Indian Ancient Rishis

Colonel James Todd (British East India Company) said of India: *"*Where else can we look for sages like those whose systems of philosophy were prototypes to whose works Plato, Thales & Pythagorus were disciples? Where do I find astronomers whose knowledge of planetary systems yet excites wonder in Europe as well as the architects and sculptors whose works claim our admiration, and the musicians who could make the mind oscillate from joy to sorrow, from tears to smile with the change of modes and varied intonation?*"*

Indian culture has evolved over the ages by India's ancient Rishis, who at the banks of its holy rivers had 'discovered' the Vedic literature – the very foundation of Indian civilization. The term 'Rishi' originally denoted the composers and singers of Vedic hymns. However, the Rishi is also a 'sage' to whom the Gods revealed the Vedas (knowledge of the eternal truths about the Creator, His creation and means to preserve it).

The 2 most popular sages of India are:

Valmiki

The famous poet-author of the epic Ramayana. One of his ashrama was at present-day Bithoor near Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh state, where Luva and Kusha were born to Sita.

Vyasa

Maharishi Veda Vyasa is the most important Rishi in the Hindu pantheon, as he organized the Veda and many Purana. He is also the author of the Hindu epic Mahabharata. One of his ashrama was at Kurukshetra in present-day Haryana state.

Some of the other great Rishis (sages) of India are:

Kashyapa

He was one of the ancient Sapta-rishis. Sapta-rishis are two Sanskrit words meaning "seven sages". He was the son of Brahmarishi Marichi, God Brahma's maanas-putra (born of the mind of Brahma, therefore called a Brahmarishi). The other chief classes of Rishi are the Devarishi (like Narada) and Rajarishi (kings who became Rishis through their knowledge and austerities such as Janaka). Kapila is the father of the Devas, Asuras and all humankind.

Vasishtha

Vasishtha possessed the divine cow known as Kamadhenu. Vashishtha is the author of some parts in the Rig Veda and was the Guru of many illustrious kings like Harishchandra, Samvarna and God Rama. There is a Vasishtha-kunda even today in Ayodhya.

Markandeya

Ancient Rishi Markandeya was a devotee of both God Vishnu and God Shiva. Markandeya is one of the Chiranjeevi – the immortals in Hinduism. On the basis of various Hindu scriptures, it is sure that Markandeya lived through more yuga (ages). He is the author of important Hindu scriptures like Markandeya Purana and the 'Devi Saptashati' or the seven hundred hymns extolling the virtues of the Divine Goddess at the Shakti-peetha near Nashik.

Kapila

Rishi Kapil was born to the illustrious sage Kardam and Devahuti. He gifted the world with the Saankhya school of thought at Siddhpur in Gujarat. His pioneering work threw light on the nature and principles of the ultimate Soul (Purusha) and primal matter (Prakruti). Prakruti with the inspiration of Purusha, is the mother of cosmic creation and all energies.

Bharadwaja

Bharadwaj was a descendant of Rishi Angira (Vedic sage who wrote most of the Atharva Veda). In the epic Ramayana, God Rama along with Sita and Lakshmana met Rishi Bharadwaja at his hermitage in the holy city of Prayagraj in

present-day Uttar Pradesh. Acharya Bharadwaja authored the " Yantra Sarvasva " which includes astonishing and outstanding discoveries in aviation science, space science and flying machines. He has described three categories of flying machines: (1) One that flies on earth from one place to another. (2) One that travels from one planet to another. (3) And one that travels from one universe to another.

Sushruta

Born to Rishi Vishwamitra, Sushruta is the father of surgery. Sushruta was a Shruta-rishi i.e. author of shastra. Author of the book "Sushruta Samhita", in which he describes over 300 surgical procedures and 125 surgical instruments, including scalpels, lancets, needles, catheters and rectal speculums; mostly designed from the jaws of animals and birds. Innumerable years ago, he and scientists of his time conducted complicated surgeries like cesareans, cataract, artificial limbs, Rhinoplasty (restoration of a damaged nose), 12 types of fractures, 6 types of dislocations, urinary stones and even plastic surgery and brain surgery. Usage of anesthesia was well known in ancient India. He has also described a number of stitching methods; the use of horse's hair as thread and fibers of bark.

Jaimini

An ancient Rishi, a great philosopher of the Mimansa school. He was the disciple of Veda Vyasa. Jaimini is also called a Kaanda-rishi, related to karma-kanda (rituals).

Kanad

Founder of Atomic Theory. As the founder of "Vaisheshik Darshan" – one of six principal philosophies of India – Acharya Kanad was a genius in philosophy. He is believed to have been born in Prabhas Kshetra near Dwarika in Gujarat. He was the pioneer expounder of realism, law of causation and the atomic theory. He has classified all the objects of creation into nine elements, namely: earth, water, light, wind, ether, time, space, mind and soul. He says, "Every object of creation is made of atoms which in turn connect with each other to form molecules." His statement ushered in the Atomic Theory for the first time ever in the world, nearly thousands of years before John Dalton . Kanad has also described the dimension and motion of atoms and their chemical reactions with each other. The eminent historian, T.N. Colebrook , has said, "*Compared to the scientists of Europe, Kanad and other Indian scientists were the global masters of this field.*"

Panini

Panini is known for his Sanskrit grammar, particularly for his formulation of the 3,959 rules of Sanskrit syntax and grammar known as Ashtadhyayi ("eight chapters"), the foundational text of the grammatical branch of the Vedanga, the auxiliary scholarly disciplines of Vedic religion.

Nagarjuna

Born in the village of Baluka in Madhya Pradesh, his dedicated research produced maiden discoveries and inventions in the faculties of chemistry and metallurgy, like "Ras Ratnakar", "Rashrudaya" and "Rasendramangal". As the author of medical books like "Arogyamanjari" and "Yogasar," he also made significant contributions to the field of curative medicine. He was appointed as Chancellor of the famous University of Nalanda.

Aryabhata

Was a master Astronomer and Mathematician, born in Kusumpur (Bihar). He wrote a text on astronomy and an unparallel treatise on mathematics called "Aryabhatiyam" He formulated the process of calculating the motion of planets and the time of eclipses. Aryabhata was the first to proclaim that the earth is round, it rotates on its axis, orbits the sun and is suspended in space – thousands of years before Copernicus published his heliocentric theory.

He is also acknowledged for calculating p (Pi) to four decimal places: 3.1416 and the sine table in trigonometry. Centuries later, in 825 CE, the Arab mathematician, Mohammed Ibna Musa credited the value of Pi to the Indians, "*This value has been given by the Hindus.*" And above all, his most spectacular contribution was the concept of zero without which modern computer technology would have been non-existent.

Patanjali

Called the father of Yoga, one of several unique contributions of India to the world. The Science of Yoga seeks to discover and realize the ultimate Reality through yogic practices. Acharya Patanjali hailed from the district of Gonda (Ganara) in Uttar Pradesh . Yoga has eight limbs where Acharya Patanjali shows the attainment of the ultimate bliss of God in samadhi through the disciplines of:

Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dhyana, Dharna and Samadhi. Yogic postures effectively enhance the efficiency of the respiratory, circulatory, nervous, digestive and endocrine systems and many other organs of the body. He prescribed the control of prana (life breath) as the means to control the body, mind and soul. This subsequently rewards one with good health and inner happiness.

Bhaskaracharya

He calculated the time taken by the earth to orbit the sun hundreds of years before the astronomer Smart; Time taken by earth to orbit the sun: 365.258756484 days. Born in the obscure village of Vijjadit (Jalgaon) in Maharastra, Bhaskaracharya's mathematical works called "Lilavati" and "Bijaganita" are considered to be unparalleled. In his treatise "Siddhant Shiromani" he writes on planetary positions, eclipses, cosmography, mathematical techniques and astronomical equipment. In the "Surya Siddhanta" he makes a note on the force of gravity: "Objects fall on earth due to a force of attraction by the earth. Therefore, the earth, planets, constellations, moon, and sun are held in orbit due to this attraction." Bhaskaracharya was the first to discover gravity, hundreds of years before Sir Isaac Newton.

Chanakya

Chanakya or Vishnu Gupta or Kautilya (his gotra) was a teacher to the first Maurya Emperor Chandragupta – the first emperor in the archaeologically recorded history to rule the complete Indian Subcontinent.

He authored the ancient Indian political treatise called Arthasastra. Chanakya is considered as the pioneer of the field of economics and political science and his work is thought of as an important precursor to Classical Economics. Chanakya's works predate Machiavelli's by thousands of years. Chanakya was a teacher in Takshashila, an ancient centre of learning.

Vatsyayana

A Hindu philosopher believed to be the author of the Kama Sutra. In the second chapter , Vatsyayana describes 64 kama-kalas, or ways to make love. These are not 64 positions, but the categories of different modes of lovemaking, namely 'embracing, kissing, scratching, biting, the positions, moaning, the woman playing the man's part, and oral sex.' As each of these modes of sex is supposed to have

eight different particular manifestations, there are thus sixty-four ways in which a man or woman could be said to be having sex in its broadest sense. But kama-kalas are not just tools for successful love making, they also lie at the heart of what constitutes an educated man.

Charaka

Acharya Charaka has been crowned as the Father of Medicine. His renowned work, the "Charak Samhita", is considered as an encyclopedia of Ayurveda. Acharya Charaka revealed through his innate genius and enquiries the facts on human anatomy, embryology, pharmacology, blood circulation and diseases like diabetes, tuberculosis, heart disease, etc. In the "Charak Samhita" he has described the medicinal qualities and functions of 100,000 herbal plants. He has emphasized the influence of diet and activity on mind and body. He has proved the correlation of spirituality and physical health contributed greatly to diagnostic and curative sciences. He has also prescribed an ethical charter for medical practitioners two centuries prior to the Hippocratic oath.

Varahamihira

Varahamihir's book "panch siddhanta", noted that the moon and planets are lustrous not because of their own light but due to sunlight. In the "Brihad Samhita" and "Brihad Jatak", he has revealed his discoveries in the domains of geography, constellation, science, botany and animal science. In his treatise on botanical science, Varahamihir presents cures for various diseases afflicting plants and trees.

Some of the other sages were:

- Agastya (a legendary scholar). One of his ashrama was in Parnashala in Telangana.
- Astika (the son of Manasa and Jaratkaru, the Vyasa of the twenty-seventh Dwapara)
- Atri (a son of Brahma – a Sapta Rishi). His ashrama was near Chitrakoot.
- Bhrigu (One of the Saptarishis and one of the Prajapatis (and Maanasa Putra – a brain child) that Brahma created as facilitators of creation)
- Gautama whose ashrama was on the banks of River Godavari near Nashik and at Ahalya-sthana near Bhagalpur in Bihar state
- Kraustuki (Markandeya's disciple)

- Kripacharya (an important character in the Mahabharata; one of the Chiranjivin (the "immortals").
- Matanga whose ashrama was near Srisailam in Andhra Pradesh and Hampi in Karnataka.
- Marichi (the son of Brahma and also one of the Saptarishis)
- Narada, a divine sage (son of Brahma) in the Vaishnava tradition
- Parashara (a Rigvedic Maharishi and author of many ancient Indian texts. He was the grandson of Vasishtha and the author of some verses in the Rig Veda)
- Prahlada (amahajana – that is, a "great devotee", in the Puranic Vaishnava traditions).
- Pulatsya (one of the ten Prajapatis – sons of Brahma, and one of the Saptarishis. He was the spiritual vibration through the power of which some texts of the Puranas were written)
- Shukra (son of Bhrigu)
- Vaishampayana (the original teacher of the Krishna Yajur-Veda)
- Yagnyavalkya (a legendary ancient sage, a pupil of Vaishampayana)

There are several notable female Rishikas who contributed to the composition of the Vedic scriptures. The Rig Veda mentions Romasha, Lopamudra, Apala, Kadru, Visvavara, Ghosha, Juhu, Vagambhrini, Paulomi, Yami, Indrani, Savitri, and Devajami. The Sama Veda adds Nodha, Akrishtabhasha, Sikatanivavari and Gaupayana.

India's other contributions to the world:

- India's greatest gift to Humanity – Mathematical innovations include ZERO; use of DECIMAL NUMBERS and DICE.
- Budhayana explained in the 6th century, the concept of what is known as the Pythagorean Theorem, long before the European mathematicians.
- Algebra, trigonometry and calculus came from India; Quadratic equations were by Sridharacharya in the 11th century CE; The largest numbers the Greeks and the Romans used were (10 to the power of 6) whereas Hindus used numbers as big as (10 to the power of 53) with specific names as early as 5000 BCE during the Vedic period. Even today, the largest used number is Tera 1012 (10 to the power of 12).
- By 1,500 BCE, Indians used figures like square, circle, rectangle, angles, triangle, fractions, algebraic formulae and astronomy and metaphysics.

- The art of Navigation was born thousands of years ago. The very word Navigation is derived from the Sanskrit word NAVGATIH. The word navy is also derived from Sanskrit 'Nou'.
- The earliest reservoir and dam for irrigation was built in Saurashtra. According to Saka King Rudradaman I of 150 BCE a beautiful lake called 'Sudarshana' was constructed on the hills of Raivataka during Chandragupta Maurya's time.
- Originated in India – Pharmacology, brain surgery, medicine, artificial colors and glazes, metallurgy, re-crystallization, chemistry, textile production, hydraulic engineering, water powered devices, etc.

There are several success stories like CV Raman (1930 Nobel prize for Raman effect) and Prof JC Bose's discovery of microwave in 1895. USA-based IEEE reported that the pioneer of wireless communication was Bose and not Marconi.

The Great Indian Leaders

Dr.A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Former President of India

Dr. Avul Pakir Jainulabhudin Adbul Kalam, the twelfth President of India, is rightfully termed as the father of India's missile technology. He was born to parents Jainulabdeen Marakayar and Ashiamma on 15th October, 1931, at Dhanushkodi in Rameshwaram district, Tamil Nadu. Dr. Kalam as an eminent Aeronautical Engineer, contributed for the development of India's first Satellite launch vehicle SLV-3 and the missiles like the Trishul, Agni, Pritvi etc.

He did his secondary education at Schwartz High School in Ramanathapuram, B.Sc. at St. Joseph's College(1950), Tiruchi, and DMIT in Aeronautical Engineering at the MIT, Madras during 1954-57. After passing out as a graduate aeronautical engineer, Kalam joined Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bangalore as a trainee and later joined as a technical assistant in the Directorate of Technical Development and Production of the Ministry of Defence.

In the 1960's Kalam joined the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre at Thumba in Kerala. He played a major role in the centre's evolution to a key hub of space research in India, helping to develop the country's first indigenous satellite-launch vehicle. During 1963-82, he served the ISRO in various capacities. In 1982, he rejoined DRDO as Director, and conceived the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP) for five indigenous missiles. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam has established an Advanced Technology Research Centre, called 'Research Centre Imarat' to undertake development in futuristic missile technology areas. He also served as the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Defence minister and later the Government of India. After retiring from the post Dr. Kalam joined Annamalai University till he became the President in January 2002.

He is a member of Indian National Academy of Sciences, Astronautical Society of India and many other professional bodies. Dr. APJ abdul Kalam has been awarded Padma Bhushan in 1981, Padma Vibhushan in 1990 and India's Highest civilian Award 'The Bharat Ratna' in 1997. Other prestigious awards include Dr.Biren Roy Space Award, Om Prakash Basin Award for Science and

Technology, National Nehru Award, Arya Bhatta Award etc. Dr. Kalam was conferred with the degree of Doctor of Science (D.Sc. Honoris-causa) by twenty eight universities.

Dr. Kalam, a bachelor is a connoisseur of classical Carnatic music. He plays veena in his leisure. He writes poetry in Tamil, his mother tongue. Seventeen of his poems were translated into English and published in 1994 as a book entitled 'My Journey'. He reads the Quran and the Bhagavad Gita with equal devotion. He is also the Author of the books 'India 2020 : A vision for the New Millennium'(1998 with YS Rajan), 'Wings of Fire : an Autobiography' and 'Ignited Minds – unleashing the power within India'.

Azim Hasham Premji

Founder of Wipro Limited Azim Hasham Premji, founder of Wipro Limited, India's biggest and most competitive IT company based in Bangalore, was born on July 24th 1945 in Bombay. Premji was forced to leave his studies in computer science from Stanford University, California, USA at the age of 21 to take over the family business of vegetable oils when his father M.H. Premji, suddenly passed away in 1966. He has since after a gap of over thirty years completed his degree in Electrical Engineering.

The Amalner-based vanaspathi manufacturing company, the Western India Vegetable Product later became Wipro Products Ltd, Wipro Technologies and Wipro Corporation. Under Premji's leadership Wipro embarked on an ambitious phase of expansion and diversification. The Company began manufacturing light bulbs with General Electric and other consumer products including soaps, baby care products, shampoos, powder etc. In 1975, Wipro Fluid Power business unit manufacturing hydraulic cylinders and truck tippers was started. But Premji's ambitions did not stop there. In the 1980s Wipro entered the IT field, taking advantage of the expulsion of IBM from the Indian market in 1975. Thus, Wipro became involved in manufacturing computer hardware, software development and related items, under a special license from Sentinel. As a result, the $1.5 million company in hydrogenated cooking fats grew within a few years to a $662 million diversified, integrated corporation in services, medical systems, technology products and consumer items with offices worldwide. The company's

IT division became the world's first to win SEI CMM level 5 and PCMM Level 5 (People Capability Maturity Model) certification, the latest in quality standards. A large percentage of the company's revenues are generated by the IT division. Wipro works with leading global companies, such as Alcatel, Nokia, Cisco and Nortel and has a joint venture in Medical Systems with General Electric Company.

Premji's story of success and prominence clearly shows how determination and perseverance, when coupled with knowledge, clear vision and proper planning, enable one to reach the peak of success and leadership. A straight forward person, he doesn't believe in resorting to bribery or corruption to get things done and associates quality with integrity. He is an absolute workaholic and according to him work is the only way to success and survival in a competitive environment. A tough employer, he expects his employees to be competent and will not tolerate lies or deception from anyone.

Azim Hasham Premji finds himself in the Forbes Billionaire List 2000, placed in 41st position with a wealth of $ 6.4 billion. Over the years, Azim Premji has been privileged with many honours and accolades. He was chosen as the Business India's 'Businessman of the Year 2000', He was named by Fortune (August 2003) as one of the 25 most powerful business leaders outside the US, Forbes (March 2003) listed him as one of ten people globally, Business Week featured (October 2003) him on their cover with the sobriquet 'India's tech king'. The Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee and the Manipal Academy of Higher Education have both conferred honorary doctorates on him. He is also a member of the Prime Minister's Advisory Committee for Information Technology in India.

In the year 2001, Premji established Azim Premji Foundation, a not-for-profit organization with a vision of influencing the lives of millions of children in India by facilitating the universalisation of elementary education. The foundation works closely with the state governments of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh etc and the programs cover over 5000 rural schools. Premji contributes the financial resources for the foundation.

Personally, Premji is known for his humility and helping mentality. Easily one of the richest men in the world, he always travels in economy class. One of his favourite recreational activity is hiking. He leads a quiet life with his wife Yasmin Premji who had worked for 'Inside Outside' (editorial) in Mumbai and his

two sons in a simple, but elegant villa in Bangalore. The elder son, Rishad, works in the USA for GE and the younger one, Tariq, has co-founded a dotcom and works from Bangalore. Mr. Premji who holds 78% stakes in the company does not believe in naming one of his sons as his successor just for the norms.

Dhirajlal Hirachand Ambani

Founder of Reliance Industries

Dhirajlal Hirachand Ambani, one of the leading Indian businessmen, was born on December 28, 1932 in Chorwad, Gujarat. Popularly known as Dhirubhai Ambani, he heads The Reliance Industries, India's largest private enterprise.

Dhirubhai started off as a small time worker with Arab merchants in the 1950s and moved to Mumbai in 1958 to start his own business in spices. After making modest profits, he moved into textiles and opened his mill near Ahmedabad. Dhirubhai founded Reliance Industries in 1958. After that it was a saga of expansions and successes.

Reliance, acknowledged as one of the best-run companies in the world has various sectors like petrochemicals, textiles and is involved in the production of crude oil and gas, to polyester and polymer products. The companies refinery at Jamnagar accounts for over 25% of India's total refining capacity and their plant at Hazira is the biggest chemical complex in India. The company has further diversified into Telecom, Insurance and Internet Businesses, the Power Sector and so on. Now the Reliance group with over 85,000 employees provides almost 5% of the Central Government's total revenue.

Dhirubhai has been one among the select Forbes billionaires and has also figured in the Sunday Times list of top 50 businessmen in Asia. His industrious nature and willingness to take on any risk has made him what he is. In 1986 after a heart attack he has handed over his empire to his two sons Anil and Mukesh. His sons are carrying on the successful tradition of their illustrious father.

Ghanshyam Das Birla

Founder of Birla Group of Industries

G.D. Birla was a great architect of India's industrial growth. He started his career in Calcutta at the beginning of this century. He entered the field of business during the days of the First World War and established himself after the war years. He established a cotton mill in Sabzi Mandi, Delhi followed by Keshoram Cotton Mills and Birla Jute Mills around 1920. In 1919, with an investment of 50 lacs, the Birla Brothers Limited was formed and thereafter a mill was set up in Gwalior. In the decade of the 30's he set up Sugar and Paper mills. From 1943 to 1946, Birla Brothers ventured into the area of cars. He had also established Ruby, Asiatic Insurance Co and Inland Air Service. After independence, the Birlas expanded their business and started production in many fields. Near Mirzapur, he, in collaboration with Caesar, an American friend, set up an Aluminum Plant 'Hindalco'. He also started many educational Institutions. To his credit go many temples, planetariums and hospitals. During the decades of 70's and 80's, Birla brothers were among the topmost Industrial Houses of India. G.D. Birla award for scientific Research has been established to encourage scientists for their contribution in the various fields of scientific Research.

Jamsetji Tata

Founder of TATA Industries

Born : 3 March 1839, Navsari Gujarat, India

Died : 19 May 1904, Bad Nauheim, Germany

Occupation : Businessman

Spouse : Hirabai Daboo

Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata (March 3, 1839 - May 19, 1904) was a pioneer in the field of modern industry. He was born in Navsari, Gujarat, India.

He founded what would later become the Tata Group of companies. Jamsetji Tata is generally accepted to be the "father of Indian industry".

Early life

Jamshedji Tata was born to Nusserwanji and Jeevanbai Tata on 3 March 1839 in Navsari, a small town in South Gujarat. Nusserwanji Tata was the first businessman in a family of Parsi Zoroastrian priests. He moved to Bombay and started trading.

Jamshedji joined him in Bombay at the age of 14 and enrolled at the Elphinstone College. He was married to Hirabai Daboo while he was still a student. He graduated from college in 1858 and joined his father's trading firm. It was a turbulent time to step into business as the Indian Rebellion of 1857 had just been crushed by the British government.

Business

Jamsetji worked in his father's firm till the age of 29. In 1868, he started a trading company with a seed capital of Rs. 21,000. In 1869, he acquired a bankrupt oil mill in Chinchpokli, converted it into a cotton mill and renamed the mill to Alexandra Mill. He sold the mill two years later for a healthy profit. Thereafter he set up a cotton mill in Nagpur in 1874. He christened it Empress Mill on 1 January, 1877 when Queen Victoria was proclaimed empress of India.

The period following the establish of Empress Mill was the most poignant period of Jamsetji's life. Over the next thirty years till his death in 1904, Jamsetji laid the foundations for the Tata Group as we know it today.

He devoted himself to bringing to fruition three of his key ideas: setting up an iron and steel company, a world class learning institution and a hydro electric plant. Ironically none of the ideas became a reality during his lifetime.

However, the foundations laid by him and hard work by his successors ensured that each of the ideas were eventually established and are respectable entities in their respective fields today:

• Tata Steel (formerly TISCO - Tata Iron and Steel Company Limited) is Asia's first and India's largest integrated private sector steel company producing 4 million tonnes of steel annually.

• The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) is a premier post-graduate institution of research and higher learning located in Bangalore, India offering postgraduate and doctoral research programmes to over 2,000 active researchers working in 48 specialized departments.

• The Tata Power Company Limited is India’s largest private sector electricity generating company with an installed generation capacity of over 2300 MW.

Among his notable ventures that did bear fruition during his lifetime was the historical Taj Mahal Hotel in Colaba district in Mumbai. The hotel was completed for a princely sum of Rs. 4,21,00,000 on 16 December, 1903.

Legacy

The company started by Jamsetji Tata came to be known as the Tata Group and is today among the largest and most respected companies of India.

Jamsetji, was however, known for much more than just starting a company. He was a pioneer in his field and thought way ahead of his times.

When he started the Empress Mills in Nagpur, he didn't just think of novel ways to manufacture textiles, he also put in place very good labour practices. This was long before any labour laws came into existence.

He was also a nationalist. Though India remained under British rule while he was alive, he interacted with activists such as Dadabhai Naoroji and Pherozeshah Mehta. He was strongly influenced by their thinking. However, he always maintained that political freedom must be accompanied by economic self sufficiency. Not only did he manage to create thousands of jobs, he paved the way for many future enterprises.

Narayana Murthy N.R.

Chairman of Infosys Technologies

NR Narayana Murthy, chairman of Infosys Technologies one of the biggest IT empire in India, was born on August 20, 1946 in Karnataka. Murthy obtained his Bachelor of Electrical Engineering (B.E.) from University of Mysore in 1967 and his Master of Technology (M.Tech.) from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur in 1969. In the early seventies, Narayana Murthy took up employment with SESA in Paris. He worked with a team to design a real time operating system for handling air cargo for Charles de Gaulle airport. He came back to India after 3 years and took up a job with Patni Computer Systems in Pune. In 1981, Murthy founded Infosys Technologies along with six software professionals which later became one of the leading software company. In March 1999, Infosys became the first Indiaregistered company to be listed on an American stock exchange.

Personally, Murthy is known for his simplicity and helping mentality. He founded the Infosys Foundation, a social welfare trust for helping the needy. He has a liking for Western Classical music and has liberal ideas. Murthy's ability to put forth his viewpoints and all his other qualities make him a unique personality. Murthy holds several coveted positions. He was the President of National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) from 1992 to 1994. He is a member of the National Information Technology Task Force of India, the Prime Minister's Council on Trade and Industry, Asia Society's International Council and Board of Councilors of the University of Southern California School of Engineering. He is a Director on the board of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and is also on the Wharton Business School's Asian Executive Board.

Murthy was honoured by 'JRD Tata Corporation Leadership Award' in 1996-97, 'Alumni Award' in 1998, 'The ET Businessperson of the Year Award' in 2000-2001 and 'The Max Schmidheiny Award' in 2001. He was chosen as the Business India's 'Businessman of the Year 1999', the Indian corporate world's most coveted award. The credit goes to Mr. Murthy for making India one of the known names in the IT world.

Vikram .A. Sarabhai

2nd chairman of Indian Atomic Energy Commission and Indian Space Research Organisation(ISRO)

Vikram.A.Sarabhai, was the main personality behind the launching of India's first satellite, Aryabhata in 1975. He was born in Ahmedabad, Gujarat in a family of industrialists. He was also responsible for the Equatorial Rocket Building Station at Thumba. Sarabhai set up the Ahmedabad Textile Industries Research Association, a laboratory for research in Physics and the Indian Institute of Management. Sarabhai was the second chairman of India's Atomic Energy Commission and the Indian Space Research Organisation.

Sarabhai's study of cosmic rays under the eminent scientist Dr. C.V. Raman, revealed that cosmic rays are a stream of energy particles reaching the earth from the outer space, being influenced on their way by the sun, the atmosphere and magnetism. This study helps in observing terrestrial magnetism and the atmosphere, the nature of the sun and outer space. He was conferred 'Padma Shri' in 1966 and was posthumously awarded 'Padma Vibushan' in 1972. He was also awarded 'Dr. Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize' in 1962. This great scientist could be credited with launching India into space age.