

VivekSawant

MR. VIVEK SAWANT PROFILE

Mr. Vivek Sawant is the Managing Director and CEO of Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Limited (MKCL) since its inception in 2001. Under his leadership, MKCL has emerged as a high-tech initiative of the Government of Maharashtra and 10 universities in Maharashtra for development and delivery of Education, Governance and Empowerment technologies, solutions and services to masses.

In MKCL, he has successfully integrated a network of about **5420** Authorized Learning Centers spanning over the Maharashtra state. This is the single largest private-public-partnership network of its kind in India. About **9 million (90 Lac) learners** from metros to rural and tribal areas have taken a low-cost, high-quality IT Literacy eLearning experiences leading to **MS-CIT** certification through this network in last 11 years. This venture has provided employment and self-employment opportunities in the field of IT to about **25,000 youngsters** in the state at their own native places.

Under his leadership, MKCL with its popular brands such as **ERA, Digital University, OASIS**, etc. has offered its Digital Empowerment services to more than **20 million (2 Crore) common people** in several states of India as well as abroad. Today while MKCL has emerged as a self-sustaining, wealth creating and ever growing enterprise it is firmly committed to its social responsibility and social accountability.

Soon after completing his school and college education in Nasik and Post-Graduate education in Pune, Mr. Sawant served as a teacher of Physics, Electronics and Computer Science at the Fergusson College, Pune from 1979 to 1987 and as the Deputy Director of Symbiosis Institute of Computer Studies and Research from 1987 to 1988.

Later he participated in design and development of India's first indigenous Supercomputers **PARAM** at C-DAC from 1988 to 2000. There he served in various leadership roles in the fields of:

- High Performance Computing Architecture
- Supercomputing Applications Development
- Modeling and Simulations
- e-Governance Solutions Development
- IT Applications Development for Rural Areas
- National Supercomputing Computing Facility Development
- Intellectual Resources Development.

During his tenure at C-DAC, he developed the nationwide network of 20 Advanced Computing Training Schools (ACTS). Under his leadership at ACTS, more than 25,000 engineering graduates from various disciplines were rigorously trained in software engineering and state-of-the-art software development tools and methodologies. All of them were placed in leading IT industries in India and abroad and are now serving in leadership roles all over the developed world.

Later he also served as the founder Director of International Institute of Information Technology at Rajiv Gandhi Infotech Park at Hinjawadi, Pune.

In order to ensure the success of citizen-centric eGovernance projects, Mr. Sawant strategically initiated IT Literacy campaign within the Government of Maharashtra from 1995 which today in the form of MKCL and MS-CIT has emerged as the largest IT Literacy movement in the world. It is widely recognized as the de-facto benchmark in IT Literacy and also the major step towards bridging the *Digital Divide* and resultant *Knowledge Divide* and *Opportunity Divide* in the semi-urban, rural, tribal and hilly areas of the state.

Mr. Sawant has served on several policy-formulation committees at state and national level including the Indian Prime Minister's IT Task Force, National Rural Road Development Committee and National Board of Apprenticeship, State eGovernance Task Force of a few State Governments, etc. In view of his pioneering contribution in eGovernance of the PWD, he was invited to be the co-author of the Pradhan Mantri Gram SadakYojana under which 1.2 million (12 Lac) km nation-wide rural road network has been established.

He has served on Boards of Studies and Academic Councils of several universities.

He is an honorary fellow of Maharashtra Academy of Sciences.

He serves on the boards of directors of several organizations such as Maharashtra State Board of Technical Education, MKCL, Rajasthan Knowledge Corporation Limited (RKCL), Odisha Knowledge Corporation Limited (OKCL), Haryana Knowledge Corporation Limited (HKCL), MKCL International Free Zone Establishment, Dubai, MKCL Arabia Ltd., Riyadh, MKCL Malaysia, MKCL Lanka, etc.

He also offers his strategic contributions and voluntary services on the boards of trustees and advisory councils of many educational, social and voluntary organizations.

His research interests include:

- Development of New Paradigms in Education
- Nurturance of Excellence and Talent

- Development of innovative technologies and solutions for delivery of Education, Governance and Empowerment services to masses
- Building Talent Capital, Knowledge Capital and Customer-Relationship Capital in a 21st Century Corporation committed to social development
- Building Private-Public-People Partnership Networks
- Development of Knowledge-Based Sustainable Habitats with community participation

Mr. Sawant has authored many articles and delivered lectures in these areas in English and Marathi in India and abroad.

Mr. Sawant has been felicitated by various awards for his distinguished contributions in the fields of education, high performance computing, entrepreneurship development, leadership development, innovations, etc. Some of the awards are –

- Dnyana Surya Award
- Ninad Award
- Rotary's Young Recipient Award
- Rotary's Vocational Excellence Award
- Yashokeerti Award of the Computer Society of India
- Rajeev Gandhi SanganakSarathi Award
- ETH Education Award
- IT-ICON Award
- Doordarshan's Shikshan Ratna Award
- VASVIK Award for R&D
- Dr. Annasaheb Shinde Memorial Award
- Maharashtra Corporate Excellence Award for Innovation (Maxcell Award)
- Neelvasant Award
- Dr. Narendra Dabholkar Memorial Award
- Pune's Pride Award 2014 for Excellence in Education

He was also nominated for World Technology Network Award at San Francisco for his work of likely long-term significance in education.

Contacts - md@mkcl.org; +91- 98220 52914

Dr. Abhishek Sen

Co-founder

Abhishek has a background in biomedical engineering from IIT Bombay and a MBBS in internal medicine from T.N.Hospital. He is a fellow at the University of Washington and focuses on research and entrepreneurship on med tech targeted at the developing world. He is an Echoing Green Fellow, 2010.

Sanjeev Galande

From Center of Excellence in Epigenetics @ IISER Pune

Sanjeev

Professor and Team Leader, Centre of Excellence in Epigenetics

email : sanjeev@iiserpune.ac.in

Sanjeev Galande obtained his PhD in Biochemistry from the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, India in 1996. As a postdoctoral fellow at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, USA from 1996-2001, he studied the role of MAR-binding proteins in tumorigenesis. He then joined the National Centre for Cell Science, Pune, India in 2001 as a senior scientist. After moving to IISER Pune in 2010, he established the Centre of Excellence in Epigenetics and has assembled a team of scientists to study the evolution of epigenetic mechanisms using multiple model systems. Research in Galande laboratory is focused on studying how the dynamic changes in higher order chromatin assembly govern gene expression in a spatial and temporal manner. To fulfill this, he has established a multidisciplinary program engaged at the interface of biochemistry, molecular biology, bioinformatics, cell biology, proteomics, and genomics.

Chromatin biology and Epigenetics

Research in our laboratory is focused on studying how the dynamic changes in higher order chromatin assembly govern gene expression in a spatial and temporal manner. To fulfill this, we have established a multidisciplinary program engaged at the interface of biochemistry, molecular biology, bioinformatics, cell biology, proteomics, and genomics.

The packaging of chromatin is hierarchical and its different states are interconvertible depending upon the physiological need of the cell and also contribute in variety of ways to achieve stringent regulation of gene activity.

Dynamic nature of chromatin loops is one such mechanism. Technological advances in recent years have provided unprecedented insights into the role of chromatin organization and interactions of various structural-functional components towards gene regulation.

The global chromatin organizer SATB1 has emerged as a key factor integrating higher-order chromatin architecture with gene regulation. Studies in recent years have unraveled the role of SATB1 in organization of chromatin "loopscape" and its dynamic nature in response to physiological stimuli. At genome-wide level, SATB1 seems to play a role in organization of the 'transcriptionally poised' chromatin, the part of chromatin that contains genes that are actively involved in specific cellular processes. A major emphasis is on studying epigenetic modifications, the heritable changes that influence gene function without changing DNA sequence. We are particularly interested in studying the implications of these phenomena towards development and differentiation of cells. To accomplish this, we use a variety of model systems such as cells of the immune system, stem cells and cancer cells. We are also interested in studying the global regulatory networks and the dynamic interplay of various cis and trans regulatory elements that dictate patterns of gene expression. The outcome of these studies would be important towards understanding the biology of diseases such as infectious diseases, cancer and other complex disorders.

Model systems and ongoing projects (2010 onwards)

Recently, the repertoire of model systems used in our laboratory has been expanded to enable addressing specific questions in epigenetic regulation. Thus, the centre has now employed a wide spectrum of model systems such as yeast, *C. elegans*, *Drosophila* and zebrafish in addition to mouse and human cells. Using these, we are actively engaged in addressing the following:

1. To understand the principles and mechanisms of evolution of epigenetic regulation.
2. To employ genetic, biochemical, molecular and computational approaches to investigate complex and dynamic processes including transcription, gene regulation, cell proliferation, self-renewal, regeneration and interrelationships between these processes.
3. To understand the role of chromatin organizer and global regulator SATB1 in Wnt signaling during early development.
4. To study the dynamics of epigenetic modifications in human cell types and uncover its potential association with environment and complex human diseases.

Funding

The work in our laboratory is supported by grants from the Department of Biotechnology, New Delhi, India, Department of Science and Technology, and the Wellcome Trust, UK.

Selected Publications

2012

Suri, D., Veenit, V., Sarkar, A., Thiagarajan, D., Kumar, A., Nestler, E.J., Galande, S., Vaidya, V.A. Early Stress Evokes Age-Dependent Biphasic Changes in Hippocampal Neurogenesis, Bdnf Expression, and Cognition, (2012) *Biological Psychiatry*. Article in Press.

Mir, R., Pradhan, S.J., Galande, S. Chromatin organizer SATB1 as a novel molecular target for cancer therapy, (2012) *Current Drug Targets*, 13 (13), pp. 1603-1615.

Burute, M., Gottimukkala, K., Galande, S. Chromatin organizer SATB1 is an important determinant of T-cell differentiation (2012) *Immunology and Cell Biology*, 90 (9), pp. 852-859.

Khare, S.P., Habib, F., Sharma, R., Gadewal, N., Gupta, S., Galande, S. Histome - A relational knowledgebase of human histone proteins and histone modifying enzymes (2012) *Nucleic Acids Research*, 40 (D1), pp. D337-D342.

2011

Notani, D., Ramanujam, P.L., Kumar, P.P., Gottimukkala, K.P., Kumar-Sinha, C., Galande, S. N-terminal PDZ-like domain of chromatin organizer SATB1 contributes towards its function as transcription regulator (2011) *Journal of Biosciences*, 36 (3), pp. 461-469.

Yamayoshi, A., Yasuhara, M., Galande, S., Kobori, A., Murakami, A. Decoy-DNA against special AT-rich sequence binding protein 1 Inhibits the growth and invasive ability of human breast cancer (2011) *Oligonucleotides*, 21 (2), pp. 115-121.

2010

Notani, D., Limaye, A.S., Kumar, P.P., Galande, S. Phosphorylation-dependent regulation of SATB1, the higher-order chromatin organizer and global gene regulator. (2010) *Methods in molecular biology* (Clifton, N.J.), 647, pp. 317-335.

Vempati, R.K., Jayani, R.S., Notani, D., Sengupta, A., Galande, S., Haldar, D. p300-mediated acetylation of histone H3 lysine 56 functions in DNA damage response in mammals (2010) *Journal of Biological Chemistry*, 285 (37), pp. 28553-28564.

Jayani, R.S., Ramanujam, P.L., Galande, S. Studying Histone Modifications and Their Genomic Functions by Employing Chromatin Immunoprecipitation and Immunoblotting (2010) *Methods in Cell Biology*, 98 (C), pp. 35-56.

Ahlfors, H., Limaye, A., Elo, L.L., Tuomela, S., Burute, M., Gottimukkala, K.V.P., Notani, D., Rasool, O., Galande, S., Lahesmaa, R. SATB1 dictates expression of multiple genes including IL-5 involved in human T helper cell differentiation (2010) *Blood*, 116 (9), pp. 1443-1453.

Lakshminarayana Reddy, C.N., Vyjayanti, V.N., Notani, D., Galande, S., Kotamraju, S. Down-regulation of the global regulator SATB1 by statins in COLO205 colon cancer cells (2010) *Molecular Medicine Reports*, 3 (5), pp. 857-861.

Bakthavachalu, B., Kalanke, S., Galande, S., Ramanamurthy, B., Parab, P., Kohale, K.N., Seshadri, V. Dense cataract and microphthalmia (dcm) in BALB/c mice is caused by mutations in the GJA8 locus (2010) *Journal of Genetics*, 89 (2), pp. 147-154.

Notani, D., Gottimukkala, K.P., Jayani, R.S., Limaye, A.S., Damle, M.V., Mehta, S., Purbey, P.K., Joseph, J., Galande, S. Global regulator SATB1 recruits β -catenin and regulates T H2 differentiation in Wnt-dependent manner (2010) *PLoS Biology*, 8 (1), art. no. e1000296.

2009

Purbey, P.K., Singh, S., Notani, D., Kumar, P.P., Limaye, A.S., Galande, S. Acetylation-dependent interaction of SATB1 and CtBP1 mediates transcriptional repression by SATB1 (2009) *Molecular and Cellular Biology*, 29 (5), pp. 1321-1337.

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Kanitkar, M., Gokhale, K., Galande, S., Bhonde, R.R. Novel role of curcumin in the prevention of cytokine-induced islet death in vitro and diabetogenesis in vivo (2008) *British Journal of Pharmacology*, 155 (5), pp. 702-713.

Limaye, A., Kashyap, R.S., Kapley, A., Galande, S., Purohit, H.J., Daginawala, H.F., Taori, G.M. Modulation of signal transduction pathways in lymphocytes due to sub-lethal toxicity of chlorinated phenol (2008) *Toxicology Letters*, 179 (1), pp. 23-28.

Purbey, P.K., Singh, S., Kumar, P.P., Mehta, S., Ganesh, K.N., Mitra, D., Galande, S. PDZ domain-mediated dimerization and homeodomain-directed specificity are required for high-affinity DNA binding by SATB1 (2008) *Nucleic Acids Research*, 36 (7), pp. 2107-2122.

2007

Galande, S., Purbey, P.K., Notani, D., Kumar, P.P. The third dimension of gene regulation: organization of dynamic chromatin loopscape by SATB1 (2007) *Current Opinion in Genetics and Development*, 17 (5), pp. 408-414.

Kumar, P.P., Mehta, S., Purbey, P.K., Notani, D., Jayani, R.S., Purohit, H.J., Raje, D.V., Ravi, D.S., Bhonde, R.R., Mitra, D., Galande, S. SATB1-binding sequences and Alu-like motifs define a unique chromatin context in the vicinity of human immunodeficiency virus type 1 integration sites (2007) *Journal of Virology*, 81 (11), pp. 5617-5627.

Pavan Kumar, P., Bischof, O., Purbey, P.K., Notani, D., Urlaub, H., Dejean, A., Galande, S. Functional interaction between PML and SATB1 regulates chromatin-loop architecture and transcription of the MHC class I locus (2007) *Nature Cell Biology*, 9 (1), pp. 45-56.

2006

Purbey, P.K., Jayakumar, P.C., Patole, M.S., Galande, S. pC6-2/caspase-6 system to purify glutathione-S-transferase-free recombinant fusion proteins expressed in *Escherichia coli* (2006) *Nature Protocols*, 1 (4), pp. 1820-1827.

Pavan Kumar, P., Purbey, P.K., Sinha, C.K., Notani, D., Limaye, A., Jayani, R.S., Galande, S. Phosphorylation of SATB1, a Global Gene Regulator, Acts as a Molecular Switch Regulating Its Transcriptional Activity In Vivo (2006) *Molecular Cell*, 22 (2), pp. 231-243.

2005

Bapat, S., Galande, S. Association by guilt: Identification of DLX5 as a target for MeCP2 provides a molecular link between genomic imprinting and Rett syndrome (2005) *BioEssays*, 27 (7), pp. 676-680.

Purbey, P.K., Jayakumar, P.C., Deepalakshmi, P.D., Patole, M.S., Galande, S. GST fusion vector with caspase-6 cleavage site for removal of fusion tag during column purification (2005) *BioTechniques*, 38 (3), pp. 360-366.

Kumar, P.P., Purbey, P.K., Ravi, D.S., Mitra, D., Galande, S. Displacement of SATB1-bound histone deacetylase 1 corepressor by the human immunodeficiency virus type 1 transactivator induces expression of interleukin-2 and its receptor in T cells (2005) *Molecular and Cellular Biology*, 25 (5), pp. 1620-1633.

2003

Rampalli, S., Kulkarni, A., Kumar, P., Mogare, D., Galande, S., Mitra, D., Chattopadhyay, S. Stimulation of Tat-independent transcriptional processivity from the HIV-1 LTR promoter by matrix attachment regions (2003) *Nucleic Acids Research*, 31 (12), pp. 3248-3256.

Kaul, R., Mukherjee, S., Ahmed, F., Bhat, M.K., Chhipa, R., Galande, S., Chattopadhyay, S. Direct interaction with and activation of p53 by SMAR1 retards cell-cycle progression at G2/M phase and delays tumor growth in mice (2003) *International Journal of Cancer*, 103 (5), pp. 606-615.

2002

Galande, S. Chromatin (dis)organization and cancer: BUR-binding proteins as biomarkers for cancer (2002) *Current Cancer Drug Targets*, 2 (2), pp. 157-190.

Sunil ShivajiKhandbahale

Innovator, Linguistic Enabler, Philanthropist

Founder - KHANDBAHALE.COM

Founder - KHANDBAHALE.ORG

Secretary - GlobalProsperityFoundation.Org

Sunil is an Engineer+MBA& crazy @ Music, Painting & Cycling

"A Journey of Thousand Miles Starts with a Single Step" ... Sunil Khandbahale is the living example who has given the true meaning to this proverb. A village boy Sunil, decided to quit engineering due to language problem. But the sense of his illiterate parent's dream, made him to face the challenge. There he came across the 'Dictionary' for the first time. Practicing it sincerely, he became a scholar engineer. Inspired by his own success, "helping people with language difficulties" become his life-mission. Sunil is best known as a founder of KHANDBAHALE.COM - a free multilingual dictionary and KHANDBAHALE.ORG - the lingual fraternity. His digital dictionaries count over 100 million users across 150 countries on computers, web, mobiles, tablets and sms. He is conferred with the honorary title of "Dictionary Man" and 'Wordsmith' by public. He has been felicitated by The President of India and awarded as a "Youth Icon" by Times Group. He has started a 'Language-Friendship' mission to enable people with language tools. Sunil is also a founder & secretary of the Global Prosperity Foundation - an NGO focused on rural education and development. He has started a visionary project " The Education on Wheels" for underprivileged children.

Awards/Recognitions;

- Best Entrepreneur of the year "Yashokirti Award" by Computer Society of India (CSI)
- Best Local Language Website Award by Internet & Mobile Association of India(IAMAI)
- International "mBillionth Award" by Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF)
- International "Manthan Award" by United Nation's World Summit on Information Society (WSIS)
- Recognized as "Industry Leader" in Indian language Dictionaries by Microsoft
- Rated as "A Top Ranking Website" by Google for Indian language reference
- Recognized "Best Local Language Apps" by Nokia
- "Young IT Achiever" by Dr.Munje Institute (DMI)
- "Youth Icon" Award by Times Group
- "INK-Fellow 2013" by INK in association with TED
- "eNGO challenge 2012 award" by Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF)

Chetna Gala Sinha

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Chetna Gala Sinha is an Indian social entrepreneur.[1] She is empowering women in drought prone areas of rural India by inculcating entrepreneurial skills and providing them access to land and other means of production.

Early life

Born in Mumbai, she earned her Masters degree in Commerce and Economics at the Mumbai University in 1982.

Career

Chetna Gala Sinha was a leader in the Jayprakash Narayan student activist movement at the end of the 1970s, which fought for the democratic and basic human rights of the rural and marginalized communities during the Indira Gandhi's Emergency.

She founded chairperson, Mann DeshiMahilaSahkari Bank, a micro finance bank which lends to women in rural areas. She is founder and President of Mann Deshi Foundation.

Chetna Sinha received "Entrepreneurship Development Award" on 29th July, 2010 by Entrepreneurs' International, Pune.

Chetna Sinha received the first Godfrey Phillips Bravery Amodini Award on 11th September, 2009 by Godfrey Phillips.

Chetna Sinha received "Rani LaxmiibaiPuraskar" on 7th March, 2009 from Cyclo Transmissions Ltd., Satara. This award is given to the women who have done outstanding work in various fields.

Yale University World Fellowship Program 2002-2003: selected Chetna Gala Sinha, for the inaugural class.

Some more awards.

Jankidevi Bajaj Puraskar Award for Rural Entrepreneurship 2005. Shri NanajiDeshamukh and the Rajiv ShethSabale Foundation Award 1999 presented by for work completed with drought-affected women. Governor of Maharashtra Shri P. C. Alexander Award 1994 for work in development. The award was sponsored by VasantNaikKrishiSansthanvaGraminVikasPratishthan. [2]

Personal life

Chetna is the mother of three sons and lives in Mhaswad, where Mann DeshiMahila Bank has its headquarters.

Chetna Gala Sinha



[Visit Website](#) [1]

CHETNA GALA SINHA

[Economic Development](#) [2]

Sectors:

[Income Generation](#) [3], [Rural Development](#) [4]

Target Population:

[Women](#) [5]

Mann VikasSamajikSanstha

India,

[Asia](#) [6]

Chetna has created a microfinance bank for entrepreneurial women in rural India. Mann DeshiMahila Bank has lent over \$3 million to 127,000 clients.

This profile below was prepared when Chetna Gala Sinha was elected to the Ashoka Fellowship in 1996.

[INTRODUCTION](#) [7]

Chetna Gala Sinha is empowering women in drought prone areas of rural India by inculcating entrepreneurial skills and providing them access to land and other means of production.

[THE NEW IDEA](#) [7]

Chetna Gala Sinha, an experienced farmer, is establishing the various elements necessary to develop a culture of microenterprise among women in the inaccessible, drought-prone areas of Maharashtra in Western India. Her plan has strategic components to allow access to cattle and land, hone entrepreneurial skills, increase earnings, and develop local markets.

The main component of Chetna's design is a Women's Bank (Mahila Bank). At a time when microcredit schemes have become a cornerstone of development policy, one of the distinctive qualities of her bank is that it does not confine itself to making loans but also puts into place the infrastructures needed to develop entrepreneurial success and assets among women. It also has established creative measures for bringing money into the bank as well as lending from it. The Bank is the vehicle through which women in this drought stricken area can develop their learning potential so that remaining in their rural area becomes a more viable and sustainable option. It also reduces their dependence on their men-folk, who migrate in large numbers in search of employment when the land fails to support them. Women have historically been the repositories of traditional skills and, as a result of migration from rural areas, have emerged as the de facto wage-earners for their families. The Bank sponsors projects that emphasize these traditional skills and make them more effective through the introduction of technical assistance. In the process, the women in this area have achieved a comprehensive improvement of their potential as equal participants and decision-makers in the market, the home, and local government.

[THE PROBLEM](#) [7]

Mann Taluka (an intermediate administrative unit between a district and a village), in Maharashtra state, receives enough rainfall to support cattle rearing, but not profitable crops such as sugarcane and cotton. The area was known for the good quality of its animals, and the cattle market in the main town of Mhaswad attracted buyers from all over the state. However, poor central planning by the government led to the development of industries such as textile and sugar mills. Because of shortages of electricity and water, these industries did not really take hold, and the people in the rural areas, who no longer had access to common lands to graze their cattle, were forced to migrate elsewhere in search of work.

Although women in rural Maharashtra are known for their skills in animal husbandry and the marketing of animals, over time they have been gradually alienated from the market place and rendered asset-less. Despite the fact that the burden of earning the family income and, more largely, maintaining the overall health of the village economy falls to the women, they lack both resources and vital linkages to the market. Removed from the process of

production and reduced to the status of laborers, they become powerless in the social arena as well, especially in the panchayats (local self-government bodies). The government passed a new law in the early 1990s requiring that 30 percent of all panchayats be made up of women. Consequently, there is a surge in the number of women being elected to the panchayats or the local self-governing bodies, but neither the women nor their male colleagues have adequate training for their new responsibilities.

THE STRATEGY [7]

Chetna began by working with women from the shepherd community, since they had the most available cash and the largest deposits in local banks. She gathered a small group of women and started a savings and credit project with a revolving fund from a local credit cooperative. Instead of drawing loans in the form of credit, the women bought goats. This helped them to increase their working assets. The success of this program spread with the District Cooperative Bank taking up the scheme at the policy level for implementation. Chetna then conceived the idea of a bank that would not merely make financial support available but would also create the infrastructures and training necessary to make lasting economic changes for women.

The Mahila Bank was set up with 25 members from 235 villages. Chetna mobilized a paid-in capital of Rupees 100,000 (approximately US \$2,400), an unusually large sum in terms of deposits and savings, and enough for the bank to get recognition from the Reserve Bank of India (the Federal bank that regulates the banking industry in the country). The Bank is structured in such a way that policy decision making rests with all the shareholder members, who meet every six months.

The Bank forms groups and sponsors activities that will be profitable, keeping in mind the skills and resources of the women concerned. It does surveys of local markets and determines which products are profitable and can be easily used as a basis for economic activity. For example, the bank has organized groups of vegetable vendors and provided training on how to grow vegetables without using expensive pesticides and fertilizers. Factors such as water use, balance of nutrients, seed management, and recycling of waste are discussed during the training session, and women with traditional skills and knowledge in this area are invited to participate. The Bank has also provided support to manure making, or "creating soil" as the women call it. Crop residue is collected, mixed with other farm waste and water, and then fermented in the sun. In a return to traditional methods, the women have experimented with using different mixtures for different crops, though with the advent of chemical fertilizers, use of the same formula for all crops has become commonplace. Similarly, seed banks that promote local varieties and work to develop pest resistant strains are also supported.

To facilitate cash flow for the banks, Chetna has introduced several novel schemes, including one in which people can pay their electricity bills through their bank accounts without having to go all the way to the electricity board and wait in line. She is also working at the government policy level to channel grants to be routed through the bank.

At another level, she is working with related national institutions such as rural universities and the Wasteland Development Board to change their perspectives and policies regarding women entrepreneurs and financing in the fields of animal husbandry, fodder cultivation, and farming.

Along with economic empowerment, Chetna has founded a second organization, the Mann Sub-district Organization for Societal Progress, to carry out campaigns in other areas. To support women's effectiveness in the panchayats, the organization has organized training camps in eleven subdistricts on effective government. An antiliquor campaign organized by Chetna resulted in the closing down of liquor shops in two villages. She has organized meetings with village governing bodies to discuss property rights for women, who are often unable to assert ownership and control even when, as in one village, Walai, nearly 60 percent of the women have property in their name.

Chetna is convinced that the Bank will show other regular banks that financing of rural women is a viable and profitable option. As these schemes become more viable, Chetna anticipates a 50 percent reduction in the migratory trends in her region.

THE PERSON [7]

In virtually all aspects of her life, Chetna has exhibited an independence of thought and a passionate commitment to her work. She went against certain traditions of her middle-class family background by insisting on completing her education and waiting until she felt ready to marry. She also shifted from a hectic urban lifestyle in the country's commercial capital of Mumbai (Bombay) to a drought-prone, rural district in order to pursue a career in farming. In farming, Chetna experienced firsthand the difficulties facing women: their inability to access financial support, ensuing debt, and the fact that they are not treated as viable entrepreneurs. The wisdom she obtained from her own experiences in farming gave her a frame of reference that accurately reflects the concerns of the average poor rural women and her family. In this way, Chetna has been able to put her personal and family business experiences to good use in envisioning her current project.

SudeshBhonsle

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

SudeshBhosle



SudeshBhosle in 2010

Born	1 July 1960 Maharashtra , India
Occupation	Singer , record producer , playback singer
Years active	1988 – present
Spouse(s)	SnehaSudeshchandraBhosle
Children	SiddhantBhosle ShrutiBhosle
Parents	N.R. Bhosle SumantaiBhosle
Website	http://www.sudeshbhosle.com/

SudeshBhosle (born 1 July 1960) is an Indian playback singer who primarily sings for [Bollywood](#) feature films. He was born to N.R. Bhosle and SumantaiBhosle. Bhosle is known for his ability to mimic actor [Amitabh Bachchan](#), having sung for him in various songs.^[1]

Career

SudeshBhosle king of mimic got his first major break in playback singing in the film [Zalzala](#) (1988). He used mimicry to become a professional dubbing artist for several artists like [Sanjeev Kumar](#) and [Anil Kapoor](#). He actually dubbed for Sanjeev Kumar when he died prematurely before completing the film *Professor kiPadosan*. He has sung songs for the movie [Ghatothkach](#) in 2008.^[2] Bhosle is the producer and judge on [K For Kishore](#), a singing contest on Sony Entertainment Television. He has sung many famous Bollywood songs for Amitabh Bachchan including "Jummachumma de de" from 1991 movie [Hum](#). He can mimic numerous Bollywood stars including Ashok Kumar (Dadamuni), Amitabh Bachchan, Vinod Khanna, Sanjeev Kumar and many more. He possess a great talent of Voice Modulation.

Accolades

He has been awarded the Mother Teresa Millennium Award for his contribution to music in a ceremony in [Kolkata](#) in 2008.^[3]

Born on 1st July 1960 in a conservative Maharastrianfamily,Sudeshbhosle today is the most versatile artist in the Indian film Industry. His father Late Shri N.R.Bhosle was an artist associated with one of the reputed film banner artist and his mother Late Smt.SumanBhosle was an Indian Classical Vocalist. Sudesh had never planned to be a professional singer in his wildest dreams. During his childhood he was more inclined to painting,infact he had even sketched and painted for the film Julie. Singing was just his hobby. SudeshBhosle was following the footsteps of his parent's professions, Sudesh use to help his father with painting posters and also he use to participate in singing in his college. Having consciously developed his natural gift of mimicry in his college and started getting the recognition as singer and mimic with the popular orchestra "International Artist Melody Makers". Sudesh was initially groomed in the basics and technicalities under Pt. SatyanaryanMisra and veteran composer Kalyanji. He had started his career as crooner and compere with "International Artist Melody Makers" in the year 1982. Since he had a passion for perfection, he would rehearse till the late hours in his bed to perfect his items and improve upon them. Mimicking a star or singing an entire song one after another in different singer's voice. His first breakcame in 1985, where in a concert his renditions, moved a member of the audience, Asha Bhosle. Amazed at the youngster's art, she approached him to give an audio tape of his performance to her. She played it to her

husband, the late R.D.Burman, who immediately liked it and offered Sudesh to sing a song for the film "Zalzala". After this there was a ripple effect, one after another, music directors like Laxmikant-Pyarelal, Kalyanji-Anandji, BappiLahari approached him to record a song. SudeshBhosle recorded a song with Kishore Kumar, who was his idol for the film "Waqt Ki Awaz", which incidentally was the last recorded song of Kishore Kumar. But success has continuously knocked at his door-steps in the form of the film "HUM", the "jummachumma de de's" number created a sensation in the Hindi Film Industry.

How SushrutMunje, a college dropout started 'Hammer & Mop'

SUSHMITA CHOUDHURY AGARWAL, ET Bureau Nov 25, 2013, 08.00AM IST



(In 2010, he boasted no work...)

He is an engineering college dropout with one failed entrepreneurial attempt behind him. In 2010, he boasted no work experience, no particular skills, and precious little by way of seed capital. Three years on, [SushrutMunje](#) is the founder and managing director of Hammer & Mop, a Rs 20 lakh professional home and office cleaning services company.

"By the second year of engineering at RAIT, Mumbai, I was completely bored with academics," reveals Munje. "Then after a two-month internship at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, I lost all inclination to return to college because I couldn't see myself working as an engineer," he adds. So he pulled out of college and started interning with a [Web entrepreneur](#). "It was then that I realised that I'm an awful employee, and my fascination with the way my boss worked settled things. I knew I had to try the start-up route," he adds.

The two things the 19-year-old knew best were writing and editing since he had handled his college magazine. "So I discussed the possibility of opening an online content platform with four of my friends and cofounded Simple! magazine. However, the setup folded up within four months because we lacked focus," says Munje. The next step was Hammer & Mop.

To begin with, the new venture was incepted as On-Time Repairs & Maintenance Services in October 2010. Started with [Ashish Pingle](#), a dentist friend, the company aimed at providing electricians, plumbers and carpenters on call. The duo was mentored by Mohit Bansal, who used to run an accelerator by the name of L-pad. "Over a six-month incubation period, he introduced us to the basics of business, including branding, target segments and pricing," says Munje, adding, "He also played an integral role in shifting our business focus from handymen to home cleaning." The switch to Hammer & Mop happened because the founders realised that home cleaning was an ever-pressing need and, hence, a less risky business. Munje drummed up a seed capital of Rs 50,000 from his own [savings](#) as well as money borrowed from family. "We initially worked from my home at Kalyan," he says.

Most of the money went into hiring eight people. It took them six months to kick-off beta operations, and one year to get off the ground. In the meantime, the business model evolved, moving from the narrow focus on homes to include commercial spaces and offering AMCs. In November 2011, Hammer & Mop was registered as a private limited company.

By September 2012, the business had scaled up enough to warrant shifting into a rented office at Bandra west and investing in a rented warehouse at Andheri. The company clocked nearly Rs 8 lakh in the first year of operations and broke even in 18-20 months. "Now, we are reporting a 200% growth and currently operate from a larger warehouse at Ghatkopar," says Munje.

Hammer & Mop's team strength is touching 30, the average age being 30 years. Pingle, however, recently left the company to focus on his day job. On an average, the team services two or three homes and offices per day, and charges Rs 5,000-30,000 (plus tax) for a one-time clean-up, depending on the dimensions. In the short term, the firm plans to expand in Mumbai, but aims at a pan-India presence a few years from now.

After a stint in an engineering college and a couple of internships, I've found my calling as a writer and an entrepreneur. Based in Mumbai (India), I'm building [Hammer & Mop](#), a premium cleaning services company focused on providing beneficial employment to the underprivileged and delivering remarkable service to our clients. I also curate [Frankaffe](#), a group blog where I write with my co-authors. Frankaffe believes in freedom, love and the vast scope of design. I'm a contributing author on [Under30CEO.com](#) and a published poet. It is my aim to address key workforce issues in India and create brilliant organizations that deliver value to all parties involved. I enjoy having conversations that help expand perspectives. I'm in love with efficiency and animals. Drop me a line at [sushrut\(at\)hammerandmop.com](mailto:sushrut(at)hammerandmop.com)

MeeranBorwankar

An IPS officer from the 1982 batch and the first lady commissioner of police.

Employment History

Nodal Officer on Behalf Maharashtra

Joint Commissioner Police

Additional Director General Police

Included Maharashtra Director General Police

Deputy Commissioner Mumbai

Joint Commissioner of Police Mumbai

Chief of the Crime Branch Mumbai

Police Chief Pune

Woman Police Commissioner Pune

Joint Commissioner Mumbai University

District Superintendent of Police Satara

Education

Lyallpur Khalsa College

Policy Analysis in Law Enforcement University of Minnesota

Devwrat A. Jategaonkar

'Executive chef' at Radisson resort & spa, Alibaug.



Coming from a small town Akola, Devwrat finished his hotel management diploma 1994, there were hardly any degree courses available in India from one of the reputed hotel management institute from Pune. While studying in college, he came across carvings and started to practise, with guidance and encouragement from teachers and peers, he had already started providing designs for wedding receptions.

Later on over the years he participated in number of competitions and events and his nac of carving innovative designs was an USP. He also started experimenting with butter sculpture and has gained recognition for it.

While working on his carving skills, He worked with the most famous British Ocean liner 'Queen Elizabeth 2' and Specialised his skills in Garde manger, continental, Italian, and Indian cuisines, Fine Dining, and Quantity cooking. Today he is an Award- winning culinary professional with 15 years of experience in the hospitality industry. He has a unique blend of creative flair and passion for food, strong business sense and engaging interpersonal skills. This has led him to do that extra mile along with his main area of work. He organises culinary workshops, events and demonstration on a variety of topics and feels sky is the limit.



Achievement



Working tirelessly for 2 months, Chef Devwrat created a 3 ft x 3 ft x 3 ft margarine (butter) sculpture. Carrying this huge yet delicate butter sculpture in one piece, all the way from Alibag to Germany was a challenge in itself. He, however, was richly awarded with a silver medal in the 'culinary artistry' category for his butter sculpture 'Oh Cinderella'. In this sculpture, a crucial moment from the fairy tale is frozen. Cinderella, a poor girl is turned into a princess by a kind angel. The magic was to last till midnight. The clock starts tolling midnight hour, Cinderella runs out of the ballroom, prince running behind, her shoe slips. Alas! No time to get back.

Key Skills



Knowledge and Experience in world cuisines, Specialised skills in Garde manger, continental, Italian, and Indian cuisines, Management skills, and Leadership qualities, Expertise in Fine Dining, and Quantity cooking.

- Represented 'The Orchid', at the "The Great Indian Culinary challenge 2006-2007" and Won a Gold Medal in Butter Sculptures category and silver medal in Fruits and vegetable carving category. Won Bronze medal (2005-2006) for the same competition. Also led the team of chefs who participated in different categories. Our team won five medals at this national level competition



- Have won super chef culinary competition in 1998 held at 'Cidade de Goa' also won prizes in seven different categories (HOT and cold)



- Have organised as well as conducted culinary workshops and food demonstrations in Mumbai, Pune, and Nagpur. Also given demonstrations on board **QE2**.



- Was invited to give carving demonstration at the annual festival of the Magazine, **UPPER CRUST [2005]**



- Done various cookery demonstrations episodes on television for 'Mejwani' E-TV channel. , saam Marathi channel, and ND TV good times.



- 'Conducts 'RangatdarMejwani food Shows' which is not just a cookery show, but a culinary journey with Chef Devwrat. Apart from interesting innovative recipes, the show also has interesting videos, experiences, tips, and slideshows about five star kitchens, basic garnishing, techniques, fruit & vegetable carvings etc.



My Story

Dr. Maya Tulpule in 2010

It all started at the age of 10 years. I distinctly remember the severe illness of measles and chickenpox which grounded me for 21 days.

I missed my 5th standard final exam and was promoted to 6th standard. About 1 month later one small spot appeared on back which was noticed by my cousin sister. Within few days new spots started appearing all over. My father was in US for his PhD studies, so my uncle took me to a very senior dermatologist. He advised to check stools and blood. I had thread worm infestation, so de-worming was done, ointment meladinine and exposure to sunlight was advised along with 5 injections of b-plex forte. Within six months most of the spots vanished. Few spots on ankle and shin remained. Stronger treatment with tablets meladinine, tablet mexaform etc. was given which did not suit me. My complexion became very dark as if burnt and I used to develop acidity and giddiness. So the treatment was discontinued and intradermal injections (most probably bawachi oil) were given. They were very painful. I could not

walk properly for a week after the injection. I used to bear the excruciating pain thinking that my family is doing so much for me so I must bear it for their sake and should not make them feel sad. Those five injections did not give any pigmentation and were stopped to my great relief.

My close relatives were very much concerned and used to suggest some medicines or doctors. After Allopathic treatment, one *Ayurvedic* treatment was started as per recommendations of my aunt. Some powder, *lep* (ointment / cream) with *gomutra* (Cows's urine) and *kadha* (syrup) were given. I was suggested to follow *nirjaliupawas* (fasting for whole day without even having water) on Thursdays and to visit temple and do

101 *pradakshinas*(circumambulation). My cousin used to do the fast and *pradakshina*with me just to make me comfortable. It didn't help much and to apply *gomutra* during school days was very difficult. The treatment got discontinued in a year. I was in 9th standard and had little time for time-consuming treatments. Instead, I started wearing long skirts and *saree* at the age of 13 years. 4 spots on my legs were stable and I was at peace for time being.

I went into depression around this period, got secluded, was irritable and cranky. My mother noticed it and advised me to read '*Ramayana*' during school holidays. I borrowed the nine volumes of *Ramayana*from my uncle's library and read it all. I realised that everybody has to suffer in some form or the other. Even a king like *Rama* was no exception to it. We must look at people who are less fortunate than us in many aspects of life and yet live happily. Today I feel it was the day of acceptance.

During my medical graduation our dermatologist teacher suggested dermabrasion and plastic surgery. Dermabrasion under Ethyl Chloride spray was not a pleasant experience as pain of thawing was much more than expected and the patch became black but surrounding skin exposed to spray became depigmented. One small patch was cut and skin sutured as plastic surgery, which was not done properly leading to wound gaping and I was with bandage on my ankle for one full month.

I continued with something or the other like steroid creams, antimalarials, oral lactobacilli and what not. Ointment *Ratino-a* caused some sort of reaction reactivating stable Vitiligo. I fared badly to oral steroids, developed bleeding gums and so many problems leading to poor health.

One expert homeopathic doctor relieved me of all the side effects. 95% of my Vitiligo came under control. He used to give one dose if new patch appeared or existing patches start spreading and things used to come under control. His death made me feel like an orphan.

Six years later I decided that I must concentrate on treatment of few remaining patches and get cured. I was suggested *PUVA therapy* (*Psoralen* + *UVA* treatment for [Eczema](#), [Psoriasis](#), [graft-versus-host disease](#), [Vitiligo](#) and [Mycosis fungoides](#).) In second sitting I think exposure time was prolonged as the nurse who administered it forgot to switch off UVA light. By evening severe burning sensation developed. In the morning my right ear was white, next day left eye and so on and so forth. In next 6 months I was 95% depigmented. (Note: Everybody is not so sensitive to UVA but enough precaution should be taken.) It took me almost 2 years to depigment totally. It was tough time for me and my close ones. I did not dare to look in the mirror for those 2 years. Thus began my second inning of life as a 'foreigner'. Living life with two colours and two identities is not so easy but I have learned to live happily with it.

-- Dr. Maya Tulpule

SachinKhedekar

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Sachin Khedekar



Sachin Khedekar at Meet & Greet of 'ChhodoKal Ki Baatein' starcast

Residence [Mumbai](#), [Maharashtra](#), [India](#)

Occupation	Film Actor
Years active	1993–present

SachinKhedekar (**Marathi:** सचिनखेडेकर) is an [Indian](#) actor and director from [Maharashtra](#), best known for his roles in the film *Astitva*, TV series *Imtihaan*,^[1] and as [Subhas Chandra Bose](#) in [ShyamBenegal](#)'s *NetajiSubhas Chandra Bose: The Forgotten Hero*.^[2] He has directed *Kalchakra*.^[3]

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Awards and achievements

SachinKhedekar won the Screen Award for Best Actor for the TV show *Sailaab*. He also won awards for his roles in the film *Kadachit*. He won the Best Actor in a Historical Role award for his portrayal of NetajiSubhas Chandra Bose in the film *Bose: The Forgotten Hero*.

He won the Zee Gaurav for Best Actor for the movies *Mrigajal* and *Me ShivajirajeBhosaleBoltoy* and a State Award for *GharaBaher*. He hosts the Marathi version of KaunBanegaCrorepati, called KonHoeel Marathi Crorepati, on ETV Marathi.

Filmography

2014	Anuradha Movie 2014 ^[4]	
2013	Krrish 3	Minister (special appearance)
2013	Mumbai Cutting	
2013	The Desire	
2013	Beed Cha Raaja	
2013	Kokanastha (Marathi)	Ramachandra Gokhale
2013	PremMhanjePremMhanjePremAsta (Marathi)	Dr.RohitPhadnis
2013	Ajicha Divas Majha (Marathi)	VishwasraoMohite
2012	ChhodoKal Ki Baatein	
2012	Maatraan (Tamil)	Ramachandran
2012	EkDeewanaTha (Hindi)	
2012	AaynaKaBaayna (Marathi)	Warden
2012	Kaksparsh (Marathi)	Haridada
2012	Agneepath	Home secretary
2012	EkkDeewanaTha	Anand Malhotra
2011	Aazaan	Home Minister
2011	KashalaUdyachiBaat (Marathi)	
2011	FaktLadhMhana (Marathi)	MadhusudanPatil
2011	Taryanche Bait	Father
2011	Singham	GautamBhosle
2011	Stand By	
2011	<i>Bubble Gum</i>	
2011	DeivaThirumagal	Rajendran
2010	Tees Maar Khan	Commissioner Khadak Singh
2010	City of Gold (2010 film)	Rane
2010	LalbaugParel (Marathi)	Rane

2014	Anuradha Movie 2014^[4]	
2010	ShikshanachyaAaichaGho(Marathi)	CM
2010	A Flat	
2009	Shadow	Shiv Shankar (Home Minister)
2009	Tum Mile	
2009	ZorLagake..Haiya!	Vivek
2009	Ek – The Power of One	Anna Mhatre
2009	YavarumNalam	Dr.Balu
2009	13B	Dr.Shinde
2009	Me ShivajirajeBhosaleBoltoy (Marathi)	DinkarBhosale
2009	Aasma - The Sky Is The Limit	
2009	Marathi Manoos	
2009	The White Land	
2009	He - The Only One (On Hold)	
2009	Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (Post-Production)	PanditJagannath Mishra
2009	KabhiKahin	Priest
2009	EkThi Rani AisiBhi	
2009	Students	
2009	The Desire	
2009	Rokkk (2010)(Hindi)	Ravi
2009	Rang Rasiya / Colors Of Passion	
2009	Dumkata (2009)	
2008	Summer 2007	Sankya Dada
2008	<i>Dashavatar</i>	Lord Vishnu
2008	Woodstock Villa	
2008	U Me Aur Hum	Sachin Khurana
2007	Showbiz	
2007	AapKaSurroor - The Moviee	
2007	Say Salaam India	Gossy
2007	Guru	Sujatha's father
2007	KudiyonKa Hai Zamana	
2006	Rockin' Meera	Fortune Teller
2006	Quest	
2005	Siskiyaan	Javed Sheikh
2005	Viruddh	Inspector Desai
2005	Bose: The Forgotten Hero	Subhas Chandra Bose
2005	KuchMeethaHoJaaye	Sunil Wadhwa
2005	Police (Malayalam)	Reji Allen
2004	Satya Bol	KB
2004	Rakht	Javed Sheikh

2014	Anuradha Movie 2014 ^[4]	
2004	Uuf Kya JaadooMohabbat Hai	Kumar Chaudhary
2003	TereNaam	Radhe's elder brother
2003	PranJaye Par Shaan Na Jaye	Parveen Seth (Chawl Owner)
2003	Freaky Chakra	The Caller
2002	Hum PyarTumhi Se KarBaithe	Vikas
2002	Hathyar	Munna
2002	Dil Hai Tumhaara	Shekhar
2002	MujhseDostiKaroge	Mr. Kapoor
2002	23rd March 1931: Shaheed	
2002	Pitaah	Shiva
2000	Astitva	ShreekantPandit
2000	Bichhoo	Kiran Bali's brother
2000	Chimaneepakhre (Marathi)	
2000	Jung	Doctor
1999	Baadshah	TyagrajBachchan
1999	Arjun Pandit	Siddharth (guest appearance)
1999	Daag- The Fire	Inspector Vinay
1997	Ziddi	Akash Pradhan
1993	AapleeMaanse (Marathi)	
1991	Vidhiliikhit (Marathi)	
1990	Jeeva Sakha (Marathi)	

Television

- [Samvidhaan \(TV Series\)](#)
- *Imtihaan* 1994
- [Sailaab](#) 1995
- [Thoda Hai Thode Ki Zaroorat Hai](#)
- *Teacher*
- *ChalNavachiVachalVasti*
- [KonHoeel Marathi Crorepati](#)

SonamWangchuk



SONAM WANGCHUK

[Learning/Education](#) [1]

Sectors:

[Citizen/Community Participation](#) [2], [Cultural Preservation](#) [3], [Education Reform](#) [4]

Target Population:

[Educational Institutions](#) [5], [Minorities](#) [6]

**Students Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh
India,
[Asia](#) [7]**

By introducing educational reforms in government-run schools, SonamWangchuk is encouraging communities to reinforce the cultural identity of minority ethnic groups that live along the northern border of India.

This profile below was prepared when SonamWangchuk was elected to the Ashoka Fellowship in 2002.

[INTRODUCTION](#) [8]

By introducing educational reforms in government-run schools, SonamWangchuk is encouraging communities to reinforce the cultural identity of minority ethnic groups that live along the northern border of India.

[THE NEW IDEA](#) [8]

In the pan-Himalayan region along India's northern border, national and state governments dictate educational policies with little consideration of the differences of language and culture among the students. The result is a state of cultural colonization, which delivers to minority groups an inferior and unfair education in an alien culture. Responding to what he sees as a critical need to involve local communities in educating their children according to their own language and way of life, Sonam has organized citizens across the region to monitor and participate in school activities. His approach to changing the education system is gradual and nonconfrontational. Rather than beginning with an assertion of cultural rights, an approach that can create a deep divide between local people and authorities, Sonam has mobilized citizens to monitor schools, train teachers, and develop an educational system appropriate to their own language and culture.

As a result of citizens' advocacy, the government has changed the official language of instruction in Ladakh schools from Hindi to English, the second language of the people in the region (Ladakhi is the first). Meanwhile, by publishing and distributing the first Ladakhi magazines and teaching materials, Sonam is playing a significant role in establishing a modern written Ladakhi language.

As a part of the Himalayan Mountain Forum, Sonam has identified other citizen organizations in the Himalayan region, especially along Indian-controlled border areas in Sikkim, Bhutan, and Nepal, that he believes would benefit from exposure to his work. Twenty schools in the politically sensitive region of Kargil along the Pakistan border have adopted his model.

[THE PROBLEM](#) [8]

Ladakh is a high-altitude desert sandwiched between the Karakoram and Himalayan mountain ranges in the far north of India. Culturally and religiously, the region shares much with Tibet. Politically, it is part of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir with which it shares an uneasy relationship and is governed by an autonomous Hill Council. Since Ladakh's annexation to Jammu and Kashmir in 1947, the official language of Ladakh, like the rest of the state, has been Urdu. Hindi, India's national language, and English are taught. Languages of instruction in primary schools are Hindi and Urdu, neither of which the children speak in their daily lives. Children begin to learn English only five years before their school exams in English. As a result, the students have difficulty expressing themselves on exams and the failure rate is high. Since India's independence, the graduation rate in Ladakh has varied from zero to 5 percent.

Until recently, the quality of teaching was poor and teachers often ridiculed Ladakhi students for being different. Elementary school curricula were built on mainstream Indian motifs and contexts the children did not understand. Material was taught in Hindi, a language the children do not speak. Teachers were neither trained nor supervised, and this led to corruption of the system. Many teachers ceased conducting their classes altogether and chose to spend their time at a second job. Those who did teach required their students to attend high-fee supplementary sessions.

The cultural discrimination experienced in Ladakh has resulted in high failure rates that in turn have led to unemployment. The ensuing economic dissatisfaction has generated political tension and feelings of resentment toward the government. Because the people of the region do not identify with Indian culture, they have been especially vulnerable to political ploys. For instance, it is alleged that groups in neighboring Pakistan have used Ladakhis in Kargil for insurgencies against India.

THE STRATEGY [8]

Sonam has adopted a three-tiered localization strategy to bring about educational reforms. In creating Village Education Committees, providing teacher training, and introducing language and cultural reforms, Sonam hopes to build an educational model to improve Ladakh schools.

Beginning with one school in the village of Saspol, Sonam started by engaging the villagers themselves in the school system. He realized early in his work that change at the policy level lay in people's support and participation.

Mitigating the dangerous political situation he was working in, the people also acted as a protective shield against the wrath of the government.

Building on that foundation, Sonam then launched the Village Education Committees. The villages that want teacher training are asked to pay for it. Each villager contributes a little toward the total amount. These contributions ensures the villagers' enthusiasm in the process of change and secures their future roles as monitors of the schools. Sonam works with the committees and with new teachers to introduce curricula with local motifs and contexts, including new methods in teaching science and math.

Sonam takes care to avoid and neutralize conflict by maintaining a balance between the teachers and the people. Villagers treat teachers with great respect. Villagers are encouraged to organize welcome and farewell parties for them, and the teachers are aware that the villagers both contribute to their training and monitor the schools. According to Sonam's strategy, the training of teachers is followed by focus on the inherent flaw in the education system, namely, the foreignness and poor quality of the curriculum. Through Sonam and his team's careful introduction of relevant topics and advocacy efforts, the government introduced English at the primary level in 1992, a move especially important because there is still no universally accepted version of written Ladakhi.

In 1996 on popular demand, the Hill Council adopted Sonam's participation model "Operation New Hope" as its official policy for the government schools of Ladakh. To strengthen the voice of the people, Sonam merged the Village Education Councils into Block Education Committees and these further into District Education Committees so that the new strengthened citizens' movement could continue to monitor schools.

A milestone in Sonam's work came with the building of a central government residential school at Durbuk village. Everyone in the community put in at least one day's labor to build the school. Because the buildings were insulated for winter use, they were able to implement a path-breaking change in the educational cycles. While children in Durbuk used to spend their school break in idleness during cold winters, they now are able to spend their break outdoors during the summer, often helping their parents at work farming, and study through the winter.

Sonam sees a need for good teachers with a strong sense of culture and tradition to bolster the education system in Ladakh. In the residential hostel in Phey, where senior students attending government schools live for a small fee, care is taken to ensure their full development. Sonam provides financial support for those who wish to become teachers. Their education in the hostel goes beyond the school curriculum. They participate in after-dinner debates and discussions and are introduced to Ladakhi culture and heritage, which has been diminishing through foreign influences. They also learn life-skills. Sonam organizes supplementary summer camps for other senior government school students. The resident students manage the hostel, decide on the menu, help with breakfast, and tend to the gardens.

An engineer by qualification, Sonam has incorporated the use of solar energy at the hostel in Phey and has also has set up a learning center for students to learn about solar energy. He has installed a solar cooker and solar pump to feed and wash the 200 students who live at the hostel. Solar power lights the hostel at night.

Simultaneously and persistently, Sonam has been working to update and simplify the Ladakhi script. He established the first Ladakhi newsletter and reaches out to Ladakhi-speaking people in India and Pakistan. Through this important tool, he has been building consensus among the Ladakhi diaspora on a universally accepted language.

Still, the problems in this geographic area are complex. The Muslim Ladakhis within India feel Urdu reinforces their religious identity, and so they are unwilling to learn Ladakhi. Conversely, the Muslim Ladakhis in Pakistan, an Islamic country, are keen to establish a stronger Ladakhi identity and want to work toward establishing a script. Sonam has been trying to reconcile the differences by, for example, getting the Koran translated in Ladakhi by a Muslim scholar-priest, and publishing it in his newsletter. Through his efforts, the Buddhist scholars who, years earlier, had been fiercely opposed to a change in the archaic script, are now open to the idea of a simpler language.

The Melong Publication house that Sonam established has published Ladakhi language books, as well as books on Ladakhi food and recipes. Recently, Sonam published the first illustrated series of traditional Ladakhi children's stories.

THE PERSON [8]

Sonam spent the first seven years of his childhood with his mother in a remote Ladakhi village, climbing trees, helping her with housework, and learning to read and write Ladakhi. He feels that the opportunity to learn Ladakhi was one of the best things she provided, particularly since the schools he attended later did not teach the language. His father, SonamWangyal, a politician who later became a minister in the state government, was stationed in Srinagar. There, SonamWangchuk looked different from the other students and was addressed in a language he did not understand. Many adults regarded his lack of responsiveness as stupidity. Unable to bear the treatment, he escaped to a Delhi school he had heard of, pleaded his case to the principal, and got himself admitted. It was a free, residential, government-run school for children from the border areas of India. The encouragement of the teachers in the school brought him out of his shell; he studied, participated in extracurricular activities, and blossomed into a confident young boy.

Sonam later opted to go to Ladakh where he opened a tuition center to help students take their first board exam (Class 10). The response was overwhelming. He tried new teaching methods in his class and encouraged peer learning. The experience led Sonam to realize that the core difficulty was with the language. Students who knew the answers well had difficulties expressing themselves in a language they began to learn so late in their school life. He returned the next year and decided to continue helping the students with free supplementary classes. But surprisingly, the response to free classes was not at all encouraging. He decided he would return to Ladakh to help the students.

In 1988, a year after graduating as an engineer, Sonam, with his brother and five peers, formed the Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL). Their first fundraising effort, a Ladakhi cultural show, proved to be a huge success. Until 1990 Sonam coached school students and offered vocational training courses to dropouts. Sonam had to get to the root of the problem, and the solution to that lay in localizing the system of elementary education. He did not think of building an alternate system because it would have resulted in a waste of resources. Besides, most of the children in Ladakh attended government-run schools.

In 1991 Sonam started his first intervention in the government school of Saspol with permission from the chief education officer of the region. The success of the model created popular demand for his training, and 33 villages came forward to adopt the model before the newly formed Hill Council adopted it as official policy.

In 1995, when Ladakh was placed under governor's rule for political disturbance, Sonam and his team went to plead their case with the special advisor to the governor. Impressed by their efforts, the advisor ordered the state government of Jammu and Kashmir to support the Melong Publications, and thus Sonam went on to publish his first set of books in Ladakhi.

Sonam lives on the Phey campus of SECMOL with his American wife Rebecca who originally went to Leh to work as a volunteer.