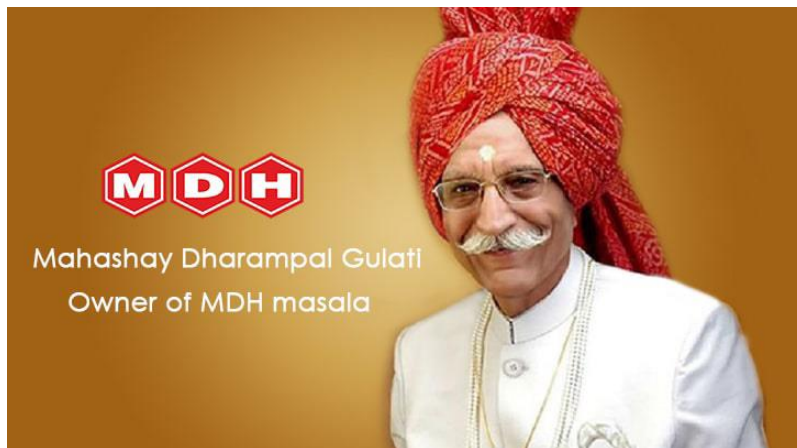


FROM RAGS TO RICHES: INSPIRING STORIES



We always tend to blame our luck when we cannot achieve anything. Here are a few inspiring stories of people who were not born with a silver spoon but will surely die with a silver spoon!.

1. MAHASHAY DHARAMPAL GULATI



From a simple Tonga driver to raising a brand. What started as a small spice shop in 1919 in the city of Sialkot in Pakistan, worth millions today. A business started by his father is now an empire with not just the spice factory, but hospitals and schools as well. This is the rags to riches story of Mahashay Dharampal Gulati—a school dropout, a Tonga driver, and the creator of MDH. He was born and raised in Sialkot, in Pakistan. He left school in 5th standard in 1933 and tried his luck in various other businesses but didn't work out. In 1947, when Gulati's family moved to India during Partition, they reached a refugee camp in Amritsar before moving to Delhi in a flat with no electricity, water or toilet facilities. On moving to Delhi, his father handed him Rs. 1500; Rs. 630 of which was used to buy a Tonga. Tonga didn't earn him much so he sold his vehicle to buy a small space for the business of spices. In 1953, he rented a shop at Chandni Chowk and in 1959 he bought a plot of land in Kirti Nagar and set up a spice factory. His personal philosophy was "Give to the world the best you can and the rest will come back to you automatically." He might be a 5th-grade dropout, but his salary was worth crores. With an 80% stake in the company, he didn't retire even in his 90s and continued to take business decisions. MDH is an empire today. It has been a journey from a spice shop to a 250-bed hospital, a mobile hospital for slum dwellers and more than 20 schools. With a range of 62 products in over 150 different packages, MDH stands as a motivation and Mahashay Dharampal Gulati as the face behind the motivation. Unfortunately, Mahashay Dharampal Gulati passed away, leaving behind a legacy and decades of what success looks like.

2. JAY CHAUDHRY



Jay Chaudhry (born 1958/1959) is an Indian-American billionaire businessman and the CEO and founder of Zscaler, a cybersecurity company. Prior to this, he founded AirDefense (acquired by Motorola), CipherTrust (acquired by Secure Computing), CoreHarbor (acquired by AT&T) and SecureIT (acquired by Verisign).

- He grew up in Himachal Pradesh, India. His parents were small-scale farmers and his family, during Jay's childhood had no access to electricity and the village too had no running water. He used to attend school in the neighbouring village and had to walk 4 kms every day for the same.

• Fast forward a few years, Jay graduated from IIT BHU. After his Bachelor's Degree, he applied and got admission to a few places for an MBA. But because the University of Cincinnati offered him a scholarship, that was where he could go to. Further, Tata too offered a small scholarship. That got him a plane ticket. He worked for different companies after his MBA for over a dozen years. But in 1996, along with his wife Jyoti, he quit his job and started the cybersecurity firm secureIT. Jyoti handled the finance and the payroll, along with others, and Jay focused on sales and marketing. They tried raising funds for 3 months but nothing worked out. So, they used their life savings. That was his first startup but not the last. Then he founded CipherTrust, and led AirDefense before founding Zscaler in 2008. Today Jay and his family own 45% of the NASDAQ listed Zscaler. As of August, 2020 the company has a market capitalization of over US\$16 billion.

2. SUNDAR PICHAI



The mode of transportation for the family was either buses or the family's blue Lambretta scooter. Born without a silver spoon, he and his brother used to sleep in the living room of their two bedroom apartment. There was simplicity and modesty in his home. But he had a desire to learn and a knack for numbers. There was no television or car and it was when Sunder was 12 did the family get a rotary phone.

His intelligence led him to Indian Institution of Technology, Kharagpur, and then Stanford and Wharton. It was the knowledge, his sharp brain, and his knack to learn new things that lead him to become the CEO of Goggle in 2015 and further the CEO of Alphabet Inc. in 2019.

In an interview Sundar Pichai said , " My father spent the equivalent of a year's salary on my plane ticket to the US so I could attend Stanford. It was my first time ever on a plane...America was expensive. A phone call back home was more than \$2 a minute, and a backpack cost the same as my dad's monthly salary in India."

3. Johnny Lever



Johnny Lever, born in Andhra Pradesh and was brought up in Mumbai's King's Circle area (Dharavi). His mother tongue is Telugu. Johnny studied in Andhra Telugu School till the seventh grade but couldn't study further because of financial problems in his family, after which he decided to leave school and started working different kinds of odd jobs, such as selling pens on the streets of Bombay, by imitating Bollywood stars and dancing to the songs of Bollywood stars. At one of the functions at his factory he was asked to perform and show his talent. His popularity among co-workers and

officers of the factory; by his performance earned him the nickname "Johnny Lever". He started to perform in musical shows (orchestras) and after earning fame, joined the group of Kalyanji-Anandji, a legendary music direction duo. He did a lot of shows and world tours with them, one of his first big tours being with Amitabh Bachchan in 1982. At one of his shows, actor Sunil Dutt noticed his talent and potential and offered him his first movie Dard Ka Rishta. In the 1980s, he released his mimicry/comedy album, Hansee Ke Hungame, which became a hit in India and the world over, increasing his fame to another level. During this time period, he also did few commercials for Kachua chhap incense, directed by Shekhar Kapoor. In 1986, he performed in a charity show called "Hope 86", in front of the whole Hindi film industry as a filler and was loved by audience. His talent was recognized, which resulted in producer Gul Anand offering him a film called Jalwa with Naseeruddin Shah. He is considered an influential Indian comedian who has been cited as inspiration by many other comics. He has received 13 Filmfare Awards nominations in Best Comedian category, and has won the award twice.

5. PANKAJ TRIPATHI



Born in Bihar, Pankaj used to act in some of the plays in his village where he played the role of a girl. Until he reached 11th standard, he used to help his father on the farm. His father wanted him to become a doctor. So, he sent him to Patna for further higher studies.

But when Pankaj saw the play Andha Kuan, he was moved by the performance of actor Pranita Jaiswal. This made him religiously cycle his way to watch all stage performances that were held in Patna. His love for theatre became so intense that he started doing theatre during the day and at nights, he worked in a kitchen at a hotel. This went on for 2 years when he realised he had to be trained. But, money was an issue. So, he started looking for free training. That's when he found out about National School of Drama, Delli, which by the way rejected him twice before accepting. Because the basic requirement to enrol there was graduation, Pankaj enrolled himself in college and graduated with Hindi literature as his major. At NSD, he met Nawazuddin Siddiqui who was his senior by 8 years. This followed a move towards Mumbai with Rs 46,000 in his pocket in October 2004. However, by the end of that year, all he had left was Rs. 10. He had no money to buy a gift or a cake for his wife on her birthday. For the first 10 years in the industry, he survived with a will to act and run his family. Meanwhile, he debuted in the movies Run and Omkara with a minor role. However, it was only more than a decade later that he found breakthrough through Gangs of Wasseypur.

6. SONU SOOD



Sonu is a small-town guy. Born in Moga, Punjab, to a teacher and a textile business owner, he has now been in the film industry for more than 20 years. With humble beginnings, he started his career by participating in modelling events in college. That's when he developed an interest in acting. So, after graduating, he shifted to Mumbai and started modelling to take small steps.

In order to get a role, he used to drop his photograph to casting directors just like others. It was in 1999 when he was introduced to Tamil language films with Kallazhagar and Nenjinile. In 2000, he appeared as an antagonist in the Telugu film Hands up! In 2002, he started appearing in Hindi movies. His first Bollywood movie was Shaheed-E-Azam where he portrayed the role of Bhagat Singh. Talking about being recognised, it happened with the movies Yuva and Aashiq Banaya Aapne. He now, has his own production house called Shakti Sagar Productions which was started in 2016. His family also owns a hotel by the same name in Juhu, Mumbai. Since a long time, Sonu has been involved in social work including, but not limited to, sponsoring the travel and stay for a team of differently-abled students who competed at the Special Olympics Asia Pacific Unified Badminton Championship in Bangkok and an initiative called Shakti Annadanam which provided more than 150,000 meals daily to the underprivileged in Mumbai.

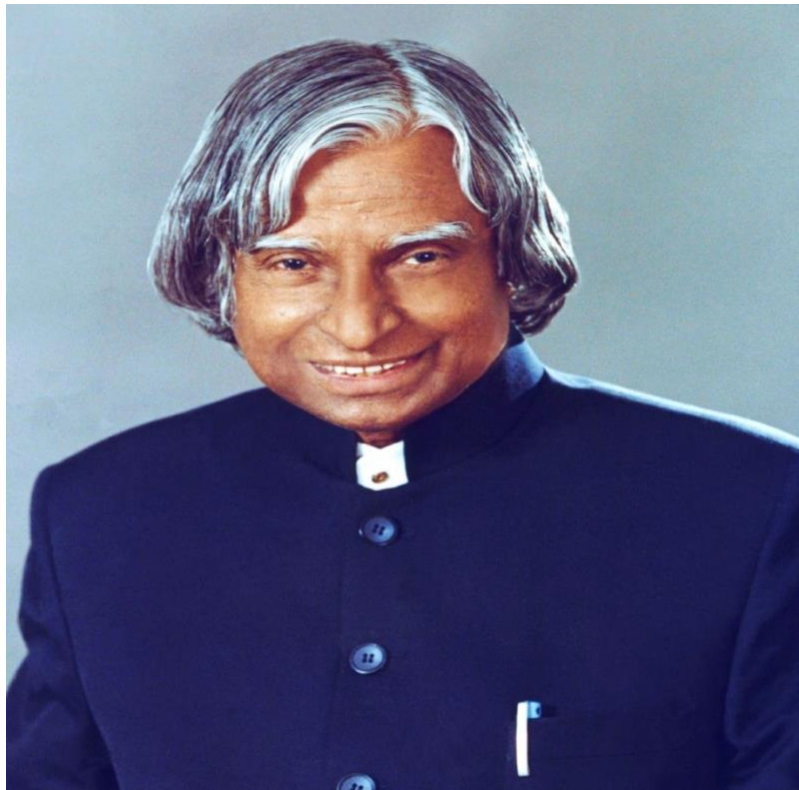
7. DILIP JOSHI



Dilip was born to a Gujarati family and pursued his B.Com where he was twice awarded the Indian National Theater Best Actor award. This was bound to happen for; since childhood, he was good in mimicry and that was when his mother thought of introducing him to theater. That began the journey of struggle because at that time, acting was a social taboo. There was also a time when he didn't get roles and as a backstage artist, he used to get Rs. 50 role. But Dilip's passion was far more than this. In 1989, he launched his career with the film *Maine Pyar Kiya* where he played the role of Ramu. This was followed by many Gujarati dramas and films like *Phir Bhi Dil Hai Hindustani* and *Hum Aapke Hai Kon..!* When he acted in the latter, he felt blessed because he stood amongst the big stars. In 2007, his play '*Daya bhai do dhaya*' got over. That was last play of his 25 years long Gujarati theater journey. But as his theater journey halted, so did work. For a year he

was jobless until a year later when Tarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah happened. The rest as people know is history

8. DR. APJ ABDUL KALAM



Born to boat maker and home maker, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam's had to struggle to make ends meet. Therefore, he often used to sell newspapers. But, Kalam's superpower was his mind. He was bright, smart, hardworking and interested in Mathematics. He dreamt of becoming a fighter pilot. And his inclination towards academics took him to greater heights. He worked at DRDO, become the project director for India's First Satellite Launch Vehicle at ISRO, and created a Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle. Not only this, he was the Chief Scientific Advisor to the Prime Minister and had a important role in the Pokhran-II Nuclear Tests. Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam served as the 11th President of India from the year 2002. The Missile Man of India received the Bharat Ratna award. He is not just a story of Rags to making something

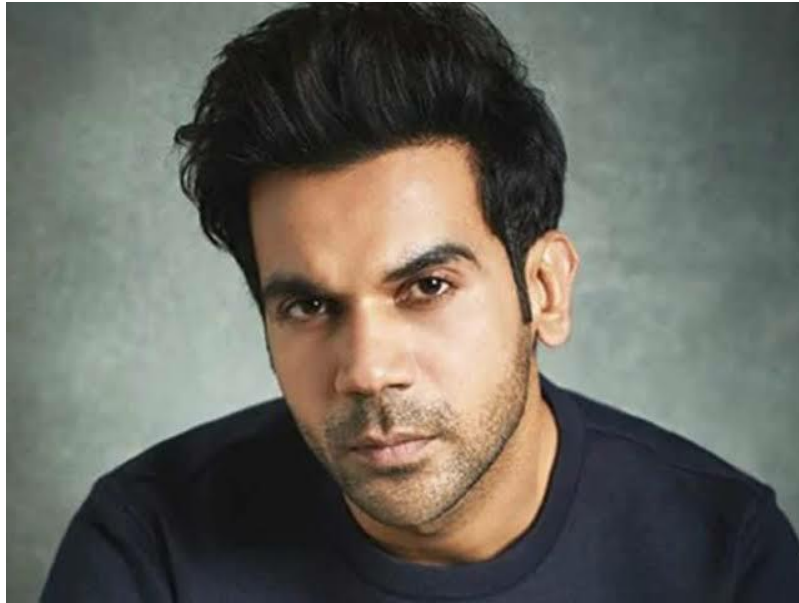
great out of the life but is an inspiration to everyone who dreams of achieving big.

9 Kailasavadivoo Sivan



Born in a farming family in Tamil Nadu, the financial conditions of the family weren't good. Therefore, though he received his education from Tamil medium Government school, he didn't spend money on tuitions and worked without any guidance. Soon, he was helping his father for extra income to provide for his family. He carried mangoes on his bicycle, sold them, and paid his school fees. His brother left his education so that he could excel, which he did. He completed high school, finish Engineering , and then attained a master's degree in aerospace engineering, most of it was through scholarships. After his master's, joined ISRO and started with the PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle) project and through his hard work, climbed up the ladder to become the chairman of ISRO in January 2018. It was under his leadership that the Chandrayaan 2 mission took place. Although, the mission didn't succeed, but K. Sivan knew this wasn't the end hence, launched the dates for Chandrayaan 3. Kailasavadivoo Sivan's story is a beautiful example of how education leads someone to greater heights.

10 Rajkummar Rao



He doesn't have Bollywood background. That's what makes his story inspirational. It's filled with sheer dedication and hardwork. Hailing from Gurugram, Haryana, his father was a government employee and his mother was a homemaker. He used to participate in school plays and was involved in theater during college. It was because of Manoj Bajpayee and the way he was impressed by him did Rajkummar decide to become an actor. So, in 2008, he enrolled in a 2-year acting course at the Film and Television Institute of India. He then moved to Mumbai to start his film career. He spent the next year visiting studios and met with casting directors. His first role was as a newsreader in Ram Gopal Varma's *Rann*. It was a small, uncredited role. This was followed by the film *Love Sex Aur Dhokha* and his performance was appreciated. Then, he was offered a lead role in *Ragini MMS* to which he was reluctant at first but agreed later on. Since then, all his performances have been well appreciated. He got his breakthrough in the movie *Shahid* and today, Rao is one of the most promising actors in the film industry.

Note : The work is secondary source of data collection and is collected from different sources. The author gives due credit to those sources. The author does not claim over the images.