

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

INSPIRING
ENTREPRENEURS
OF INDIA



About Inspiring Entrepreneurs of India

"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—

I took the one less traveled by,

And that has made all the difference.

- The Road Not Taken, Robert Frost

Is it a passion, a burning desire to prove all the naysayers wrong, or simply the will to change the world around them that drives entrepreneurs? Whatever be their driving force, the efforts of incredible entrepreneurs chronicled in these pages have enriched lives in more ways than one. Through their stories, these special individuals inspire people to reach higher, dream bigger and achieve more than they ever thought possible.

'From Humble Beginnings to Glory', is an attempt of bringing to the fore such heroes who started from scratch and are creating

history as you read this. It is an ode to individuals whose success is not defined by its magnitude but by the uniqueness of how they achieved it. The Economic Times has always been an integral part of national growth story and we acknowledge that given the scope of opportunities it creates, entrepreneurship should be encouraged and nurtured across industries to ensure economic progress. With this in purview, we are pleased to introduce this compilation that incorporates the mantra of distinct entrepreneurs whose stories can become a source of inspiration and learning to many.

Needless to say, it was no easy task choosing the ones to be featured, given that every story is special in its own way. Nevertheless, we hope that those featured here motivate several stories much like their own to ensure that India's entrepreneurial flame continues burning brightly forever.





THE BIG IDEA / SEED OF THE DREAM

It was a visit to Europe in 1980 when the seed for the current success was planted. I was watching the demonstration of a pasta-making machine at a trade show. It struck me that it could be used for making the common Indian household savory semiyaa. I quickly visualized the convenience that an Indian housewife could enjoy if the traditional food item could be sold in hygienically packaged units. The rest was history with Bambino becoming an instant hit in India. It revolutionized the market.

MANIFESTATION / EXECUTION OF THE DREAM

We launched the product in 1982. It was the first branded vermicelli product in the country creating a new category of food products. I had to face some opposition and there was just my vision to carry out my plan! It was a gamble backed with a firm conviction that it would make life easier for the Indian housewife. I was convinced that generations to come would thank me for bringing this easy to use everyday product in the market.

In the olden days vermicelli was only

handmade, lovingly and painstakingly made by the older members of the family because it required a good amount of skill. For people of my generation, this activity was a time for family camaraderie and bonding. Vermicelli was some kind of soul food, in the sense that it was associated with a sense of kinship and amity. As nuclear families became the norm and people moved to different parts of the country for work reasons, it was not easy to find this food item. I saw the gaps in the market and also felt that I could help people reconnect with their childhood memories.

As a person I keep a low profile, but I wanted my product to be known by the whole country. I put my whole and soul behind it. Bambino's biggest strength is its infrastructure and the innovation in product and manufacturing process. The four plants situated in four different geographical locations, cater to all the markets in India and abroad making Bambino the largest selling Vermicelli brand in South-East Asia.

Apart from the convenience it offered, the sophisticated and unique manufacturing

process resulting in a hygienic product, completely untouched by hand was Bambino's USP.

Research clearly is our focus with a relentless quest for innovating newer and improved products in tune with the changing food habits and health awareness. Bambino's focus now is on innovating functional foods and food items, low on cholesterol and high on calories. The key to our success is our team of specialists and industry experts who bring to the table years of experience in food technology, nutrition, and engineering. While our processes are world class so is our supply chain system where our backward integration ensuring quality inputs right from the farm gate to the factory gates. We source the wheat directly from the farmers to ensure that quality is maintained from end to end.

HIGHS AND LOWS

I would say the high in this long journey of 32 odd years is the acceptance of the product by the Indian housewife. Bambino became a generic name for vermicelli. That was the taste of success.

The other major achievement, is expanding the market base by reaching international quality pasta to the Indian consumers at affordable prices. We redefined the pasta category in the country. I would dare say that it was because of Bambino that many Indian households know what pasta means.

There has been tough competition from the commodity segment resulting in an unwillingness from consumers to pay a little extra price for branded products in the market.

LEARNING'S

- Listen to consumer very carefully
- Small feedback can make a big difference
- Empower your teams
- The consumer has aspirations, make him aspire for your brand

KEY MILESTONES ACHIEVED

- Bambino is a market leader in vermicelli
- Bambino is synonymous with the category. People don't ask for vermicelli, they ask for Bambino

PRESENT DAY ROLE MODEL

My father

THE BIG FIVE

5 ADJECTIVES YOU WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF

ENERGETIC | INDUSTRIOUS | EMPHATIC | VISIONARY | AMBITIOUS

5 CORE VALUES

INTEGRITY | HARD WORK | GROWTH ORIENTED | OPTIMISTIC | PASSIONATE

5 POINTERS TO UPCOMING ENTREPRENEURS

BELIEVE IN AN IDEA | DREAM BEYOND THE OBVIOUS | LISTEN TO YOUR CONSUMER VERY CAREFULLY | COMMUNICATE IN SIMPLE AND STRAIGHT TERMS WITH YOUR CONSUMER | LOOK AT THE BIG PICTURE WITH AN EYE ON FINE DETAILS

YOUR INSPIRATIONAL CHAKRAS FOR SUCCESS

Your eureka moment/turning point

My eureka moment happened while watching the demo of pasta making at a trade show in Europe.

Your inspiration

The consumer. Listen to him and make products that he/she needs

Your favorite quotation

"Give them quality. That's the best kind of advertising in the world."

Your work mantra

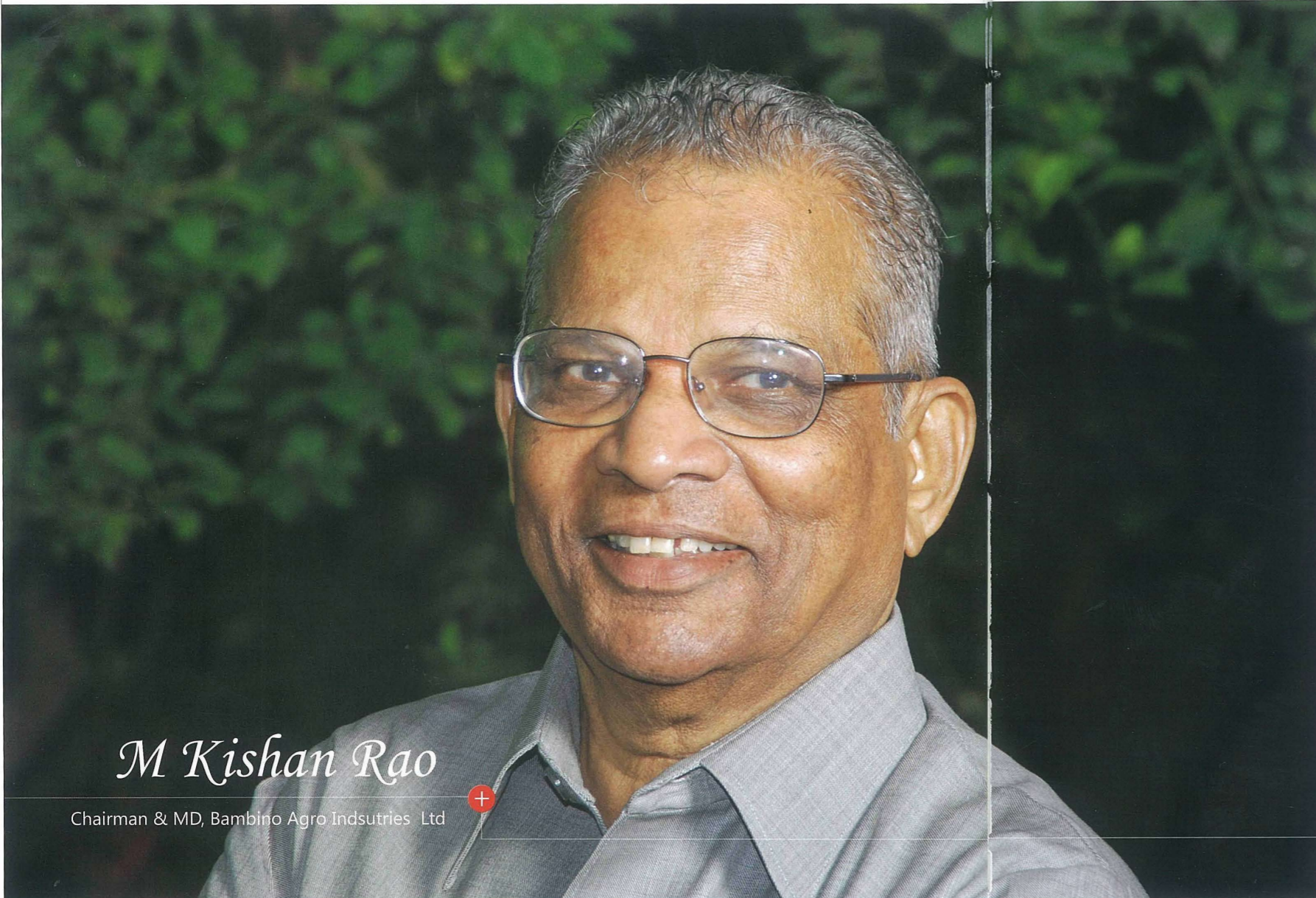
Hard work delivers sooner or later

Your take on entrepreneurs social responsibility

I believe that our actions must always benefit society at large.

One person who impacted your journey

A tobacco trader who taught a big lesson on backward integration.



M Kishan Rao

Chairman & MD, Bambino Agro Industries Ltd