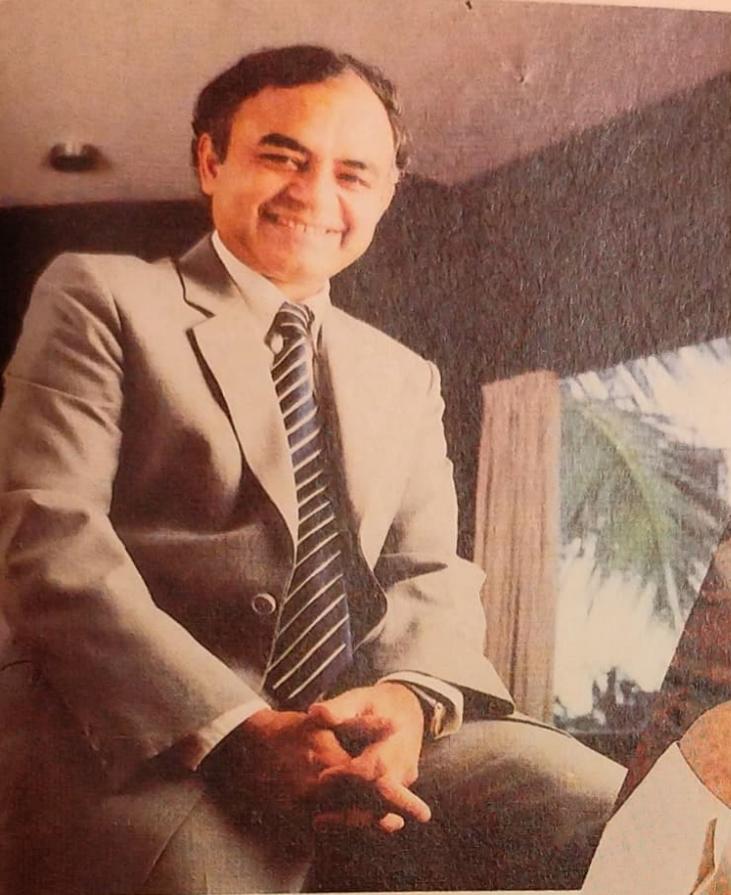
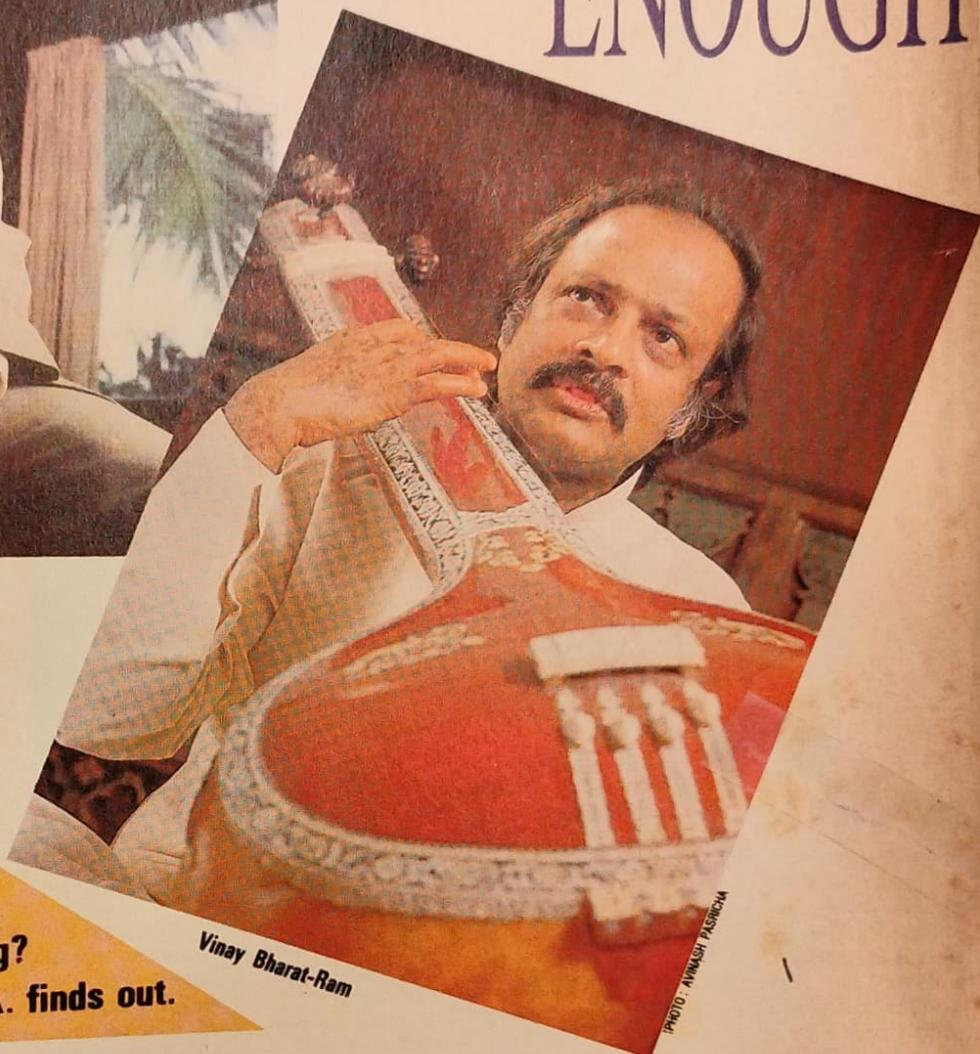


# ONE IS NOT ENOUGH



Gurcharan Das



Vinay Bharat-Ram

**What prompts an eminent public figure to pursue a secondary interest with as much fervour as his primary profession? Fame, money, or sheer zest for living? VINITA DAWRA NANGIA finds out.**

**A** businessman, a diplomat or a cop. Labels we live up to. Carefully nurtured images we present to the world and sedately adhere to. For many of us life stops here; we have arrived. Some, however, pack into the lifetime what others would span to do in maybe a dozen. The profession is not enough and they are irresistibly drawn to other pursuits close to their heart, to which they then accord equal time and fervour. Fame or money is obviously no consideration since their primary professions accord this to them in ample measure. What then edges them on to

exert themselves beyond their professional calling? How does their day stretch beyond the normal 24 hours? Take Vinay Bharat-Ram. We all know him as the chairman and managing director of the DCM group. But how many of us know that he shares the public platform as a vocalist with the likes of Bhimsen Joshi and Kishori Amonkar? Or that he is an honorary professor of economics at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, with a background of about 20 years of research in the subject? Dr Raja Ramanna, the nation's most eminent physicist, ex-defence minister and presently member of Parliament, is also an accomplished pianist.

Another MP whose term in Rajya Sabha has just ended, Vishwabandhu Gupta, owner-editor of the weekly *Sun* and the *Daily Tej*, classifies his passions in life as "flying, science technology, journalism and last of all, politics." He is India's only balloon pilot and founded the Ballooning Club of India. The textile tycoon, Vijaypat Singhania, managing director of Raymond Woollen Mills, is a keen flyer. "Flying is a passion with me; maybe even an addiction." The chairman of Procter and Gamble, Gurcharan Das, the youngest to hold this position in any Indian multinational, takes pride in the fact that there are many people who know him only as a writer and

not as a corporate boss. His novel, *A Fine Family*, published by Penguin India this year, has already sold more than 10,000 copies. For all these eminent public figures, the secondary pursuits are not mere hobbies to be taken up in their spare time, but all-consuming passions in which they have each achieved a degree of proficiency and attained professional status. Indisputably at the top in their primary profession, they have claimed top positions in their secondary pursuits also. All those spoken to opined that their secondary pursuits gave added meaning to their lives and made them the complete persons they were. However, surprisingly, asked if they

would rather follow just their creative pursuits and forget about their primary business, all of them were emphatic in their refusal, though for different reasons.

Bharat-Ram grew up in an atmosphere where he was exposed to all the great artistes of the era and started singing early. His mother, herself a sitar player, encouraged him. Economics and business were inevitable, given his background. He traces a fine connection between his three passions, "Music complements life and helps take away the mind from the harsh world of business reality. It relaxes me, absorbs all the tension and helps me return to business fresher. On the other hand, teaching helps as it keeps me up-to-date with all developments and the practical exercise always enriches the theoretical side of my business."

He has also written a book on economic theory which has been much appreciated. Bharat-Ram is happy with things as they are, with his business being accorded primary importance. "I am in a very competitive world. Business is my mainline and as a musician, I have never been part of the commercial world. Music does, however, along with my other pursuits, help make me a whole person in keeping with the Vedantic and Greek concepts of a whole man."

Agreeing with him wholeheartedly on the peaceful effect of music is Phillipe

Falisse, the cultural attache with the embassy of Belgium in Delhi, who is also an acclaimed singer of *dhrupad*, an exquisite form of Hindustani devotional classical music. Falisse took his senior diploma in music from Rabindra Bharati in Calcutta and took further training from the Dagar brothers. He looks on music as an introduction to India in one of its colours and regrets that he could not make it his sole involvement. "Perhaps I did not have the courage to suffer for it as music alone could not have sustained my family and me." However, as

three plays and one novel. One of the plays, *Larins Saheb* is now showing in theatres all around the country. Das feels both his pursuits complement each other though in terms of time they do sometimes come into conflict also. "When things become negative at work, I indulge in writing and this break enables me to convert the negative into positive." Both pursuits give him enormous satisfaction though he feels time management alone can ensure success in both. Getting up at 5.45 every morning, Das makes sure to jot down a few

### Secondary pursuits give added meaning to their lives and make them complete persons. Yet none of them is willing to give up his primary profession.

Falisse puts it, "Time has to be devoted to everything so as to totally express your personality. So there is a time for work and a time for music. The latter is a refuge from reality and helps ebb away tensions by taking me to a higher plane from which I can ease my way back into reality. With music, you use yourself as an instrument to express true happiness and peace."

However, to music alone does not belong the distinction of providing an escape route from reality. Gurcharan Das discovered his refuge in writing. Till now he has authored

thoughts before leaving for work at 8.45 am. He manages to write during the course of his business travelling.

Vishwabandhu Gupta's style of soaring away from reality takes a somewhat more literal form. Each morning sees him reaching for the skies in a hot air balloon. Speed has always been a passion with Gupta and motorbikes his first love. From these he graduated to flying and then on to ballooning. Today his day begins early and Gupta is up in his balloon each morning from 5.30 a.m. to 8 a.m. While still an MP, he

managed to fit in Parliament, his editorial responsibilities and his work at the Ballooning Club into the rest of the day. Quite a stupendous task by any standards!

Time management, as Das puts it, seems to be the crux of the matter with sheer will power and supreme confidence being the secret behind the all-round success of these amazing men. How do they manage it? And what is the incentive, considering that with the exception of Das, who gets a royalty, they earn nothing from it?

Bharat-Ram explains, "We are brainwashed into labelling ourselves as this or that and we lose sight of the potential of the human mind. The so-called diverse things in life have a certain harmony which is missed out. Thus there is a harmonious thread running through all I do." Gupta manages as he believes that there is always time for "a little more" in life.

While marvelling at their capacity for straddling success in diverse fields and their capability for beating Time hollow at its own game, one feebly wonders where do the families of these men fit in? Elementary. They don't. In all cases they initially complain and protest but ultimately learn to take the busy schedule of their famous kin in their stride. As Bharat-Ram says, "Normally the immediate family is too overexposed to a man's talent to be able to appreciate it but it doesn't really matter; the yardstick of success or satisfaction lies within!"