



# 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 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 stakeholders along with various Government reforms have made nonesuch contributions in shaping these organizations since their inception, and making them what they are today.

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

<b>Bank of India</b> Employees*: 52,000	Revenue* 23-24: <b>8B \$</b>
<b>Bank of Baroda</b> Employees*: 75,000	Revenue* 23-24: <b>15B \$</b>
<b>Tata Steel</b> Employees*: 77,000	Revenue* 23-24: <b>18B \$</b>
<b>Khadi &amp; Village Industries Commission</b> Members*: 9.5 million	Revenue* 23-24: <b>18B \$</b>
<b>ICICI Bank</b> Employees*: 1.3 million	Revenue* 23-24: <b>28B \$</b>

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

### **Some other active startups:**

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:

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

## Some other significant contributions made:

- 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 first Princely State to join the Union of India.

- Starting **India's first** Indian-owned cement plant (Porbandar), shipping company (Bombay) and sugar factory (Baramati)
- 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.

Let us get to know these visionaries a little better and yes, recognize their contributions.



# 10 MEN. 6 GENERATIONS. ONE INDIA.



Ranchhoddas



Parmananddas



Samaldas



Vitthaldas



Lallubhai



Vaikunth



Jyotendra



Gaganvihari



Jayant



Nikhil



## FEW HIGHLIGHTS



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

Map of Gujarat State



- Born in **Goghá** (a significant port town and trading centre in Saurashtra, since 5th century CE)
- Served under **Damaji II**, son of Pilaji Rao Gaekwad (**the 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 Goghá 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 British 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 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)



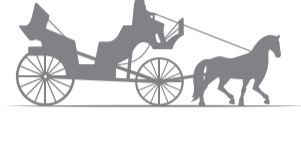
- Following matriculation from Bhavnagar, attended Elphinstone College in Bombay



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



- One of the first owners of a car in Bombay



- Member of the Legislative Council** of the Bombay Government (1910-12)



- 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) National Maritime Day is celebrated on April 5, marking the 1919 voyage of SS Loyalty to the UK



- Co-founded **India's first co-operative 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.**



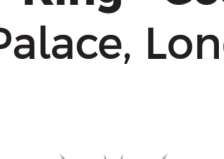
- Co-founded Indian Merchants' Chamber (**IMC**), Bombay (President, 1917)



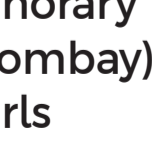
- Co-founded **Sydenham College**, Bombay - first to offer commerce education in Asia



- 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, Bombay, as well as at Elphinstone College in the subjects of English and Maths



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



- Awarded **Kaiser-i-Hind** Medal in 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 B G Kher, became the **first Finance and Co-operatives 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 a Minister or as chair of KVIC, or in any other posts 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) to 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. **Koyna Dam** (the largest hydroelectric plant in India) was built under his leadership (1956-64)



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



- **Co-founder** of the Andheri Recreation Club, Bombay (1970)



## 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 for two terms (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

## ICICI

- Established and Chaired** Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (1959-1971)



- 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 IIT-B.



## JAYANT JYOTENDRA MEHTA

GEN 6 (1916-1996, 80 years)



- One of the youngest in India to get a pilot's license (at the age of 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)



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



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



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



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

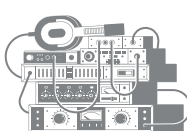


# NIKHIL JYOTENDRA MEHTA

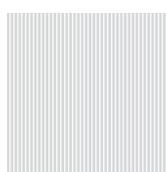
GEN 6 (1935-2021, 86 years)



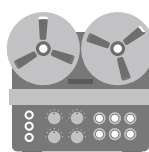
- **Bombay University topper** in M.Sc. (Inorganic Chemistry) from the Royal Institute of Science



- 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 numerous prestigious projects, launching the careers of many of today's star musicians)



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



- Awarded "Best Pro-Audio Equipment Dealer in India" (2013)
- Honoured with the **Lifetime Achievement Award** (*posthumously*) for outstanding contributions to the field of **audio recording** (2024)

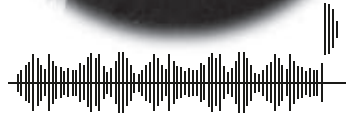
# REFERENCES

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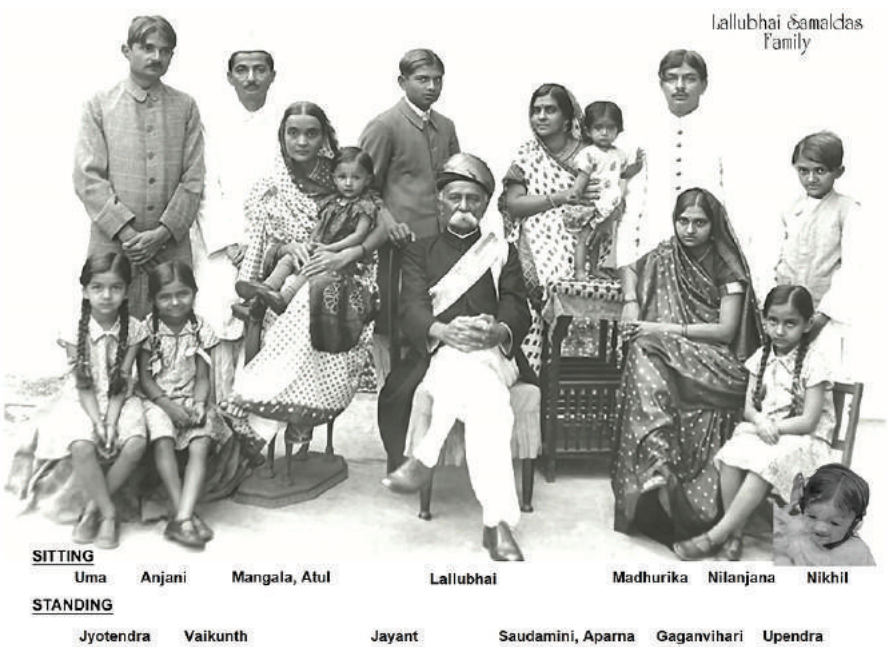
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Vaikunth  
Lallubhai Mehta  
film by NDDDB



Gaganvihari  
Lallubhai Mehta  
audio clippings



Official website for the stories and much more...

[lallubhaisamaldas.com](http://lallubhaisamaldas.com)



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