shaarath Thondanure, with a score of 197/200, came state first, Haritha Dhanasekar 197/200, state second and A Sruti, 194/200, state third.



*Shaarath Thondanure*



*Haritha Dhanasekar*



*A Sruti*



*Girish Raguvir*



*Arjun Praveen*

Three students Shriya S Narayan, Girish Raguvir and Arjun Praveen of Standard XII, **Sri Sankara Senior Secondary School**, Adyar, received merit certificates in Functional English, Computer Science and Economics respectively from the Central Board of Secondary Education for having been placed in the top 0.1% of successful candidates in the board examination held in March 2014.



*Shriya S Narayan*

Among the 1500 students from all over India who participated in the Engineering Watch Fellowship programme conducted by the magazine 'Engineering Watch', Shriya S Narayan of Standard XII, **Sri Sankara Senior Secondary School**, Adyar, secured the fourth position and was awarded a merit certificate and mentorship.

## S Adithyanarayanan, the golden voice of Swarna Sangeetham

In the Carnatic music reality show Swarna Sangeetham conducted by Tanishq and Raj TV to identify the golden voice for the year 2014, S Adithyanarayanan of Standard XII, **Sri Sankara Senior Secondary School**, Adyar, emerged as the winner from among 1000 contestants. He received his award of gold vouchers worth over Rs 5 lakh and the trophy from legendary artists Umayalpuram K Sivaraman and Dr M Balamuralikrishna.



# Madhuras Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children

## 'Moving Ahead'

On 17 April 2014, the last day of the academic year, the Madhuras Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children, celebrated the graduation ceremony of its children who were moving ahead to school education in special and mainstream schools on completion of the Early Intervention Programme, *Upanayan* at MNC.

Over the past six years, 62 children have been successfully enrolled in mainstream schools, and this year 20 children moved into the mainstream, of which 16 were from MNC and 4 from Government Early Intervention Centre monitored by MNC.

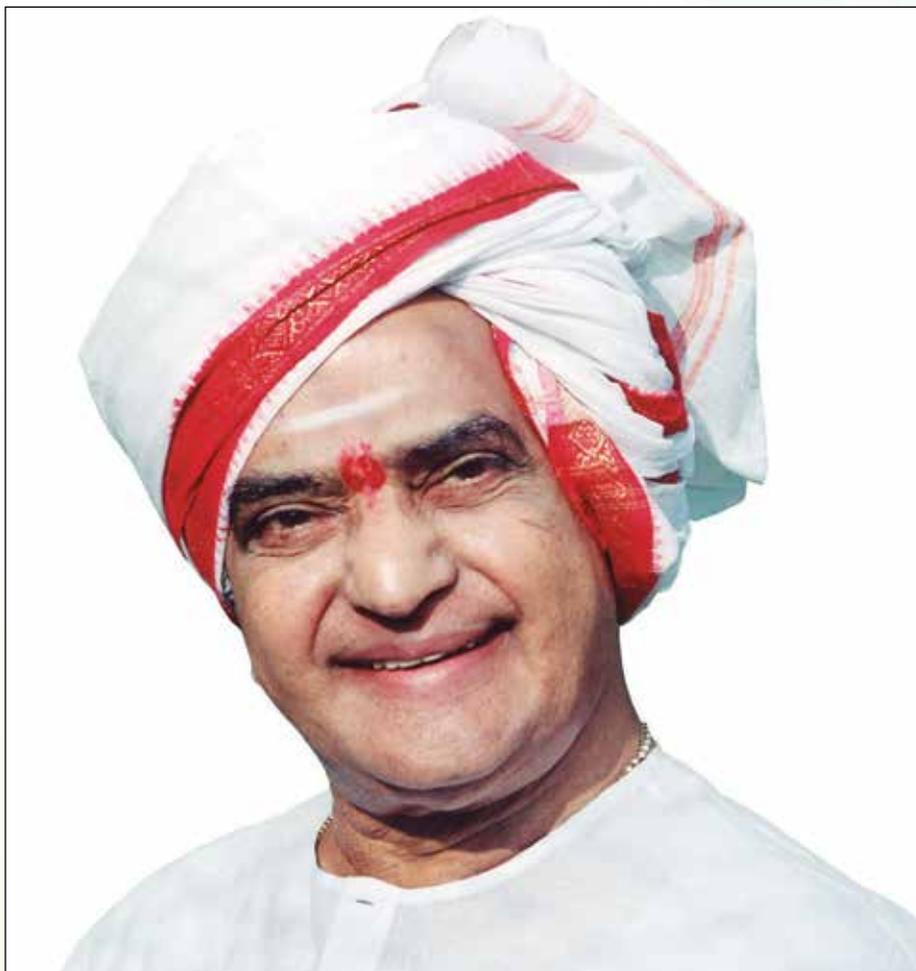
Geetha Muthiah, founder, Chettinad Hari Shree Vidyalayam, was the chief guest. Dr TS Kanaka, Asia's first woman neurosurgeon, was also present.



The graduating children and their parents presented a dance performance 'Aadum Vanna Mayil' on the national bird peacock as the theme.



# NT Rama Rao (1923-1996)



Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao was an iconic south Indian film star who launched the Telugu Desam party and became the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh after sensationally wresting power from the Congress party that ruled the state before him. He served as Chief Minister for three terms.

NTR, as he was popularly known, made his debut as an actor with the 1949 Telugu film *Mana Desam* directed by the renowned LV Prasad.

He became a household word in the south after his successful portrayal in the 1950s of Hindu deities in films, especially Lord Rama in the blockbuster *Sampoorna Ramayanam*.

NTR lived at Madras (now Chennai) for decades when Telugu films were

made in the Tamil Nadu capital and not yet in his home state, and it was a regular ritual for tourists from Andhra Pradesh visiting Madras to stop in front of his house to catch a glimpse of him. On his part he never disappointed his fans, and made it a point to wave to them from his balcony. A fierce advocate of Telugu pride he was largely responsible for shifting the Telugu film industry from Madras to Hyderabad.

Rama Rao starred in 274 Telugu, 15 Tamil and three Hindi films, and became one of the most prominent figures in the history of Telugu cinema. He and contemporary Akkineni Nageswara Rao dominated Telugu cinema for well nigh 50 years. NTR had a powerful voice he used to

great effect in delivering long lines of dialogue, charged with emotion, especially in the first half of his acting career.

He first acted in a mythological film in 1957, playing Krishna in the hugely successful *Maya Bazaar*. He was to play the blue god in 17 films in all. Besides Rama, he also portrayed other characters from the Ramayana, including Ravana, the mythical abductor of Sita.

In the later part of his film career, NTR became a screenwriter, scripting for many films. He turned producer as well, through his production house National Art Theater Private Limited. He was a constant student of his craft, learning Kuchipudi dance at the age of 40, for instance, from eminent guru Vempati Chinna Satyam, in preparation for the movie *Nartanasala* (1963).

NTR founded the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in 1982 and served three tumultuous terms as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh between 1983 and 1995. At the national level, he was instrumental in the formation of the National Front, a coalition of non-Congress parties that governed India from 1989 until 1990.

NTR used many innovative ways of electioneering, and was perhaps the first politician to go on so-called *rath yatras* on his campaigns, covering over 75,000 kilometres in a modified Chevrolet van he called the *Chaitanya Ratham*. The van attracted the attention of huge crowds, with its party flags and banners and NTR sitting on top and waving to his admirers.

NTR was sworn in as the first non-Congress Chief Minister of the state on 9 January 1983, along with ten cabinet ministers and five ministers of State.

On 15 August 1984, NTR was removed from office by AP governor Ramlal while he was in the USA to undergo open-heart surgery. His finance minister Nadendla Bhaskara Rao, a former Congressman who had joined the TDP, was made the Chief Minister by Ramlal. NTR returned to India immediately after his surgery, disputed the claims by Bhaskara Rao and demonstrated his strength by bringing all the MLAs supporting him, a majority in the 294 member assembly, to the Raj Bhavan.

An exciting sideshow during the crisis was NTR's daring act in spiriting away all his supporters to a secret hideout in Bangalore, Karnataka, to prevent them being lured away by his rivals to the opposition. Tremendous political pressure and public anger forced the Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, to remove Governor Ramlal and appoint veteran Congressman Shankar Dayal Sharma in his place, as the governor of Andhra Pradesh. NTR was restored as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh in September 1984.

A month later, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her own bodyguards in Delhi, and the Congress swept the national election that followed, except in Andhra Pradesh, where NTR's TDP scored a landslide victory. TDP became the first regional party to become the main opposition party in the Lok Sabha, when Rajiv Gandhi assumed office as Prime Minister.

Meanwhile, NTR recommended the dissolution of the assembly and called for fresh elections the following year in the state. The TDP again won with a massive majority, marking the beginning of NTR's second term as Chief Minister.

Losing the next assembly elections, after completing his five-year term, NTR however, returned to power for a third and final time in the December 1994 elections. However, his third term lasted only nine months. He was removed as chief minister and president of the TDP by his son-in-law, Nara Chandrababu Naidu, who staged a coup against him and took over as chief minister.

NTR was a socialist at heart and was admired, even hero-worshipped by the common man. He ensured basic amenities and subsidized essential goods for people below the poverty line in the state. He was an advocate of women's rights and worked on a bill to amend inheritance laws to provide equal rights for women to ancestral property, enacted in 1986. He passed legislations allowing private transport operators to compete with the government-owned APSRTC. He also pioneered the Telugu Ganga project, with support from the Government of Tamil Nadu, for the provision of water from the Krishna river for drinking and irrigation purposes to Rayalaseema in Andhra and Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

At the Centre, NTR extended unqualified support to Congress leader and former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh PV Narasimha Rao, leading to Rao's entry into Parliament for the first time in his long career with a record majority. Narasimha Rao went on to become India's Prime Minister after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, and helmed the country's economic liberalisation programme

NT Rama Rao was truly a super star of Telugu cinema and Andhra Pradesh politics, leaving an indelible impact on both state and national politics. He was a bold, often courageous and outspoken advocate of causes dear to him and the common man.



