

## Deepak S Parekh *in conversation with* Shekhar Gupta

January



*The KS Narayanan Oration, 2017*



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## In this issue...



4



10

4 The KS Narayanan Oration 2017  
Deepak Parekh in conversation with Shekhar Gupta

8 Chemplast Sanmar meets the Press  
Golden Jubilee celebrations in the offing; expansion plans unveiled

10 Cabot Sanmar's fumed silica expansion at Mettur

12 KCP Platinum Jubilee  
N Sankar recalls Sanmar-KCP family ties

14 Students from Odense, Denmark in India on a study tour

15 Nordic Ambassadors to India on a week-long tour of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry

16 Indian Space Research Organisation: Pride of Modern India

19 National Safety Council recognises Sanmar for safety management practices

20 The Tenth Annual India Chemical Industry Outlook Conference on Innovation and Disruption

21 Business Seminar at Cairo by the Embassy of India in Egypt

21 PS Jayaraman a main speaker

21 Visit of CII Indian Delegation to Cairo

22 Chemplast organises mega medical camps for rural populace

23 Chemplast provides financial aid for education and environment upkeep

24 Donation to Ellen Sharma School, Karapakkam



13



15



25

25 Annual Day and Sports Meet at Madhuram Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children

26 Legends from the South  
Swati Tirunal (1813 - 1846)

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# The KS Narayanan Oration 2017

## Deepak Parekh in conversation with Shekhar Gupta

The KS Narayanan Oration was launched on 30 January 2016, the birth anniversary of KS Narayanan, patriarch of The Sanmar Group and its former Chairman Emeritus, who passed away on 28 September 2012. In its inaugural edition on 30 January 2016, the KS Narayanan Oration had been dedicated to cricket, as part of the celebration of the Sanmar family's association with Jolly Rovers Cricket Club for 50 years.

This year, on 30 January 2017, two eminent personalities, Deepak S Parekh, Chairman, HDFC and Shekhar Gupta, Chairman and

Editor-in-Chief, ThePrint were engaged in conversation fielding a volley of questions from each other. The conversation was moderated by N Sankar, Chairman of The Sanmar Group.

The proceedings began with a welcome address by Sankar, who said, "If there was one thing that singled Father out, it was his enormous capacity for friendships. As someone aptly mentioned, he had a 'degree in people'. What gave him the most happiness was the company of friends, which was an ever expanding tribe. We therefore thought a good way

*(L to R): N Kumar, Deepak S Parekh, N Sankar, Shekhar Gupta and Vijay Sankar.*



to remember him was to get many of his friends and well wishers together, and organise talks by eminent personalities from different fields. We began the KSN Oration series last year with a talk by David Gower, the English Test cricket captain. This year we are fortunate to have with us two outstanding exponents of economic and political thought, Deepak Parekh and Shekhar Gupta.”

In his address, Deepak Parekh recalling his association with KS Narayanan said, “He was a man who followed his heart and his passion, but above all he will always be remembered as a man of principles, a man of integrity, a man who always kept his word. The world unfortunately has very few such men today. Leaders need to believe that they have the ability to shape the future and to shape a better future. This is exactly what KSN did through his five decades of being a businessman. It was always his optimism that kept him going.”

The conversation began with Shekhar throwing a challenge, “Deepak, at the beginning of a New Year, as you sit in your big ivory tower in Bombay, your new ivory tower, give us a sort of sunrise view of the state-of-the-world.” The conversation that followed covered various aspects of the world economy with particular reference to the USA now with Donald Trump at the helm. “The US has become a conundrum. The new, radically different leadership style is riding on populism, on anti-globalisation, on protectionism and insularity. Now we will have to wait and see whether the political rhetoric will be translated into policies and actions.”



“With the new government in the US increasingly looking inward, India needs to take steps to support its market with domestic investments. People’s interest in mutual funds, sparked by falling bank interest rates, is a positive sign. Investments in mutual funds and other instruments are bound to increase, these will be a function of bank rates rather than the short-term impact of demonetisation,” said Parekh in response to a question from Gupta.

According to Parekh, “the key elements of growth are private consumption, private spending, government expenditure and exports. Of these four, two factors, including exports and private spending are not working.” India has done well even with two of the engines of growth running slow — private consumption and private sector investments. But government expenditure, particularly public sector company investments, is on the increase.

Talking about demonetisation, he said that this was short-term pain.

*N Sankar*



*Shekhar Gupta*

The conversation between Deepak S Parekh and Shekhar Gupta can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vNFQIwouds>

“Business in January is better than it was in December. In two to three months, things will be normal. Private consumption slowed after November (when the government announced that high-value currencies of Rs 1,000 and Rs 500 would no longer be legal tender) but will come back,” Parekh said.

“We need to stand on our own legs, we need to mobilise and catalyse India’s

savings” into the equity market. It is good that over the last couple of months Indians have invested about Rs 10,000 crore a month in mutual funds, particularly equity-linked funds. But we need to develop the markets more, including “increasing insurance investments in equity markets,” he said.

Private sector investments will happen only with better capacity utilisations in industry. “Our industries are operating at 70 per cent and need to pick up to 80-90 per cent before investments happen,” Parekh said.

India will also have to deal with China which looks to play a dominant role as the US increasingly starts looking inwards. This has always been “tricky” as it focusses on exports without regard for viability and is known to dump goods, he said, referring to China dumping steel into India at below the cost of production here till India stepped in to protect its domestic industry.



Parekh also spoke about the need for clarity in the Income Tax Act and said that if people paid their income tax honestly, not even other indirect taxes, India would be a prosperous country. “While the objective of demonetisation is laudable its success is anybody’s guess.” “One of the concerns in India is lack of clarity in the Income Tax law and corporate tax,” he said.

The Indian economy, he said, was relatively well-placed when compared to many other economies. States like Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have captured the number one slot. “While Gujarat which was number one in ease of doing business now stands in the 5th place. Ease of doing business is one area that states need to address. Health and education indexes of states are critical for long-term growth,” he said. “Twenty years ago, Tamil Nadu was number one when it came to ease of doing business but now it has been pushed to the 18th position.”



N Kumar gave away mementos to Deepak Parekh and Shekhar Gupta. Vijay Sankar proposed a vote of thanks.

*Deepak S Parekh*



*A glimpse of the audience at the Oration.*

# Chemplast Sanmar meets the Press

## Golden Jubilee celebrations in the offing; expansion plans unveiled

*Chemplast Golden Jubilee logo was unveiled by N Sankar at the Meet.*

A press meet was convened on 6 March 2017 on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee celebrations being planned on 4 May 2017 to mark the completion of 50 golden years of Chemplast Sanmar.

The meet was well represented by members of the press fraternity including senior reporters and photographers, both national and regional, and television channels including The Hindu, The Times of India, Deccan Chronicle, News Today, DT Next, Business Line, Business Standard, Financial Chronicle, Financial Express, Economic Times, PTI, IANS, Dinamani, Rajasthan Patrika, Sakshi, Vanigamani, Velan Vaniga Ulagam, Malai Murasu TV, Business Advisor (Youtube), Star News TV (Youtube), NBA (Youtube), Arjuna TV (Youtube), Muthaleedu, Chennai Online, Thozhil Vanigam, Vaartha and Theekkathir.

In line with its record of achieving continuous growth, Chemplast Sanmar has taken on hand two ambitious projects, one for the manufacture of Hydrogen Peroxide, and another for the production of Chlorinated PVC (CPVC), both products again based on the concept of value addition. The investment in the Hydrogen Peroxide plant will be around Rs 100 crore. The CPVC project, at an investment of Rs 325 crore, will come up as a JV with Kem One SAS, a leading European Chloro-Vinyl company. "The plant will come up at Karaikal in Puducherry and will have the capacity to produce 20,000 tonnes per annum of CPVC resins," said Vijay Sankar.

"Both the projects have been conceived based on the concept of value addition and will be funded through internal accruals and some borrowings," said N Sankar.





“The Hydrogen Peroxide project is a local market specific one. We had an opportunity to acquire the assets of one of the existing producers. However, it is a forward integration project. We generate hydrogen already. This Rs 100 crore project will come up in Mettur as most of the customers, the textile units, are located in nearby districts,” said Vijay Sankar.

The capacity will be about 18,000 tonnes a year and the market size for this product about 100,000 tonnes a year. “Both the projects will have the potential to add Rs 450-500 crore to the topline,” said Ramkumar Shankar, Managing Director, Chemplast Sanmar Ltd.

Besides the committed projects, the company also has grand plans of more than trebling its Suspension PVC capacity to one million tonnes in stages. This will help the country to meet its huge demand of Suspension PVC, going into the irrigation and construction sectors. As part of this, it plans to double



the Cuddalore unit's capacity of three lakh tonnes in the near-medium term.

“We have not finalised the plans. This expansion may entail an investment of about Rs 600 crore,” said Vijay Sankar.

The Golden Jubilee logo of Chemplast Sanmar was unveiled at the meet. The Golden Jubilee function on 4 May 2017 will be as much a celebration of the exciting opportunities that await the company in the years to come, as one of success in the years past.



*Ramkumar Shankar.*



# Cabot Sanmar's fumed silica expansion at Mettur

*Visitors getting an overview of the various fumed silica grades made by the JV.*

A new Burner Assembly and a new Fluid Bed Calciner were installed at Cabot Sanmar's fumed silica plant at a function held at Mettur on January 16, 2017.

The new burner assembly incorporates the latest design aspects of Cabot and enables the JV to produce additional quantity of untreated grades. The new fluid bed calciner allows the JV to penetrate new market segments for treated grades. The demand in India for both these grades have been strong and is expected to continue in the coming years.

The new equipment was inaugurated by Nick Cross, Executive Vice President, Cabot Corporation, USA and Vijay Sankar. Fei Deng, Vice President, Asia Pacific, Cabot, China, was also present during the occasion.



*Inauguration of the new equipment by Nicholas S Cross and Vijay Sankar.*





*Visitors and key members of the operation team in the control room.*

*Chairman N Sankar hosted a dinner for Cabot visitors along with senior members of the Sanmar team on 16 January 2017.*



*(L to R): N Sankar, Nick Cross, R Kalidas, Fei Deng and Krishna Kumar Rangachari.*

# KCP Platinum Jubilee

## N Sankar recalls Sanmar-KCP family ties

*(L to R): SN Subrahmanyam, Deputy MD and President, L&T; VL Dutt, Chairman, KCP, Union Minister for Urban Development, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Information and Broadcasting Venkaiah Naidu and N Sankar.*

KCP Limited celebrated its Platinum Jubilee on 27 December 2016. Union Minister for Urban Development, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation Venkaiah Naidu was the chief guest and in his address said, “I am happy with the way family-owned companies in Tamil Nadu, especially in Chennai, maintain highest standards in the industrial sector.”

N Sankar was a special guest at the function. Recalling the relationship between KCP and Sanmar families, he said, “First and most important, the relationship between Dr Dutt’s family and ours has been strong over five decades and

four generations. Many parallels can also be drawn between our business groups, both of which had their beginnings in pre-independent India. Both groups came into existence when there was little by way of economic development in the regions where they were established. Ours had its beginnings in the Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu, and KCP was founded by Sri V Ramakrishna in Vuyyuru, now in Andhra Pradesh. However, at the time of founding, both were set up in relatively less developed regions of the then Madras Presidency. Both groups are family owned and professionally managed.”





On the founder of KCP, Sankar said, “Coming to KCP, it is well known that Sri V Ramakrishna the founder, quit one of the most sought after positions at that time as a member of the ICS to begin his career as an entrepreneur. However, it is a less known fact that in the 1930s, he was the Collector of Tirunelveli where as I mentioned earlier, our Group had its roots. The Thamirabarani waters are known to be very fertile, not only for agricultural produce, but for producing entrepreneurs and industrial groups like TVS, Amalgamations, Enfield, and our own. Perhaps Sri Ramakrishna had also partaken of the waters of the Thamirabarani which sparked off the blooming of his entrepreneurial spirit. If so, this would only confirm the legend of the diverse fertility of this river’s waters. Incidentally, over my business career when times were difficult, I have often wondered whether I should go down to Tirunelveli and drink a bit of the Thamirabarani water to re-energise my entrepreneurial spirit.”

On VL Dutt’s association with KS Narayanan, “Sri Ramakrishna’s son Dr VL Dutt, the present Chairman has taken the group to new heights. He was a very close personal friend of my late father, Sri KS Narayanan, and I consider him in many ways my elder brother. Over the years, we have shared many experiences, but probably the most memorable period was when we were concurrently Presidents of FICCI and Assocham. And more importantly, we held office in probably the most significant period in India’s economic history–1991-92–and were firsthand witnesses to the economic transformation of the country.”

“KCP today is a leading industrial conglomerate, with core business interests in Sugar, Cement and Heavy Engineering. It would be absolutely correct to label KCP Limited a multinational, since 40% of its turnover comes from its very successful sugar operations in Vietnam, where it is projecting expansion to 11,000 tonnes per day of cane crushing,” he said.

## Students from Odense, Denmark in India on a study tour



A group of graduate students pursuing the hospitality stream in the Lillebaelt Academy, Odense, Denmark, visited the Royal Danish Embassy Chennai on 6 February 2017. They met and had discussions with N Sankar, Consul General, Royal Danish Consulate and SB Prabhakar Rao, Vice Consul of the Royal Danish Consulate, in particular about Indo-Danish relations and opportunities for investment.

*N Sankar addressing the graduate students from the Lillebaelt Academy, Odense, Denmark.*

*Students pursuing the hospitality stream in the Lillebaelt Academy, Odense, Denmark, with N Sankar (at the centre). Extreme left is SB Prabhakar Rao.*



# Nordic Ambassadors to India on a week-long tour of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry

The Ambassadors to India representing Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden came on a one-week tour of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry from 20 February 2017.

The ambassadors arrived in Chennai where meetings with Nordic businesses, journalists, educational institutions and government representatives were held.

The ambassadors with their spouses visited Tranquebar or Tharangambadi, one of the earliest Danish trade stations established in 1620, after a land lease was signed with the local ruler, the Ragunatha Nayak of Thanjavur. The Fort Daneborg, more or less finished in a year after the arrival of the Danes, has now been beautifully restored, along with the Governor's bungalow, Colonel's house and other heritage buildings.

SB Prabhakar Rao, Vice Consul of the Royal Danish Consulate, South India, accompanied the Ambassadors to Tranquebar.



*Vice Consul of the Royal Danish Consulate, Chennai, SB Prabhakar Rao, with Mrs Gitte Wallin Pedersen, wife of Danish Ambassador and Peter Jensen, Danish Ambassador at a reception hosted in honour of the visiting Nordic Ambassadors on 21 February 2017.*



*SB Prabhakar Rao and V Sriram with the Nordic Ambassadors and their spouses during the recent visit to Tranquebar.*

## Indian Space Research Organisation: Pride of Modern India



*Sir CV Raman*

On 15 February 2017, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched 104 satellites in a single rocket (PSLV-C37) and created a world record. This has been the finest moment yet in India's space research, whose journey began long before the country achieved any kind of economic progress. In fact, the western world, and indeed the world at large used to question the wisdom of a developing nation like India investing vast resources in such a programme.

Space research in India can be traced to the 1920s, when scientist SK Mitra conducted a series of experiments leading to the sounding of the ionosphere. Later, scientists of the stature of Nobel laureate Sir CV Raman and Meghnad Saha contributed to India's development in space sciences. Coordinated space research became a reality in India after 1945, the year the father of the Indian nuclear science programme, Homi J Bhabha, established the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. Bhabha supported Vikram Sarabhai in founding the Physical Research Laboratory at his residence at Ahmedabad (in 1947). Studies were carried out at research laboratories, universities, and independent locations. The initial experiments in space sciences included the study of cosmic radiation, high altitude and airborne testing of instruments, deep under ground experimentation at the Kolar mines one of the deepest mining sites in the world - and studies of the upper atmosphere.

In 1950, the Department of Atomic Energy was founded with Homi Bhabha as its secretary. The Department provided

funding for space research throughout India. During this time, tests continued on aspects of meteorology and the Earth's magnetic field, a topic which was being studied in India since the establishment of the observatory at Colaba in 1823. In 1954, the Uttar Pradesh state observatory was established at the foothills of the Himalayas. The Rangpur Observatory was set up in 1957 at Osmania University, Hyderabad. Space research was further encouraged by the technically inclined Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. In 1957, the Soviet Union successfully launched Sputnik and opened up possibilities for the rest of the world to conduct a space launch.

The Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR) was set up in 1962 by Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister.

It set up the first rocket launching station at Thumba near Thiruvananthapuram on the coast of the Arabian Sea, primarily because of its proximity to the equator. The land chosen for the project was between a railway line and the coast. The station's first home was an old church, the St Mary Magdalene Church. Thanks to the efforts and cooperation of K Madhavan Nair, Collector of Trivandrum, and Rt Rev Dr Dereira, Bishop of Trivandrum, the project opened at the church. The late former President of India, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, an ISRO scientist trained at the NASA headquarters, was a key member



*Homi J Bhabha*



*Vikram Sarabhai*





Sanmar's BS&B Safety Systems (India), a joint venture with BS&B Safety Systems Inc., USA, is committed to providing foolproof safety devices in critical appliances in high technology industries, especially space research - from Chandrayaan, India's prestigious space project to AGNI 5, which was successfully field tested during April 2012 to the more recent Re-launch Vehicle Technology Demonstrator (RLV-TD) project by supplying its Rupture Disks.



*APJ Abdul Kalam*

of the ISRO team. The prayer room was Kalam's first laboratory, and the bishop's room his first office. Today, the church is maintained in top condition by the space programme and even houses the Indian Space Museum.

The inaugural flight was launched on 21 November 1963 with a sodium vapour payload. It was a sounding rocket, Nike-Apache, made at NASA. It was assembled in the church building, and moved to the launch site with the help of a truck and a manually operated hydraulic crane. D Easwardas and R Aravamudan were Kalam's colleagues, closely involved in the launch. The launch was smoothly conducted and collected excellent flight data.

The first Indian satellite, Aryabhata, was put in orbit in 1975 from a Russian Cosmodrome.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is the space agency of the Government of India headquartered in Bengaluru. Its vision is to "harness space technology for national development", while pursuing space science research and planetary exploration.

Formed in 1969, ISRO superseded INCOSPAR. The establishment of ISRO thus institutionalised space activities in India. It is managed by the Department of Space, which reports to the Prime Minister. In 1980, Rohini became the first satellite to be placed in orbit by an Indian-made

launch vehicle, SLV-3. ISRO subsequently developed two other rockets: the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) for launching satellites into polar orbits and the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) for placing satellites into geostationary orbits. These rockets have launched numerous communications satellites and earth observation satellites. Satellite navigation systems like GAGAN and IRNSS have been deployed.

"In 2008 India launched as many as 11 satellites, including nine from other countries and went on to become the first nation to launch 10 satellites on one rocket." ISRO has successfully put into operation two major satellite systems: Indian National Satellites (INSAT) for communication services and Indian Remote Sensing (IRS) satellites for management of natural resources.

In January 2014, ISRO successfully used an indigenous cryogenic engine in a GSLV-D5 launch of the GSAT-14.

ISRO sent one lunar orbiter, Chandrayaan-1, on 22 October 2008 and one Mars orbiter, Mangalyaan, which successfully entered the Mars orbit on 24 September 2014, making India the first nation to succeed in its first attempt, and ISRO the fourth space agency in the world as well as the first space agency in Asia to successfully reach the Mars orbit. The Mars expedition has been the least expensive such endeavour in the history of the world.

On 18 June 2016 ISRO successfully set a record with a launch of 20 satellites in a single payload, one being a satellite from Google. This was a precursor to ISRO's latest achievement of launching 104 satellites in a single payload.

*V Ramnarayan*



# National Safety Council recognises Sanmar for safety management practices

The National Safety Council of India, Tamil Nadu chapter, recognises significant contributions made by factories in promoting Safety and Health in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry by Health and Safety Awards bi-annually. Winners of awards are selected after a detailed assessment of the safety management practices in the units by a team of judges nominated for this purpose.

Seven of the Sanmar units participated in this Health and Safety Awards competition and significantly all of them have been recognised with an award each.

## Awards were given to the following Sanmar companies:

- Chemplast Sanmar, Cuddalore – Safety Star Award
- Chemplast Sanmar, Mettur Plant II – Safety Star Award
- Chemplast Sanmar, Mettur Plant III – Safety Star Award
- Chemplast Sanmar, Karaikal – Safety Star Award
- Cabot Sanmar, Mettur – Safety Appreciation Award
- Flowserve Sanmar, Karapakkam – Safety Appreciation Award
- Pentair Sanmar, Viralimalai – Safety Appreciation Award

*P Manoharan, receiving the award on behalf of Sanmar from M Ponnuswamy, Chairman, CII Chennai Zone and Chairman and MD of Pon Pure Chemical India in the presence of P Bose, Chairman of National Safety Council, Tamil Nadu Chapter, and Director of Industrial Safety and Health, Government of Tamil Nadu and R Manimaran, Vice Chairman of National Safety Council, Tamil Nadu Chapter.*



# The Tenth Annual India Chemical Industry Outlook Conference on Innovation and Disruption



*Vijay Sankar proposing a vote of thanks.*

*(L to R): HS Karangle, Director General - ICC, Noshir Kaka, Director (Senior Partner), McKinsey and Company, Vijay Sankar, Vice President, ICC, Ravi Kapoor, President, ICC, and Kevin Fogarty, CEO, Kraton Corporation, USA.*

The Indian Chemical Council (ICC) in cooperation with the Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilisers, Government of India with the support of the North East Process Industry Cluster (NEPIC), UK, and with other Sectoral Associations organised the tenth annual India Chemical Industry Outlook Conference on 13 - 14 February 2017 at the Lalit, Mumbai. This conference focused mainly on how innovation and disruption would impact the growth of the Chemical Industry.

The two-day event comprised nine technical sessions and two panel discussions. The technical sessions mainly focused on the theme of the conference, “Innovation and Disruption – Chemical Industry in Transition.”

Vijay Sankar, Vice President, ICC, chaired the fourth session of Day 1 on Disruptions in Supply Chain. He also proposed the vote of thanks.



*Vijay Sankar (second from left) chairing the 4th session of day 1. Seated (L to R): Ursula Thakkar, Head, Global Supply Chain and Planning, Infineum Singapore, Sudipta Sen, Analytics Partner, McKinsey and Company, PVS Murthy, Executive Director, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).*

# Business Seminar at Cairo by the Embassy of India in Egypt

## PS Jayaraman a main speaker

The Egypt-India Friendship Association (EIFA) in association with the Maulana Azad Centre for Indian Culture (MACIC) of the Embassy of India in Cairo organised a Business Seminar at the MACIC premises on 9 February 2017.

PS Jayaraman, Chairman of TCI Sanmar, was a main speaker at the seminar. Jayaraman shared the experience of his company TCI Sanmar Chemicals S.A.E., Port Said, which is the largest Indian investment in Egypt. He related the advantages that Egypt offers for investors and the role of government in encouraging business.

The presentation was well appreciated by the audience.



*PS Jayaraman is on the extreme right. Standing beside him is Nadia Jereidini, Vice President of EIFA and Dr Asser Salama, Deputy Chairman of the India-Egypt Joint Business Council and Chairman of Easy Care for Medicines and Cosmetics.*

## Visit of CII Indian Delegation to Cairo

A 17-member business delegation from Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), led by Ajit Gupte, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India visited Egypt during 8 to 10 February 2017, at the invitation of the Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI). PS Jayaraman, Chairman, TCI Sanmar Chemicals S.A.E., Port Said, Egypt was a member of the CII Indian delegation that visited Cairo.

During the visit, the delegation called on several Egyptian Ministers and had discussions with senior officials from General Authorities for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI) and the Suez Canal Economic Zone Authority.



# Chemplast organises mega medical camps for rural populace

## At Mettur

A large section of the rural populace was screened for health disorders at the medical camp organised by Chemplast Sanmar at Mettur in coordination with Sri Gokulam Speciality Hospital at Vaidheeswara Higher Secondary School, Mettur, on 12 February 2017. S Venkatesan of Chemplast inaugurated the camp in the presence of K Ardhanari, Managing Director, Gokulam Hospitals. Seven hundred persons from the villages

of Mottur, Thippampatti, Kozhipannai, Kavipuram, Thangamapuripattinam, Ramamurthy Nagar, and the areas near Mettur RS were screened at the camp.

During the camp, nearly 600 people were screened with many undergoing such tests as ECG and Echocardiogram. Six doctors and paramedical staff and more than fifty Chemplast employees facilitated the event. Medicines were distributed at the camp.



## At Karaikal

A free medical camp for a general and eye check-up was organised by Chemplast Karaikal in coordination with Vinayaga Mission Medical College and Hospital on 4 March 2017 at Mudali Medu and Vadakku Vanjore. More than two hundred benefitted from the camp which was organised at the local community halls, under the aegis of the district collector of Karaikal, P Parthiban, under the supervision of the Medical Superintendent, Government General Hospital, Karaikal, Dr P Chitra. The Mudali Medu and Vadakku Vanjore Panchayats were also involved in the camp and placed a request with Chemplast to conduct such camps on a monthly basis.



## Chemplast provides financial aid for education and environment upkeep

Chemplast Cuddalore provided financial assistance towards an educational development fund to Chitrapet village. A cheque was handed over to Chitrapet Panchayat towards part payment for the fund on 7 January 2017 by J Sridhar of Chemplast Cuddalore. The final instalment will be handed over in April 2017.

A cheque was handed over to P Parthiban IAS, District Collector, Karaikal, by N Palanisamy of Chemplast Karaikal on 23 February 2017 towards financial assistance for the removal of *Seemai karuvelam* trees (Juliflora) at TR Pattinam Commune Panchayat area, Karaikal District.



# Donation to Ellen Sharma School, Karapakkam

Sanmar Engineering, Karapakkam, has been sponsoring the educational institution Ellen Sharma School for several years now.

B Visweswaran, Vice Chairman of Sanmar Engineering Technologies Limited, took time to visit the school and inspected the damage post Vardah cyclone.

Sanmar had previously donated to the school kitchen and now the school compound wall had been damaged by the cyclone. Visweswaran presented a cheque to the school correspondent, Sakhunthala Sharma, who conveyed her appreciation for the support provided by Sanmar.



*B Visweswaran, Sanmar Engineering Technologies Limited, presenting a cheque to the school correspondent, Sakhunthala Sharma.*





# Annual Day and Sports Meet at Madhuras Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children

The 27th Annual Day of Madhuras Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children was celebrated with great gusto at the Bengal Association Hall, Chennai, on the 6 January 2017.

R Ramanujam, Executive Chairman of Brakes India, was the chief guest.

The children and their parents gave a presentation on the theme Bharati Dharmam based on poet Subramanya Bharati's song, 'Sindhu nadiyin misai nilavinile.'



## Annual Sports Meet

The Annual Sports Day of the Madhuras Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children was held on 10 February 2017. Inspired by the passing of the bill on the Rights of Persons with Disability by the Parliament in India, the children of MNC started the Sports Day with a pentagonal formation proclaiming the five rights everyone has – Right to Life, Right to Shelter, Right to Food and Water, Right to Health and Right to Education.

C Hemanth Kumar, Chemplast Sanmar and first class cricketer of repute, was the chief guest and gave away the prizes.

The Sports Day began with the usual Marchpast. The games chosen for the day were from a variety of activities that suit children with different levels of disability involving motor skills, cognitive skills, social skills and daily living activities.



## Legends from the South

# Swati Tirunal

(1813 - 1846)

Swati Tirunal was a Maharaja of Travancore in British India, who achieved fame as a classical music composer many regarded as a worthy contemporary of the famed Trinity of Tyagaraja, Muttuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri of Thanjavur district.

Among the many accomplishments and achievements of the short-lived Maharaja were a well-formulated code of laws, the establishment of modern courts of justice, the introduction of English education, construction of an

observatory, installation of the first Government printing press, and the establishment of the first manuscripts library.

Swati Tirunal was born into the Chera dynasty of the matrilineal royal family of Travancore, now a part of Kerala, on 16 April 1813.

He was the second child of Queen Gowri Lakshmi Bayi who ruled Travancore from 1811-15, and Rajaraja Varma Koyi Thampuran of the Changanasseri Palace.

He ruled under the regency of his mother from 1813-15 and then under the regency of his maternal aunt Gowri Parvati Bayi until 1829. When he was just four months old, his mother invited Colonel John Munro, representative of the East India Company, and his officials and declared in the Durbar that she was entrusting the East India Company with the care of her child and expected the Company to cooperate with him in future.

In 1829 Swati Tirunal reached majority at 16 and assumed full powers of ruler and reigned as the Maharajah of Travancore until his death in 1846. He had an elder sister, Rukmini Bai, whose children ascended the Travancore royal seat consecutively. Her only daughter was the mother of Moolam Thirunal. He had a younger brother, Uthram Thirunal Marthanda Varma, who succeeded him in 1846 and ruled Travancore until his demise in 1860.

Irayimman Thampi, the famous poet-composer wrote perhaps the most famous Malayalam lullaby Omanathinkal Kidavo about Swati Tirunal when he was born.



Both his aunt/foster mother, who was well-versed in music, and his father, a Sanskrit scholar, monitored his studies. Also, Col. Munro is said to have taken a keen interest in his education. He started learning Malayalam and Sanskrit at the age of six and English at the age of seven. The young Prince studied several languages, including Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil, Hindustani, Telugu, Marathi, Sanskrit, English and Persian. He was impressive in his understanding of languages but also other subjects like geometry. Swati Tirunal took over the reins of power from his aunt, Gowri Parvati Bayi at the age of sixteen, appointing his tutor, Subba Rao, as the Prime Minister or Diwan of the state. One of his first moves was to shift the government secretariat from Kollam (about seventy five kilometres away) to Thiruvananthapuram. This enabled him to pay personal attention to government affairs. He took steps to curb corruption in the government, and told the Diwan to resign when he heard he had favoured a particular party in a land dispute. He started an English school in Thiruvananthapuram in 1834, which came to be called the Maharajah's Government Free School and later became Maharajah's High School and then Maharajah's College. It is now the University College.

Later, similar schools were started at many other places. He also implemented reforms in the legal sector, starting Munsif, District and Appellate Courts and modernising laws. He settled many land disputes by carrying out a resurvey of the land. He conducted the first census of the state in 1836.

Swati Tirunal brought modern medicine to the state, and appointed a European as the palace physician and surgeon general, responsible for the healthcare of local people, for whom hospitals were started. He also started an engineering department. The Karamana bridge was built at that time.

Swati Tirunal took a deep interest in astronomy and set the initiative to start an observatory. One of its directors would be his relative, Raja Rama Varma Rohini Thirunal, Prince of Mavelikara Palace, an established astronomer and a member of the British and Canadian Astronomical Societies.

The Trivandrum Public Library (now State Central Library) and the Oriental Manuscript Library, the Museum and the Zoo in Thiruvananthapuram were all started by the Maharajah who was also an honorary member of the Royal Asiatic Society from 1843.

He is also credited with starting the first government press (the only press at that time was CMS Press in Kottayam).

Swati Tirunal's most publicised and sometimes controversial contribution was his work in the field of classical music. Deeply interested in music right from childhood, he became a patron of music and a musician himself. He is credited with composing many songs in numerous languages like Sanskrit, Telugu and Hindi, which have become standard fare in the Carnatic classical music. Over 400 compositions in Carnatic and Hindustani music have been attributed to him, though critics have dismissed these as the work of composers in the employ of his court or great artists he hosted in his palace, like the famed Thanjavur Quartette.

Swati Tirunal was a hard working monarch, committed to his kingdom and his people. The appointment of General Cullen as the Resident of Travancore, was the beginning of the end for the Maharajah. The Resident's intrusion in the administration was unbearable for the young king. The deaths of his elder sister, father, wife Narayani and her children made the Maharajah distraught, seeking silence and solitude, Maharajah Swati Tirunal slowly wasted away and died on 27 December 1846 at the age of 33.

