

COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

# MATRIX

July 2022

A PUBLICATION OF THE SANMAR GROUP



N SANKAR

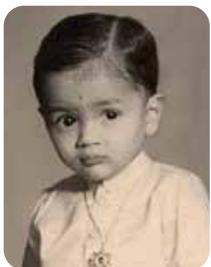
## N Sankar (NS) - a saga of many-splendoured excellence

NS was

- A doyen of industry, with exceptional entrepreneurial skills.
- An Institution builder in every sense of the word - in the way he ran businesses and also the way he created sustainable institutions outside of his business interests.
- An astute administrator, he held several top positions in industry associations and sports bodies with aplomb.
- A patron of sports, he passionately supported several cricketers and tennis talents, who rose to national and international fame.
- A connoisseur, who took deep interest in arts and heritage.
- An architect of several joint ventures with global corporations.
- A perfectionist, a no-nonsense person.

And above all,

NS was a humanist, touching the lives of all those who came in contact with him.





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*A special edition of Matrix on*  


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**N SANKAR**



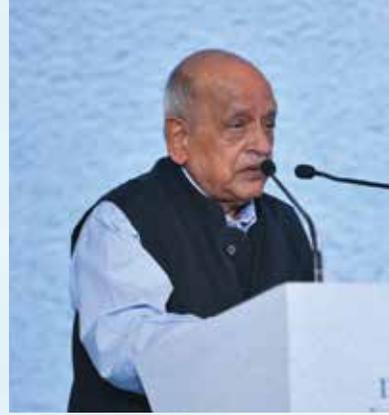
# N SANKAR IN MEMORIAM

1<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2022

The ballroom at the Taj Coromandel hotel was a packed hall on 1st May 2022, at the Memoriam event organised to celebrate the life and legacy of N Sankar, Chairman, The Sanmar Group, who passed away on 17th April 2022.

Several eminent personalities from all walks of life reminisced and shared the wonderful memories and times they have had with NS. Business leaders - Arun Bharat Ram, R Seshasayee and L Lakshman, N Ram from The Hindu Publishing Group and Sports personalities - Kapil Dev, Vijay Amritraj, and Ramesh Krishnan paid rich tributes to NS. Video messages from across the world from joint venture partners, close associates and friends conveyed the admiration that he had enjoyed. NS' brother N Kumar, daughter Madhurika and grandson Manas, paid poignant tributes, while his son Vijay Sankar proposed the vote of thanks. Historian Sriram V moderated the event.





# *A doyen of industry, who led by example*



*Chemplast Sanmar Silver Jubilee (1991).*



*Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at Metkem Silicon plant, Mettur (1988).*

**N**Sankar (NS) started his career as a 21-year old in Chemplast on the magic date of 4.5.67 (1967). NS made his first entrepreneurial move at the age of 26, when he acquired a major stake in the Industrial Chemicals and Monomers. There was no looking back ever since in his relentless journey of perseverance and growth.

A pioneer in “green PVC” manufacture, NS was responsible for some of the most original choices made in the field including the highly integrated manufacturing processes at the numerous facilities of Chemplast, Sanmar’s flagship company, now over fifty years old. His concept of captive power for the Caustic Chlor facility at Mettur was also a path-breaking initiative. Among other notable achievements, Chemplast was the first in the Indian Chemical Industry to develop and install a ‘Zero Liquid Discharge’ process.

NS was the architect of several successful joint venture partnerships of the Group with leading international partners in niche technology areas which have flourished over four decades, including with American

corporations such as Flowserve, BS&B, Crane, Emerson as well as with Cabot and several others. His acumen in forging these ventures and his unique ability to make them long-standing have turned out to be guiding principles for Indian industrialists looking abroad for partnerships. These partnerships are based on principles of trust, transparency and respect for intellectual property rights. NS’ bid to rope in technology to raise the quality of Indian manufacturing proved to be an enduring route for Indian businesses to raise their level of play.

Sanmar Engineering Technologies was born out of NS’ determination to bring in technology to India to manufacture products of excellence as a measure of import substitution. In 1976 he signed the first Joint Venture with Durametall (now Flowserve Corporation) of Kalamazoo, Michigan, and forayed into a wide spectrum of process industries – even India’s space missions – in need of components that principally ensure absolute safety and control. Over the decades, these joint ventures with global corporations have emerged as

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*Strategise  
wisely, plan  
meticulously,  
execute  
faithfully  
and you will be  
successful.*

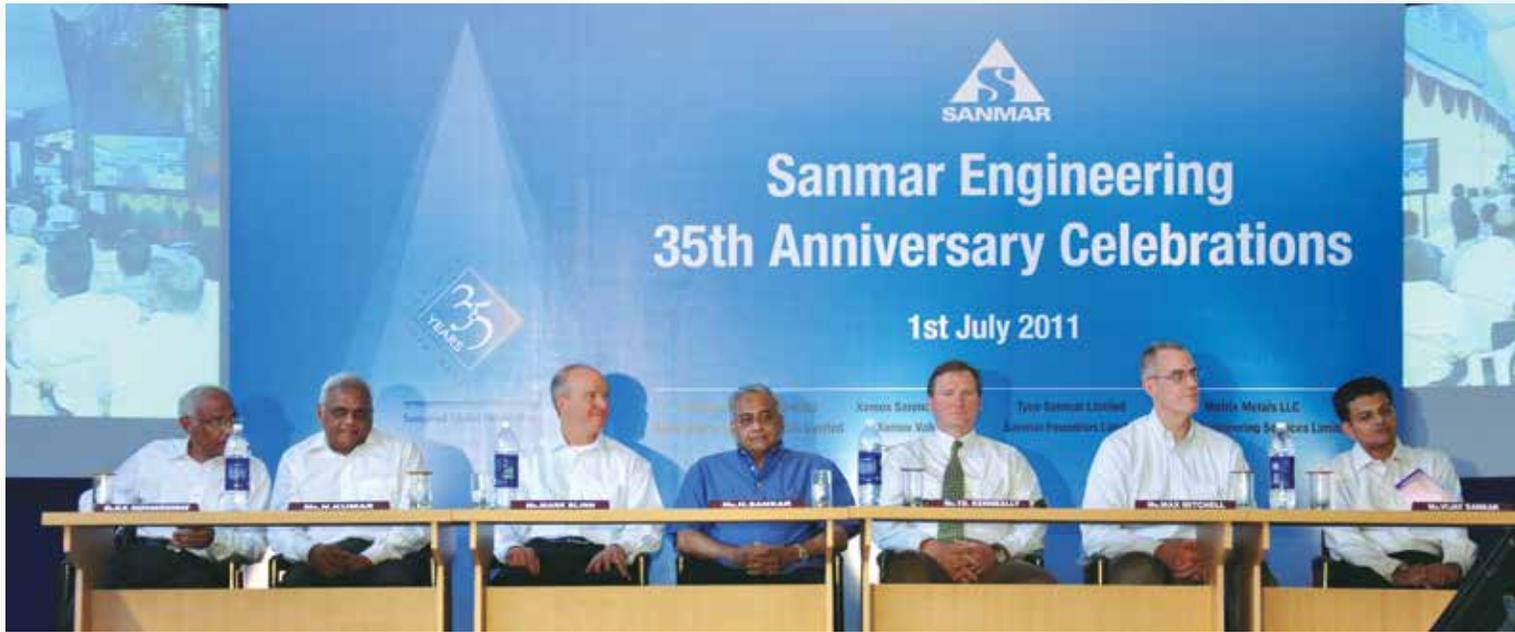
- NS



*Dedication of Chloromethane Plant, Mettur (1999).*



*N Sankar with senior management of TCI Sanmar, Port Said, Egypt.*



models for emulation for joint venture management.

NS ventured into the Shipping business in 1994 and Sanmar Shipping Limited acquired its first ship, a bulk carrier in February 1995. Over the years under NS' stewardship, the company consolidated its position as a strong player in clean petroleum products. Sanmar Shipping owns and operates a fleet of ships which trade worldwide.

With NS at the helm, The Sanmar Group has become a multinational

with global footprints in the USA, Mexico, and Egypt, other than in several parts of India.

NS established The Sanmar Group of companies that have earned a name for themselves in a highly competitive market. They stand for integrity and excellence; for growth with responsibility; for culture of innovation; for excellence in execution; for ethical business code; for a commitment to serve all constituents fairly; and with a strong sense of Corporate Social Responsibility.



*With Mr & Mrs Paul Jackson, Durametallc, USA (1976).*



*15th year of Durametallc India & 10th year of BS&B India (1991).*



Among the pioneers to separate ownership from the management, by establishing a Group Corporate Board, NS was known to be both a hands-off boss who would delegate and trust the professional managers. However, he was tough and demanding when it came to delivery of the work at hand.

Corporate governance was an article of faith with NS and the group echoed this philosophy in its vision statement “Combining Integrity with Excellence”.



*Kennett F Burnes, Cabot Corporation, USA, announcing the JV with Sanmar for the manufacture of Fumed Silica at a press conference (1996).*



*Dave Farr laying the foundation stone of the foundry at Viralimalai (1998).*



*With Eric Fast, Crane Co. (2008).*



There are few industry leaders in our country, who have demonstrated grit, ambition, passion to excel and persevere, with uncompromising integrity, as well as maintaining an impeccable reputation. Sankar undisputedly, will always be amongst this rare breed of leaders. Despite the loss, the edifice of The Sanmar Group will always have Sankar's grit, perseverance values, and vision imprinted on it. - **Deepak Parekh**, *Chairman, HDFC*.



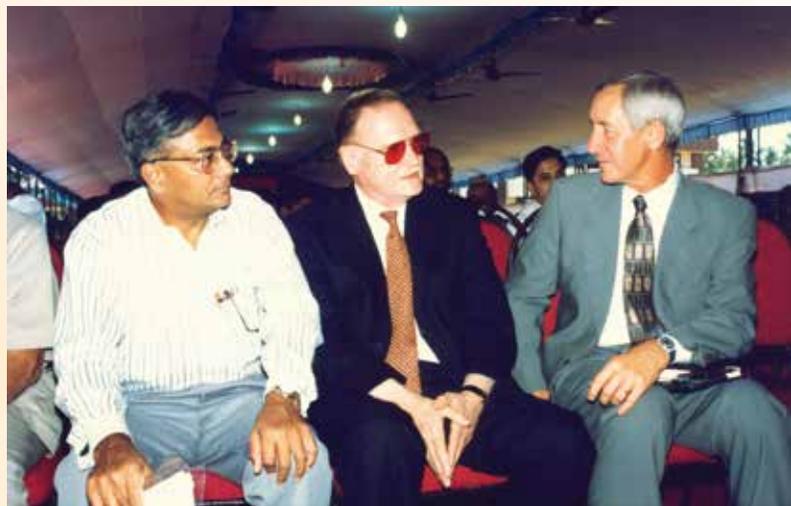
I met Mr Sankar in 2016 when we made a \$300 million investment in Sanmar. Mr Deepak Parekh, who was on our board, said that The Sanmar Group that Mr Sankar had created from scratch operated with the highest integrity, similar to the Tatas. Mr Sankar, with his son Vijay, is a fine story of entrepreneurial success, and son Vijay is well trained by his dad to take Sanmar to the future. Sankar and Vijay believed in reputation before profits. Like many, we've had a wonderful partnership with Sankar and his family. - **Prem Watsa**, *Founder, Chairman, and Chief Executive of Fairfax Financial Holdings, Toronto, Canada*.



Sankar was a rare entrepreneur who was tall enough to see miles ahead, who steered The Sanmar Group to remain relevant with changing times, at the same time with feet very firmly on the ground, measuring every step. He was forthright and clear in his views on all matters. He was a quiet benefactor of many social institutions in Chennai. I have lost a personal friend. - **R Seshasayee**, *Executive Vice Chairman, Hinduja Group*.



*Charles F Knight, Emerson Electric (1996).*



*JT Kenneally, BS&B, USA, and WM Jordan, Flouserve Corporation, USA (1996).*

Sankar was one of the pioneering industrialists of south India. I have known him over many decades and watched him lead The Sanmar Group with foresight. He was early to adopt modern management practices and focused on building competence in his companies. He pushed international growth and investment to make Sanmar a leading player globally. - **Venu Srinivasan**, *Chairman, TVS Group*.



He was a pioneer in corporate governance. He constituted a corporate board many, many years ago at the holding company, even though it was not required to make sure that it was transparent. In building Sanmar, Sankar used ethics, integrity and trust as cornerstones other than the joint venture partnership. - **N Kumar**, *Vice Chairman, The Sanmar Group*



Sankar, a third-generation industrialist, who was intellectually gifted, who strategised and thought big, who was, often stepped ahead of his peers who experimented, who took calculated risks, who pioneered PVC manufacture in India, who diversified in a measured way and who never shied away from a challenge. He was deeply committed to innovation and the pursuit of excellence. - **N Ram**, *Director, The Hindu Publishing Group*



*Moorco and Crosby team (1994).*



*Ed Monser, Emerson, USA, at Sanmar Foundries, Viralimalai (2008).*

# Building bridges across nations, partnering for progress

N Sankar was determined to bring in technology to India to manufacture products of excellence as a measure of import substitution. Even at 26 years, he wrote letters to foreign companies seeking collaboration with them, something unheard of then.

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*No growth  
or success will be  
worth its salt,  
if it is acquired  
under anything  
other than  
completely  
ethical  
behavioural  
standards.*

- NS

As the engineering arm of The Sanmar Group, Sanmar Engineering Technologies caters to a wide range of process industries – even India’s space missions – in need of components that principally ensure safety where the slightest risks must be ruled out. It also has been a supplier to India’s space missions over the years.

Several successful joint ventures have followed Durametall India (now Flowserve Sanmar).

NS has over the decades ensured that these Joint Ventures (JV) with global corporations are models for emulation. He has clearly enunciated a joint venture philosophy which he summarised as:

“Both partners should appreciate the need for the joint venture. They should clearly agree on the way the JV will be managed, they must work towards a system based on trust and transparency. There must be appropriate interaction at different functional levels for the ongoing operations of the JV and clearly defined high level contacts at both ends for management decision-making on important issues calling for the involvement of both partners. Finally, both partners need to be equally able to serve the growing capital needs of the JV as it expands.”

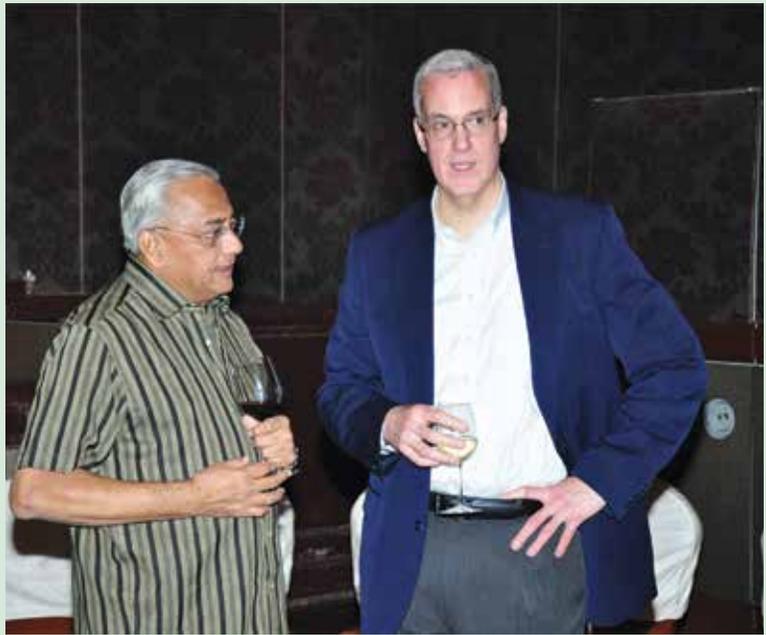


I hope that his legacy will remain among all of you and remain among all the Danes who came across Mr Sankar. There is hardly any Danish company who has settled in that part of India who did not benefit from Mr Sankar’s guidance, help and assistance. His active promotion of Indo-Danish ties would and will be always remembered. He was so promotive in and for Danish interests.

**H E Freddy Svane**, *Ambassador, Royal Danish Embassy, New Delhi.*

It was clear to me that he loved his family, his business, and his country, and also conducting himself with the highest degree of ethics and integrity at all times, and it showed with pride. I enjoyed having some back and forth teasing with Sankar over the many years of our partnership, which blossomed into a true friendship. While a huge void is left for us all, let's recognise this great man and celebrate the incredible accomplishments, love and legacy, he leaves and that will most certainly carry on with pride for generations to come.

**Max Mitchell,**  
*President/CEO, Crane Holdings Co., USA*



Sankar's many, many great characteristics always came through in our times together. He was always honourable in business, focused on good work and charity. I found him completely knowledgeable in all things political, supportive of all the people around him and he was deeply curious about the world writ large through Sanmar's many endeavours. Above all, I'm really appreciative of the lasting friendship.

**Tiffen Kenneally,** *President, BS&B, USA.*

Mr Sankar inspired us to develop Chennai into our global engineering centre in Tamil Nadu over a three-year period. He became the driving force in efforts made in our successful developments in India. We all have a lot to say. Mr Sankar, we shall never forget him.

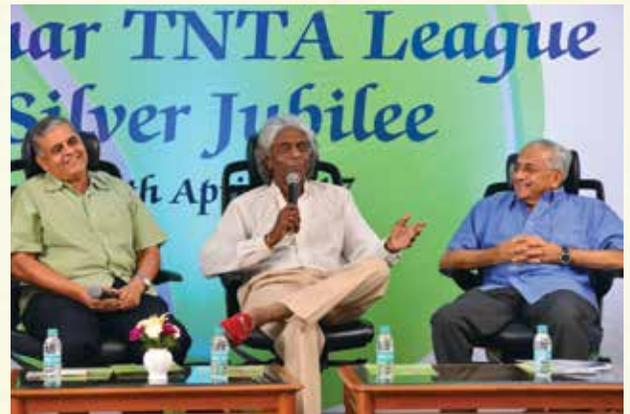
**Jorgen Huno Rasmussen,** *Former Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) FLSmidth & Co.*



## An ardent patron of sports and arts



*Neil Harvey dedicating the Sanmar Pavilion at the IIT-Chemplast cricket ground (1998).*



*A panel discussion during the Sanmar TNTA silver jubilee (2017).*

As a keen sports enthusiast, N Sankar was a patron of cricket and tennis, and had played both sports with great passion. In his younger years, he won many a doubles tournament in tennis at University and Club levels.

As a teenager, he was more inclined towards tennis, and was coached by the legendary TK Ramanathan (Ramanathan Krishnan's father) and would have gone on to a singles career in the sport but for being derailed by polio at the age of 17.

In later days, he became an able sports administrator and served as the Vice-President of the All India Tennis Association and the President of the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association and the Tamil Nadu Tennis Association. The Sanmar Group has been sponsoring the Tennis league in Chennai for over twenty-five years.

Apart from Alwarpet Cricket club, along with his father KS Narayanan, NS ran Jolly Rovers for well over 50 years, a record globally for an unbroken association between one family and one sports team. Jolly Rovers is a highly successful first-division cricket team, which gave the State and the Indian team many an illustrious player at the national and international levels.

He was also a passionate patron of the letters and arts and was chairman of Sruti Foundation, which publishes one of the country's best-known magazines on the performing arts.



At a Sruti function to honour eminent artists (2016).

He also breathed new life into *Madras Musings*, a fortnightly of repute, devoted to the preservation of the heritage and environment of Chennai, and placed it on a sound financial footing with support from multiple corporate houses.

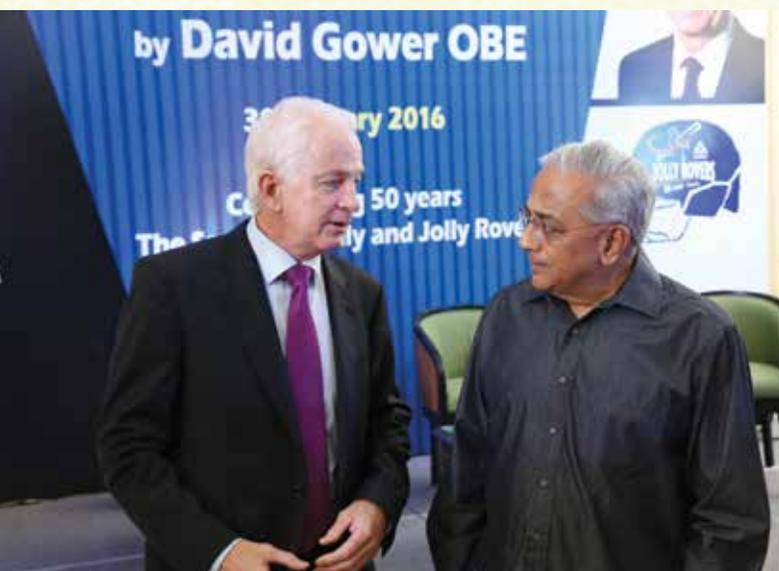


Madras Musings Silver Jubilee (2016).

*It was Mr Sankar who really saved Mr Muthiah's dream child, Madras Musings, from going into oblivion in 1996. And it was so typical of him as an institution builder. That he worked on, not how the paper was going to be brought out, but on how it could become a long standing and sustaining publication by itself and right through his life he kept paying attention to it.*

**Sriram V**

*Historian and Editor, Madras Musings.*



With David Gower - Jolly Rovers Golden Jubilee (2016).



Grace and elegance, is what comes to mind when I think of Sankar. The way he played the game of tennis was majestic, was beautiful. I was too young at the time to have played against him, but to watch him strike the ball was the thing of beauty. Today we talk about Roger Federer with the same grace and elegance. But I think, when we look back at the way TK Ramanathan and TA Rama Rao coached at that time, there were

players like Sankar who brought beauty to the game.

More than anything else, what is a lasting legacy for us in tennis is the Sanmar Tennis League, which is the only league of its kind in our sport in the country. And that is extremely unique for a country of this size. People constantly say that we need to have more and more sporting athletes come from a variety of sports, and it can only happen when you have people like Sankar leading, coming to the forefront and being able to help, as he has done with tennis and with cricket. -

**Vijay Amritraj**

I would say in India there is not any cricketer who has not gone or passed by his kindness. He looked after many, many cricketers. Easy to say, it's very difficult to do it. Unless you have a passion, it cannot last for 50 years. In my cricket, I don't have any more passion for the game. You move on in life, but I think this person stuck to that. He had a passion for sports and that is why we all have come this evening. To me, I always look in my life, at a person, who is 5 to 10 years senior to me, and ask myself, whether I can be like him, when I reach his age? And this is the person who crossed many times in my mind. I would like to be



like him. It's not possible because you always pick your heroes. Heroes are there where you can't reach! I wish his family and all his friends the best words that come to my mind. Let's celebrate his life, what he had done not only for himself but also for so many people, and made them happy. It is easy to say, but very difficult to do. - **Kapil Dev**



Lots of special memories about Mr N Sankar. I remember in 1985 when we (the Indian team) were in Australia on the way to winning the World Championship

of cricket, he called me to his room in Australia. He had come to Melbourne to watch the finals and give us words of encouragement. "Hey, guys, come on, you guys are doing well. You should win the cup." -**Kris Srikkanth**

Mr Sankar was passionate about cricket. And followed every game that Jolly Rovers played. Post-match, he would share his observations. His keen interest and knowledge were extraordinary.



a good place in life, credit must go to N Sankar sir.

- **Dinesh Karthik**

TK Ramanathan and N Sankar had a very special bond. When I see my father's wedding album, Sankar is very prominent there, almost as the *Mapilai tozhan* in the wedding and much later, when TK Ramanathan passed away, N Sankar came forward and created an endowment fund to support promising youngsters.

- **Ramesh Krishnan**

His penchant for cricket is well known and having run the iconic Jolly Rovers for well over five decades with a huge amount of success and highly respected amongst all the cricketers in the country, it is a testimony to the support and encouragement and patronage of Mr Sankar.

- **Bharat Arun**

At this moment, I would just like to thank Sankar sir and

an extremely grateful for the opportunity given to me and to many a player like me to hone our skills at the fantastic facility that they have at IIT.

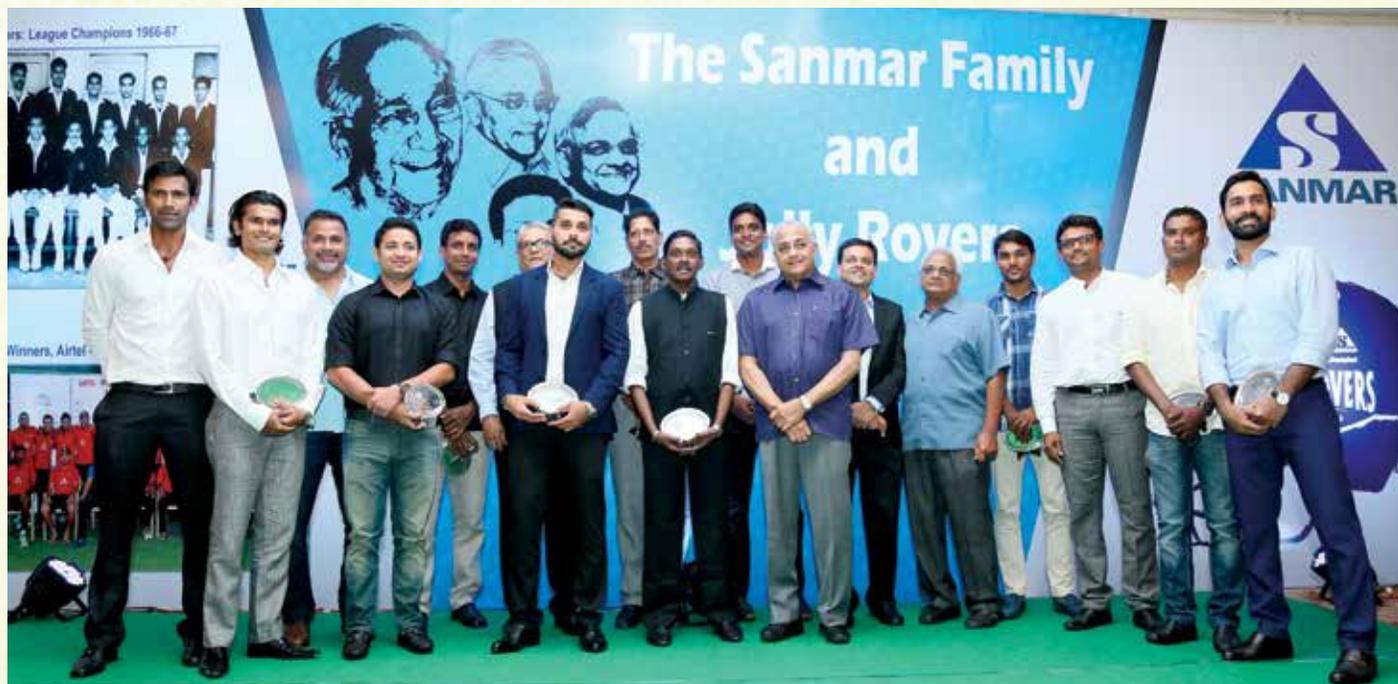
- **Hemang Badani**



Mr Sankar was my only mentor. His passing has created a huge void which can never be filled.

- **Bharath Reddy**

He's been somebody who has supported cricket in a big manner. I think, if a lot of cricketers are there in



*With International players from Jolly Rovers.*

*A benevolent philanthropist, who believed in creating self-sustaining organisations*



N Sankar was a generous donor and had contributed wholesomely to a number of organisations in the areas of healthcare and rehabilitation, education, social welfare, disaster relief and empowerment of the individual at society's grassroots.

Some of the organisations that have benefitted from NS' generosity include the Adyar Cancer Institute, Madhuram Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children, Kanchi Kamakoti CHILDS Trust Hospital, Sankara Nethralaya, and the Voluntary Health Services (VHS).

The Group's flagship company, Chemplast Sanmar has long been involved in ensuring a better quality of life for the community around its plants in Mettur, Cuddalore, Karaikal, Vedaranyam and Berigai.

NS believed that to be truly successful, businesses will have to

integrate a sustainability mindset into their business models.

All of us who entered this planet leave some footprint. Some of us are happy to have just a few pebbles move around, some cut a path, some cut the grass path for others to follow, very few people can really lay a path forward, which many generations can follow. And even fewer can really look at different paths, almost radiating from the centre 360 degrees. Sankar was one who played the shots all around the field. Everyone knows that he was a very generous donor, but I think, to my mind his generosity was incidental.

For a couple of years, he was on the board of the Cancer Institute as I was and I could see the kind of clarity that he had in terms of the purpose of the institution, his impatience to make the institution become modern and his ability to be very keen on not merely

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*We, at Sanmar, have been practising a truly sustainable business model for several decades and can testify to the deeply held conviction that what is good for business can be equally good for the community and the world.*

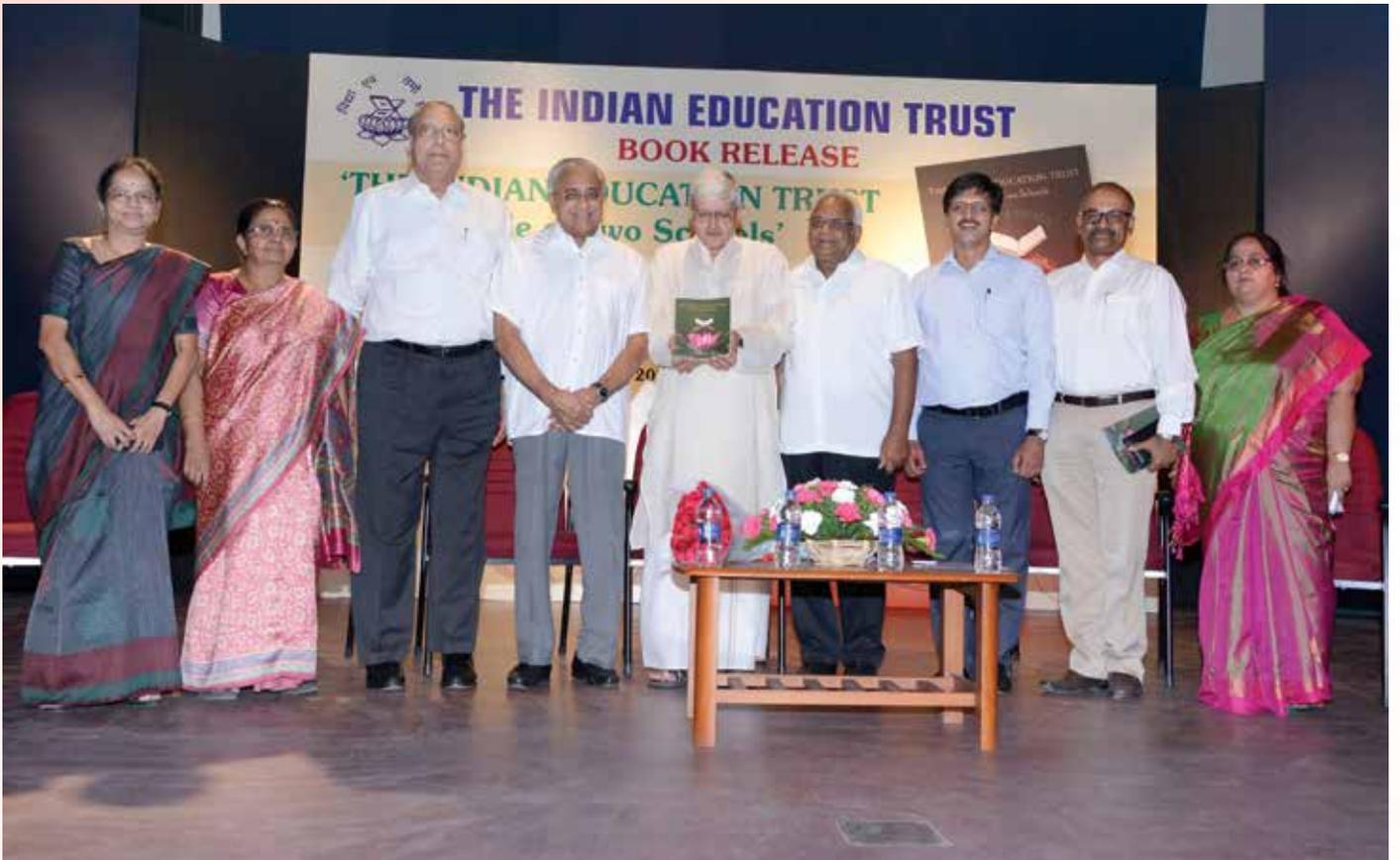
- NS



*Inauguration of the KS Narayanan Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at the Childs Trust (2019).*



*Inauguration of the Madhuram Narayanan Surgical Complex at Sankara Nethralaya by Prof APJ Abdul Kalam (2001).*



*At the Indian Education Trust book release function - 'A Tale of Two Schools' (2015).*

the macro matters, but also on the micro matters.

And I think the way he applied himself to the task and the purpose of life, the purpose of the institution, therefore the purpose of his life in supporting those institutions, that was a great learning to me. And that is how I was constantly reminded of the *Sathvik* way of giving. And it is not this one institution. I also know from my friends who were colleagues with Sankar on the board of the Childs Trust, that he not only gave generously (I think he gave more than 12 crores or so), but also took care in making sure the institution was sound. The very meticulous kind of detailed planning that he did for the institution - that certainly is his greatest contribution to all the classes that he supported.

- **R Seshasayee** *Executive Vice Chairman, Hinduja Group & Chairman, Cancer Institute (WIA).*

Sankar's sense of compassion and caring for the needy was legendary, but hardly surprising. He must



*Donation to Voluntary Health Services (2021).*

have inherited these qualities from KSN *Mama* and Madhuras *Mami*, and just carried forward the family tradition even more ardently.

- **L Lakshman**, *Chairman Emeritus, The Rane group.*

He was an institution builder and has re-structured many organisations so that they live beyond his captaincy.

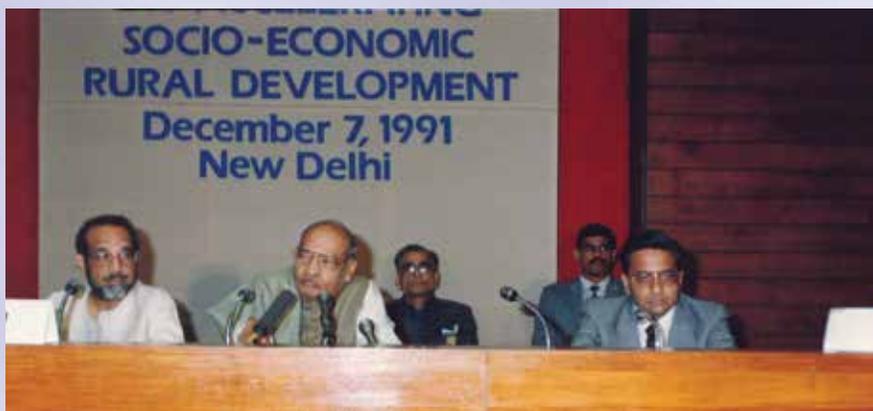
Tamil Nadu Tennis Association (TNTA) and Chennai Heritage are examples. I recollect, many years ago, when the Indian Education Trust (IET – Sankara Schools) was struggling, he told our father and uncle to increase the fees by a significant amount. Despite their opposition to it, they implemented that strategy. He felt that Institutions and Trusts should not be dependent on corporates on an annual basis but must stand on their own feet. Thanks to him, IET is healthy.

- **N Kumar**, *Vice Chairman, The Sanmar Group.*



*NS receiving the special cover and 'My Stamp' released on the occasion of 25 years of MNC (2016).*

# An astute administrator, who walked the talk



*With PV Narasimha Rao, Prime Minister of India (1991).*



*Greeting Dr Manmohan Singh (1991).*



*With Danish Ambassador Michael Sternberg and Danish Princess Benedickte (2004).*

During his eventful career that spans over five decades, N Sankar headed a number of industry organisations. He served as the President of ASSOCHAM (1991-92), where he played a key role in interacting with the government when economic liberalisation happened.

In the 1990s, he worked with fellow industrialists in the auto sector in Tamil Nadu to help the Jayalalithaa Government come out with the State's first industrial policy.

NS has been a highly respected figure while helming sports bodies like the Tamil Nadu as well as the All India Tennis Association, the Madras Cricket Club and Tamil Nadu Cricket Association.

He has also held other offices in several public bodies representing trade and industry, including Chairman, Indo-Danish Business Council (1987-88) Indo-US Joint Business Council (1998-99), Chairman, Madras Chamber of Commerce and Industry (1986-87) and President, Madras Management Association (1981-87).

NS served as the Honorary Consul General for Denmark in South India from 1989 till 2017, and was awarded the 'Knight of the Order of the Dannebrog, First Class' by the Danish Government in recognition of his services.

The TNCA recalls his exemplary service to the game of Cricket in Tamil Nadu. He was an astute administrator and a visionary. His demise is a huge loss to Indian cricket, especially Tamil Nadu. His immense contribution to the development of cricket and cricketers will be long remembered.

- **RS Ramasaamy**, *Secretary of the TNCA.*

He was very special in every way. When he walked into the room, he had a presence about him. You always knew that you were in the presence of a leader. - **Vijay Amritraj**

The impact of his vision, far sightedness and what he implemented as the President of TNTA, during his tenure from 1989 to 1994 is that we are in the 29th year of the Annual Day awards function which was to recognise and encourage new talent.

- **Hiten Joshi**, *CEO, TNTA.*

Sankar had become President of ASSOCHAM, shortly after the reforms started for the business community, it was a new era. Uncertain and we all looked at Sankar, as to how he would manage. Both, his own industry and how he would lead ASSOCHAM, which was an important Chamber of Commerce. And how he would guide industry through that uncertain difficult time. And let me assure you that, that was the time when I learned from him. How meticulous he was in his strategic thinking. And how he built up the chamber at the time and got everyone on board with him. - **Arun Bharat Ram**, *Chairman, SRF*

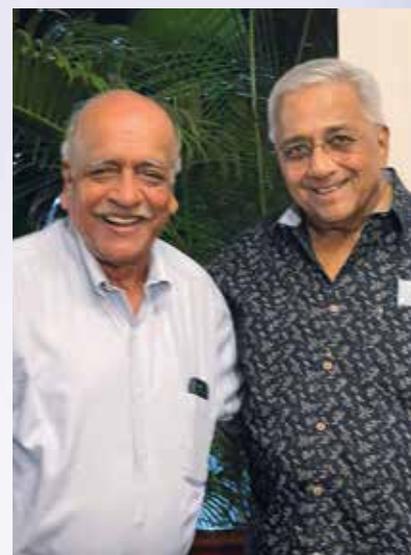
Work-wise, he had this enormous entrepreneurial drive and used to



*NS, President, ASSOCHAM with R Venkataraman, President of India (1991).*

push the envelope. We were also contemporary, serving the Madras Chamber of Commerce and the ASSOCHAM. Sankar, post his tenure as the President of the Madras Chamber of Commerce went on to head the ASSOCHAM during a very turbulent period in the Indian economy. Sankar used to rub shoulders with the likes of PV Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh and the joke amongst us friends was he was their 'go-to man'.

- **L Lakshman**, *Chairman Emeritus, The Rane group.*



*With Arun Bharat Ram.*



*(L to R): L Lakshman, Chandra Sankar, N Sankar, Pushpa Lakshman.*

# Family first and always, the guiding force



As the eldest son of Industrialist KS Narayanan and Madhuram, NS was born on November 19, 1945 at Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.

“It was a time of great happiness for the whole family, this birth of the first child in a new generation,” said the proud father.

NS was born in an entrepreneurial family of three generations, as the son of KS Narayanan and grandson of SNN Sankaralinga Iyer, both trailblazers in the history of South Indian industry.

NS obtained his B.Sc. (Tech) in Chemical Engineering from the AC College of Technology, Madras,

graduating with distinction, and a Masters Degree from the Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago. He joined Chemplast in 1967 to help his father and there was no turning back since then.

I have witnessed my brother looking after my father. Sacrificing a lot of his personal time and enjoyment to take care of him as our mother died early. He took care of not my father, but many others. An example is a cricketer who played for us for a long time and who's not well. Sankar ensured that he got monthly income so that he could live. This, I believe is Sankar, a really exceptional human being.

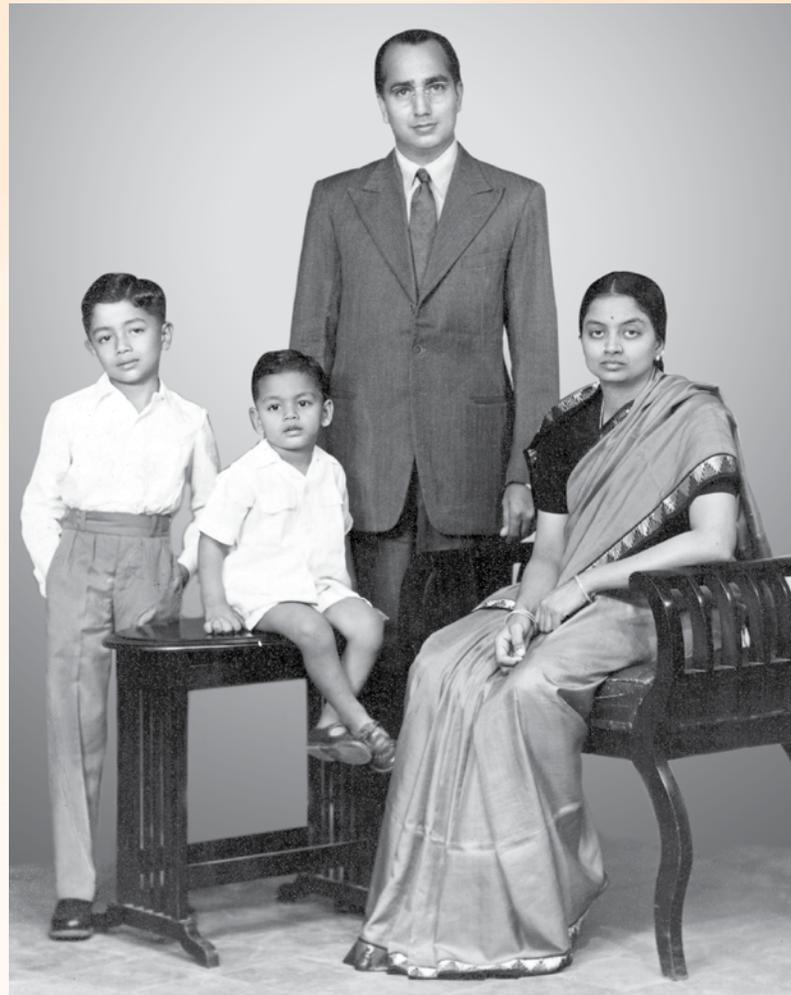
I've been with him ever since he built Sanmar, brick by brick. He took over Industrial Chemicals Limited long time ago. Anna's long-term planning and foresight had to be seen to be believed. He wrote the joint venture manual and many business schools in the US use it as a case study. His earliest joint ventures Durametallic which is now Flowserve and BS&B are now inching towards their Golden Jubilee year. On a lighter note, he always used to tell the collaborators when they talked about family businesses, he said, "You may change, but, I will still be here." Alas! it's not true anymore.

Anna was a fun-loving person played tennis regularly and enjoyed the competition. When he contracted Polio at the age of 17, while others would have stopped tennis for instance, Sankar fought fiercely and continued to play tennis.

His MCC days were filled with fun and enjoyed the camaraderie, making time for this in spite of his gruelling schedule. His two hours at the Club were important to him to relax and meet people. He loved to surround himself with friends.



*N Kumar receiving the 'Grand MCCian' award on completion of his 50 years at the Madras Cricket Club from NS in Nov. 2021.*



*N Sankar and N Kumar with KS Narayanan and Madhuram Narayanan.*

Anna's family was everything to him and he would sacrifice everything for the family...

For me, personally, I have lost a friend, and a person who was very close to me. A friend I used to drink with, travelled with, a father figure who looked after me and my family. A person with whom I shared my fears, laughs and memories with. I will miss my companion of 72 years on this journey called Life. - **N Kumar**

When my father's 75th birthday came up two years ago, I wanted to give him something meaningful. He and I shared a deep love of science fiction and fantasy books... So, I decided to write a fantasy novel for him. It took me about five months. At times, I had no idea what I was doing, but I persevered, hoping it would all come together. And when I finally presented it to dad on his 75th, he was thrilled to put it mildly. Perhaps the



*With daughter Madhurika.*

book had some potential, so I sent it to some publishers abroad. I received a contract last year for the book, for which dad astutely observed, 'You're getting a second act career-wise young lady.'

How many times has he thus saved me; my father is the love of my life. I will never know that intensity of love again, and that's OK. I've had it for 45 years.

I am blessed. Dad only wanted one thing for me to try and be the best version of myself and to see how far that takes me, because he was the very best version of himself and it took him so very far, leagues beyond most. - **Madhurika Sankar**

Every kid has the innate ability to bring out the man from his father and the boy from his grandfather. Countless memories and experiences with him have brought me here and made me utterly clueless about which ones to share. Him wanting to measure my

height on his wall every time I entered his room, watching innumerable TV shows and movies with him for over 10 years, playing chess and checkers with him, him teaching me mathematics and physics until 9th grade trying to comprehend my question papers, going out for dinner to one particular restaurant that we both like and so much more. I wouldn't be the person I am today without him... Not only was he the leader of our family, he was an incredible human being who left a noticeable impact on everyone he met. He was metaphysical and philosophical in his approach to life. He especially had a great frame of approach when it came to small things, never displaying anger, irritation, or impatience...

The kindest compliment I hope to receive someday is 'your grandfather would be proud of you.' I hope to become half the man that he was some day. - **Manas Sankar**

What can one say about somebody with whom you have grown up admiring, respecting? He's been your boss, your father, your mentor, all your life, and somebody whom you've seen pretty much every day in your life and worked closely with for so many years. In spite of his extremely busy schedule, he guided me through professionally qualifying myself inspite of the many obstacles I put in front of him. He was a perfectionist, as you would have heard, strict but benevolent and with an amazing eye for details and picking up even the minutest mistakes. On a lighter note, I can almost hear him telling me, while this event was indeed well organised, we should have had the event on another



*With grandson Manas.*



*With grandson Varun.*

non-dry day where all our friends who came here today would have had more fun with the drink in hand. Whatever I have achieved at the workplace is clearly only due to him.

He told me in 1998 was that the process of transition was going to be so smooth. It was zero hundred on that day and at some stage, it will be hundred zero. And you will never realise when the transition has happened. And, looking back after 24 years of working extremely closely with him, I can say what he said came true almost completely, except that I'm pretty sure it's not 100%, it's only 99%. Because he's still up there, guiding and watching over me. - **Vijay Sankar**



(L to R): Sukanya, Madhurika, Chandra Sankar, N Sankar, Vijay, Manas and Varun.

Initially, he had made the comment that I was his best brother-in-law that he ever had. Because I was 10,000 miles away. Starting from that, we got closer and closer as we interacted over the years. I was amazed at how a guy who was so brilliant, was off the charts brilliant, and successful, could be so approachable. - **VV Srinivasan**

My sweet anna and I had a very, very special relationship. And not only was he



giving them advice and talking to them with great interest. - **Geetha**

a great brother to me, he was a great brother to my husband and to my children he was the greatest uncle. Always



(L to R): NS, Chandra Sankar, VV Srinivasan (brother-in-law), Lalitha Seetharaman (sister-in-law) and VV Seshagiri (brother-in-law).

He was my mentor. Sankar was a confidant. He always helped me whenever I was in dire situations. We have had a lot of vacations together. I've been on cruises with him. He's such a fun loving person to be with. - **Bala**

# Close associates share their thoughts

Whenever there was an occasion to discuss regarding our friendship with our friends, Sankar would always comment that it was a friendship without a fight at any time. An amazing characteristic of Sankar was that he



kept in touch with all his friends. And would wish them on their birthdays or wedding anniversaries. He would also invite them home if he hadn't seen them for some time.

- **MA Alagappan**

We shared common interests on so many topics. It is not often that one cultivates an admiration for a friend as one is not always objective about such a relationship. But in Sankar's case, I admire him for his many talents. The most important characteristic of Sankar, beyond success in the industry was that, he was a true friend to many of us. - **Marti Subrahmanyam**



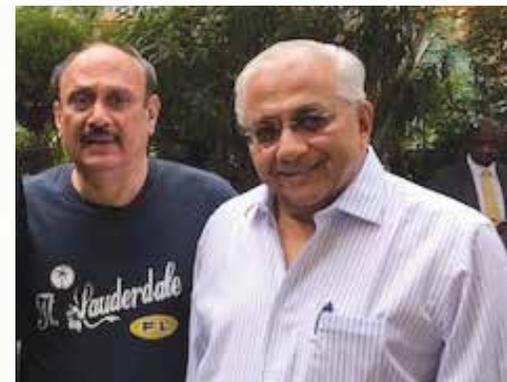
Sankar would call each and every one of us and check if we were free to come by, and after we formed a WhatsApp group, he would send a voice message and we would respond. Days went by the pandemic and two years of intermittent interaction. But the



WhatsApp group kept us going. He was the 'go-to man' for decisions as to how many to come and NS the boss would decide with precision who would be there. With a feeling of loss, I have no more words to say, and with liberty on behalf of every one of the Sunday gang, I say 'we miss you NS the boss.'

- **Prem Karra**

My children, Amrita and Lavanya used to look up to Sankar for his guidance and mentorship. Thanks to his counsel, both of them have done very well. Sankar, you may be out of our sight, but you'll always be in our hearts. You are a terrific person. You're a class act. You're a breed apart.



We cherish all the wonderful times we spent together.

- **R Ravichandran**



We played tennis non-stop for 20 years. And those are glorious days and we enjoyed tennis. Sankar enjoyed it a lot and all of us who played with

him enjoyed it. We became friends very quickly and especially in the last 4-5 years, we became very close.

**- Venugopal Reddy**

Throughout the 80's and 90's I had the good fortune of playing tennis with Sankar. When you got on court with him, you had to be on top of your game. He was focused, intent, and very cerebral in the way



that he played. He really got the best out of you whether you were a partner or whether you were on the other side. He demanded the best and he got

the best. And I think that's one great quality of Sankar - he inspired the best in everybody around him. -

**Vivek Reddy**

He was a quick and decisive decision maker, yet he tolerated debate on his decisions and he had the backing of his senior staff always. He was quick to apologise if he was wrong, but woe a manager who was wrong and did not admit it. He was fanatical about



ethical practices and behaviour. - **B Natraj**

A phenomenal boss, full of trust, encouragement and support to his people. A humane employer committed to the welfare



of his employees. Above all, a true friend, philosopher and guide to many of us in Sanmar. -

**MN Radhakrishnan**

I would remember him finally, for the way in which he communicated very profound management theories in a very simple, conversational way.



**- P Viswanathan**

I cannot forget the numerous voice messages that I would receive over the course of these three years.



I've learned a lot from him. His attention to detail, his leadership and his judgement. And his kindness. He helped my parents when

they were not well. He was an amazing patient.

**- Dr Vincent Rajkumar**



*With his close friend, AC Muthiah.*

# Awards, honours and recognitions



*Indian Chemical Council's Lifetime Achievement Award (2015).*



*Chemical Industries Association  
'Rasa Udyog Ratna' award (2008).*



*Lifetime Achievement Award at TiECON Chennai (2010).*



*For the sake of Honour Award, Rotary International (1993-94).*



*Lifetime Achievement Award at the 'Vinyl India 2012'.*



*Felicitated at TNTA 'Celebrate Tennis' event (2018).*



*The 'Knight of the Order of the Dannebrog, First Class' by the Danish Government (2006).*

# Tributes

Warm, affectionate tributes were paid by Industry associates and friends to the memory of N Sankar. Here are some excerpts:



ASSOCHAM will always cherish his memory for the contributions he has made during his tenure as the President towards the progress and development of ASSOCHAM.

**Deepak Sood**, *Secretary General, ASSOCHAM*

Mr Sankar was a man of great intellect, vision and courage who contributed immensely to the development of Indian Industry on the global stage.

**Hrishikesh A Mafatlal**, *Executive Chairman, NOCIL Limited*

He was a tremendous business leader, a great friend to Emerson for 40 years, but more importantly, a very special friend to me over 32 years... he taught me so much about winning in business and investing for the long term... I will truly miss him.

**Dave Farr**, *former Chairman and CEO of Emerson Electric Company, USA*

He was an extraordinary man, whose company I enjoyed and who made a great contribution to CRH.

**Albert Manifold & Ken McKnight**,  
*CRH plc, Ireland*

Mr Narayanan Sankar had a long association with Denmark as Consul General of Denmark - he relentlessly looked after the Danish interests and had assisted innumerable visits by Danish companies who benefitted with it in setting up their operations in Chennai, as Chennai is a hub with the presence of major Danish companies. We will cherish our association with him.

**Freddy Svane**, *Ambassador of Denmark in India, Embassy of Denmark in India*

He was instrumental in setting up the bird migration study centre at Point Calimere.

**Dr S Balachandran**, *Deputy Director, Bombay Natural History Society*

He was a wonderful business partner and a friend of mine for many years. I still have good memories of my trips to India and the meetings with your father.

**Horst Otto Gerberding**, *former Chairman, Dragoco Gerberding & Co., Germany, Sanmar's past partner.*

**Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin** condoled the death of The Sanmar Group Chairman N Sankar. Stalin said he had served in various capacities in the industry body, including ASSOCHAM and sports bodies and also in TNCA and TNTA. Recalling the various awards won by Sankar, the Chief Minister said that he had also played his part in educational institutions and CSR activities.

An industry leader of great quality and clarity, he commanded my highest respect as he did with many others.

**Tarun Das**, *former CII Chief Mentor, Gurgaon*

He will always be remembered for his significant contributions towards the growth and development of IIM, Kozhikode.

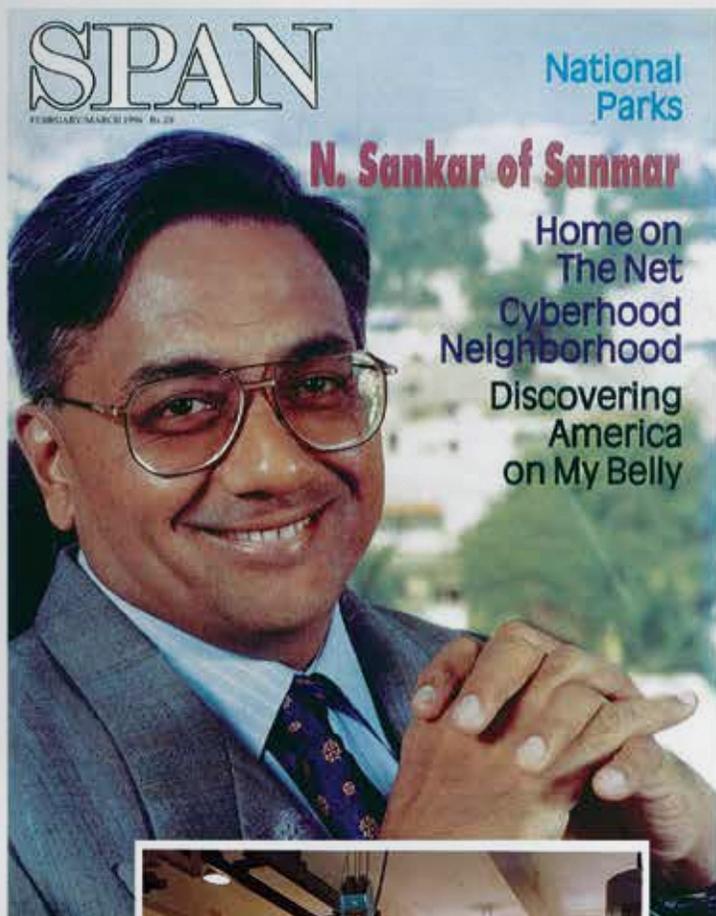
**Prof. Debashis Chatterjee**, *Director, Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode*

Mr Sankar had been a great mentor, guiding FLSmidth India for the last 25 years. His presence will be acutely missed at the FLSmidth India advisory board meetings.

**Mikko Keto**, *CEO, Group Executive Management and Deon De Kock*, *President, FLSmidth*

## Excerpts from NS interviews over the years

# “We Won’t Rest on Our Laurels”



The Sanmar Group has a long history of collaborations with foreign companies, including eight American corporations.

"Our first joint venture was way back in 1963," says Sanmar Group Chairman N. Sankar in his Madras office overlooking the greens and whites of the city [see cover]. "That 1963 joint venture was between our Chemplast company and B.F. Goodrich Chemical Company, for the manufacture of thermoplastics. Its success paved the way for other joint ventures. When we wanted to diversify into strategic but related areas in engineering and electronics, the American companies we approached were impressed by our earlier record in joint ventures."

A chemical engineer with a master's degree from Illinois Institute of Technology, Sankar, 50, has been chairman of the Sanmar Group for 20 years. He is director of many companies outside the Sanmar Group. Under his stewardship, the Sanmar Group has expanded manyfold. He has been a strong believer in setting up collaborations with foreign companies that will bring the latest technology to India, particularly in medium engineering and electronics products that are critical to industry.

Sankar has won several awards, including, most recently, an award "for leadership in the chemical industry," presented by the Indian Institute of Chemical Engineers.

At the national level, Sankar has been president of several business organizations, such as the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (Southern Region), and the Madras Management Association. He is also Denmark's Consul General for South India.



## THE BEST ADVICE I EVER GOT

**N. Sankar**, 62  
Chairman, Sanmar Group

# Ultimately, management is common sense



G. KESHAV RAI

“The best advice I ever got was from my only boss, S. Ramaswamy, who was GM of Chemplast in the 1960s. I worked as his assistant to learn the business. He used to tell me that all management decisions boil down to common sense and logic, but most organisations get lost in all kinds of models and accepted practices. In 2002, our flagship, Chemplast, faced a shortage of alcohol, from which we make ethylene di-chloride (EDC) and then polyvinyl chloride. EDC imports were costly. The option was to set up a cracker to get ethylene to make EDC, but that would require a huge investment. Importing ethylene and transporting it by road to our Mettur plant was not safe. We looked at the issue

through the prism of logic. Why not import ethylene by sea, convert it to EDC at a coastal plant and then transport EDC (a safer product) to Mettur? In 2006, we did this. Had we gone with conventional wisdom, we probably would have been bankrupt by now.”

AS TOLD TO N. MADHAVAN

# Clear-cut strategies

The Chennai-based Sanmar group has completed its restructuring to cope with liberalisation



Chemplast was one of the first PVC manufacturers in the country to use industrial alcohol as the raw material. A small unit to start with, it has expanded over the years and has now reached a capacity of 60,000 tonnes. The dawn of the 1990s saw the emergence of dominant manufacturers like Reliance and IPCL with capacities in excess of 200,000 tonnes. The smaller manufacturers—Chemplast, Finolex, DCW, and Nocil suffer from the cyclical nature of the industry as they do not have the size to cope with the ups and downs.

Sankar has had to face a lot of criticism for not going in for massive capacity expansion in PVC. "In 1991 we had a capacity of 30,000 tonnes. We were going up to 60,000 tonnes. By global definition, the relevant size would be between half a million and 1 million and if we had to go up to 1 million tonnes, it would have meant an investment of Rs 2,000 crore. Could we commit group resources of that kind to save Rs 200 crore?" he asks.

Instead, the strategy has been to concentrate on niche products like Speciality PVC, chloromethanes, and silicon PV wafers, of which Chemplast is the dominant manufacturer. Its ability to switch raw materials for PVC, its experience in being able to source raw material globally, and its early investment in self-generation in this power-intensive industry have helped it outperform its competitors.



*Sankar sees good prospects for PVC*

# A 'jolly' good run so far

Prasad.RS@timesgroup.com

C Suresh Kumar



**Chennai:** Sponsoring and nurturing any sports team for over five decades is not a feat too many institutions can boast of. That's exactly what Sanmar Group has done with regard to Jolly Rovers. The club, which has been existence since the 50s, blossomed into a champion side in the 60s and has never looked back since. N Sankar, chairman of Sanmar Group, spoke to TOI on the journey of the club, its indelible bond with cricket and a lot more. Excerpts:

**Ever since your father, KS Narayanan, took over the side in the mid-60s, it has done well. Was there a secret to it?**

(Laughs) I think the credit entirely goes to the players. The 1966-67 side had some fantastic cricketers like KR Rajagopal, Najam Hussain and many others who did a great job in winning the first division title in the very first year we began sponsoring the team. Once we began winning regularly in the subsequent years, there was no looking back as

we dominated the scene. **Talking about domination, there have been incidents where Jolly Rovers faced crowd ire**

True. Such was the domination that the crowd would usually end up supporting the opposition team those days. Even if they were an outstation side, we wouldn't get the support.

**How important has Bharath Reddy's contribution been in terms of talent-spotting and managing players?**

When he (Bharath Reddy) joined us, he brought a lot of emphasis on spotting talent and maintaining fitness. He also lent a professional approach to the enterprise which has benefitted the side immensely.

**Who would be your favourite Jolly Rovers player?**

There are no favourites as

such but I would like to mention Raja (KR Rajagopal). He was one of the best players that we had. He was quite unique in his style. He would come to the ground just before the start of the match, borrow a pad and bat from someone and then go on to score a century.

**Any anecdotes you could share?**

Our Group has always identified with cricket. On one instance when Sunil Valson was on the flight to Chennai to turn out for us, his fellow passenger happened to be the CEO of one of our engineering companies. The two got talking and found out that they were employed with an engineering firm in South Chennai. Sunil then asked him, "which sport do you play?" Later the CEO came to me and said "looks like everyone in our company plays a sport". Another interesting incident was during the Buchi Babu match in the 70s between our team and ACC at the Loyola Grounds. Over 6000 spectators flocked to watch the match as Sunil Gavaskar was playing the game (for ACC) and the cheers were deafening.

## MONDAY, MAY 2, 2022

# THE HINDU

## Industry leaders, sports personalities pay rich tributes to N. Sankar

They recall his contributions to various fields

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
CHENNAI

Industry leaders, sports personalities, friends and family members paid rich tributes to Sanmar Group Chairman N. Sankar, who passed away last month, at a memoriam function here on Sunday.

"He built the group with integrity, trust and ethics," N. Kumar, Vice-Chairman of Sanmar Group and brother of Sankar, said.

He was a pioneer in corporate governance and constituted a corporate board many years ago to ensure transparency, Mr. Kumar said while recalling his brother's legacy.

### Ahead of times

He said Sankar had framed a compensation policy which was way ahead of his time and which was still followed in the group.

N. Ram, Director of The Hindu Publishing Group, said Sankar was not a crony capitalist and said his was a long life of "understated achievements".



Industrialists A.C. Muthiah, Vijay Sankar, Arun Bharat Ram, N. Kumar, and The Hindu Group Director N. Ram attending a programme organised in memory of Sanmar Group chairman N. Sankar in Chennai on Sunday. ■ M. KARUNAKARAN

Speaking about his philanthropy, R. Seshasayee, former executive chairman of Ashok Leyland, said Sankar was a generous donor and had contributed a substantial amount to The Cancer Institute, Adyar.

Tennis legend Vijay Amritraj said the late industrialist brought beauty to the game when he played tennis and highlighted his role in promoting the sport through the Tamil Nadu Tennis Association.

Arun Bharat Ram, Chairman-Emeritus of SRF, recalled how Sankar was the president of industry body Assocham when the reform process was started.

It was a challenging time for the industry and through

his acumen and strategic thinking, he navigated the phase smoothly.

Cricket legend Kapil Dev said there was no Indian cricketer who had not been touched by Sankar's kindness and highlighted his passion for sports.

### Video message

A video message from Prem Watsa, CEO Fairfax Financial Holdings, HDFC Chairman Deepak Parekh and others sharing their memories of Sankar was played at the event.

Vijay Sankar, Deputy Chairman of Sanmar Group and Sankar's son, recalled how he was groomed professionally by his father, who had left behind a remarkable legacy.

THE HINDU

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# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA  
CHENNAI | MONDAY 3 MAY 2022

## N Sankar remembered fondly

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, MAY 1

Rich tributes were paid to the late N. Sankar with speakers referring to his institution building, ethics and integrity in running his company as well as supporting sporting and public causes. Sankar who passed away last month was a respected head who put the Sanmar Group on the industrial map of Tamil Nadu and abroad.

1983 World Cup winning captain Kapil Dev and tennis star Vijay Amritraj were in Chennai to pay tribute to Sankar who was a highly regarded promoter of sport and who sponsored the very successful Jolly Rovers cricket team in the city for well over six decades. Arun Bharat Ram and others paid trib-



ute to Sankar's qualities and commitment to various causes and chronicles capturing the history of the city. His brother N. Kumar welcomed the gathering at a memorial function put up by his company at the Taj Coromandel on Sunday evening. Videos of Sankar's life.

FORRETT COLEMAN & CO. LTD. ESTABLISHED 1871 VOL. 13 NO. 101 CHENNAI | MONDAY, MAY 3, 2022 | 20 PAGES | METRO PRICE: ₹ 4.50 (SUBSCRIPTIONS: ₹ 110)

# THE TIMES OF INDIA

## N Sankar a great leader & friend, recall peers

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Chennai:** The love and affection for late N Sankar, chairman of the Chennai-headquartered ₹12,500 crore Sanmar Group who passed away on April 17 at the age of 76 among his industry peers and sportsmen, was visible here on Sunday, at a 'memorial function arranged by his family at a city hotel.

Recalling his bond since 1972, Arun Bharat Ram, chairman emeritus of SRF, said Sankar became the Assocham president shortly after economic reforms were introduced in the country and for industrialists it was a new era. "There was appre-



**DOWN MEMORY LANE:** Former Indian cricket captain Kapil Dev with Vijay Sankar, deputy chairman of Sanmar Group

hension over how he would guide the industry during that uncertain time. But he

did a tremendous job at the helm of the industry body," he said.

R Seshasayee, former executive vice-chairman of Ashok Leyland, in a lighter vein recalled his first meeting – for an interview for the post of a junior accountant, 50 years ago. "I was very impressed by Sankar, but he rejected my application. Years later, he even offered me a board seat in his company," Seshasayee said. "Sankar saw the cause and purpose and not the amount of money, when he decided to give," he said, referring to cost escalation of a project for Adyar Cancer Institute.

Sportsmen were not far behind. "He was the big brother for all of us who came down to Chennai to

play cricket. No cricketer would have gone past him without benefiting from his kindness. He had passion to sports and retained it till the end," said former Indian test captain Kapil Dev. "Sankar brought beauty to the game of tennis. He would hit the ball gracefully and win with elegance," said former international tennis star Vijay Amritraj, recalling his long association with Tamil Nadu Tennis Association.

Sanmar Group deputy chairman and Sankar's son Vijay Sankar thanked the guests for taking their time out to attend the event and promised to take his father's legacy forward.

# N Sankar, a leader par exc

**CHENNAI:** On Sunday at a memoriam function, a diverse set of accomplished individuals gathered in the city to pay tributes to N Sankar of the Sanmar Group, who died last month.

Business barons, noted sportspersons, friends and family took turns to express their love and affection for late Sankar, who had touched their lives in some way or another. During the two-hour session moderated by well-known historian V Sriram, the audience learnt about the impact and legacy that the doyen left behind.

“It is difficult to imagine a life without Sankar,” said his brother and VC of Sanmar Group N Kumar about his 72-year-old sibling, fondly recalling how Sankar painstakingly laid foundation of the specialty chemicals conglomerate ‘brick by brick’.

Hailing him as a corporate governance pioneer and a joint venture specialist, Kumar said his brother was known to think ahead of time, investing in planes and

helicopters to tide over the hardship of travelling. Sankar epitomised the ‘attached yet detached’ characteristic that one distinctly finds in the Bhagwad Gita, he added.

Arun Bharat Ram, Chairman-Emeritus of SRF, said he knew Sankar when he came to Madras in 1972 with his two small boys.

“Sankar and Chandra were our first friends,” he said, highlighting his involvement in steering Assocham with finesse. Recalling his “passion and love” for cricket, he said Sankar would endlessly discuss all aspects of the game, including selection of a team member. On a nostalgic note, Ram remembered the tradition of receiving Imam Pasand mangoes from Sankar’s

Tiruchy orchard every year. Now, his sons Aashish and Karthik have forged a similar bond with Sankar’s family, he added.

R Seshasayee, former executive chairman, Ashok Leyland, said Sankar had rejected his candidature as a junior



**N Sankar**

# ellence on and off the field

accountant at Sanmar five decades ago. As providence would have it, Seshasayee had to decline an offer to join the corporate board. "Sankar played shots all around the field," he said, recalling his large-heartedness, spontaneity and 'Satvik' aspect to

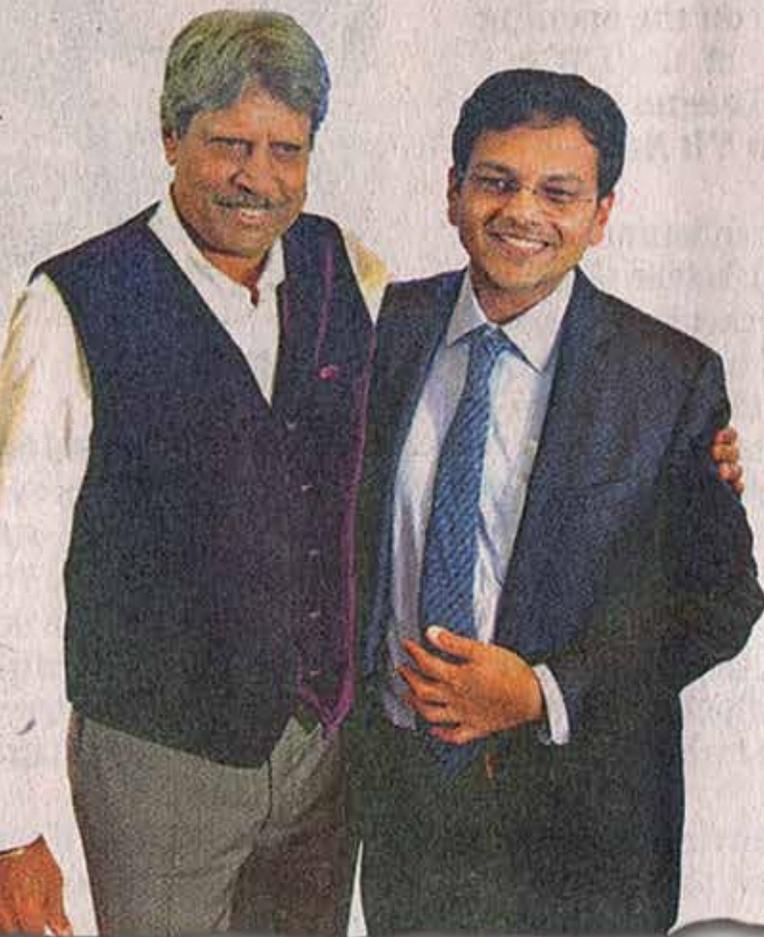
contribute generously.

Tennis legend Vijay Amritraj described Sankar as a player who "brought beauty to the game." Always seeking perfection, he had wanted "everything to be the best." Such was his love for the game that Sankar was instrumental in setting up Sanmar Tennis League, one of its kind in the country.

Former India captain Kapil Dev said Sankar had looked after many cricketers, which only exemplified his passion for the game for over 50 years.

Messages from global stalwarts, past employees and long-term business associates, including HDFC chairman Deepak Parekh, Fairfax CEO Prem Watsa and Marti G Subrahmanyam, professor of finance at the Stern School of Business at New York University, were also played.

Sankar's daughter Madhurika also paid a poignant tribute to her late father while son Vijay Sankar, the deputy chairman of the group, delivered the vote of thanks.



**Kapil Dev with Vijay Sankar in Chennai**

# Homage paid to Sanmar Group chairman N Sankar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

N Sankar, the chairman of Sanmar Group, had lived many lives in just the one. From being an entrepreneur, to being a patron of sports, cricket, and tennis in particular, and then to being a compassionate human, he had donned many hats in his life and was an inspiration to many, echoed eminent persons at a memorium organised at Taj Coromandel on Sunday to celebrate the life of Sankar, who had passed away on April 17 after a brief illness.

Speaking at the event, renowned cricketer Kapil Dev said, "There is no cricketer in India who has not been touched by his compassion. He inspired me a lot, and was role model for many. He was a hero like whom you aspire to become, but you can never be one." Speaking at the event, N Kumar, the younger brother of Sankar, said he was like a father to him. "He was a pioneer in corporate governance, who ensured that the heritage of the institutions created by him lives beyond him."

N Ram of The Hindu, said, "He was not a crony capitalist, and never sought anyone's favour." R Seshasay-



Former cricketer Kapil Dev speaking at the memoriam function of N Sankar in Chennai |

DEBADATTA MALICK

ee, former executive vice chairman of Ashok Leyland, spoke about Sankar's generosity in giving donations for social causes.

Sankar had held the position of ASSOCHAM president, and as the chairman of Indo-US Joint Business Council, Madras Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Madras Management Association.

Sankar had joined Chemplast on May 4, 1967 as a trainee where his late father KS Narayanan was a promoter and director. He was 26 when he began his entrepreneurial career.



## 'N Sankar, a true role model'

### OUR BUREAU

Chennai, May 1

Former Chairman of Sanmar group N Sankar wrote the joint venture manual which many B-Schools are using as a case study today, said N Kumar while speaking at an event organised to celebrate his brother's legacy. Sankar was involved in over 30 joint ventures, some of which have lasted for more than 25 years, as he grew the group across multiple businesses.

Sankar, 76, passed away last month after a brief illness.

Kumar also said that his brother was far ahead of his time and peers when it comes to values. Ethics, integrity and trust were a hallmark of his management.

### 'Understated achievements'

N Ram, Director, The Hindu Publishing Group, while recalling Sankar's work said that it was a long life of 'understated achievements'. He was not a crony capitalist and bravado, bluff and vaingloriousness was not his style, he added.

Very few people lay a path for the next generation to follow. Even fewer, like Sankar, will lay multiple paths, said R Seshasayee, former executive chairman of Ashok Leland. A generous donor, Sankar gave money without making the receiver feel small or without seeking credit for it. For him it was the cause. The money does not matter, he added revealing



Arun Bharat Ram (left), Chairman, SRF and Vijay Sankar, Chairman, Chemplast Sanmar at the meeting **BIJOY GHOSH**

the substantial donation that Sankar gave for Chennai's Cancer Institute. Sankar's many fans from across the country had descended on Chennai to celebrate his work.

Former Indian cricket captain Kapil Dev was one of them. There is no Indian cricketer who has not been touched by Sankar's kindness, he recalled adding, "He was my hero." Tennis legend Vijay Amritraj said Sankar brought beauty to the game when he played tennis. "He always won with elegance and never played to win at all cost," he said. A trait he embodied in his business as well.

Vijay Sankar, Chairman, Chemplast Sanmar and Sankar's son, said his father lived many many lives in his one life. "He was a true role model who set a remarkable legacy for us to follow," he added.

