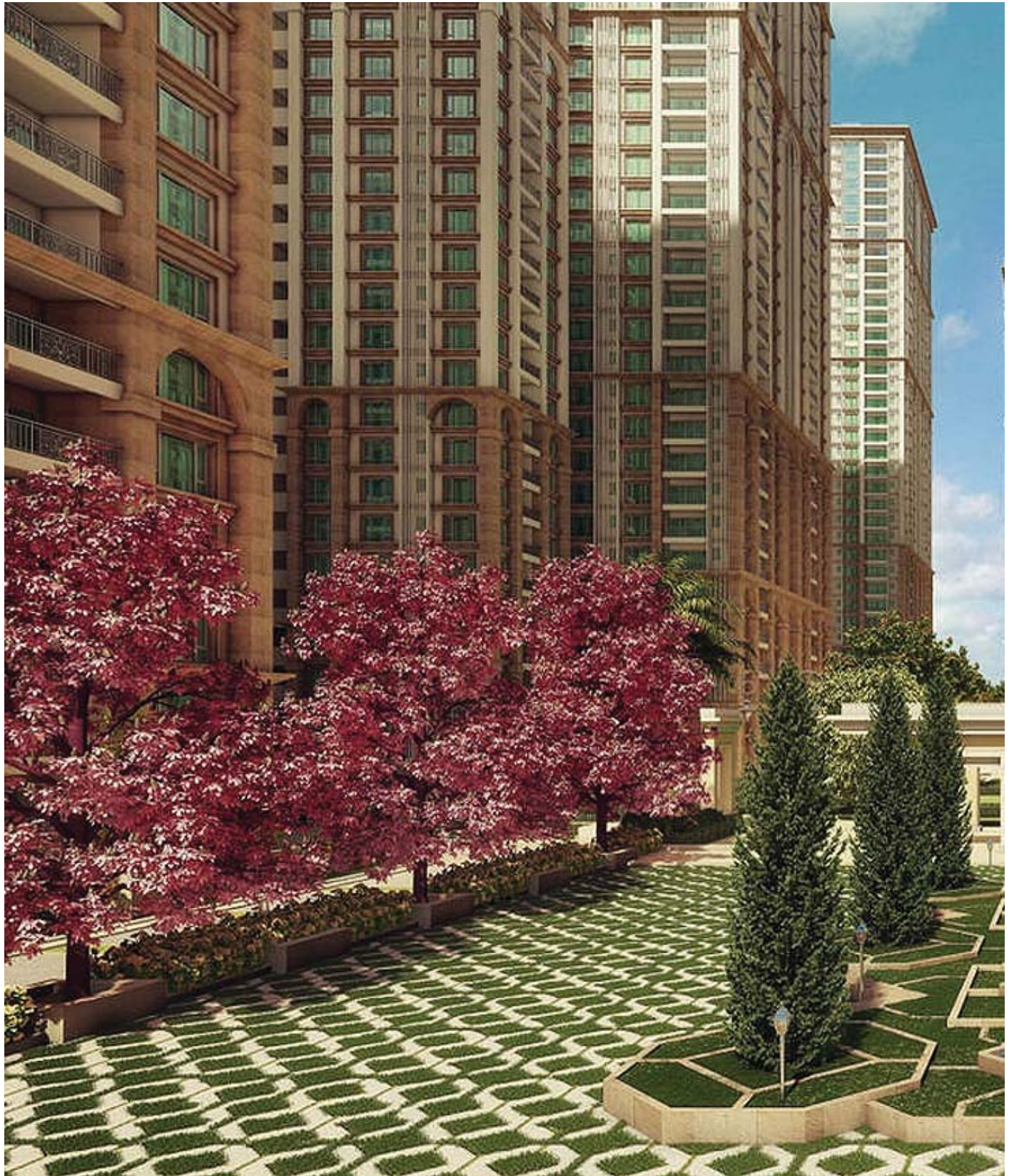


Cover Story





MY HOME GROUP

Building for Life

The Hyderabad-based company, whose name is synonymous with the roof over one's head, has over a period of 3 decades turned into a widely acknowledged leader of the construction industry. Its enviable status can be traced to the commitment, integrity and dynamism of first-generation entrepreneur Dr. Rameswar Rao.

The company has completed construction of 12 million sq feet so far, and aims to double its most recent turnover of Rs3400 crore by 2020. It has also gone boldly into backward integration with a JV cement outfit that currently turns out 8.4 million tpa.



Dr. Rameswar Rao Jupally, Chairman

Seated in a spacious, well-appointed office, but rather contrarily dressed in simple white shirt-and-black trousers, his smile puts you in mind of a young lad – happy, enthusiastic, eager, frank and full of energy. The adjectives may seem excessive, but the person they describe is truly one of a kind.

Meet Dr. Rameswar Rao Jupally, one of the leading industrialists from Telugu speaking state and Chairman of the Hyderabad-based My Home Constructions, a part of the Rs. 3400-crore diversified business conglomerate, My Home Group. Without exaggeration, Dr. Rao can be called an exemplary role model for millions of the country's youths. Through sheer grit and hard work, coupled with ambition and dedication, he surmounted the many hurdles of his childhood growing up in the remote village of Kudkilla in MehboobNagar, in the vicinity of the Nallapura forests in Andhra Pradesh.

Born in 1955 into a farming family that owned 30 acres of land, Rameswar used to walk miles to his first

school. After the 7th standard, he had to shift to another school even further away to study up to the 10th standard, and later relocated to Hyderabad, where he graduated in homoeopathy. He lost his father early, and his elder brother Srinivas took on parental responsibilities, toiling hard in the fields to fund Rameswar's education.

Reminisces Dr. Rao, "My elder brother used to send me money for fees and other miscellaneous expenses and I, alongwith four other students of the medical college, rented a small house at the then royal rent of Rs. 15." In the same vein, he adds, "I used my rustic sense to manage my finances and live within the budget, buying a Hercules cycle to save on travel expenses, and a stove and utensils to cook my own meals. This not only trained me in managing money but also in prioritising my tasks and aspirations, and has stood me in good stead all through my life."

TURNING POINT

Harking back to what he calls the "defining moment in my life", Dr. Rao says, "In 1978, while in medical college, I led a strike as student leader against the difficulties faced by the students due to the callousness and ineptitude of the college management. I was not only successful in getting all our demands fulfilled but it also catapulted me to a level where I got to mingle with administrators, government officials and political leaders. These contacts helped me when I set up practice in the vicinity of DilsukhNagar, home to many poor and uneducated people — I could help in mitigating their social and financial woes, and in the process I became popular."

He continues, "While helping these people, I realised my other abilities and soon started juggling different responsibilities alongwith my practice. The turning point came when a friend, C. Satyanarayanan, who later became my partner, advised me to invest Rs. 50,000 in a plot, which I sold after 3 years for Rs. 1.50 lakh, a princely sum then, and for me the first time I had seen such a huge amount. I realised that good luck and good timing are very helpful in building one's fortunes. It also made me aware of the potential of the real estate business and I made up my mind to venture into it."

The early years saw him getting up at 5.30 in the morning and working way past midnight, educating people about the benefits of owning their own homes, meeting government officials, and leveraging the benefits of housing schemes for the poor, like grants, subsidies and concessions, so as to build houses for them. In 1983 Dr. Rao gave up his medical practice and went the whole hog in construction and real estate, promoting My Home Constructions Pvt. Ltd.

Quality construction

Dr. Rao's philosophy is that a house is not just four walls but a place to live life, with its happiness and sorrow, aspirations and disappointments. Hence, it should be a quality home. As he puts it candidly, "If we make quality homes, without compromising on any aspect, there will be a good demand for them."

The first-generation entrepreneur's first project, My Home JM Apartments, met with reasonable success. But after people started living there, the word-of-mouth spread from residents to visitors about the quality and comforts of the flats. This gave Dr. Rao not only much satisfaction but enthused him to press ahead in his new field.

From co-operative housing societies and gated colonies to malls and commercial spaces, My Home Constructions has moved at a rapid pace. "Till date we have completed construction of 12 million square feet while 16 million square feet is due to be completed within the next 3 years", he says, adding with justifiable pride, "The seed sown in the eighties has blossomed into a huge tree and My Home Constructions has emerged as one of the most recognized and preferred construction companies. Our projects are not only known for their exceptional quality, they are also praised for their aesthetic appeal. What is more, our company is known for timely completion of its projects."

Dr. Rao has no regrets about his decision to drop medicine for construction. He measures his success in somewhat different terms than a typical builder. "No doubt, My Home Constructions has built over 15 residential and commercial complexes with a total built-up area of over 12 million sq. feet. But more than all the square footage, it is the wide smiles of our satisfied customers that is a true testimony to the fact that My Home Constructions has become an icon in the real estate market of Hyderabad," he says.

Since its inception, My Home Constructions has created several landmarks which are testimonials to its status as Hyderabad's most trusted construction company. Starting with My Home Jewel, a first-of-its-kind mega apartment complex spread over 22.5 acres, the company has come out with construction 'jewels' one after another. My Home 'Abhra', launched in 2012, became the city's most sought after premium luxury address. Then came My Home 'Vihanga', perched atop a hillock in the Gachibowli area, the sleek towers of My Home 'Avatar' which flaunt a sophisticated, minimalist façade that blend with its lavish interiors, and the company's signature project, My Home 'Bhooja', where the level of opulence across 36 floors is a feast for the eyes and the senses. All these projects have served to redefine the concept of luxury and aesthetics, and have strengthened the perception of the company as a real estate icon.

Having earned its spurs over a period of 3 decades, My Home Constructions is planning to foray into Bengaluru



and Pune. "We are keen to venture into these two cities," Dr. Rao says, but qualifies it with, "However, our top priority for the next 3 years or so will continue to be Hyderabad. And this is not only because we have an edge in Hyderabad as prominent local player, but also because the government is striving for the speedy development of Telangana, which can lead to a spurt in commercial and IT activity in Hyderabad in the coming months. In fact, IT companies like Google and Capgemini have already stepped up their operations in the city. As a result, demand for real estate will remain strong in Hyderabad for the time being."

CEMENTING' RETURNS

Dr. Rao is a man of foresight. Realising that cement accounts for a sizeable percentage of the cost of construction and that quality construction calls for high-quality cement, he decided to take up the manufacturing of cement by way of backward integration. He established My Home Industries, which set up a small plant at Mellacheruvu in Nalgonda district, with a capacity of 0.9 million tonnes per annum (tpa). Under his dynamic guidance, the company grew at a fast pace and Dr. Rao invited CRH Plc. of Ireland, a global leader in building materials which operates in 33 countries, to join My Home Industries as an equal partner, thus converting My Home Industries Ltd. (MHIL) into a joint venture.

Sharing the CRH vision of excellence, MHIL has earned a reputation for quality, reliability and energy-efficiency, and



Vinod Rao J, Director - MHCPL



Ranjith Rao J, MD - MHIPL

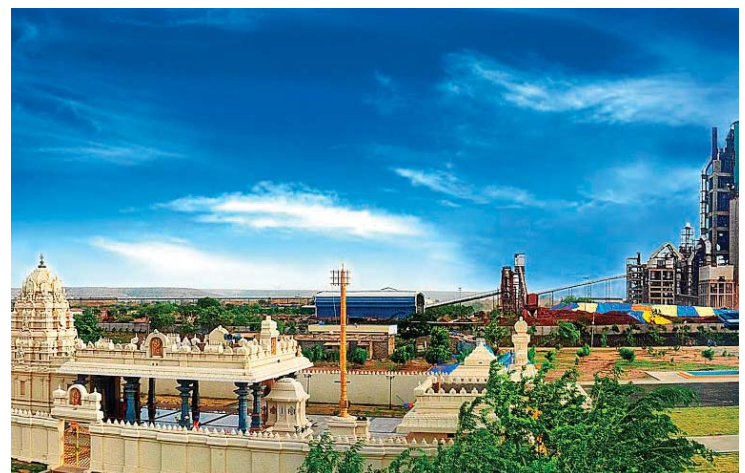
has bagged several prestigious national awards including India's most promising brand for the year 2015. The company has emerged as one of the fastest-growing cement units in the country, with its production capacity shooting up from just 0.9 million tpa in 1998 to 8.4 million tpa by now. Notes Dr. Rao, "We are planning to increase the company's annual capacity further to 12 million tpa in the near future."

In a rather short span of 19 years, MHIL has made rapid strides, transforming itself from a mini cement (one plant with a capacity of just 0.9 million tonnes per annum) to a major cement player (three plants with a total capacity of 8.4 million tonnes) and achieving phenomenal success in marketing. Says Dr. Rao with a glint in his eyes "we would like to raise the capacity further to 12 million tonnes within the next few years". Needless to say after crossing the 10-million mark, MHIL will be catapulted among the top 10 cement manufacturers in the country.

Today, the company manufactures 43 grade and 53 grade Ordinary Portland Cement (OPC), Portland Pozzoland Cement (PPC) and Portland Slag Cement (PSC) and markets them under the brand Maha. Maha Cement has various brands under its name like Maha Cement (OPC 43 grade), Maha Gold (OPC 53 grade), Maha Shakthi (PPC as well as PSC). Interestingly, all of these brands surpass the standards set by Bureau of Indian Standards. It is being marketed both in national and international markets. The company has also entered into the business of ready mix concrete (RMC)

and has set up two RMC plants – one at Patancheru in Medak district and another at Nacharam in Hyderabad. Informs Dr. Rao "the company has built up a very wide marketing network of 20 regional offices and more than 4000 dealers". Today, Maha Cement posts annual turnover of Rs. 2600 crore.

As far-sighted Dr. Rao realized that as power being an essential input for cement production, it will be an ideal move to go for captive power generation, the My Home group ventured into the power sector by acquiring a Naptha-based CGCT plant in 2000 which was later converted into a biomass-based non-conventional plant and a separate com-





Ramu Rao J, WTD - MHIPL



Shyam Rao J, Executive Director - MHCPL

pany styled as My Home Power Ltd was floated. Says Dr. Rao proudly “this company is amongst the few in the country to achieve 100 per cent carbon credit approved by the UNFCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change).

Having successfully set up 3 plants, generating electricity from thermal waste heat recovery and solar energy, the group gained remarkable expertise and floated a new company My Home Power Consultancy Ltd. in 2005 which soon met with success. Within a decade, it is in a position to boast of a strong portfolio of clients which includes Ramky Pharma City, Aurobindo Pharma, Visaka Industries, Orissa Sponge

Iron and Amreli Power Projects, among others. What is more, the company has gone abroad also by winning a few overseas projects including large-scale consultancy assignments in Syria, Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh in partnership with Finnacle Capital Advisors.

Remembering his childhood days in a village where he had to walk miles to go to school, Dr. Rao was keen to enter the field of education. Strongly believing that “there is a tre-



Cover Story

mendous potential that future generation holds, they must get quality education as it is this education which is the way to empower one's decision-making, moral standards and principles. And such good education should be within the reach of all children's" he set up My Home Education Society which started the Little Scholar School in Hyderabad in 1991 followed with a branch at Mallacheruvu. This English medium, co-education school caters to students from nursery to class X. "It is attached to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) New Delhi. Smiles a highly satisfied Dr. Rao "In our schools, personal attention is the hallmark of the teaching system which has so far brought many laurels and I am sure that many more will follow".

Lording over the Rs. 3400 – crore business empire and emerging as one of the top most first generation entrepreneur in the state, Dr. Rao has become a formidable player in the spaces of real estate, cement & power sector.

Over the last 3 decades, a debt-free My Home Group has carved a niche for itself, posting a turnover of Rs. 3400 crore in fiscal 2015-16 (with Rs. 2600 crore from cement segment and Rs. 650 crore from the construction vertical.) and has targeted the milestone to double the turnover by 2020.

Unrivalled among its peers, Dr. Rao attributes the company's success to a one-line *mantra* – "Always keep the housewives happy and they will bless you." Timely delivery, superior construction quality, effective sewage treatment, green spaces and landscaping, a happy community and transparent dealings are the cornerstones of the goodwill and brand recognition earned by the My Home Group.

HEART OF GOLD

While Dr. Rao enjoys a lot talking business and high rewards on account of an excellent quality construction in his prestigious real estate projects, what gives him immense satisfaction and happiness in his daily two-hour 'Puja' re-



gime and frequent trips to the 'ashram' of his spiritual guide and guru Swamy Shrimanarayana in Shamshabad and the social activities that he undertakes under the Jeeyar Education trust banner. He is a very rich man but the wealth has not made him arrogant and has not sapped his human values.

"Serve all beings as if serving God. I must feel God in every being because we all are children of God," avers Dr. Rao. In keeping with this belief, he has donated vast land and money to charitable causes. A college for visually impaired students – Netralaya — set up by Jeeyar Integrated Veda Academy that imparts intermediate education, where every student is provided a Braille-compatible laptop, is a world record in itself. A 100-bed homoeopathy hospital where over 40 doctors attend to poor patients, a girls' hostel where training in nursing is imparted to enable them to be employed in the hospital, and residential schools in the tribal district in the Adilabad forests are some of the philanthropic ventures undertaken by Dr. Rao.

Modest, low-profile and media-shy, Dr. Rao prefers not to boast of these social endeavours which are overseen by his guru Swamy Srimanarayana. "Worship your own, respect all, serve society and this will lead to happiness" is all that Dr. Rao proffers, even as he scrutinises details of the work that is going on at the Global Spiritual Centre for the Statue of Equality – a proposed 216-foot-tall statue that is estimated to cost Rs. 200 crore.

With four sons and daughter-in-laws along with younger brother Jayapati Rao assisting in managing the affairs of the conglomerate, Dr. Rao is now shifting gears so as to devote most of his time to social and religious endeavours. "I have been blessed by God with such bounty of wealth, love from my near and dear ones, the affection of my clients and peers, and the goodwill of all those I have interacted with, that I feel fulfilled, satisfied and happy," reveals Dr. Rao with the same childlike smile that is like a window to a soul filled with integrity and devotion. ■

