



TEN MEN

SIX GENERATIONS

ONE INDIA



75

Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav

Compiled by **Aditya Mehta**



CONTEXT

This is a compilation of some significant events in the lives of six generations of the **Lallubhai Samaldas family** (3 generations up and 2 generations down; 1723 CE onwards), whose efforts, reforms and undertakings have played an important role in building our nation.

Our history books have ignored many such individuals who have silently contributed to the making of India.

Building organisations from scratch and dedicating them to the country is a Herculean task that this family has undertaken over generations.

At the same time, it is incumbent upon us to acknowledge and appreciate that other co-founders, successive officers at the helm, the employees and all the stakeholders along with various Government reforms have made nonesuch contributions in shaping these organisations since their inception, and making them what they are today.

Here is a list of **some active startups**:

Bank of India	Employees*: 52,000	Revenue* 23-24: 8B USD
Bank of Baroda	Employees*: 75,000	Revenue* 23-24: 15B USD
Tata Steel	Employees*: 77,000	Revenue* 23-24: 18B USD
Khadi & Village Industries Commission	Members*: 9.5 million	Revenue* 23-24: 18B USD
ICICI Bank	Employees*: 1.3 million	Revenue* 23-24: 28B USD

*appx. figures sourced from FY 2023-24 published balance sheets

Some other start-ups:

Bhavnagar Electricity Co., Tata Power, Indian Merchants' Chamber, New India Assurance, Maharashtra State Co-op Bank, Koyna Dam, IPCL, GACL, GSFC, etc.

Some educational institutions with which this family is associated are:

Samaldas College, Bhavnagar
Notable Alumni: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (political leader), Harilal J. Kania (first Chief Justice of India), and many other achievers
Sydenham College, Mumbai
Notable Alumni: Deepak Parekh (HDFC), Ashwin Choksi (Asian Paints) and many other achievers
Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management (VAMNICOM), Pune
Notable Alumni: At various co-operative bodies across India

Some other significant contributions made: ²

- Establishing various game-changing reforms in the erstwhile **State of Bhavnagar** as **Diwans** (a position akin to that of a Prime Minister) for 4 generations (1775-1900 CE).

In 1948, Bhavnagar became **the 27th state** to join the Union of India.

- Starting **India's first** Indian-owned cement plant, shipping company and sugar factory
- Pioneers of the **Co-operative Movement**
- Laying down the foundation of banking systems in India
- Drafting committee members of the Indian Constitution and India's first five-year plan
- Pioneering work in the field of petrochemicals, audio industry, and others

What makes them extra special?

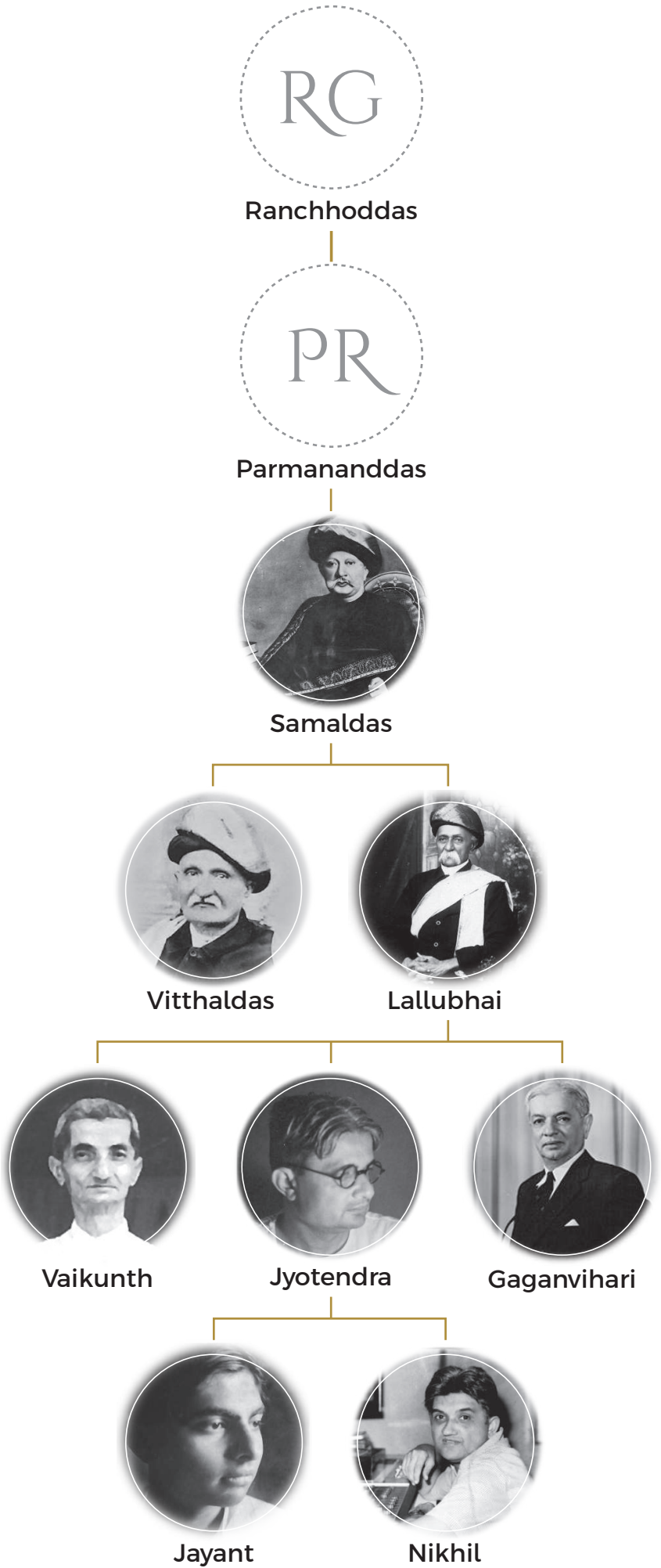
The founders of these institutions and companies chose not to leave any shares or assets for their descendants, focusing instead on creating a legacy driven by their passion and vision.

Quietly dedicated to the monumental task of cultivating a financially robust nation, they opted to operate from the shadows, displaying true humility. Additionally, the remarkable contributions of the women within the family warrant a distinct narrative.

On the occasion of ***Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*** (75th year of Indian independence), let us get to know these visionaries a little better and yes, recognize their contributions.



10 MEN. 6 GENERATIONS. ONE INDIA.





FEW HIGHLIGHTS



RANCHHODDAS GABALDAS GEN 1 (1723-1796, 73 years)

Map of Gujarat State



- Born in **Ghoghá** (a significant port town and trading centre in Saurashtra since 5th century CE)
- Served under **Damaji II**, son of Pilaji Rao Gaekwad (**founder of Baroda State**)
- Appointed as **Chief of Arab forces**, rose to become the Chief advisor of Damaji II, and later on moved to Bhavnagar
- As the **chief advisor (Karbhari)**, helped Maharaja Wakhtsinji of **Bhavnagar** to build and develop trade in the State



- Started a local bank at Ghoghá and Bhavnagar around 1780 CE





**PARMANANDDAS
RANCHHODDAS**
GEN 2 (1794-1850, 56 years)

فارسی संस्कृतम्

- A doyen of Persian and Sanskrit languages



- Appointed **Diwan** of Bhavnagar by Maharaja Wajehsinhji



- Revitalized commerce through the port of Bhavnagar using his sharp business acumen



- Rebuilt the State's economy, which was in a poor financial condition due to a terrible famine



- Made persuasive proposals to the Bombay Government to restore civil and criminal jurisdiction in Bhavnagar





SAMALDAS PARMANANDDAS

GEN 3 (1828-1884, 56 years)



- Scholar of Sanskrit, Brijbhasha and Persian



- Began as a Revenue officer, then appointed Magistrate under **Diwan Gaurishankar Oza** (his maternal uncle & founder of Rajkumar College, Rajkot), and Maharaja Wajehsinhji



- Stood his ground and turned back spurious accusations against Maharaja Jashwantsinhji by the Political Agents and Police Superintendent of Ahmedabad



- As **Chief Judge** played a major role in establishment of civil and criminal courts in the State



- Appointed as **Diwan** by Maharaja Takhtasinhji



- Helped start the **first school** for girls



- Helped **establish railways** in the entire Kathiawad region, a hospital in Bhavnagar, and in the expansion of Rajkumar College, Rajkot



- Opposed the Bombay Government for **retaining control of the salt-works** in Western India



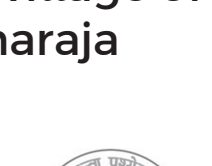
- Introduced **major reforms** like right of land ownership, improved land and sea-customs, and also built water-storage tanks in the villages and towns



- In 1881, the British Government declared Bhavnagar as the "**best governed Native State** in the Province".



- Received the village of **Jalalpur** as a gift from the Maharaja



- **Samaldas College** established in 1885 by Maharaja Takhtasinhji in his memory

(was the third college in Western India after Elphinstone College, Bombay and Gujarat College, Ahmedabad)





VITTHALDAS SAMALDAS

GEN 4 (1846-1915, 69 years)



- Educated at Bhavnagar and a scholar of English Literature and Mathematics



- Began working with his father (Samaldas) and Diwan Gaurishankar Oza



- Rose from the Political Department to Judge to Revenue Commissioner to **Diwan**



- Member of the management committee of Rajkumar College, Rajkot



- Helped establish the **Land Revenue Code** that saved farmers from the clutches of money-lenders



- His new house got the area to be renamed "**Diwanpara**" in Bhavnagar



- Set up the **Vitthaleshwar Mahadev Temple** in Bhavnagar for travelling sanyasis





LALLUBHAI SAMALDAS

GEN 4 (1863-1936, 73 years)



- Following matriculation from Bhavnagar, attended Elphinstone College, Bombay



- At the **age of 18**, began as **Revenue Commissioner** in the State of Bhavnagar (elder brother Vithaldas was Diwan). Setup **Samaldas College**, Bhavnagar at age 19!



- Helped start Bhavnagar Electricity Company, and introduced several administrative and revenue reforms in the State



- At the **age of 36**, moved to Bombay (1900 CE)



- One of the first owners of a car in Bombay



- Member of Imperial Legislative Council** of the Bombay Government



- At **Shri Gopalkrishna Gokhale's** request, introduced **Shri Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi** to the Government and business circles in Bombay



- Founded **India's first cement plant** at Porbandar (1913 - now a part of ACC), the **first shipping company** at Bombay (**Scindia Steam**, 1919), **first sugar factory** at Baramati (**Nura Valley Sugar**, 1921)



- Co-founded **India's first cooperative bank - Bombay Provincial Co-op Bank** (now called Maharashtra State Co-op Bank)



- Co-founded **Bank of India** (1906), and **Bank of Baroda** (1908) Chairman 1921-35.



TATA

- Director in **Advance Mills, Tata Hydro and TISCO** for life



- Co-founded **India's first general insurance company - New India Assurance Co.**



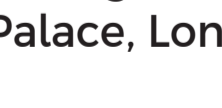
- Co-founded Indian Merchants' Chamber (**IMC**), Bombay (President, 1917)



- Co-founded **Sydenham College**, Bombay - first to offer commerce education in Asia



- Knighted by **King George V** at the Buckingham Palace, London (1926)



- Life-long Honorary Secretary of **Seva Sadan** (Bombay) - a sanctuary for marginalised girls



- Remembered as the "**Father of the Co-operative Movement in India**"



- The **Lallubhai Park** area in Andheri West, Bombay has been named in his honour





VAIKUNTH LALLUBHAI MEHTA

GEN 5 (1891-1964, 73 years)



- An outstanding student at Bharda Murzban School and Elphinstone College in the subjects of English and Maths



- Quietly transferred his scholarship to a poor student. That was **Shri Mahadev Desai**, who later became the lifelong private secretary of Mahatma Gandhi



- Awarded **Kaiser-i-Hind** Medal (1916) for his service to the co-operative movement



- Worked for 35 years as **CEO** of Maharashtra State Co-operative Bank (co-founded by his father)



- Most trusted lieutenant of Mahatma Gandhi in the **Khadi** (homespun cotton) movement



- **Founder and Chairman** for life of Khadi Village and Industries Commission (**KVIC**)



- A member of the drafting committee of the Indian Constitution



- Upon the insistence of Gandhiji, Sardar Patel and Shri BG Kher, became the **first Finance and Cooperatives Minister** of the Bombay State (1946)



- **Vice-Chairman** of the State Bank of India under John Matthai as chair



- **Did not accept any remuneration** (as Minister or as chair of KVIC, or in any other post whatsoever) **throughout life**

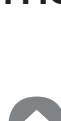


- The first Gujarati to be awarded **Padma Bhushan** (1954)



- Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Co-operative Management (**VAMNICOM**) set up in his memory at Pune (1964)

- On the **25th anniversary of NDDB**, Dr. Verghese Kurien (Chairman, NDDB) produced a documentary film on him



JVPD

- The road from Hotel Tulip Star (Juhu) upto SV Road, a Park and a Co-operative Housing Society in Andheri, Mumbai **are named after him**





JYOTENDRA LALLUBHAI MEHTA

GEN 5 (1893-1977, 84 years)



- An avid enthusiast of **painting and astronomy**. Educated in Botany from St. Xavier's College, Bombay



- **Co-founder** and chair of **Union Co-operative Insurance**, Bombay
- **Director and chair** of firms including the Hindustan Construction Company (**HCC**), **Premier Auto** and several others. Built **Koyna Dam** (the largest hydroelectric plant in India)



- **President** of Andheri-Vile Parle Borough Municipality (for two terms)



- **Co-founder** of the Andheri Recreation Club, Bombay





GAGANVIHARI LALLUBHAI MEHTA

GEN 5 (1900-1974, 74 years)



- Studied at Elphinstone College, and later became a Fellow of the London School of Economics (**LSE**)

INDIAN TARIFF BOARD

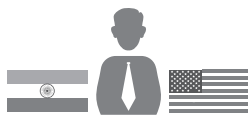
- President** of FICCI (1939-43), and the Indian Tariff Board (1947-52)



- Member of the **Indian Constituent Assembly** (1947)



- Member of **India's First Planning Commission** with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (1950-52) as chair



- India's Ambassador** to USA and Mexico (1952-58)



- The first Gujarati to be awarded **Padma Vibhushan** (1959)



- Member of Nalini Ranjan Sarkar's committee that recommended setting up of five Indian Institutes of Technology (**IITs**)



- Chair** of Hindustan Shipyards and the National Shipping Board (1958-63)

ICICI

- Established and Chaired** Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (till 1971)



- A member of the **Board of Directors** of Air India and Indian Airlines (1965-67)



- Chair** of the board of governors of **IIT Bombay** (1965-71). Memorial lectures in his name are held at IITB.





JAYANT JYOTENDRA MEHTA

GEN 6 (1916-1996, 80 years)



- One of the youngest in India to get a pilot's license (at age 17)
- After graduating from Royal Institute of Science, Bombay, did his post-graduation in **Chemical Engineering** from **MIT** (Boston, USA) in 1939



- Helped build the **National Rayon** factory at Kalyan (Maharashtra)



Indian Petrochemicals Limited

- **Founder CMD** of **IPCL**, Baroda (1967-74) (was invited by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to start this first industrial “mega” project of India)



विद्याविनियोगादिकाशः

- Member of the board of governors at **IIM Ahmedabad** (1969-74)



Promoting Green Technology

- **Founder Chairman** of **GACL** and **GSFC** (1974-83)



- Brainchild behind **Sardar Patel Planetarium** in Baroda



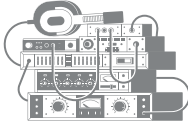


NIKHIL JYOTENDRA MEHTA

GEN 6 (1935-2021, 86 years)



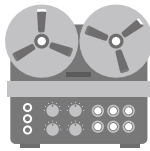
- **Bombay University topper** in M. Sc. (Inorganic Chemistry) from the Royal Institute of Science



- Self-taught expert in electronics and audio recording technology



- Co-founded a world-class **corrugation plant** at Charkop (Bombay), serving top brands across India



- Co-founded **Sudeep Studio** (1977) - **India's first** home-based professional audio recording studio

(recorded several prestigious projects, and many star musicians of today debuted here)



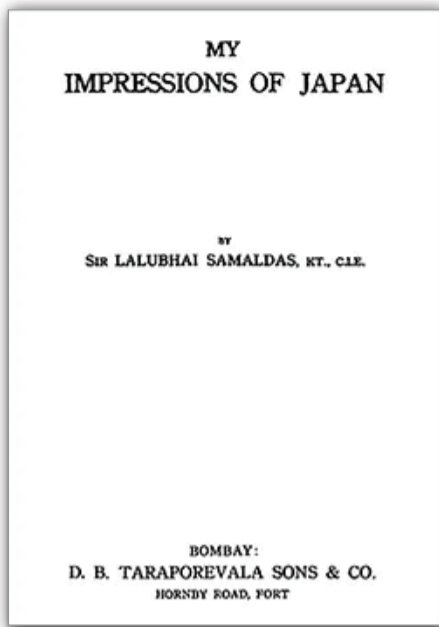
- Co-founded **SudeepAudio.com** (1999) - **India's first** pro-audio online store



REFERENCES

For more information and links, [click here](#)

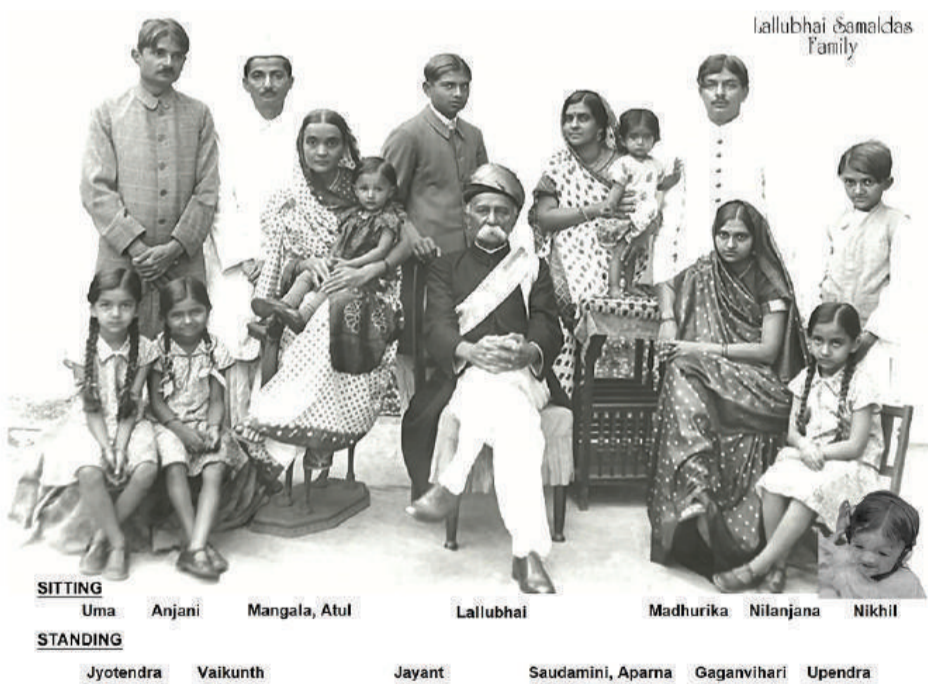
-- Click the images below to read / watch / listen --



Vaikunth
Lallubhai Mehta
film by NDDDB



Gaganvihari
Lallubhai Mehta
interview



Official website for details, photos and more...

lallubhaisamaldas.com



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