

ANAND JACOB VERGHESE



SKYWARD BOUND

A JOURNEY WITH PASSION, PURPOSE AND PERSEVERANCE

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PURPOSE AND PERSEVERANCE

DR. ANAND JACOB VERGHESE

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Foreword



Bhaskar Ramamurthi

Hon. Director, Centre of Excellence in Wireless Technology,
Institute Professor and former Director, IIT Madras

In the rich and varied tradition of biographical narratives, the story of Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese stands out as a compelling account of visionary leadership, innovative educational practices, and utmost dedication to the advancement of global educational standards. I am happy to introduce his biography, which encapsulates a journey of profound transformation and significant impact.

Dr. Anand's journey from an energetic youth giving flight to his curiosity and ambition to a stalwart in the educational arena embodies the synthesis of precise action with expansive strategic thinking. His tenure at the helm of the Hindustan Group of Institutions has been marked by a robust commitment to integrating advanced technological standards within a comprehensive educational framework. This biography chronicles how his educational and entrepreneurial efforts have shaped the landscape of

aviation training in India and set benchmarks for academic excellence.

What makes Dr. Anand's story compelling is his ability to navigate the complexities of engineering management with the strenuous demands of leading a vast educational network. His stint in London, where he was immersed in a milieu of diverse cultures and global education systems, equipped him with the insights necessary to foster an educational environment that is both inclusive and challenging. This book captures his journey through these transformative years with a narrative that is as informative as it is engaging.

Dr. Anand's approach to education reform is characterised by a blend of theory and practical application. His initiatives have not only provided versatile platforms for academic growth but also instilled a spirit of innovation and exploration in thousands of students. This biography offers readers an inside look into the strategic thinking and decisive actions that have characterised his leadership, presented through a narrative that combines the analytical rigour of an engineer with the holistic insights of a seasoned educator.

For educators, students, and aspiring leaders, Dr. Anand's biography is a study in leadership and innovation in the field of aviation and beyond. Each chapter contributes to a larger understanding of how targeted educational strategies and passionate leadership can create ripples across the global educational landscape. The book is a blueprint for future educators and leaders striving to make a significant impact in their fields.

Foreword



DR. A SIVATHANU PILLAI
Padma Bhushan Awardee

Founder CEO/MD BrahMos Aerospace Fmr. Hon'ble
Distinguished Professor, ISRO
Fmr. Chief Controller (R&D), DRDO

It is with great delight that I write the foreword for the biography of Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, whose story is not only a tapestry woven from academic achievements and professional milestones, but also a vivid portrait of an extraordinary human spirit. This narrative encapsulates the essence of a man whose life trajectory has been marked by an unwavering commitment to innovation, education, and philanthropy.

Dr. Anand's journey from the audacious adventures of his youth to becoming the visionary leader of the Hindustan Group of Institutions is a profound testament to the transformative power of education and leadership. His story is an inspiring amalgamation of relentless pursuit and

thoughtful leadership, embodying the spirit of a true pioneer in the educational sector.

The pages of this biography do more than recount the life of a man carrying forward the legacy of his father Dr KCG Verghese, who started India's first flying school and aeronautical engineering education. They reflect the spirit of a person who views challenges as opportunities to innovate and who approaches each situation with a solution-oriented mindset. Dr. Anand's narrative is a compelling reminder of the impact one individual can have on the lives of many. Through Dr. Anand's experiences, we see the embodiment of a leader who combines courage with compassion, intellect with empathy, and rigorous scientific inquiry with expansive humanitarian outreach. His life's work extends beyond the confines of traditional educational leadership, touching the lives of students not just academically but holistically.

This biography, written in a style that is accessible and engaging, mirrors Dr. Anand's educational philosophy—simple yet profound, inclusive yet challenging. It invites readers from all walks of life to engage with the story of a man whose life is a beacon of hope and a model of how personal integrity and public service can intertwine to forge pathways of profound societal impact. Let this book serve as an invitation to explore the vast horizons of what can be achieved when courage meets opportunity and when knowledge is guided by kindness. May Dr. Anand's journey inspire the readers to seek the extraordinary within the ordinary and to reimagine the world not only as it is but as it could be.

Foreword



ANTO ANTONY

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, PATHANAMTHITTA

It is both a privilege and a delight to pen the foreword for this inspiring biography of Anand Jacob Verghese, a distinguished figure whose contributions to education and society resonate far beyond the corridors of academic institutions. As someone who has had the honour of knowing Anand personally and witnessing his remarkable journey, I am thrilled to see his story captured in these pages.

Anand's life story is not merely a narrative of personal success; it is a testament to the transformative power of education when combined with visionary leadership and unyielding dedication. From his early days filled with youthful mischief to his educational pursuits across global institutions, and his

eventual return to India to spearhead innovative changes in the educational landscape, Anand's journey is a compelling saga of resilience and ingenuity.

This biography does more than chronicle the milestones of a successful entrepreneur and educator; it serves as a beacon of inspiration for the youth of our nation and beyond. Anand's unique approach to blending international educational standards with the rich cultural heritage of India sets a precedent for future educators and leaders. His story encourages us to think globally while acting locally, pushing the boundaries of traditional education to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving world.

Congratulations, Anand, on the publication of your biography. It is a source of great inspiration and a valuable resource for anyone aspiring to make a significant impact in the field of education or any endeavour they choose to pursue. Your journey teaches us that with passion, perseverance, and a desire to make a difference, anything is possible.

Acknowledgement

DR. ANAND JACOB VERGHESE

Behind every successful person is a constellation of loved ones who have supported and nurtured their journey. Their unwavering belief, boundless love, and relentless encouragement form the foundation upon which great achievements are built. It is their silent sacrifices and enduring faith that illuminate the path to success, inspiring us to reach for the stars and beyond. With my biography, I am deeply moved by the realization that this momentous occasion is not just a reflection of my journey, but a tribute to the incredible individuals who have walked alongside me.

I am profoundly grateful to my parents, Dr. KCG Verghese and Dr. Mrs. Elizabeth Verghese, whose love and guidance have shaped my journey. My father, Dr. KCG Verghese, started this educational empire that he built with his visionary leadership and tireless dedication. His legacy is a beacon of inspiration, and I am forever thankful for his faith in me. My mother, Dr. Mrs. Elizabeth Verghese, has been my pillar of strength, offering boundless love and unwavering support. Her wisdom and encouragement have been instrumental in my growth, and I am deeply indebted to her.

I extend my deepest thanks to my beloved wife, Dr. Annie Jacob and her family. Your steadfast support, love, and patience have been the cornerstone of my strength.

I thank my children Enid and Tiya. They are the best children I could have ever asked for and I'm proud to see their growth.

To my siblings, Ashok and Susan, your constant encouragement and belief in my dreams have been a driving force in my life. The bond we share is invaluable, and your camaraderie has been a source of inspiration and strength throughout my journey. You both, along with your families, have been my guiding lights and pillars of support, and for that, I am deeply thankful.

My heartfelt gratitude also goes out to my dear friends Madan, Samar Gupta, Vivek Reddy and Anoop. All of you have played a significant role in my journey, offering friendship, guidance, and unwavering support.

A special note of thanks to Maria Alphonsa Theresa, who has been instrumental in executing this biography project. Your hard work behind the scenes has been pivotal, and I am deeply appreciative of your commitment to this project.

I would also like to thank my team at Hindustan, including a special thanks to Mr. Salim for being there for the institution round-the-clock.

Finally, to everyone who has supported and encouraged me along the way—colleagues, mentors, students, family members, friends, and loved ones—a sincere 'thank you' can hardly suffice. Your belief in me has motivated me to push beyond boundaries and pursue my passions relentlessly. Words cannot fully express my gratitude for each one of you.

And most importantly, I express my gratitude to the Lord Almighty.

Thank you reader, for celebrating this significant milestone with me.

BIOGRAPHY
DR. ANAND JACOB VERGHESE

Chairman, Hindustan Group of Institutions



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Chapter 1

The Young MAVERICK

In the heart of Tamil Nadu, where the horizon blushes with the first glance of the morning sun, there was a teenager aged 19, whose boundless energy was the morning bell of the town. His life's motto could have been 'More speed, more fun!' This wasn't just any boy. Oh no, this was a mischief-maker who could outwit the neighborhood's wildest tricksters, leaving them green with envy.

The teenage years were shaping up to be unbearably dull, and for our protagonist, life hungered for a taste of excitement. Just as the mundane haze of teenage routine threatened to overwhelm him, fate intervened with a twist—and perhaps a sprinkle of serendipity—in the form of a crumpled, forgotten flyer clinging to a dusty bulletin board in a quiet café corner. This wasn't just any notice; it crackled with the enticing call to arms from a motorsports club, inviting him to join their upcoming rally race.

With a grin as wide as a racetrack, he saw this as his golden ticket to jump into the fast lane. For him, this opportunity presented exactly what he needed, life was about to get as spicy as a bowl of Chennai chillies—exciting, slightly dangerous, but totally worth the ride!

Eager for his adrenaline fix, he, along with a couple of his pals seized the opportunity to participate in a local rally race organized by passionate motorsport enthusiasts. To him, it promised nothing less than a weekend adventure. Little did he know, however, that this was no mere Sunday drive; it would prove to be a grueling battle against unforgiving terrains, testing his skills and resolve to their very limits.

On the day of the race, a palpable sense of anticipation permeated the air as the friends made their way to the event. Excitement buzzed through their conversations, along with a touch of nervous energy as they deliberated over who would assume the pivotal role behind the wheel. After careful consideration, they unanimously entrusted our protagonist with the responsibility, recognizing him as the ideal candidate for the impending adventure. With a firm grip on the steering wheel, he couldn't help but voice his thoughts aloud, a self-assured grin lighting up his face. "Just a club rally," he mused, his voice tinged with both excitement and curiosity. "How

tough could it really be?"

Beside him sat a friend more experienced in the racing world, with connections stretching as far as Silicon Valley. Their navigation through the impending chaos? A cryptic tulip chart, akin to a map leading to buried treasure on a deserted island.

"I'll drive, you handle the map," he declared with a confidence that was almost comical. The experienced friend, armed with nothing more than a hopeful smile and a sense of adventure, nodded. They set off with a roar, the engine humming with potential and promise.

The rally began deceptively well, their spirits high and their adrenaline higher. But as the path grew wilder, their initial enthusiasm met reality head-on.

"Left or right?" he bellowed above the thunderous roar of the engine, his voice barely audible amidst the din.

"Just keep going straight until I decipher this cryptic joke of a map!" his friend hollered back, wrestling with a map that seemed more like a riddle penned by a mystic poet than a practical guide.

As they plunged deeper into the rally, what passed for a road transformed into a treacherous ribbon of mud and gravel. Puddles, resembling miniature lakes, lurked menacingly, ready to engulf their wheels and challenge the resilience of their suspension with each jarring impact. For a couple of 19 year olds, this adventure proved far more daunting than they had ever imagined taking on.

On top of everything, the unforgiving terrain showed no mercy. The rally swiftly escalated into a frenzied ballet of swirling dust, gritty gravel, and unadulterated adrenaline. Once recognizable paths dissolved into mythic trails, their surfaces marred by muddy scars and puddles so deep they seemed to delve into the depths of philosophical

contemplation. Amidst this chaotic landscape, their reliable odometer surrendered, apparently conceding that keeping pace with their daring escapade was beyond the reach of its mechanical fortitude.

The drive was less of a race and more of an off-road odyssey. Their car, not quite designed for such brutality, danced and skidded across the terrain with a mind of its own. The speed was exhilarating, the bumps unforgiving. As the young maverick floored the accelerator, both the friends struggled not only with the map but with maintaining their seat. The lack of seatbelts turned their ride into a freeform dance of human pinballs within the confines of their metal capsule.

"Shouldn't we have prepared more for this?" The seasoned friend's voice cracked with equal parts amusement and fear, dodging a spiteful tree stump that appeared out of nowhere.

But the young daredevil thrived in the chaos. He greeted each surprise with a wild laugh, skillfully maneuvering through close calls and hair-raising slides. "Life's no fun without a challenge!" he yelled back, his grin unwavering even as they circled back for the third time, missing a hidden turn buried under thick bushes.

Hours blurred into an eternity as they battled through the unforgiving terrain. The map lay forgotten, replaced by shouted, semi-helpful encouragements from his friend: "Maybe try avoiding that giant rock!"

In a heart-stopping moment, they hurtled over a particularly audacious puddle, the navigator's urgent cry to turn drowned out by the thunderous engine and the adrenaline-fueled rush. Their trajectory veered off course, missing the intended path in a swirl of dust and a chorus of laughter and expletives. In the chaotic rear seats, their friends were tossed about like marionettes in a storm-tossed ship, every unexpected jolt a surprise ambush they struggled to

brace against. Anxious energy pulsed through the cramped space, palpable in the shouts and exclamations that echoed against the vehicle's walls. Each bump and swerve seemed to rearrange their companions like pieces in a frenetic puzzle, limbs flailing and voices blending into a chorus of excitement and trepidation.

Amidst the whirlwind of motion and noise, our protagonist turned to the cacophony erupting behind him. What met his eyes was nothing short of a comedy of errors: friends who had started on the right now found themselves on the left, disoriented and laughing despite their disarray. The absurdity of the situation only added to the thrill of the moment, turning what could have been chaos into a shared adventure filled with laughter and camaraderie.

As they careened through the unpredictable terrain, each twist and turn became a gamble against the elements. The landscape blurred into a whirlwind of earth and sky, punctuated by fleeting glimpses of obstacles looming just ahead.

The atmosphere inside the vehicle crackled with tension and exhilaration, adrenaline pumping through their veins as they pushed the limits of both machine and courage. Every missed turn was a lesson learned in haste, every near-collision a testament to their shared resolve to conquer the unforgiving course.

Through mud-splattered windows and with hearts in their throats, they managed to claw their way back to the track, the young maverick's hands white-knuckled on the steering wheel, his focus as sharp as it had ever been. They crossed the finish line battered, muddy, and utterly exhilarated.

Amidst the swirling chaos, they pressed forward, their vehicle now a canvas of mud and triumph. Each mile brought them closer to the rally's conclusion, where perseverance had

already begun to thin the ranks of their competitors. Through sheer determination and a touch of luck, they maneuvered past those who had faltered under the relentless onslaught of the route's challenges.

Approaching the finish line, their hearts raced with a mixture of exhaustion and exhilaration. Cheers erupted from the sidelines, mingling with incredulous stares that mirrored their own surprise. In an unexpected twist of fate, they had not only survived but thrived, securing a commendable fourth place finish. It was a remarkable achievement for the novice driver who had initially mistaken the rally for a casual outing.

As they basked in the aftermath of their unexpected success, adrenaline still coursing through their veins, the realization dawned upon them: what had begun as a spontaneous adventure had transformed into a test of grit and resilience. Theirs was a tale of underdogs defying the odds, leaving an indelible mark on the unforgiving terrain and proving that sometimes, the most extraordinary journeys begin with a simple willingness to embrace the unknown.

Exhausted but exhilarated, they collapsed beside their battered car, its engine ticking as it cooled. "Not bad for a couple of novices, eh?" the young maverick laughed, clapping friend on the back, who could only nod, his earlier terror transformed into triumph.

As they stepped out of their gritty chariot, laughter bubbled over. "Who needs roads when you've got guts and a dash of madness?" the young maverick joked, his smile as wide as the tracks they'd left behind. This rally wasn't just an adventure; it was a crash course in chaos, a testament to their raw, untempered youth.

This rally was more than just a test of their driving skills; it was a rite of passage, a journey from reckless enthusiasm to

a measured respect for the raw forces of nature and machine. It taught them the value of preparation, teamwork, and the sheer, unadulterated joy of surviving against the odds.

Their adventure at the rally would become a legendary tale among their friends, embellished in each retelling but always true to the spirit of their wild, youthful daring. It was a reminder that sometimes, the best stories come from the least expected places, and the greatest lessons are learned in the heat of the moment, behind the wheel of a mud-splattered car, on a road that's barely a road at all.

"This rally," the young maverick mused later, "was like trying to solve a Rubik's cube while riding a rollercoaster. Not easy, but definitely memorable."

Returning to the muddy paths of the rally the following day, drawn back to the scene of their exhilarating chaos, he sought to unravel the physics behind their wild ride—an intellectual pursuit sparked by the previous day's adrenaline-fueled escapade. Tracing the still-visible tire tracks etched into the mud, he meticulously reconstructed their erratic journey, mentally applying the principles of physics he had studied to decipher how they miraculously avoided flipping the car.

As he studied the chaotic pattern of tracks, a humbling realization washed over him. "Luck played a big role," he muttered to himself, recognizing the fine line between speed and control, particularly on a treacherous mudslide masquerading as a road. His newfound admiration for professional rally drivers grew as he acknowledged the skill and precision required to navigate such unforgiving terrain.

Reflecting on their unexpected success, he couldn't help but marvel at the mix of daring intuition and sheer luck that had propelled them to the finish line. It was a testament to their audacity and resilience, a narrative of exploration and



Anand Jacob Verghese with his trusted jeep, a symbol of his adventurous spirit.

discovery that had unfolded amidst the rugged landscape of the rally course.

The rally wasn't just a test of physical endurance but a pivotal moment that steered his youthful energy towards a future where every challenge was an opportunity to learn, to grow, and most importantly, to laugh at the chaos of it all.

As he returned home, the trophies were shelved, but the experiences etched deeply within him. His family's reactions—initial worry replaced by pride—made him reflect on his choices and the future avenues he wished to explore. Sitting with his family one quiet evening, he shared, "It's odd, but smashing up a bit helped clear my vision. Maybe you need a good jolt to see the road you're meant to take."

At dawn, our maverick stood on the terrace of his home, reflecting on the day's outcome. The dust on the race track might have long settled, but for him, the conclusion of the

race marked the start of an even grander journey. In the serene aftermath, the exhilaration of the rally still coursed through his veins, kindling a fire that would soon ignite a visionary pursuit.

Our charismatic protagonist is none other than Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, the man who now stands at the helm of an entire group of institutions, transforming lives for the better. This is his story, and it's one unlike any other.

**"IN EVERY REAL
MAN, A CHILD
IS HIDDEN THAT
WANTS TO PLAY."
— FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE**

Chapter 2

Family Ties and EARLY FLIGHTS

In the lively heart of Chennai, where old temples elbow their way next to towering skyscrapers and the scent of filter coffee mingles with the salty sea breeze, Anand Jacob Verghese wobbled into a world bursting at the seams with potential. Born on a pleasantly cool day, January 31, 1969, in the charming village of Arattapuzha, Kerala, he was soon whisked off to Chennai—his father’s chosen battleground. Here, he was the first bundle of joy for Dr. K.C.G. Verghese, a visionary in the education sector and the brains behind the esteemed Hindustan Institute of Engineering Technology (HIET) — a leading institution sparking innovation and excellence in technology, which notably, once known for an aircraft being parked in front of their office — and Elizabeth, a Civil Engineer and woman of distinguished caliber.



Anand perched on a tree branch, captured in timeless black and white.

Anand's childhood was steeped in the colours, sounds, and rhythms of Chennai, a city that danced to the beat of both tradition and modernity. His father, having launched one of India's first aviation programs back in the 1970s, was often wrapped in blueprints and dreams of propelling India into the skies. Meanwhile, his mother, Elizabeth, managed the delicate balance between her husband's aspirations and the grounding of her children in both humility and humour.

Anand, often content with his own company, was an ordinary student, neither seeking the spotlight of academic excellence nor trailing behind. His books were his companions, but not for the pursuit of grades—instead, they were gateways to worlds he quietly longed to explore.

In this environment, Anand's introversion was not a barrier but a window through which he watched the world unfold at its own pace.

Even as a child, his rare interventions in conversations were thoughtful, carrying a weight that was unexpected from someone so young. In childhood, his reserved nature often parted ways when it came to family. From his earliest days, there was warmth and tenderness in him that shone brilliantly whenever he spoke of his siblings.

The neighbourhood still whispers tales of a young Anand, just four years old, buzzing from door to door with a grin as wide as the Marina Beach. His mission? Announcing the arrival of his new sister Susan, whom he affectionately nicknamed "Rosiemol." Even today, during family gatherings, a call of "Rosiemol!" echoes, and his sister's eyes light up with the warmth of cherished sibling love. This nickname, born out of pure joy and a bit of toddler creativity, has stood the test of time, much like the bonds within their family.

The following year, the Verghese household welcomed another member—Ashok, Anand's younger brother. With the arrival of Ashok, Anand found not just a sibling but a playmate, a partner in crime who would share in the countless adventures that filled their childhood home. Their games were more than just child's play; they were the early signs of Anand's leadership and his knack for organising, be it treasure hunts in the backyard or cricket matches in the lane.

Anand's sister, Susan, fondly recalls the vibrant days of their youth. "Anand was our rock, the mediator of our sibling squabbles, and the mastermind behind our home's most memorable moments," she shares with a laugh. Whether arbitrating a dispute over who got the last mango slice or orchestrating elaborate family performances, Anand was always at the centre, ensuring everyone played their part perfectly.

"Our home was always a sanctuary, a gathering place for many, and the values of kindness and hospitality were woven into the fabric of our daily lives," Susan recalls.

In Anand's early life, his introverted nature painted a vivid but quiet presence. Even in school, where the clamour of everyday learning echoed through the hallways, he preferred the shadows to the spotlight. His leadership traits were subtle, not always seen in traditional forms of student leadership like organizing events or leading discussions.

The buzz of school life filled the air with a vibrant energy, an energy that often felt overwhelming to a young boy whose comfort zone was within the silent pages of his books rather than the noisy corridors of his school. Anand's school, an institution of repute, was known for its high academic standards and a rigorous emphasis on participation—whether in class, sports, or cultural activities. However, for

him, the mere thought of participation, especially public speaking, was enough to send shivers down his spine.

The incident that would remain etched in Anand's memory forever unfolded during his eighth grade. It was a typical sunny morning when, the Science teacher announced that each group in the class would present a project on 'Renewable Energy Sources'. The projects were not just to be written but had to be presented in front of the entire class the following week. As she outlined the expectations, his heart sank. He knew that his group would expect him to take part in explaining the project, and the very thought filled him with dread.

As the days leading up to the presentation dwindled, Anand's anxiety grew exponentially. He lay awake at night, the scenarios of embarrassment playing over and over in his head like a bad movie. His appetite disappeared, and his usual enthusiasm for things he loved—like reading and playing tennis—faded. His mother noticed his pale face and quiet demeanour, but every time she inquired, he just shrugged it off, murmuring about being "just a little tired."

The day of the presentation arrived all too soon. That morning, Anand was a bundle of nerves. His hands were cold and clammy, his stomach in knots. He stood in front of the mirror, rehearsing his lines, but each time his voice sounded weak and shaky. "Why must I speak if I can write it all down so well?" he thought miserably.

In class, as his group was called up, Anand's legs felt like they were made of lead. Each step towards the front of the class felt heavier than the last. His group members, filled with the usual mix of nervous excitement, seemed not to notice his distress. They arranged their posters and models, while he stood slightly to the side, hoping he could somehow blend into the background.

As his turn approached, his mind raced. "What if I forget everything? What if everyone laughs?" His hands trembled visibly as he took the pointer from a group mate. He began speaking, his voice barely a whisper, and then, midway through a sentence about solar panels, his mind went blank. There was a pause that felt like an eternity. He stood there, frozen, the room's silence pounding in his ears. The snicker from the back of the room was the sharp nudge he dreaded. His face flushed with embarrassment, he stumbled through the rest of the sentence and quickly handed the pointer back, not saying another word for the entire presentation.

After what felt like the longest day of his life, he rushed home, bypassing his mother's questions and shutting himself in his room. He felt a mix of relief that it was over and a deep, lingering embarrassment about his performance.

Anand's reticence extended beyond the classroom, into his early interactions with broader community activities. His father, passionate about his involvement in Y's Men International—a service organisation dedicated to community improvement—often brought Anand along to meetings. These gatherings were vibrant, filled with spirited discussions and plans for community projects. Yet, he shied away, the bustling energy of the meetings overwhelming his quiet disposition. Despite his reluctance, these experiences silently sowed the seeds of leadership and community engagement in his mind. Later in life, as he stepped into numerous leadership roles within the organisation, those early days of observation and quiet reflection became the foundation upon which he built his capability to lead, transforming his innate shyness into a thoughtful, effective leadership style.

The values of respect, humility, and pursuit of excellence

instilled in him by his parents didn't manifest in loud declarations or grand gestures. Instead, they were reflected in Anand's quiet determination, his respectful nods, and the subtle yet significant ways he contributed to every group effort, proving that leadership isn't always about being the loudest voice in the room; sometimes, it's about being the most thoughtful one.

During family gatherings in the lush landscapes of Kerala, where generations merged under the shade of ancestral homes, Anand was often the silent observer. These reunions, buzzing with the chatter and laughter of numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins fascinated him. Amidst the joyous cacophony, he absorbed the essence of familial bonds, his young mind mapping the intricate web of relationships that defined his heritage.

At his grandparents' sprawling home, surrounded by lush greenery, Anand was both an observer and a participant. While he engaged in typical childhood activities like playing and dissecting insects, he also noted the respect in his father's siblings' interactions. Their conversations, a blend of deference and affection, taught him the art of maintaining connections across miles and generations.

In the maternal Tharavad (home), the dynamics shifted slightly but were equally enriching. Here, Anand, being the eldest cousin, felt a different weight of expectation. It was an unspoken role, filled with responsibilities that he assumed with a grace that surpassed his age. This position taught him the delicate balance of leadership—how to guide without overshadowing, to inspire without imposing. His younger cousins, unaware of the silent observations of their older peer, continued to look up to him, drawn by his quiet confidence and inherent kindness.

Even as a child, Anand's presence was like a gentle

undercurrent in the lively streams of family interactions. He did not need to assert his place; it was naturally accorded to him by virtue of his thoughtful actions and his attentive, listening stance. It was here, in these verdant settings, away from the clamour of city life, that his core beliefs in family values deepened, influenced by the natural ebb and flow of traditional kinship ties.

His contributions to these gatherings were never marked by grand speeches or dramatic gestures. Instead, Anand expressed his love and respect through his attentiveness and his eagerness to help—be it setting the table for a communal meal or gathering younger cousins for a bedtime story. Each act, though quiet, was a brick in the foundation of his character, building the man who would one day lead with empathy and integrity, his leadership style a reflection of those serene, observant days under the Kerala sun.

"Every significant achievement in the world came when someone chose perseverance over surrender, pressing forward regardless of obstacles," his father would often remind him, embedding this belief into the family's daily conversations.

The streets of Chennai, lined with mango trees and echoing with the clangs of the local iron smiths, were Anand's first playground and classroom. Here, among the kite-flyers and the cricket players, he learned his first lessons in negotiation, leadership, and the fine art of escaping trouble, only to land in it all over again.

One particularly bright afternoon, Anand, then decided that the walls of his home were too confining. Egged on by tales of explorers and the heroes in his Amar Chitra Katha comics, he led a band of neighbourhood kids on an expedition—to the top of the local water tank. The view from the top was worth the scolding he received, a scolding

that paused momentarily when his father, instead of the usual lecture, burst out laughing upon seeing Anand's triumphant, albeit sheepish, grin.

As a toddler, Anand's first steps were silently ambitious, often leading him into harmless troubles. Like the time he decided to explore the mechanics of his father's cherished radio, his tiny fingers dismantling it piece by piece with the focus of a seasoned engineer. When his masterpiece of disassembly was discovered, his mother's exasperated expression was worth a thousand words. "Looks like we've got a future engineer who starts with reverse engineering!" his father joked to the relatives, making light of the dismantled radio now spread across the living room floor like an abstract art installation.

This light-hearted home environment, where education and laughter were equally important, shaped Anand into a boy who was as curious as he was spirited yet looked calm and introvert.

On the other hand, his mother, Elizabeth, brought balance with her gentle wisdom and the grounding force of reality. She taught him the value of patience and the importance of kindness through simple daily gestures—like the time she would pack extra lunches for the less fortunate kids they passed on their way to school. "Remember, Anand," she would say, "the real joy of flying isn't just the height you reach, but the sights you see and the hands you hold on the way up."

Anand was always very fond of his father. As a young child, his days were filled with eager anticipation, waiting for the moment when his father would return from work. Each evening, the highlight of his day was the joyous ritual of their drives in the car. He would sit proudly in the passenger seat, his eyes sparkling with excitement,

and ask his father to turn on the windshield wipers. With each swipe, he would sway along, lost in pure, innocent joy. These drives were more than just moments of fun; they were the threads that wove an unbreakable bond between father and son, leaving a profound and lasting imprint on Anand's heart.

Chennai, with its eclectic mix of tradition and modernity, was the perfect backdrop for Anand's life story to unfold. The city taught him resilience amidst chaos, joy in simplicity, and the importance of roots. It was here, among the mango trees and monsoon rains, that his foundational years rolled out like the early sketches of a grand blueprint.

As the sun dipped below the horizon, casting long shadows through the streets where he once played, Anand Jacob Verghese was unknowingly stepping closer to a future where he would not just follow in his father's footsteps but also forge a path distinctly his own. As we turn the pages from these quiet, introspective early days to the chapters that defined his journey, remember, every visionary was once a child, quietly dreaming big, right in his own backyard.

Such episodes were frequent in Anand's childhood. Each shy misadventure brought a lesson, sometimes learned the hard way. Like the time he tried to replicate a chemistry experiment he read about in a library book. The result was a minor explosion that earned him a week's worth of dishwashing duties.

In the cool evenings, under a sky slowly filling with stars, Anand's father would lead him to the terrace to watch the planes traverse the vast expanse above. In those quiet moments, he would share wisdom that was as much about dreams as it was about the dedication needed to realize them.



Anand with his parents, Dr. KCG Verghese and Dr. Elizabeth Verghese, and siblings Susan and Ashok, a close-knit family destined for greatness.

Every evening, as the city cooled under the breeze from the Bay of Bengal, young Anand would sit on his home's terrace in Madras, listening to his grandparents' stories. These were special tales, full of life lessons and morals.

In a humorous incident that Anand often recalls, he learned the law of physics the hard way by trying to ride his bike up a steep road only to find himself rolling back down. "Gravity is not just a rule; it's the law around here," his father joked, helping a scraped-knee Anand to his feet. Little did he know, these laws would one day form the basis of his decision-making in business strategies, teaching him that every action has an equal and opposite reaction.

From the echoing calls of "Ice-ice, kulfi!" in summer, to the heartwarming aroma of filter coffee wafting through the air in winter, Chennai offered a backdrop of sensory experiences that shaped Anand's early perceptions. In this city, life wasn't just lived; it was celebrated, analyzed, and sometimes improvised like a well-cooked meal that needed a dash of spice here and a pinch of salt there.

As we delve deeper into Anand's formative years, we'll see how this vibrant city with its temples, schools, and beaches was not just a setting but a participant in the making of a maverick.

BREAKING A BRANCH

"Roots and wings," they often say, "are the two greatest gifts parents can provide." In the vibrant chaos of Chennai, where the peal of church bells competes with the relentless honk of autorickshaws, young Anand Jacob Verghese was fortunate to receive both.

This lively city served as the fertile ground where the seeds of Anand's future were planted. Born into the brisk chill of a January morning in 1969, he emerged as the sprouting first leaf on a family tree deeply entrenched in the educational ethos of Kerala's fertile landscapes. His parents, Dr. K.C.G. Verghese and Elizabeth along his grandparents, were the gardeners, tending to his growth with diligence and love.

On one scorching summer afternoon, beneath the lush, leafy branches of a mango tree bursting with the season's ripest fruits, young Anand and his troop of merry friends found themselves embarking on a daring venture—a quest to capture the juiciest mangoes. Climbing trees was strictly off-limits, a stern rule set by the watchful eyes of their elders. However, the most succulent fruits teasingly dangled from

the highest limbs, whispering challenges that sparked a rebellious fire in the boys.

The mission was charged with excitement; laughter and friendly jeers filled the air as each boy plotted his route up the gnarled tree trunk. The thrill of the hunt made them momentarily forget the rules, their eyes fixed on the golden prizes swaying just out of reach.

As Anand, always the adventurous spirit, shimmied higher up the branches, his friends below offered a mix of cheeky encouragement and cautious warnings. "Higher, Anand! The golden king of mangoes awaits you!" one shouted, while another chimed in with a worried, "Be careful, or it's going to be more than mangoes falling from this tree!"

The adventure reached its peak just as Anand's fingers brushed against a particularly plump mango. But as fate—or perhaps gravity—would have it, his triumph was short-lived. With a dramatic crack, the branch underfoot betrayed him, and down he came tumbling, a cascade of leaves and one very startled boy landing with a thud that surely woke up the entire neighbourhood.

The aftermath was a mix of groans and giggles, as Anand found himself sitting amid a battlefield of scattered mangoes, nursing a bruised knee but mostly his bruised pride. His friends' laughter mingled with the distant clucks of disapproval likely brewing from the kitchen window where his mother undoubtedly stood.

As he sat there, the sting of the fall was quickly soothed by the sweet, sticky juice of a mango he'd managed to rescue during his descent. It was then that his grandfather's wise words echoed in his mind: "It's not the fall that matters, but how you pick yourself up." Reflecting on these words, young Anand couldn't help but chuckle at his own predicament.

This mishap, minor yet significant, sowed the early seeds of risk-taking and innovation in his young mind.

For little Anand, the sprawling corridors of educational institutions became his playgrounds. Each hallway, steeped in the scent of aged books and the sharp tang of chalk dust, was where he sprinted through his formative years. His father, a towering figure carved out of ambition and dedication, would regale him with tales from his own barefoot days under the Kerala sun. "Back in our days," he'd start, setting the scene for yarns about times when education was a cherished privilege, not a widespread right. "We used to chase dreams with nothing on our feet and everything in our hearts, beneath the vast, open sky."

These weren't just stories meant to lull a child to sleep; they were crafted to instil resilience. Anand grasped at a tender age that learning wasn't merely about filling his mind with facts but about kindling a relentless thirst for knowledge. This revelation didn't just light a spark; it set ablaze a bonfire that would illuminate his path forever. From his earliest days, the young boy saw classrooms as magical portals leading to unseen worlds and untapped possibilities.

Each story his father told, each lesson his mother imparted was a note in the symphony that would lead Anand to dance to a rhythm of innovation and leadership. The classrooms of his youth weren't just rooms with blackboards and desks; they were arenas where potential met opportunity, where our young protagonist, with eyes wide and mind open, began to understand that his journey was to be no ordinary trek through life.

As these tales unfolded by the flicker of the night lamp, Anand's imagination took flight. Each night, after the stories had been told and the lamps dimmed, the young boy would

lie in bed, the echoes of his father's voice mingling with the distant hum of the city.

A THRILLING ESCAPE: ADVENTURE THAT SHOOK EVERYONE

On one fine day, young Anand had vowed to make history. His mother had recently acquired a Maruti800 – the first in their neighbourhood. It was her pride and joy, a gleaming red symbol of modest prosperity. Before she had even had a chance to take it for a proper spin, her son decided it was the perfect opportunity for him to test his driving mettle. With a convincing enough plea, he managed to borrow the keys, promising to return it before anyone would notice. “Just going to the market,” he’d said with a grin that should have been a warning sign.

Gathering a couple of his closest friends, who were not as reckless as he was, they set off. The roads stretched invitingly before them, empty and wide, leading to the beach. “No people, no cars, just us and the road,” he thought gleefully. The thrill of driving his mother’s car, the engine’s hum, the wind in their hair—it was exhilarating.

As the town faded behind them, the straight roads near the beach beckoned. Here, our young protagonist’s foot became heavier on the accelerator. The speedometer needle climbed, egged on by the cheers of his friends in the backseat. “Faster!” they yelled, and he was only too happy to comply. Speed was thrilling, a rush like no other, making him feel like a pilot soaring high—until reality hit, quite literally.

Attempting to overtake a slow-moving truck, he swerved too sharply. The car, quite unaccustomed to such acrobatics, skidded on a patch of loose gravel and embarked on an unexpected aerial journey, performing not one, but two

spectacular somersaults in the air before landing with a dramatic thud in a ditch. For a moment, the world paused, holding its breath as the dust settled around the upside-down car like a disappointed audience at the end of a dangerous stunt show.

Miraculously, everyone emerged unscathed. Shaken, they clambered out of the wreckage, hearts pounding but alive, their earlier exhilaration replaced by a sobering dose of reality. The ditch had cradled their fall—soft enough to spare them serious harm, yet harsh enough to impart a lifelong lesson. As they stood assessing the carnage, a vehicle pulled up—the same truck they had tried to overtake. Out stepped a man who, by some divine twist of fate, turned out to be a doctor.

Seeing the boys in distress, the doctor insisted on checking them over then whisked them away to his clinic for a thorough examination. Fortunately, aside from a few bruises and a good deal of shaken nerves, there were no injuries. The car, however, told a different tale—it was a sorry sight, bearing no resemblance to the pristine vehicle that had left home that morning.

After ensuring the boys were alright, the doctor contacted their families. The young boy’s uncle arrived first, his expression a bewildering cocktail of relief and anger. “What were you thinking?” the uncle scolded as they drove back home. The boy had no answer; in the light of day, what had seemed an exciting adventure now looked foolish and rash.

Upon reaching home, the full weight of his actions hit him. His mother’s disappointment cut deeper than any scolding; her dream car was now nothing more than a heap of twisted metal. “I just wanted to feel the speed,” he tried to explain, his voice barely a whisper, drowned out by the

loud echo of his remorse.

The next day, driven by a mix of guilt and curiosity, he returned to the scene of the accident. Armed with all the physics he had learned, he was determined to unravel the mystery of that fateful flight. The tire marks painted a vivid picture of their wild ride, curving crazily before ending abruptly at the ditch. He traced them with his eyes, each twist and turn a stark reminder of his reckless abandon.

"I was lucky," he muttered to himself, a newfound respect for the power of machines and his own mortality taking root. This harrowing experience, though traumatic, ignited a curiosity within him—a desire to understand the mechanics of things, to respect and master them, rather than to recklessly chase the thrill. It was a pivotal moment, one that would eventually steer his future in ways he couldn't yet comprehend.

Pondering the physics of his aerial stunt, he couldn't help but marvel at the absurdity of it all. "Two loops in the air, and not a single physics lesson prepared me for this," he joked to himself, half-amazed, half-aghast at his own audacity. This incident, a blend of luck and folly, would be the catalyst that transformed a reckless boy into a thoughtful leader, shaping his path towards a future where speed was measured not by how fast one could go, but by how much one could achieve. The dust had barely settled from his airborne misadventure when another chance to satisfy his thrill-seeking soul presented itself.

ROLE MODELS: THE PILLARS OF ASPIRATIONS

In the colourful landscape of Anand Jacob Vergheese's early life, towering giants loomed large—his parents, grandfather and his teachers, each one casting a long, nurturing shadow over his formative years. In this vibrant

story that makes up his life, his roots are as colourful as a bustling Indian bazaar, deeply embedded in a family heritage brimming with ambition and resilience. Imagine a lively household echoing with the laughter and chatter of 13 children, each chasing dreams bigger than the last in the verdant landscapes of Kerala.

Anand's father was one of these ambitious souls, a man not content to just sit under the shade of a palm tree and watch life pass by. He was a dreamer with aspirations that stretched far beyond the tranquil rivers and gentle hills of his hometown. With a spirit as fiery as the curries Kerala is famous for, he embarked on a bold quest that would lead him away from the familiar scents of cardamom and cloves to the academic hustle of Tamil Nadu.

But why leave paradise, you ask? Well, for the elder Vergheese, education was the siren call he couldn't resist—a treasure more valuable than the golden coconuts swinging above his head. However, chasing this dream wasn't as simple as following a rainbow. In those days, engineering schools were as rare as a quiet marketplace in Kochi, and each one was a precious gem hidden among the common stones.

Undeterred by the scarcity, Anand's father set his sights on the scholarly towers of Tamil Nadu. It was here, among the clatter of typewriters and the rustle of thick textbooks, that he sought the knowledge to build not just bridges or buildings, but a future for himself and his family. This was no leisurely stroll through the market; it was a full-blown adventure, fraught with the challenges of adapting to a new academic environment and the rigorous exams set by stern British overseers.

Through the tales of his elders, Anand learned that the path to greatness was paved with determination and the

willingness to leap into the unknown.

As we follow the echoes of Anand's father's footsteps, we see not just a pursuit of education, but a journey towards creating a legacy of learning—a quest that he would take up with gusto, armed with the wisdom of the past and a vision for the future.

In a bold move that only the bravest of educational pioneers could make, Anand's father planted his academic flag in the bustling city of Chennai. From these humble beginnings, he founded an institute that would grow into a thriving beacon of knowledge, drawing curious minds from across the globe. Anand fondly remembers his childhood home as a “mini-United Nations,” bustling with students from Africa to Asia, all attracted by his father's vision of accessible, practical education. “Our living room felt like a global summit every evening,” he laughs.

But the influence of his family extended beyond just building educational institutions. It permeated their everyday lives, where every meal was a lively assembly session filled with robust discussions on history, ethics, and, of course, the fine art of negotiation. Anand grins as he recalls the heated debates over dinner. “Imagine negotiating for the last piece of fish while arguing about Aristotle's ethics. It was like a diplomatic summit meets a food fight!”

FOUNDATIONS OF DREAMS: ANAND JACOB VERGHESE'S UNCONVENTIONAL CHILDHOOD

Way back in mid-20th century, imagine a family where Mom isn't just the heart of the home but also a pioneering civil engineer, turning every school holiday into an adventure straight out of an old Raj Kapoor film—except with hard hats and blueprints! That was Anand Jacob Verghe's

childhood, crafted by a mother who wasn't just building physical bridges but also paving the way for her children to cross into realms of their own ambitions.

His mother was a trailblazer, one of the first women to carve out a space for herself in the gritty, male-dominated world of civil engineering. But her construction sites weren't just about concrete and cables; they were classrooms for life lessons.

The family car was packed with chattering kids and picnic snacks, doubling as a mobile classroom. “Mummy could turn a breakdown into a breakthrough teaching moment,” Anand chuckles. “Once, when we were stranded with a flat tire, she not only showed us how to use the jack but also taught us about the physics of leverage. She said, ‘It's like getting the last bit of toothpaste out of the tube—you've got to know where to apply the pressure!’”

Every detour on the road, every unexpected halt became a lesson in resilience and ingenuity. “She taught us that every obstacle was a quiz from the universe, waiting for a clever answer,” Anand explains. These weren't just drives; they were quests for knowledge, with the car's dashboard lit up with discussions ranging from the weight distribution in bridges to the best strategies for Monopoly.

And it wasn't all about physics and formulas. Between the rumbles of the engine and the rustle of maps, there were lessons in history and ethics too. “During a visit to a historical fort, she'd spin tales of the great Indian engineers and architects of yore,” Anand recalls. “She linked those stories to the importance of precision and integrity, much like a Bollywood drama where every scene is crucial to the storyline.”

These lively road trips, peppered with laughter, roadside chai breaks, and her impromptu lessons, shaped Anand's

worldview. His mother wasn't just laying down asphalt or aligning girders; she was constructing the scaffolding for her children's futures.

Reflecting on those adventurous journeys, he realizes the trips were less about the destinations and more about exploring new perspectives, tackling challenges, and learning that each mile travelled was a step towards understanding life's deeper mechanics.

His grandfather, a distinguished figure, owned sprawling rubber and pepper estates, effectively making him the unofficial "King of Cash Crops" in their little corner of Kerala.

"Visiting grandpa wasn't just about holiday treats and tales; it was like stepping into a bustling marketplace," Anand recalls fondly. The family home, especially during the peak harvest season, transformed into a veritable warehouse. Piles of rubber sheets and sacks of peppercorns weren't just stored; they were practically part of the decor!

Anand describes a typical morning at his grandfather's: "You'd wake up to the smell of rubber—stronger than any cup of coffee—and by breakfast, you were already neck-deep in agricultural economics.

This unconventional upbringing was less about rote learning and more about hands-on, muddy-boots education. "Grandpa believed in learning by doing. So there I was, an 8-year-old who could negotiate rubber prices better than my ABCs, and by 9, I was scaling pepper vines like a pro," Anand jokes, his eyes lighting up with the vivid memories.

Every family gathering was an eclectic mix of discussions, ranging from the best fertilizers to the latest trends in crop prices, interspersed with hearty laughs over who could climb trees the fastest. "These weren't just family meetings; they were lively masterclasses in the art of living

and learning. From grandpa, I learned not just about the elasticity of rubber, but the flexibility needed in life."

Anand's childhood tapestry was woven with lessons that textbooks could never teach. "Each visit to grandpa's was an education in itself. I learned how to dream big from watching him handle acres of land, how to dare from his business gambles, and how to laugh—from all those times we kids tried to outdo his seasoned farmhands."

I learnt life's greatest lessons amidst fields and farmhouses," Anand muses. "It wasn't always about making perfect decisions but about making decisions perfectly. Grandpa's empire was built not just on the soil of his land but on the robust foundation of learning from every success and every slip-up."

We're about to dive into the next chapter of Anand's life, where the tales of his family's past—sprinkled with adventures, mishaps, and lessons learned the hard way—fuel his drive to reshape the world of education.

So, strap in and sharpen your pencils, for we are not just following a story of a man who changed education; we're learning how to live a story worth telling. Watch as our protagonist takes the playful energy of his pranks and channels it into purposeful plans that aim to elevate learning to exhilarating new heights. Get ready to see how a lad who once orchestrated classroom capers grows up to architect campuses that buzz with innovation and inspiration

School days were not just about fun and games for Anand; they were also about facing hurdles that came his way. Imagine a schoolyard where each challenge was like a tricky pitch in cricket—sometimes a spinner, sometimes a fast ball.

His teachers were the unsung heroes in this saga. They

spotted the spark in Anand and fanned it into a flame with their dedication and wisdom. They weren't just educators; they were the wise wizards in his journey, guiding him through puzzles and challenges, preparing him not just for the exams life would throw at him but for the tests of character and leadership.

As Anand's ambitions grew, so did his dreams. They expanded beyond the confines of his textbooks and classrooms, reaching into the realms of innovation and leadership in education. His life story was no longer just about a mischievous boy who once sought the juiciest mangoes; it was about a visionary who aimed to plant entire orchards so that future generations could reach easily for their dreams.

**"IN THE STORY
OF LIFE, IT'S
THE THREADS
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THAT WEAVE THE
MOST VIBRANT
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— DR. ANAND JACOB VERGHESE**

Chapter 3

From Silence to Significance: **ANAND'S QUIET EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY**

On a serene Sunday many years ago, a young Anand faced a moment that would quietly mark the beginning of his journey from silence to significance. It was his turn to lead the monthly youth service at church—a task that filled him with more trepidation than excitement. As the day approached, his usual reserve deepened into apprehension; he was stepping into a role that required him to break from his natural reticence.



Anand in his convocation gown, along with his father - a proud moment marking the culmination of his academic journey.

The service was set to begin, as was tradition, with the ringing of the church bell three times to call the congregation to worship. Anand, ever meticulous but not always confident in public settings, had thoroughly prepared his welcome speech but had not yet fully grasped the timing associated with the bells. With a heart pounding louder than the first bell, he started his welcome right after it ceased. His words were barely out when the bell clanged a second time, causing him to falter and pause, a blush creeping up his cheeks as he realised his mistake.

The congregation, a mix of familiar faces, watched as he stood awkwardly, waiting for the third bell. Once it rang, Anand cleared his throat and resumed his welcome, his voice steadier than before. This small misstep at the beginning of the service could have unsettled many, but with a quiet determination, he gathered his poise and carried on. The rest of the service went smoothly, and though he was embarrassed, he learned a valuable lesson about resilience and the importance of pressing on despite early stumbles.

This incident, seemingly minor, was a significant stepping stone for Anand. It was one of those early experiences where he had to navigate the discomfort of the spotlight, an endeavour that taught him about vulnerability and the quiet courage needed to overcome it. He would eventually learn not only to cope with but eventually thrive in roles that required leading, speaking, and inspiring others.

"From Silence to Significance: Anand's Quiet Educational Journey" delves into these formative years, exploring how a reserved boy grew into a leader whose influence would resonate well beyond the confines of any church or classroom.

Anand's educational journey began, quite unexpectedly,

at Brecks Memorial, a boarding school in Ooty managed by a church, nestled among the misty mountains. It was supposed to be a place that sculpted young minds into well-behaved citizens. "But honestly," he would confess, with a shy smile, "it was more like a boot camp for young rebels. They tried to teach students discipline, but they were too busy plotting their next great classroom escape!"

The school was a grand, old building that looked as if it had been plucked straight out of a Victorian novel, complete with ivy creeping up its walls and a bell that sounded like it had seen better days. The stern matron, Mrs. Cunningham, ruled over the school with an iron fist—or at least, she tried to. Her son, Norton, a boy with a rebellious streak that matched Anand's, quickly became his partner in crime. "Norton knew all the secret passageways in the school. Midnight feasts in the kitchen were our specialty—fuelled by stolen kitchen keys and a shared love for Mrs. Cunningham's sugar coated biscuits," he recalls, his eyes twinkling at the memory.

Life at Brecks Memorial was subtly thrilling, especially during the rain-soaked soccer games where the mud seemed to join the teams as an uninvited yet thoroughly enjoyable participant. Anand, often a quiet spectator, found himself drawn into these matches more by the enthusiasm of his friends than by his own volition. "You haven't truly watched soccer until you've seen your friends slide five feet in the mud to score a goal," he'd remark, his laughter quietly echoing the joyous chaos of those rain-drenched games. Despite his introversion, these moments brought a sparkle of mischief to his eyes, as he cheered from the sidelines, always supportive, occasionally daring to join in under the sheltering camaraderie of his peers.

Imagine a young Anand, in the bustling streets of Chennai, turning each corner of his school into a laboratory

for his experiments—some involving actual science projects and others, well, involving creative ways to skip the mundane parts of the school day. "My first big project was figuring out the perfect angle to bounce a ball off the classroom wall to disrupt the maximum number of students," he recalls with a laugh. It wasn't all just fun and games; each prank pulled and every challenge overcome taught him lessons in physics, human psychology, and crisis management.

One such anecdote that stands out in Anand's memory involves a rainy day during his school years in Chennai, when the monsoon had transformed the schoolyard into a slippery mess. Known for his shy and reserved nature, he typically avoided the forefront, especially in physical education classes. However, one afternoon presented an unexpected challenge that would leave a lasting impact on him.

The Physical Education teacher had organised a relay race, and as fate would have it, Anand was reluctantly pushed into participating when one of his more athletic teammates sprained an ankle just before the event. With no substitutes allowed, he had no choice but to step in. As he took the baton, his usual timidity was replaced by a surge of unexpected determination.

The whistle blew, and Anand ran. He dashed across the muddy field, focused and faster than he ever imagined he could be. Though his team did not win, the personal victory for the young boy was profound. He finished the race, his face flushed not with embarrassment, but with the triumph of overcoming his fears and exceeding everyone's—and his own—expectations.

Classes were a different kind of challenge. "Our history teacher, Mr. Thompson, had a voice that could put a hyper kid to sleep in under five minutes flat. So, we had a little

game—see who could stay awake the longest. I still think the curriculum included his monotone as a test of endurance rather than education," Anand jests.

After a couple of whirlwind years filled with more tricks and trials than most see in a lifetime, Anand's adventure in the hills came to an end. It was time to return to Chennai, where the education was as warm as the climate. Chennai, with its bustling streets and spicy samosas, was a sharp contrast to the quiet order of Brecks Memorial. Here, he joined Sishya, a school closer to his familial home and, more importantly, his comfort zone. "Sishya was different; it was like moving from a silent black-and-white movie to a vibrant Technicolor film," he describes.

The transition wasn't just geographical but educational. Sishya School, run by an ex-principal of the prestigious Lawrence School, offered a more relaxed and encouraging environment. Here the teachers were less about control and more about creative chaos. "It was like jumping from a symphony orchestra to a street-side jazz band. There was a rhythm, but everyone played their own tune!"

It was in the quiet corners of the classroom where Anand, often overshadowed by his more outspoken peers, found a silent fascination with science—particularly, the less predictable experiments. "Once, we were assigned a science project on volcanic eruptions. My attempt to create a model volcano ended quite unexpectedly," he recalls, his voice tinged with a hint of shyness. "Instead of a controlled lava flow, it erupted a bit too vigorously. The resulting chaos set off the school's fire alarm, earning me a very memorable, if somewhat embarrassing, meeting with the principal." Despite the mishap, this incident quietly ignited his curiosity in the dramatic and unexpected outcomes that science could offer, even if his experiments didn't always go

as planned.

Yet, it wasn't all fun and foibles. Anand also grew to appreciate the beauty of learning. "There's something magical about figuring out a math problem that's been bugging you all day or finally understanding a Shakespearean sonnet," he says. "It's like unlocking a secret level in a video game!"

As Anand progressed through school, he moved from the background, where louder classmates dominated, to meaningful personal projects that showcased his growing interest and creativity. He wasn't the first to speak up in class, but he approached assignments with careful planning and execution. This shift marked the start of his path toward leadership, where his actions spoke louder than words.

One key project was the school science fair, where Anand led a team to build a working model of a water conservation system. "It started as a challenge to make something from junk in our backyards. It turned into a mission to solve real-world problems," he explains. This project won the science fair and sparked his interest in sustainable practices, which later influenced his approach to creating educational curricula focused on sustainability.

In the sun-drenched lanes of Sishya, Anand's idea of a perfect afternoon was playing cricket with his pals or diving deep into the colourful world of comics. Calculus? Well, that was just a distant, dusty book on the highest shelf of his academic life.

"Who would choose x's and y's over watching cricket match?" Anand would often muse, his voice barely above a whisper as he recalled his high school days. In a school known for its casual atmosphere and relaxed rules, he found a comfortable niche. He was a quiet observer, more likely to be found on the outskirts of the playground, watching others play rather than participating. Despite being shy and

not particularly academically inclined, he carried a subtle charm—an unassuming presence that made him uniquely memorable to those who took the time to know him.

Despite his quiet nature and general aversion to the spotlight, Anand found himself at the centre of an unforgettable episode during one of Sishya's monsoon seasons. He reflects, "You see, at Sishya, monsoons weren't just about rain; they subtly transformed our surroundings and, sometimes, even us." One particularly stormy day, a whimsical idea took hold of him. He had always thought the school pond, typically ignored and filled with nothing but water and frogs, deserved more attention. "What this needs," he thought timidly to himself, "is to be appreciated, maybe even as Sishya's first unofficial reflection pool."

With a hesitation typical of his shy demeanour, he shared his idea with a few close friends. To his surprise, they loved it and decided to turn the pond into a place of quiet reflection and peace, away from the usual school chaos. "It was serene," Anand recalls with a soft smile. "There we were, a small group enjoying the gentle rain and the calm water, a rare moment of tranquillity."

However, the peaceful scene didn't last long. The transformation of the pond was noticed much sooner than expected. "It was all calm until the principal noticed not only the missing students but also the unusual quietness where there should have been the usual hustle," Anand says. The notebooks and textbooks some had brought along, hoping to study in this new peaceful setting, ended up damp and slightly muddy.

This incident nearly led to Anand facing severe repercussions, but he managed to avoid them with a sincere apology and a promise to channel his quiet, creative impulses in more conventional ways. "I learned a valuable

lesson that day," he admits with a thoughtful look. "Even the quietest among us can stir the waters, though perhaps next time, I'll keep my innovations on dry land."

But it wasn't all about impromptu swimming lessons. These years at Sishya taught Anand something invaluable: resilience. "Every time we faced a challenge, whether it was recovering from a waterlogged math notebook or dealing with the aftermath of one of my 'brilliant' ideas, I learned a bit more about bouncing back," he reflects.

He also fondly recalls a mischievous moment from his teenage years that had the potential to end in disaster but instead became a cherished memory. One sunny afternoon, he found his father's car parked in the garage, and curiosity led him to experiment with driving it in an unconventional way. Deciding to swap the usual positions of his feet, he placed his left foot on the accelerator and his right foot on the brake. Predictably, this led to a comedic mishap: the car lurched forward, crashing into the garage door. Thankfully, the only damage was to the headlamps, leaving the car—and Anand—relatively unscathed. In a flurry of panic and quick thinking, he swept up the broken glass, returned the car to its place, and dashed to his room, hoping to cover up his escapade. When his father discovered the damage and confronted him, Anand, still in the throes of his teenage years, braced for a scolding. Instead, his father simply told him to get the car fixed, marking the end of a memorable Sunday.

As he navigated through life as a student, Anand's reserved nature meant he often observed from the sidelines, yet his ability to handle life's quieter challenges steadily grew. Each introspective moment, each silent observation, and every quiet reflection added depth to his character, transforming a shy and timid boy into a thoughtful and resilient young

man. In the spirited saga of our protagonist's school days, we turn the page to a chapter filled with fresh starts and sporting escapades at his new alma mater, St. Bede's, a no-nonsense all-boys state board school. "Switching from ICSE to State Board was like trading a strict diet for street food; it was less about the presentation and more about the substance!" he shares, recalling the transition that reshaped his academic life.

"St. Bede's wasn't just a school; it was a rambunctious brotherhood where the unofficial curriculum was mischief management and survival skills," Anand jests, reflecting on his four years there. Nestled in a lively neighbourhood brimming with other schools, St. Bede's was the centre stage of his teenage antics and academic pursuits. "The school's motto could have been 'Enter as boys, leave as slightly bigger boys with a penchant for trouble'," he laughs.

The school's more practical approach to education provided Anand the breathing room he desperately needed after the rigors of ICSE. "State Board was my academic lifesaver." This laid-back environment allowed him not only to improve his grades but also to indulge in his true passion: tennis.

"Sports at St. Bede's was less about winning trophies and more about winning stories to tell," Anand recalls with a twinkle in his eye. But life at St. Bede's wasn't all fun and games. He shares a particularly mischievous incident that became legend. "One time, I thought it'd be hilarious to switch the sports equipment with classroom supplies. Imagine the chaos when the math teacher asked for a compass, and someone handed him a frisbee!" This prank, though legendary among his peers, landed him in hot water more times than he cared to count.

However, it wasn't just the sports field or the prank wars



Anand and his cousin at home after a tennis match, a snapshot of camaraderie and youthful ambition.

that defined his time at St. Bedes. It was also the life lessons learned in the most unexpected ways. "Every scolding I got, every race I lost, every test I barely passed—they weren't just setbacks; they were setups for understanding resilience," Anand reflects.

"Our school rivalry used to be so intense that it could have sold tickets," he laughs, "But those same rivals would become your best backers in times of need."

Slowly, as his time at St. Bede's drew to a close, Anand had transformed from a mischievous schoolboy into a young man with a clearer vision of his future. "Those years taught me that education isn't just about textbooks and tests; it's about understanding people, embracing your passions, and sometimes, learning to duck when a frisbee—meant to be a compass—comes flying at your head!"

High school at St. Bede's was a blur of exams, friendships,

first loves, and a whole lot of learning—both in and out of the classroom Anand's quiet nature persisted and gradually transformed into a talent for innovation. "Every problem was a puzzle, and every solution was a new discovery. It wasn't just about getting good grades; it was about making something cool happen."

As graduation approached, Anand stood at the crossroads of adulthood, his pockets full of dreams and a heart full of ambition. "They say your school days are the best days of your life. I say, they're just the teaser for the blockbuster movie called 'Life'," he reflects, ready to take on the world with the same zest with which he had tackled school life.

And so, our mischievous hero, with his infectious laughter and endless curiosity, stepped into the future, eager to turn his dreams into reality. Whether he became a scientist creating the next big discovery, or a teacher inspiring the next generation of young rebels, one thing was certain: he would always remember the long back to back tennis games, the midnight feasts, and the lessons learned in the most unexpected of classrooms at different schools.

And with a knowing smile, he often says, "Life is a lot like school—full of unexpected tests, surprising allies, and extraordinary adventures. So, study hard, play harder, and, most importantly, keep your sense of humour handy. You're going to need it."

As Anand's school days recede in the rearview mirror of his journey, they leave behind a trail of laughter, lessons, and a lifetime of stories. "Stay tuned," he winks, "the best is yet to come as we explore how these schoolyard skirmishes were just the prelude to the boardroom battles." With his mischief mastered and lessons learned, he was ready to step into the world.

THE SILENCE TO SIGNIFICANCE — JOURNEY

"When in Rome, do as the Romans do; when in London, learn to queue and make tea!" Anand Jacob Vergheese quips, his words echoing the lively spirit that led him from mischievous car rallies in Chennai to the prestigious lecture halls of London. Fresh off the adrenaline rush of his rally escapades, he packed his bags, not with spare car parts, but with dreams and aspirations, setting off to conquer the academic world abroad.

Anand's academic odyssey began just after his feet hit the ground from the rally race, in April 1992 at U.S. International University in London, where he pursued a B.S. in Engineering Management. "Engineering was in my blood, but business was the challenge I sought," he reflects. Inspired by his father's relentless pursuit of educational excellence and his mother's pioneering spirit in civil engineering, the young man was determined to bridge his technical expertise with managerial acumen.

The environment at the university, accredited by ABET, USA, was a far cry from the dusty rally tracks, yet it offered its own set of challenges and thrills. "The courses were tough, tougher than a two-pound steak," Anand laughs, remembering his initial academic hurdles. "But every class polished a little more of my raw edges, transforming me from a rally racer to a business strategist."

No sooner had he begun to grasp engineering management than Anand dove into the deep end of business studies with an M.B.A. at Huron University from August 1992 to September 1994. "My classmates were from every conceivable corner of the globe, turning every group project into a global summit," he shares with a chuckle. This period wasn't just about gaining a degree; it was about understanding the pulse of global business, a lesson far

more expansive than any textbook could offer.

Living in London was like being in the heart of a bustling bazaar, each day bringing new faces and fresh perspectives. "Studying in London was like playing on a global chessboard; every move and every interaction taught me something new about the world," Anand recalls. The cultural diversity and academic excellence of London were not just overwhelming but exhilarating, providing him with a broadened worldview that would later become instrumental in shaping his educational initiatives.

The culmination of Anand's academic journey didn't just stop with his degrees. His relentless pursuit of knowledge and his innovative approach to education were later recognised with an Honorary Doctorate in Business Management from the world-renowned Dongguk University, Seoul, South Korea, in November 2011. "It was a nod not just to my



Class photo of Anand with his batchmates on convocation day, commemorating his MBA achievement from Huron University, London.

academic pursuits but to the global impact we envisioned and started creating through our research initiatives," he states proudly.

GUIDING STARS: MENTORS WHO SHAPED ANAND'S PATH

"Behind every successful person lies a pack of mentors," Anand claims, reflecting on the significant figures who shaped his educational and professional journey. For him, his college years weren't just about cramming for exams and scribbling notes; they were enriched by mentors who helped turn his raw ambition into refined skill.

Anand's first mentor encounter sounds like it was straight out of a movie—think the wise, globe-trotting professor who's seen it all. "There was this one professor, Dr. Eric, who seemed like he'd jumped out of a thriller novel—mysterious yet brimming with knowledge. He was an expat, settled in the UK, and had a knack for turning every lecture into an adventure," Anand recalls. Dr. Eric didn't just teach; he connected Anand with opportunities that extended far beyond the classroom walls. "He got me involved in managing student affairs programs, which really opened my eyes to the diverse world of international students."

Anand describes another mentor, Professor Ray Hilditch, as "the navigator of my academic ship." Professor Ray Hilditch was instrumental in guiding young Anand through the intricacies of the MBA program. "He wasn't just about textbooks and tests. He connected me to real-world industry projects. Imagine trying to understand complex business models when you've barely managed your laundry budget!" he laughs. This practical exposure was crucial in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, preparing him for the challenges of

the business world.

Fast forward to post-college years, Anand met Mr. Bashir, a stalwart in the public sector and a titan in community service. "Meeting Mr. Bashir was like finding an encyclopaedia on Kerala's leadership. He'd narrate tales of navigating through bureaucratic jungles and labour union storms with the ease of a seasoned captain," he shares with a chuckle. His mentorship extended beyond casual advice, fostering his growth in leadership roles within the Y's Men organisation, eventually helping him secure an international convention—a pivotal milestone in his career.

From running halls of residence to managing international programs and events, Anand's mentors taught him lessons that extended beyond academia. "It was about understanding cultures, mastering diplomacy, and sometimes just keeping students in line," he remarks with a wink. These mentors instilled in him flexibility, cultural awareness, and negotiation skills—essential for his leadership roles.

Reflecting on these formative experiences, Anand expresses gratitude, describing his mentors as early bosses, life coaches, and crisis managers. "They taught me how to assess risks, lead teams, and navigate life's complexities with humor." Each mentor profoundly influenced his professional ethos and personal growth, shaping him into the leader he is today.

Anand reflects on his mentors as guiding lights through youth's challenges to leadership's shores, humorously adding, "Without their guidance, I'd probably still be adrift!" Returning from London, his suitcase packed with new ideas, perspectives, and a transformative vision for Indian education, he describes it as not just a homecoming but the launch of a new expedition. His time abroad immersed

him in a cultural and intellectual kaleidoscope, revealing how diverse ideas fuse into something spectacular. Now back in India, he is determined to integrate world-class methodologies with our educational traditions, poised for a new stage of innovation and leadership.

With mentors like Professor Ray Hilditch and Mr. Bashir lighting his path, Anand was not merely armed with theoretical knowledge but equipped with the mentorship that would enable him to navigate the complex terrains of educational reform and leadership. “These mentors didn’t just fill my mind with knowledge; they expanded my vision and fine-tuned my aspirations,” he notes, acknowledging the profound impact these figures had in shaping his approach and ethos.

The real work, the real change, **starts now.**

**"EDUCATION IS
NOT THE FILLING
OF A PAIL, BUT
THE LIGHTING
A FIRE."
— WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS**

Chapter 4

Return to Roots: ANAND'S NEW ERA OF LEADERSHIP

On the plane journey back home, Anand reminisced about his education, which began in the quaint village of Bushey near Watford, just 45 minutes from London. His journey took him to South Kensington for his MBA, with a routine shaped by the evolving London skyline. Despite the new skyscrapers in areas like Docklands, he found that much of the city's essence remained unchanged. His campus, a sprawling 100-acre site once a Masonic house, retained its vintage charm even through refurbishments, standing as a testament to history amid modern developments.

As the London skyline was fading into the distance, in 1994, our maverick Anand Jacob Verghese, touched down on Indian soil, transformed. "Stepping off the plane felt like stepping onto a giant chessboard," he mused, "where every move was a chance to bring world-class tactics to the local game." Fresh from his studies in London, he was ready to take on new responsibilities back in India. His return marked a significant shift for the Hindustan Group of Institutions (HGI). The quiet student who had once wandered the streets of London was now stepping into a leadership role. Among the many tasks awaiting him, one stood out prominently: the Orient Flight School.

The Orient Flight School, established in Pondicherry in 1994, was the brainchild of Anand's father, Dr. K.C.G. Verghese. The elder Verghese had started Air Asiatic, India's



Returning from London after his MBA, ready to apply his newfound knowledge and skills.



Anand with his Chief Pilot after a flight on the Beechjet, highlighting the practical aspects of aviation training at Orient Flights.

first private airline, and soon realized the need for a robust aviation training program to address the acute shortage of trained pilots in India. Thus, Orient Flight School was born, aiming to fill this gap and provide top-quality aviation education.

Anand's return home wasn't just a homecoming; it was the beginning of a new chapter in his life and in the history of HGI. Taking charge of Orient Flight School was like navigating uncharted territory. His initial days were filled with hands-on work, learning the intricacies of aviation training. He spent countless hours on the tarmac, working alongside aircraft mechanics in the sweltering sun. He learned about engine maintenance, aircraft painting, and the logistical challenges of running a flight school. This was not just a desk job; it was an immersive experience that required him to roll up his sleeves and get his hands dirty.

Anand recalls those early days vividly. "In those early days, I was often covered in aviation fumes. It was hard work, but it was necessary. We couldn't afford downtime. Every minute a plane was on the ground was a minute lost in training future pilots," he says. Although he had only just arrived in India, Anand's efforts for the Orient had actually begun during his days in the UK. He remembers how one day, during his MBA studies in the UK, he received an unexpected call from his father. Out of the blue, he was tasked with inspecting aircraft in Helsinki as part of a plan to start a pilot training school back home. With little knowledge of the developments, he embarked on this sudden adventure, connecting with an agency in the UK and organizing a trip to Finland. His excitement was palpable as he arranged the visa and other formalities, despite having no clue where Helsinki was.

Upon arriving in Helsinki and staying at an airport hotel, he was taken to see the airplanes in a hangar. To his surprise, everything was dark due to the winter season, making the experience quite unique. Dr. Verghese had hoped for a joyride, but the snowy conditions prevented it. Instead, he diligently inspected the aircraft, despite the logbooks being in Finnish and filled with technical jargon he was unfamiliar with. He documented everything, recommended translating the documents into English, and coordinated with the consultant on the deal. Despite the gloomy surroundings, his sojourn in Helsinki became a memorable chapter in his life, filled with challenges, new experiences, and the satisfaction of completing an unexpected mission.

His childhood friend Madan, who often visited the tarmac, shares a detailed account of Anand's hands-on leadership. "Whenever a plane was serviced or overhauled, he would sit with the aircraft mechanics in the hot sun on the tarmac, getting the planes either painted or the engines

overhauled. He was there with them, hands-on, sleeves rolled up, smelling of aviation fumes most of the time. It was hard to believe this was the same guy who had just returned from studying abroad."

Madan continues, "Anand would take an active interest in learning about how to work on the different parts of the planes. In those days, importing components or parts for the planes wasn't easy. He would come back to the office, sit with importers, and work tirelessly to get the necessary parts in time. He was meticulous in ensuring that the planes were airborne as quickly as possible because so many students were waiting to fly. It was a different side of him – someone who wasn't afraid to get his hands dirty to ensure everything ran smoothly."

At the heart of this ambitious venture was a dedicated core team comprising Anand, his father Dr. K.C.G. Verghese, and a close family friend, Samar Gupta. This trio was the backbone of Orient Flight School, combining their expertise, vision, and relentless drive to turn their dream into reality.

FACING CHALLENGES HEAD-ON

The path to success was not smooth. Anand faced numerous challenges, both bureaucratic and operational. Convincing seasoned professionals to adopt new technologies and methods was a significant hurdle. Integrating modern teaching aids with traditional methods required a delicate balance. He approached these challenges with persistence and innovation.

"Having a plan B is good, but having plans C through Z could save you a semester's worth of headaches," he often remarked. His approach to overcoming obstacles involved a mix of deep research and relentless planning. Meetings often stretched into the wee hours, filled with brainstorming

sessions in what came to be known as the 'situation room.'

One of Anand's pivotal decisions was to integrate a comprehensive safety management program well before it was mandated by local authorities. "In the aviation business, cutting corners is not just bad form; it's downright dangerous. We're shaping future pilots here, not making paper planes!" he asserted. This forward-thinking move wasn't just about adhering to global standards; it was about setting a new benchmark in pilot training safety in India.

Anand knew that thorough knowledge of aviation regulations was critical for the success of the flight school. He immersed himself in the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) regulations, studying them with the zeal of a scholar. "I became the walking, talking DGCA encyclopaedia," he'd jest. His mastery of these regulations not only enhanced the



Inauguration of Orient Flights at Pondicherry, a significant step in expanding the horizons of aviation education.

curriculum but also ensured that the Orient Flight School was one of the safest and most compliant training centres in the region.

NAVIGATING THROUGH GLOBAL TURBULENCE

Just as Anand began to find his rhythm, the world was shaken by the events of September 11, 2001—a day that rewrote many rules, including those governing institutional security and student safety. For him and the Hindustan Group, this wasn't just news; it was a clarion call for an overhaul in how things were done.

"Post-9/11, the question wasn't if we should tighten our security measures, but how swiftly we could do it," Anand recalls. His approach was as meticulous as a pilot's pre-flight checklist. From installing state-of-the-art surveillance systems that could make the Pentagon proud to implementing

rigorous emergency drills that made fire exits as well-known as cafeteria menus, he ensured that safety wasn't just an add-on; it was embedded in the campus culture.

Anand's strategy was simple: blend seriousness with a spoonful of hard work. Under his watch, mock drills were as eagerly anticipated as annual fests, turning essential safety practices into campus events.

Implementing these sweeping changes wasn't just about adhering to new global standards; it was about setting a new benchmark for how educational institutions could operate in a post-9/11 world. "It was like planting new seeds in an ancient forest, but imagine the forest is an entire institution and the seeds are global safety standards," Anand shares.

Through the whirlwinds of change and the challenges of innovation, Anand's journey was a testament to the power of leading with both head and heart. His legacy was not forged in the quiet of boardrooms but in the everyday interactions where he turned challenges into opportunities for learning, growth, and occasional laughter.

As students and faculty navigated through the changes, they weren't just following a new set of rules; they were part of a larger narrative that Anand was weaving—a narrative that promised every young dreamer and aspiring pilot a chance to soar safely and confidently into their futures.

A HEARTFELT INCIDENT AND ITS AFTERMATH

In November 2015, just before the Chennai floods, Anand was in Mysuru for an inspection related to the certification of his flying school. Accompanying him was his childhood friend, Madan. As they were heading to the hangar, Madan started experiencing discomfort in the car. Initially brushing it off, it was Anand who recognized the symptoms of a heart attack. Acting quickly, he rushed Madan to Apollo Hospital



Anand with his father and little Enid along with faculty members and students beside an Orient Flights Aviation Academy aircraft.

in Mysuru.

During those days, the use of Google Maps was not widespread, making navigation a challenge. Anand organized an escort with two cars from the local college – one from the vice principal and another from the special officer – to ensure a swift and safe journey to the hospital. This quick thinking and prompt action saved Madan from further complications.

Following the heart attack incident, the Chennai floods struck in December 2015. Anand and Madan had to drive back to Chennai as air travel was disrupted due to the floods. The roads were treacherous, but Anand's navigational skills ensured they avoided flooded areas and reached Chennai safely.

Upon reaching Chennai, Anand immediately got involved in relief efforts. He organized 25,000 food packets for the affected villages near the university campus. The power was out, and resources were scarce, but our protagonist's leadership ensured that aid reached those in need. The relief camp set up by the university became a hub for distributing essentials like food, water, and blankets.

TRANSFORMING ORIENT FLIGHT SCHOOL

Under Anand's leadership, Orient Flight School underwent a significant transformation. In 2015, the entire facility was relocated to Mysuru, becoming the Orient Flights Aviation Academy (OFAA). This move was part of a broader vision to provide top-quality aviation education to aspiring pilots. The new campus in Mysuru offered state-of-the-art facilities, including advanced flight simulators, modern classrooms, and well-equipped maintenance workshops.

The academy's curriculum was designed to be comprehensive and dynamic. It combined traditional subjects with modern teaching methods, focusing on critical

thinking, creativity, and practical skills. Anand introduced a range of extracurricular activities, from arts and sports to community service, ensuring that students received a well-rounded education.

One of the notable aspects of OFAA was its diverse array of courses. The academy offered training in flying, maintenance, and airport operations, covering essential licenses such as Private Pilot License (PPL) and Commercial Pilot License (CPL). Specialized programs like Advanced Flight Simulation, Aviation Management, and Aircraft Maintenance Engineering were also introduced to meet the industry's evolving needs.

Safety was a core philosophy at OFAA. The academy's fleet included nine aircraft, comprising single-engine and multi-engine planes. The Cessna 172R Skyhawk, equipped with Garmin glass cockpits, was a standout, offering students



Orient Flights Aviation Academy has a fleet of 9 Aircraft which includes 8 Single Engine Aircraft-6 Cessna 172, 2 Cessna 152 and a Multi Engine Aircraft-Tecnam P2006T



training experiences similar to those in commercial airlines. The academy's partnership with ALSIM Simulators, France, provided trainees with real-time flying experiences through advanced flight simulators.

OFAA was also approved by DGCA to operate a fully functional Aircraft Maintenance Organization, ensuring reliable and effective maintenance of aircraft. The academy's commitment to safety and adherence to high aviation standards earned it several accolades, including the Best Flying School in India by ASSOCHAM in 2023 and the Best Aviation Training Institute by Times Education in 2018.

The academy's reputation grew, attracting international students from Africa and Arab countries with an impressive safety record. Over the past 29 years, OFAA trained more than 600 pilots who went on to serve in prestigious airlines

worldwide. The academy's comprehensive training programs and commitment to excellence ensured that its graduates were well-prepared for successful careers in aviation.

Anand's vision extended beyond training pilots. He introduced IATA-certified training programs to meet the needs of the aviation industry, including Cabin Crew Training, Ground Staff Training, and Flight Dispatcher Training. These programs equipped students with the skills required to excel in various aviation roles.

Anand's leadership was characterized by his ability to blend tradition with innovation. He maintained the core values instilled by his father while embracing new technologies and methodologies. His approach was not just about meeting industry standards but setting new ones. He ensured that OFAA remained at the forefront of aviation education, continuously evolving to meet the demands of the industry.

One of Anand's significant contributions was his focus on practical learning. The academy exceeded DGCA's ground training requirements, offering over 372 hours of training for CPL students. This rigorous training prepared students not just for regulatory exams but also for success in airline interviews.

OFAA's success was also attributed to its valuable partnerships with global aviation institutions. Collaborations with ALSIM in France and other international organizations provided students with opportunities for exchange programs and international exposure. These partnerships enhanced the learning experience, broadening students' horizons and deepening their understanding of global aviation practices.

In 2021, OFAA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Tamil Nadu Government to establish a new Flight Training Organization (FTO) in Tamil Nadu. This

collaboration aimed to enhance flight training opportunities in the state, contributing significantly to the growth and development of the aviation sector in Tamil Nadu.

Currently, with Abel Mathew Prasad at the helm as Vice President of Orient Flights, the institute continues to soar to new heights of excellence and achievement.

Anand Jacob Verghese's journey from a student in London to a leader at the helm of HGI is a testament to his dedication, resilience, and vision. His transformation from a silent student to a significant person prepared to lead was marked by hard work, innovative thinking, and an unwavering commitment to excellence.

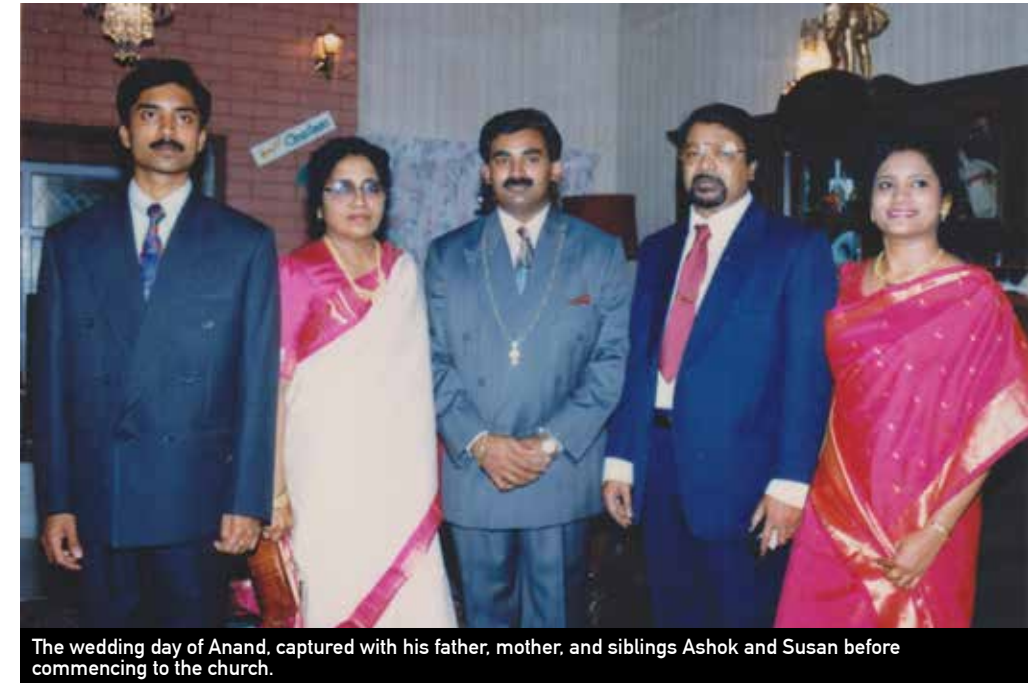
**"THE REAL
JOURNEY
BEGINS WHEN
YOU RETURN
HOME."**

— DR. ANAND JACOB VERGHESE

Chapter 5

The Educator's Equation: FAMILY + WORK

As Anand Jacob Verghese took control of the vast empire of Hindustan Group, his mind was not only focused on revolutionizing the Indian educational scene but also on forging a fulfilling family life. The next step was the holy matrimony with Annie, a woman from a deeply traditional Kerala family. It was as though a live wire had met a calm sea—sparks were inevitable, but so was the synthesis of something enduring.



In the bustling corridors of Hindustan Group, where tales of academic pursuits and entrepreneurial dreams are as common as filter coffee, there lies a lesser-told but equally captivating story of how Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese met his match, quite literally, in the vibrant Annie.

The saga began somewhat unromantically, with Anand poring over several matrimonial proposals, none of which seemed to catch his fancy—at least not until Annie's profile came along. "Imagine trying to find a match when all you've got are addresses and mutual acquaintances' testimonies," he smiles as he recounts the early days of matrimonial explorations.

His initial reluctance stemmed not from her profile but from a sheer lack of enthusiasm about connecting with someone from a background so different from his own. "Kerala was as familiar to me as abstract art is to a mathematician,"

Anand jokes, "and I was as prepared to meet her with some palpable nervousness as one might be for a pop quiz on a Monday morning."

Their first meeting was set in a resort, chosen for its scenic beauty but remembered for its overpowering smell of mosquito repellent. "The whole place smelled like it was ready for a mosquito apocalypse," he recalls with a grimace. The setting might have been less than ideal, with the buzz of mosquitoes only slightly less deafening than the awkward silences that filled their initial conversation.

"I was there, trying to make sense of this meeting, and there she was, smart and composed, while I was distracted by a tennis match playing in the background," Anand admits. The conversation was sporadic, interrupted not just by the ongoing match but by his own reservations about how well they would mesh.

Despite the rocky start, a familial nudge prompted Anand to give the potential match another chance. "Her family insisted, and out of respect, I went to meet her again, this time at her home in Trivandrum, now known as Thiruvananthapuram." The second meeting was far more promising. Removed from the chaos of mosquito sprays and the distractions of tennis matches, he found himself genuinely engaged in conversation with Annie. "It was different this time. We actually talked, and I started to see her not just as a name on a proposal but as a person."

Their engagement soon followed— a decision that felt more like stepping into a new chapter of a book that Anand was suddenly eager to read. "We flew from hesitant acquaintances to fiancés quicker than I ever imagined," he shares with a smile. "And those long phone calls that followed, they weren't just talks; they were where we laid the foundation of our life together."

"So, if you think my life's been all about education and innovation," Anand concludes with a twinkle in his eye, "remember, it's also been about finding love in the most unexpected places, and yes, sometimes even while trying to swat away mosquitoes."

Their marriage, arranged by enthusiastic families who probably loved matchmaking more than matrimony itself, was less of a quiet agreement and more of a festive merger of two distinct cultures. Annie, with her roots deeply embedded in the traditions of Kerala, brought to the table a rich tapestry of cultural norms and values, quite a contrast to Anand's whirlwind lifestyle fuelled by entrepreneurial zeal. Annie perceived their distinct union as a vibrant and resilient foundation, one that would support and enrich their shared path through the intricate journey of life's myriad complexities.

"Our marriage was like the confluence of two rivers— distinct in their origins but aiming for the same sea," Annie fondly recalls during a family festival with grandparents included as well, where laughter was served as generously as the tea.

"Anand liked to spend Sundays brainstorming about educational reforms, while I enjoyed a quiet afternoon weaving with my old loom," Annie recalls with a smile. Their differences were clear but added variety to their life— sometimes causing minor conflicts but mostly making their life together more interesting. "Imagine me as the balloon and Annie as the string; she keeps me from floating away into the stratosphere!"

Anand's commitment to education was mirrored in his dedication to family. Despite the whirlwind of his professional life, he was a rock for Annie and their children, anchoring them with his unwavering support and vision. "He was the



Anand and his wife, Dr. Annie Jacob, on their wedding reception, a cherished moment marking the beginning of their journey together.

sort of man who could give a lecture on cross wind landings and still remember to buy the perfect mangoes on his way back home because he knew they were my favourite," Annie shares at a family dinner, eliciting chuckles around the table.

"Our story isn't just about educational entrepreneurship," Anand would say, "it's about creating a symphony where each note contributes to a harmonious life melody." In this symphony, every note mattered—from the lessons taught in classrooms to the stories told at the dinner table.

As the years unfurled like the pages of a well-loved book, Anand and Annie's journey together illustrated that the true strength of a leader lies not just in professional success but in creating a life where family and work dance in tandem. Their life story was a beacon for young dreamers looking to navigate the complex waters of career and home, proving that with a bit of humour, a lot of love, and an unyielding zest

for innovation, it's possible to sail even the mightiest seas with ease.

WORK-LIFE SYMPHONY

Shortly after marriage, Annie, with her studious nature and diligent approach, soon took charge of the Hindustan College of Arts and Science, while Anand steered the ship at the HGI. "She was very meticulous one, and I, well, was keen on helping her any way I could," he says, reflecting on their early days of working together within the same educational empire.

Dr. Annie Jacob, an IITian and the Director of KCG College of Technology, and Anand's better half, is an epitome of grace and grit. Steering one of the premier technology institutions, she infuses innovation with empathy, crafting an academic culture that is rigorous yet nurturing. "We're not just teaching technology; we're inspiring innovators," Annie would remind her team, pushing the boundaries of traditional education.

Originally known as National Institute of Technology and Science, the institution faced a pivotal moment when a new government regulation prohibited private colleges from using the word "National" in their names. Demonstrating his quick wit and intelligence, Dr. Anand suggested renaming the college after his father, Dr. K.C.G. Verghese, a decision that proved to be both insightful and fortuitous.

Under Dr. Annie's dynamic leadership, the college underwent significant transformations. Her strategic initiatives and innovative approaches reshaped the college's operations, elevating its standards and reputation. Over the past 15 years, she has meticulously steered the college to become a top-ranked institution, a testament to her visionary leadership and dedication. Today, KCG College of Technology stands as a symbol of excellence and progress, reflecting Dr. Annie's relentless pursuit of academic and technological

advancement.

Dr. Annie is the powerhouse behind the technological innovations that propelled KCG College of Technology to the forefront of education in Chennai.

FAMILIAL BLISS

“Remember the time Papa turned a chat about the weather into a lesson on climate change?” their daughter would chuckle, recalling how a simple rainy day sparked a family project on environmental science. Anand’s ability to weave education into everyday moments was nothing short of magical.

The foundation of Anand’s approach to family life was an amalgamation of his parents’ valuable teachings and his own diverse experiences. Despite the whirlwind of meetings and strategic planning, home was a sanctuary of warmth and understanding. Here, Annie shone brightly, her management acumen steering the family ship with a deft touch, ensuring that while the sails were set high towards innovation, they remained anchored in timeless values.

In the heart of their home, beneath the laughter and over the clatter of dinner plates, lay the bedrock of the future of their children Enid and Tiya. It was a common sight to see the children present ideas at the dinner table, which Anand would nurture into full-blown educational initiatives. “Our living room has seen more pitches than a baseball field,” he would joke, yet pride sparkled in his eyes.

Anand’s spiritual life, while less visible to outsiders, is a cornerstone of his ethical framework. He might skip regular church visits, but his days start with a quiet prayer and contemplation. “He doesn’t wear his faith on his sleeve,” Annie explains, “but it’s woven into every decision he makes, like a silent thread holding everything together.”

His ardent involvement and meticulous planning in buildings of churches in Chennai and a chapel within the university campus for the students and faculty, emulates his faith.

The spiritual moments are often light-hearted yet profound. Anand jokes about how his prayers often include a request for a “daily dose of patience,” especially when dealing with the more challenging aspects of school administration. “God must have a sense of humour to deal with my daily complaints,” he laughs during a family gathering, “and thankfully, he hasn’t run out of patience with me yet!”

Sundays were special—not just for their breakfast feasts but for their spiritual sustenance. Although morning church visits were not as common as they should be for Anand, he practiced his faith with actions that spoke volumes. The children observed and often mirrored his actions, learning that faith was less about words and more about deeds.

“Our home is where values aren’t just taught; they’re lived,” Annie would often say. She played a pivotal role not just in managing the home but in ensuring it was a greenhouse where every family member, from the youngest to the oldest, could grow. Whether it was nurturing the kids’ academic interests or managing the intricate dance of family dynamics, she did it all with a grace that made it seem almost effortless.

Anand’s visionary ideas and Annie’s practical approach made their home a place for both innovation and personal growth. Their home showed that education wasn’t just limited to classrooms but was a lively, everyday part of their lives.

INFLUENCE OF FAMILY

Anand Jacob Vergheese, a visionary in the educational field, has often attributed his successes not solely to his own efforts but to the strong partnership with his wife, Annie. With



Graduation Day at KCG College of Technology, year 2016, with Director IIT Madras Dr. Bhaskar Ramamurthi and Dr. Elizabeth Vergheese, marking a moment of family pride and academic achievement.

Annie's background in management, she brought more than just love to their marriage; she brought a tactical prowess that often-turned his lofty ideas into tangible successes.

Their relationship is more than just marital bliss; it's a dynamic collaboration that has navigated through the storms of running a vast educational network. Annie's keen insights and pragmatic approach have helped their ventures align with international standards, often pre-empting and solving problems before they could disrupt their growth.

In the Vergheese household, education and innovation are not confined to the classrooms; they spill over into every conversation, be it over meals or casual family gatherings. Their children, raised in an environment where creative thinking and problem-solving are the norms, have naturally absorbed these traits. "Our kids don't just bring home report cards; they bring home seeds for a brighter future" Anand

says proudly.

One memorable early morning breakfast turned into an impromptu pitch session when their ten-year-old daughter, inspired by a school friend's plight, proposed a scholarship program. Clutching a syrup bottle like a microphone, she declared, "Everyone should get the chance to learn, just like me!" Moved by her passion and the sticky fingerprints she left on the proposal, the family launched what is now a thriving scholarship fund, testament to their commitment to education and equality.

Anand's life is a vivid bundle of ambitious educational reforms interwoven with a deeply rooted family life. The Vergheese home is a blend of chaos and calm, where academic discussions are as likely as debates on the latest tennis match.

During these sessions, every family member, regardless of age, is encouraged to share ideas. "It's our own little think tank," Anand quips. "The syrup isn't just for the pancakes; it's to sweeten our suggestions!"

These breakfasts have sparked numerous initiatives, like the impromptu scholarship program championed by their daughter. Each session reinforces the family's values of inclusion, action, and a dash of humour. "You haven't experienced true chaos until you've seen a syrup bottle used as a gavel," Anand laughs, recalling the morning his daughter made her successful pitch.

Their life together not only shapes their own futures but also inspires all who aspire to integrate meaningful work with a fulfilling family life, proving that with the right mix of love, laughter, and learning, anything is possible.

MY FATHER, MY COMPASS: LESSONS IN LIFE AND LIVING

For Anand Jacob Vergheese, his father was more than just

a parent; he was a compass that guided him through every storm and sunshine. If you asked him, he'd laugh and say, "My Papa was my Google Maps in the days before smartphones—always showing me the way!"

Anand's father had the unique gift of turning every lesson into a lively conversation. "Papa was the king of 'dad jokes' before they were even a thing," he would recount with a sparkle in his eye. Whether they were negotiating business strategies or choosing which mangoes were ripe at the market, his father's wisdom was always peppered with humour. "He could negotiate prices with a vendor and teach me market economics all while making everyone around laugh their heads off."

In business, Anand's father was not just a guide but a visionary leader. From the big decisions about expanding their educational empire to the minute details like the colour of the curtains in the office, his father's influence was profound. "He had a rule," he explains. "If you're going to spend hours in a room, might as well make it a colour that doesn't bore you to death!"

Their personal life was filled with lessons taught not just through words but through shared activities. Anand fondly recalls their Sunday tennis matches, where each move was a lesson in strategy and patience. "He always challenged me," he smiles, "and then mercilessly defeated me in the next ten. His way of teaching me resilience!"

In the heart of Chennai, in a home filled with the rich aromas of his mother's cuisine and the sound of hearty laughter, young Anand Verghese grew up under the guiding light of his father, Dr. K.C.G. Verghese. These were not just any ordinary days; they were chapters of a vibrant story being written with every lesson, every meal, and every discussion around the sturdy dining table where the Verghese family

gathered each day.

Sunday mornings in the Verghese household were particularly special. As the dawn broke, the kitchen would buzz with activity, the air filled with the sizzle of appams on the hot tawa. Anand's father, an educator and visionary in his own right, believed in starting the day on a nourishing note—both for the body and the mind. "Breakfast is more than just the first meal; it's the first lesson of the day," he would say, deftly flipping an appam while illustrating how the principles of elasticity in economics could be seen in the appam's ability to be both crispy and soft.

These breakfasts became legendary not just for the delicious food but for the debates that accompanied them. Each appam served was an opportunity to open discussions on a wide range of topics, from the intricacies of global politics to the latest trends in technology. Anand's father had a unique talent for connecting everything back to lessons in life and management, making every meal a dynamic learning experience.

"Papa could link anything to a life lesson—even an appam," Anand recalls. "See how it's soft and spongy, yet holds its shape? That's flexibility and adaptability. That's what you need in life and in business."

But the lessons weren't confined to the dining table. They extended to every corner of Anand's life, particularly through the way his father interacted with others. Whether it was a high-powered CEO or the local milkman, Dr. Verghese treated everyone with the same level of respect and integrity. Watching his father, he learned that true respect was universal and not reserved for those from whom one had something to gain.

These interactions weren't just observed by Anand but were actively discussed.

Anand's close friend Madan recalls one such story. "Once, we had sent an 8-foot tuna to their house. Anand had arranged a special truck to transport it from the fishing market. As the fish was being unloaded, KCG uncle asked Anand if he knew where to catch tuna. They then discussed thermocline, a term known in tuna fishing. It's where hot waters from the equator and cold waters from the north meet, creating an environment rich in microorganisms that attract small fish, which in turn attract tuna." This conversation showed their deep knowledge of such niche topics.

On quiet evenings, sitting on the veranda, his father would reflect on his day, sharing stories of the people he met, emphasizing the importance of sincerity in every handshake and every look in the eye. "It's easy to look respectful," his father would say, "but to be respectful—now that's something you have to practice every day, in every encounter."

**"THE STRENGTH
OF A NATION
DERIVES FROM
THE INTEGRITY
OF THE HOME."
— CONFUCIUS**



Air Deccan Chief Mr. Gopinath with Dr. Anand and Dr. Elizabeth.



Visionary collaboration captured: Anand, his father, and team strategizing transformative plans for the future.



In his convocation gown after receiving his degree from Huron University.



Anand embracing equestrian excellence at the prestigious Horse Riding Club of HITS.



The unbreakable bond between siblings: Dr. Anand with his brother Ashok.



Pioneering international collaboration: Anand, Dr. Annie, and team charting the course at the Bahrain Project meeting.



Love for vintage cars: Austin Seven Ruby 1936 from his growing collection.



Dr. Anand and Dr. Elizabeth with Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Shri M. K. Stalin.



Celebrating 25 years of aviation excellence with Orient Flights Aviation Academy's entire batch and dedicated faculty.



The Chevrolet Fleetmaster 1946 from Anand's vintage car collection.



Dr. Anand with Indian jurist Markandey Katju, celebrating a legacy of legal and educational excellence.



The prestigious Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi Makkal Thalaivar Moopanar Award ceremony where Anand was awarded.



Dr. Anand with Chief Minister of Kerala, Shri Pinarayi Vijayan, strengthening pivotal educational collaborations.



Dr. Anand along with Dr. Elizabeth and other dignitaries on the convocation day at Hindustan University.



Anand with Cavinkare MD CK Ranganathan, fostering vital industry-academia partnerships at Hindustan University.



Honoring Dr. KCG Verghese's enduring legacy with a statue unveiling, joined by Pallath Joseph Kurien and dignitaries.



In a conversation with esteemed scientist A. Sivathanu Pillai, highlighting a moment of scientific camaraderie.



Visionary collaboration captured: Anand, his father, and team strategizing transformative plans for the future.



On the field: Aviation excellence at Orient Flights Aviation Academy.



Inauguration of the Founder's Block: Anand along with P.J. Kurien, former Union Minister and Rev. Dr. Zacharias.



Picture perfect family canvas: Anand, his wife, kids, and the families of his brother Ashok, sister Susan, and Dr. Elizabeth Vergheese.



Marking a moment of lifelong friendship: Anand along with a friend from his college days.



The faculty and guests with Dr. Anand, celebrating a legacy of educational excellence at Hindustan University.



A Chapel built in Hindustan Campus by Dr. Anand, a man who practices his faith by actions.



Dr. Anand and members of The Institution of Engineers (India) at a meeting.



Pioneering collaboration: Dr. Anand at the 70th Annual General Meeting of the Aeronautical Society of India.



Moment of pride: Anand and Annie at their daughter Tiya's convocation.



Proud family: Celebrating at Enid's convocation ceremony.



Forging partnerships: MOU signing ceremony with Lanson Toyota.



A memory to cherish along with batchmates on the convocation day at Huron University.



Anand's sister-in-law Eliza with her husband Matthew and kids Sophia and Teresa.



Anand captured by his friend during a College trip.

Chapter 6

Soaring Beyond Limits: THE ODYSSEY OF TRANSFORMATION

Anand Jacob Verghese faced a profound personal crisis. His father, Dr. K.C.G. Verghese, the visionary founder of the Hindustan Group of Institutions, was in the hospital. He was constantly updated on his father's condition while managing the critical inspections for university status. On February 14, 2006, his father passed away, leaving behind the unrealized dream of converting his college into a university. Anand felt as if the very sky he aspired to conquer in his aviation dreams had crashed down upon him.

The unexpected passing of Dr. K.C.G. Verghese in 2006 sent shockwaves through the family. The man who had been the pillar of their lives, their North Star, was suddenly gone. The house felt quieter, the mornings less bright. For Anand, this loss was not just emotional but also a profound turning point in his life.

"I felt adrift, like a ship without a compass," Anand recalls, but he found solace in his father's teachings, choosing to honor his memory by embracing life fully.

Thrust unexpectedly into the mantle of leadership as the new CEO, Anand faced the Herculean task of assuming the leadership role. "The day I lost my father, I found my purpose," he later reflected in a tone that mixed resolve with a touch of wistfulness.

"My father used to say, 'Education is the movement from darkness to light.' I found myself holding the torch, along with the help of my brother Ashok, not just to light up the path for our students but for our entire community," Anand shared in an interview, his voice tinged with both pride and pressure.

With his mother assuming the role of chairperson, Anand was suddenly at the helm, directing an educational empire that spanned various disciplines and institutions. His primary challenge? Transforming the Hindustan College of Engineering into the prestigious Hindustan University—a dream his father had envisaged but never seen realised.

Anand's leadership at the Hindustan Group of Institutions began to reflect his familial values more intensely. He implemented programs emphasizing integrity and respect, established scholarships for underprivileged students, and initiated community outreach programs. "Education is about empowering people to make a difference," he often said, continuing the legacy and weaving his memory into the fabric

of countless lives.

The transformation was full of bureaucratic challenges that tested his patience and resolve. "It seemed like for every step forward, we took two steps back," he said with a smile. "But giving up meant giving up on our dreams, and I wasn't going to let that happen on my watch!"

One of the more tangible challenges was the relocation of their esteemed flying school from Pondicherry to Mysore. This move wasn't just a logistical shift over 350 kilometres but a significant leap towards broadening their aviation training capabilities. This transition offered a broader scope and greater opportunities, Anand shared during one of his many road trips to Mysore, each journey contributing a little to his commitment to this expansive vision.

Perhaps Anand's most personal challenge was ensuring his siblings felt valued and integrated into the vision for the future. He made sure to foster a spirit of inclusiveness, with a leadership style that emphasised consensus over command.

"We'd have these family councils, kind of like our own little parliament, but less shouting and more laughing," he recalled.

OVERCOMING GRIEF WITH GROWTH

As Anand navigated through his grief, he channeled it into building a legacy for the future. In 2006, amidst the backdrop of profound personal loss, he faced the formidable challenge of immortalising his father's legacy through the launch of his autobiography in the same year. This endeavour was not merely about chronicling a life well-lived, but celebrating the monumental impact of Dr. K.C.G. Vergheese on education and society.

Two years later, in 2008, Anand's efforts and his father's dreams saw a monumental realisation with the transformation



of the Hindustan College of Engineering into Hindustan University. The inauguration day was charged with a mix of grandeur and solemnity, a celebration of progress shadowed by the absence of the very person who had envisioned this growth. As he stood at the podium, overlooking a crowd of eager faces—students, faculty, and distinguished guests—the weight of the moment settled upon him. "We did it, Papa," he whispered into the microphone, his voice full with emotion. This sincere acknowledgment deeply moved the audience, bringing tears not only to his family but also to those who had known and respected his father.

Achieving the university status marked a significant milestone in Anand's journey as a leader. He demonstrated not just his capability to lead but his profound commitment to honour and build upon the foundations laid by his



Anand with former Governor of Kerala Shri Raghunandan Lal Bhatia and Shri Praful Patel, Member of Rajya Sabha, at the launch of Dr. KCG Verghese's Autobiography.

predecessor.

As the loss began to take hold, a period of innovation and inspiration emerged. Anand Jacob Verghese not only broadened the geographical and academic scope of his educational institutions but also expanded the emotional and inspirational reach of his family and community.

"Every new building, every new course, and every new student at Hindustan University is a leaf on the mighty Banyan tree. We're all striving for greatness together," he concludes, his eyes full of hope and a smile hinting at future ambitions.

BUILDING BLOCKS OF A DREAM: HINDUSTAN INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

The Hindustan Institute of Engineering Technology's tale began in 1966 in Chennai, under the pioneering vision of Dr. K.C.G. Verghese. Known for its top-notch Aircraft

Maintenance Engineering (AME) program, the institute quickly soared to new heights. What started as the Hindustan Engineering Training Centre (HETC) in 1966 was transformed into the Hindustan Institute of Engineering Technology in 1980, expanding its horizons and welcoming a broader range of engineering marvels.

In 1994, Anand joined his father on this exhilarating journey. With renewed energy and a futuristic vision, he took on the leadership mantle, propelling the institute into a new era of innovation and success. His dynamic approach made sure the adventure of education was always full of excitement.

The new campus at Padappai wasn't just an expansion; it was a game-changer. It was equipped with cutting-edge facilities, advanced laboratories, workshops, and training setups, creating a perfect playground for budding engineers and technicians. The state-of-the-art environment ensured students were well-prepared for the challenges of the modern world.

Anand's leadership caught global attention. Governments from Kenya, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, along with international bodies like the Commonwealth Secretariat, began sponsoring students to learn at Hindustan Institute of Engineering Technology. The institute has trained over 47,000 engineers and technicians till date, with more than 5,000 alumni soaring in airlines and aviation industries worldwide.

In 2018, the Hindustan Institute of Engineering Technology Aviation College reached new heights, aligning itself with the latest regulatory standards akin to the EASA standards. This certification cemented its place as a leading institution in aviation maintenance training, ensuring graduates met the highest benchmarks in aviation safety and maintenance.

The most recent feather in its cap came in 2022, when the Aviation College was approved to conduct training in Cat B1.3

(Helicopter Turbine). A partnership with Deccan Charters Pvt Ltd. highlighted the institute's unwavering commitment to expanding its offerings and maintaining its position at the cutting edge of aviation education.

Anand Jacob Vergheese's leadership breathed new life into the institute. His relentless pursuit of excellence and innovation led to the introduction of groundbreaking programs and facilities. Under his guidance, HIET became a recognized gem in the Asian and African continents, a beacon of technical brilliance.

Anand's vision extends beyond traditional education. He aims to craft an institution that fosters not just technical know-how but also innovation and entrepreneurship. His strategic initiatives and collaborations have placed Hindustan Institute of Engineering Technology at the forefront of technical education, continuously evolving and adapting to industry needs.

The journey from its humble beginnings to its status as a premier technical institution is a testament to Anand Jacob Vergheese's visionary leadership. Today, the institute continues to shine, driven by innovation, quality, and the dream of making every student a success story.

FORGING NEW FRONTIERS: THE LEGACY OF INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE

Nestled in the vibrant heart of Chennai, the Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science stands as a beacon of educational excellence and visionary leadership. Dr. Anand Jacob Vergheese, the driving force behind this transformation, didn't just follow the traditional path—he paved a new path with a mix of audacity and innovation. "Managing a university expansion is akin to crafting the perfect cup of coffee," he remarked during a casual conversation. "It

demands a balance of boldness and patience, and it keeps you constantly engaged." With each new building and program, he meticulously shaped a landscape of learning and innovation.

Anand's vision was ambitious. He envisioned a vast campus, filled with buildings that were not merely structures but centers of potential. "Consider each department a dynamic environment," he would say. "Instead of traditional playground equipment, we have VR labs and AI centers."

The journey began by transforming empty plots into dynamic hubs. "First, we lay down the groundwork—our green campuses. Then we install the essential facilities—our tech labs and lecture halls. And there you have it, a space where minds can thrive."

"Vision keeps you engaged, quite literally," Anand reflected, his eyes reflecting the glow of his laptop screen during a late-night planning session. With a cup of coffee



Anand and his brother Ashok at a workshop, showcasing their shared passion for engineering.

in hand—his umpteenth of the night—he leaned back in his chair, pondering the road ahead. "Just as a strong coffee dispels morning haze, a clear vision cuts through uncertainty."

In these quiet hours, while much of the world slept, Anand found his determination tested yet reinforced by the vision that kept him vigilant. It was during one such moment of uncertainty that his brother Ashok stepped in, providing not just moral support but also sharing the leadership responsibilities.

Anand, grappling with the pressures before him, found an anchor in his brother Ashok. "Remember why we started this," Ashok would remind him during their late-night discussions. "It's not just about continuing what Papa began; it's about taking it to places he dreamed of." This partnership between the brothers became the cornerstone of Anand's success. Ashok's pragmatic approach to problems and his steadfast

belief in his brother's vision helped dispel any lingering doubts, bolstering Anand's resolve to push forward.

Together, they mapped out the future, their strategy sessions often stretching into the early hours of the morning. Each decision, from curriculum development to faculty recruitment, was meticulously planned. Their combined efforts gradually transformed the initial uncertainties into solid plans, laying down the tracks for the institution's growth.

This collaborative spirit extended beyond just the brothers. It seeped into the very fabric of the institution, fostering a culture of mutual respect and collective ambition among all stakeholders. Anand's leadership, guided by the clear vision he and his brother shared, began to inspire confidence across the board. The college not only stabilized but started to thrive, attracting students and faculty who were drawn to its renewed purpose and direction.

As the dawn crept up on another sleepless night, Anand looked out of his office window, the first light of morning reflecting a new day's promise. He smiled, a sense of accomplishment mingling with anticipation.

Under his leadership, Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science unveiled cutting-edge facilities reminiscent of a sci-fi narrative. "We're not simply imparting knowledge about the present world; we're equipping students for the future world," he articulated. Each new facility at Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science was conceived not merely for routine education but as arenas for discovery. Robotics labs reverberated with the whirring of automated arms, while computer rooms hummed with students coding not just projects but their own destinies.

As the digital age accelerated, Anand was quick to integrate emerging technologies into the curriculum. "We're not just building a university; we're building a launchpad for



A captivating live music concert at HIET, celebrating the vibrancy of campus life.

innovators," he declared during the unveiling of the new AI research centre.

The center bustled with activity, where ideas flowed like digital data streams. "This is where the real magic unfolds. Well, not the Harry Potter kind, but close!" Anand remarked, alluding to the transformative potential of AI.

Crafting courses was like meticulously planning a project for Anand. Each syllabus had to balance theoretical knowledge with practical application, ensuring students were both knowledgeable and prepared for practical tasks. "Imagine structuring a curriculum where every component contributes directly to essential skills and insights," he explained to an engaged audience at a conference.

Years into his journey, the once bare land had transformed into a bustling beacon of academia. Walking through the campus, one could see students from diverse backgrounds immersed in learning, their aspirations as high as the buildings around them.

"Look around you," Anand often concluded his speeches, his voice resonating through the halls of the university, "every brick laid, every interaction in our classrooms, every book in our library is part of a larger vision. It's not just any dream, but my father's singular vision—a future where education goes beyond mere learning and becomes a potent force for change. This campus, every corridor, and each classroom, is founded not just on concrete, but on a deep belief in the transformative power of education. Here, we don't just impart knowledge; we shape lives, inspire aspirations, and build futures."

Anand would often articulate his vision, describing how he envisioned an institution that transcended being merely an academy—it was to be a catalyst for profound change. "I see this place not just as a collection of buildings, but as a



dynamic community of scholars and innovators, thinkers and leaders, all united under one overarching purpose," he stated.

Expanding further, he would reflect on how every decision made at the university, from the curriculum design to the promotion of extracurricular activities, aligned with this expansive vision. "Every seminar we organize, every lab where our students conduct experiments, every debate they participate in is aimed at stretching their minds and enhancing their capabilities," Anand explained.

With evident passion in his voice, he continued, "It's a dynamic environment where we nurture potential, shape the leaders of tomorrow, and emphasize that education isn't just about acquiring knowledge, but applying it to improve the world."

As the sun set over the horizon, casting long shadows over the modern structures of Hindustan Institute of Technology



A serene view of the HIET campus in Padappai, Chennai.

& Science, Anand stood reflecting on the journey. It was about more than constructing buildings; it was about shaping futures, inspiring minds, and broadening horizons.

Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese aimed to lift Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science to new heights by leading, not following. After thorough discussion with Dr. Pon Ramalingam who was with the institution for the past 20 years, when he launched the MBA in Aviation Management program, it reflected the careful planning and precision of a skilled professional.

Forward-thinking and ahead of its time, Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science also holds the distinction of being the first college in India to introduce a BBA in Aviation Management.

Adding aviation wasn't just about updating the curriculum; it was a major step forward. Anand saw the sky as a wide-open

space for his vision. "Why just teach students to fly when we can teach them to excel?" he challenged his team, inspiring them with big goals.

With advanced simulators, engineering systems, and a curriculum meeting global standards, the aviation program at Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science aimed to produce not only skilled engineers but also future leaders in aviation innovation.

MORE THAN JUST AN EDUCATOR: THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

Beyond academia, Anand's philanthropic efforts shone brightly at Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science. Initiatives such as scholarships for underprivileged students, funding innovative student projects, and adopting rural schools reflected his commitment to creating a positive impact. "Education is the most powerful tool, and we're here to enhance its effectiveness," he frequently emphasized.

Today, as Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science continues to soar; it stands as a testament to Anand's belief in the power of education. The campuses buzz with the energy of students who are not just learning about the world but learning to change it.

Walking through the campuses of Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science, you see more than buildings; you see the realization of our protagonist's dreams and the hopes of many students. Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, with his innovative vision and relentless drive, has not just expanded an educational institution but has also broadened the horizons of what education can achieve.

"Every classroom, every lab, every brick here tells a story," Anand asserts, emphasizing that each narrative begins with a dream. His approach, infused with humor and unwavering dedication, continues to motivate not only students but also

educators who believe in the profound impact of learning.

Anand's journey exemplifies that with perseverance and innovation, there are boundless opportunities. He teaches us that education is about unlocking the potential within each individual. This narrative of transformation—from adversity to leadership, and from personal challenges to professional achievements—is more than just Anand Jacob Verghese's personal journey; it serves as both inspiration and a poignant reminder that growth often arises from our deepest struggles.

**"SOMETIMES, WHEN
YOU THINK THE SKY
HAS FALLEN, IT'S
JUST PREPARING
YOU FOR A BROADER
HORIZON."
— DR. ANAND JACOB VERGHESE**

Chapter 7

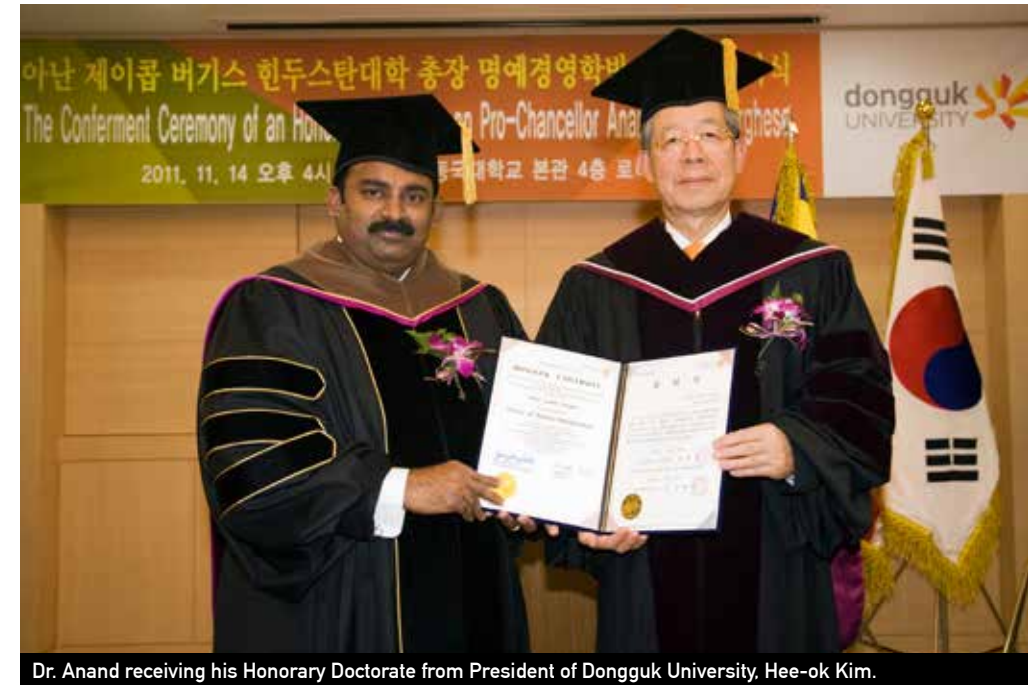
Hindustan Group of Institutions:

UPHOLDING A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE AND INTEGRITY

As a new day dawns in Chennai, the Hindustan Group Campuses spring to life with the eager footsteps and aspirations of young minds. Here, traditional values blend seamlessly with cutting-edge architecture, every corner and classroom echoing stories of ambition and achievement.

Over coffee, Dr. Anand imagines these campuses as launchpads for students to reach for the stars—both literally and figuratively—where fields like business, AI, fine arts, digital tech, health, science, and law converge, fostering a vibrant marketplace of ideas. He views learning as a grand adventure, textbooks as guides, and exams as conquerable challenges. Often jesting about his role as a "professional dreamer,"

he passionately supports his vision of empowering students to turn dreams into reality, emphasizing that in education, every day brings new opportunities for growth and discovery.



"Here's how I see it," Dr. Anand would begin, engaging his team with his flurry of ideas. "We're not just educating students; we're cultivating pioneers, innovators—individuals who will one day make Earth resilient to Mars or create robots that do homework."

Dr. Anand carried forward a legacy of educational excellence, driven by the motto of his father: "To make every man a success and no man a failure." Empowered by this guiding principle, he aimed to push educational boundaries.

His vision extended beyond mere education to exhilaration—a transformation from the ordinary to the extraordinary. "Why settle for commonness when we can aim for excellence?" he questioned, outlining his ambition to transform the educational landscape through industry-specific programs and international partnerships, akin to a



compelling academic storyline.

Creating this vision necessitated a team—not just any team, but a group of visionary thinkers and experts, each as distinctive as Dr. Anand himself. "Gathering the right team for this project was like assembling a crucial puzzle, where each person plays a vital role," he would jest. From his brother Dr. Ashok, an expert in education management, to his sister Dr. Susan, a physician and educational leader, each contributed their unique expertise to the effort.

Dr. Ashok, with his extensive experience and international exposure, was a master strategist who seamlessly integrated global perspectives into our local context. He often said, "International collaborations are crucial. When done right, they elevate our work to a new level." His approach made complex international dealings seem straightforward and manageable.

Dr. Susan, on the other hand, brought a touch of grace and a ton of grit to the team. Overseeing arts and sciences, she made sure that innovation wasn't just a buzzword but a practice. "We're here to open eyes, literally and metaphorically," she'd assert, her dual role as an ophthalmologist and an educator giving her insights a unique clarity.

And let's not forget Dr. Aby Sam, the Director at Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science who handles academic regulatory puzzles. "There is no one size that fits all in Education. Customization is key," he'd explain.

"In the early days of setting up simulators for pilot training," Dr. Anand would recall, "it felt like a challenging task, but we succeeded in not only teaching them to fly but also excel."

In this family of educators and dreamers, led by Dr. Anand, every challenge was an opportunity, and every day was a step towards a legacy of innovation and inclusivity. And as they rolled up their sleeves, they didn't just roll up their dreams to reality—they rolled up to creating a legacy where everyone was the protagonist of their own chapter, a legacy that was just as much about the journey as it was about the destination.

Dr. Anand and his team had not only established educational institutions but also fostered an environment of shared success and individual achievement.

BUILDING THE FUTURE: THE RISE OF HINDUSTAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY & SCIENCE

In the midst of Chennai stands Hindustan University, a symbol not just of academic excellence but of deep national pride. Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, reflecting on its significance, sees the name as a powerful link to India's heritage, for its promise to the future. Despite international suggestions for a name change to appeal globally, he staunchly upheld 'Hindustan'

as a legacy of identity and pride. This commitment resonates throughout the university's ethos, influencing everything from its curriculum to community engagement, fostering a sense of national belonging and inspiring students and faculty alike.

"In the world of change and uncertainty, our name is our bond," Dr. Anand concludes, looking out over the campus where the future of India is being shaped. "Here at Hindustan University, we don't just teach; we nurture the leaders of tomorrow, instilling in them a pride in their heritage and an unwavering faith in their potential."

And so, with the legacy of its name and the vision of its leaders, Hindustan University continues to forge a path of excellence, celebrating its identity, and inspiring a generation to uphold the values of their motherland, one student at a time.

In the grand legacy of Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science, every contribution by Dr. Anand Jacob Vergheese and his team enriched the educational landscape with innovation and distinction. Dr. Anand, known affectionately as the 'Chief Dream Weaver' at Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science, believed that seriousness when cut through with humor could not just be the best medicine but also the best innovative tool.

"At Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science, we don't just teach; we find creative ways to keep things interesting," Dr. Anand would say, his eyes gleaming with enthusiasm behind his glasses. He'd explain how his faculty made learning engaging, with physics lessons using pop culture and math classes feeling like solving mysteries. The campus was always buzzing with excitement.

One memorable incident involved an impromptu drone race organized by the students, overseen by enthusiastic

professors who were supposed to be conducting a serious lecture on aerodynamics. "Why just talk about lift and thrust when you can race drones and demonstrate them?" laughed Dr. Anand, recalling the day the lecture hall emptied into the field in record time.

Beyond the technical aspects like drones and solar panels, the true vitality of Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science stemmed from its community. The corridors bustled with the usual sounds of students hurrying to classes, occasionally punctuated by laughter. In his office, he hosted informal brainstorming sessions, which he fondly referred to as 'Giggle Sessions'. These meetings sometimes transitioned into storytelling sessions, with Dr. Anand remarking, "Occasionally, valuable ideas emerge amidst laughter!"

An anecdote that always brought a smile was about the time the engineering students decided to 'prank' their dean by converting his car into an electric vehicle overnight. "The dean wasn't sure if he should be furious or proud, but that's



Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam at the inauguration of Clean Energy and Nano Convergence, a pioneering event.



Receiving a lifetime achievement award on behalf of Dr. Elizabeth Vergheese from former CM of Andhra Pradesh Shri Konijeti Rosaiah.

the spirit of Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science—always electric, sometimes quite literally!"

"Innovation, imagination, and a bit of improvisation—that's our recipe for success here at Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science," Dr. Anand declares as he plans the next big project, which rumors say might involve rocket-propelled textbooks (or so he jests).

"Each student is like a seed; give them the right soil and a bit of sunshine, and they'll outgrow the pot you've planted them in," Dr. Anand would often say, proud of the organic growth fostered under his leadership. His vision was clear—create a continuum of education where students could seamlessly grow from kinder to researcher without ever needing to transplant to unfamiliar grounds.

With a leader like Dr. Anand at the helm, who believes that every day is an opportunity to learn something new,

Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science is not just building an educational empire; it's inspiring a revolution, one vibrant laugh and one visionary leap at a time.

The institution continues to evolve, embracing new technologies and pedagogies, but the core remains unchanged: a belief in the transformative power of education and a commitment to making learning an adventure.

A HUB OF POSSIBILITIES: THE HINDUSTAN UNIVERSITY

Today, this university is less like a traditional campus and more like a mini-cosmos of education where every building and every lab seems to pulse with innovation and the scent of fresh coffee. Think of education as a vast buffet. At Hindustan University, there's plenty to explore with multiple offerings. From the robust School of Engineering and Technology where budding engineers build bridges out of bytes and bolts, to the School of Planning, Architecture and Design Excellence where students sketch the skylines of tomorrow—this place has it all.

Diving deeper into this academic feast, we find the School of Liberal Arts and Applied Science—a place where Picasso meets Python programming. Then there's the School of Allied Health Sciences, where students learn to patch up people almost as well as they can patch up code. The School of Management is next, where future CEOs learn that the real 'profit' isn't just in money, but in leaving a lasting legacy.

The School of Pharmacy promises a potion for every problem, while the School of Law is busy grooming the next generation of legal eagles, ensuring they know their rights better than their lefts. The School of Vocational Programs, meanwhile, gets hands-on like a toddler with Play-Doh, crafting skills that fit the real world like a glove.

Now, if you think the schools are impressive, wait till you

hear about the Centres of Excellence. “These are not just centres; they’re more like launchpads. From composites to aerodynamics and smart grids, these centres aren’t just on the cutting edge—they’re often the ones sharpening it.

In 2022 alone, the campus buzzed with the launch of several new centres including ones focused on Aircraft Technical Publications and Embedded-VLSI Domain, “because why should cars and computers have all the fun?” Dr. Anand jests.

Amidst this whirlwind of innovation and learning sits the Office of International Affairs, like the university’s own Ministry of Magic. Here, the business of building bridges across continents is taken quite literally.

Whether it’s facilitating study abroad opportunities, welcoming International students, or setting up joint research, the OIA is all about extending the university’s reach, making sure that Hindustan University isn’t just known in Chennai or India, but across the world.

Every step from college to university was akin to hiking up a mountain—exciting, exhausting, and exhilarating. Dr. Anand recalls, “We didn’t just face challenges; we invited them over for tea and got them to tell us their secrets.”

This journey wasn’t just about adding more programs or building bigger buildings; it was about nurturing an environment where every student finds their purpose, every researcher their eureka, and every visitor a bit of awe.

As the day closes, and the shadows lengthen over the bustling campus, the blend of laughter and learning continues to echo through the air. Hindustan University stands not just as a beacon of higher education but as a community where innovation is routine, and the future is as bright as the screens in the tech lab.

“From college to university—it wasn’t a change; it was a metamorphosis,” Dr. Anand muses, his gaze sweeping over



the empire of education he has helped expand. “And in this revolution, we’re all both students and teachers.”

So, in the corridors of Hindustan University, where dreams don blueprints and ambitions wear lab coats, the adventure of education continues—full of challenges, charged with opportunities.

In this saga, the familial spirit of the institution shone the brightest. Dr. Anand’s mother stepped in as the Chancellor, embodying the grace and strength needed at the helm. “Having my mother as Chancellor was like having the family’s heart beating at the core of the university,” he shared, a testament to the family’s unity and dedication.

Today, as Dr. Anand looks out of his office window, with a slightly more cluttered desk and a view that stretches across a campus buzzing with innovation, he muses on the journey. In his own words, “Who says education can’t be an adventure?”

EXPANDING HORIZONS: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HINDUSTAN COLLEGE, MYSURU

In 2015, Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese embarked on the adventure of establishing Mysore College. It began with the ambitious plan of offering online courses through the Karnataka State Open University. However, like any good story, there were unexpected twists. Challenges with Karnataka State Open University led to a pivot towards University of Mysore-affiliated programs — a frontier which Anand was unfamiliar with and was assisted by Vivek his college friend from Bangalore, who helped him find his bearing in the unfamiliar terrain of Mysuru. The commerce and computer application

courses quickly gained popularity, but the business management course lagged behind. With his signature innovative flair, Dr. Verghese decided to introduce a unique BBA in Aviation Management, a course previously unheard of in Mysore. This bold move paid off as the University of Mysore promptly approved the curriculum. This moment of innovation reminded Dr. Verghese of the early days in 1994 when his father meticulously crafted the B.E. Aeronautical Engineering course, making their college the first private institution to offer it.

But Dr. Anand's plans didn't stop at academics. He knew that a well-rounded student life needed more. So, he championed top-tier hostel facilities and reliable transport services. He wanted amenities that catered to the practical needs of students from all backgrounds, enhancing their overall experience. The campus itself, a lush green expanse, was designed to inspire creativity and foster a sense of community. Nestled in nature's embrace, it's a place where learning and personal growth go hand in hand.

The excellence at Hindustan College, Mysuru, under Dr. Anand's leadership, soon caught everyone's attention. In 2021, the college was celebrated as the "Top & Most Trusted Degree College of the Year 2021 Karnataka" at the National Educational Excellence Awards and Conference. And that wasn't all. The college's innovative skill development programs earned it the "Skill Development Initiatives of the Year" award at the 7th Global Education & Skill Summit Leadership Award 2021. These accolades were a testament to the leader's relentless drive to provide outstanding education and build an environment of trust and reliability.

True to his style, Dr. Anand made sure life at Hindustan College, Mysuru, went beyond books and lectures. He championed a lively mix of extracurricular activities, from



Dr. Anand and faculty at the convocation ceremony at Hindustan College, Mysuru.

events to workshops and seminars. These were carefully designed to enrich students' academic journeys, nurture soft skills, and cultivate leadership qualities crucial in today's competitive world.

At its heart, Hindustan College, Mysuru, embodies Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese's vision to extend the educational legacy of the Hindustan Group. Through its specialized programs and holistic learning environment, the college has quickly become a beacon of educational excellence in Karnataka, drawing in ambitious learners and aspiring professionals from near and far.

As Hindustan College, Mysuru, thrives under Dr. Anand's dynamic guidance, it stays true to its mission: to empower every student to reach their highest potential. Rooted in a legacy of excellence and driven by a passion for innovation and community impact, the college is poised to shape future generations of knowledgeable leaders and entrepreneurial minds, ensuring a bright and promising future for all who step through its gates.

**"INNOVATION IS
THE CALLING CARD
OF THE FUTURE.
EDUCATION IS HOW
WE ANSWER THAT
CALL."
— DR. ANAND JACOB VERGHESE**

Chapter 8

The K-12 JOURNEY

“I love flying the most, but the schools that I have opened have been my calling.” Dr. Anand shares a thoughtful and revealing response, when asked about what excites him more—the thrilling world of aviation, the dynamic environment of the university, or the nurturing grounds of the schools. This chapter is truly a feather on the cap of Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, marking his ambitious expansion into school education—a vision brought to life from a dream once shared with his father.

Dr. Anand reflects on his aspiration to start a school, an endeavor that initially faced numerous challenges. The focus on university growth and the excitement of aviation seemed to overshadow the dream of school education. “Flying was exciting because every child, every boy gets attracted to cars or airplanes or something like that. But it was more exciting because the idea of creating pilots and making airplanes fly was a thrilling challenge.”

Yet, despite the allure of aviation, the seed of school education remained firmly planted in his mind. The necessity for quality schooling became more pressing when faced with logistical challenges—like the government’s acquisition of land for a flyover, which compelled the institution to find a new location. Amid these challenges, the idea of setting up an international school took root.

Dr. Anand recalls the early struggles and triumphs of establishing the dream school with world-class education. These memories are intertwined with stories and contributions from many people, including his childhood friend Madan.

The journey was anything but easy. When Dr. Anand first proposed the idea of starting the schools, he was met with scepticism from many quarters. The educational landscape was dominated by established institutions, and the thought of a new school making a mark seemed ambitious, if not impossible. But he was undeterred. He believed in his vision and was ready to face the challenges head-on.

The first hurdle was finding the right location. Dr. Anand spent countless hours scouting for a site that would be conducive to learning and growth. After months of searching, he found a piece of land in the heart of the city of Chennai for the existing Hindustan Institute of Engineering

Technology. It was perfect – spacious, serene, and with enough room to build a sprawling campus. But the real work was just beginning. A few years after his father's demise, the Hindustan Institute of Engineering Technology campus at St. Thomas Mount, Guindy was relocated, leaving the space vacant and available for new endeavours. This inspired him to repurpose the available space — a space that would go on to fulfil the dream of establishing a school.

Construction was fraught with delays and difficulties. From navigating bureaucratic red tape to managing financial constraints, every step was a test of Dr. Anand's resolve. There were moments when the project seemed on the brink of collapse, but his determination never wavered. He worked tirelessly, often late into the night, to ensure that the schools would become a reality.

Recruiting the right team was another significant challenge. Dr. Anand was not just looking for qualified teachers; he wanted educators who shared his passion for innovative teaching and holistic development. After a rigorous selection process, he assembled a team of dedicated professionals who were excited to be part of this groundbreaking initiative.

With the infrastructure in place and a stellar team on board, Hindustan International School finally opened its doors. The initial days were a mix of excitement and anxiety. Enrollments trickled in slowly, and there were times when Dr. Anand wondered if parents would ever trust a new school over established ones. But his fears were unfounded. Word of mouth spread, and soon, parents began to take notice of the unique approach HIS offered.

The curriculum at Hindustan International Schools combines rigorous academics and creative exploration. "This is a place where learning is an adventure," says Dr. Anand. "In these schools, the textbooks guide students, each lecture is a

challenge, and each exam is a test to overcome. Their rewards are knowledge, the joy of learning, and the thrill of discovery."

THE FLYOVER FIASCO: A LESSON IN ADAPTABILITY

One of the pivotal anecdotes in the establishment of Hindustan International Schools involves the infamous flyover episode. It was a challenge that tested the resilience and adaptability of Dr. Anand and his team. The government decided to acquire a significant portion of land where one of their institutions stood, to construct a massive flyover. This decision came like a bolt from the blue, throwing a wrench in the smooth functioning of the institution.

Dr. Anand recounts those days with a mix of nostalgia and humor. "It was like waking up one morning and finding out you have to move your house because they're building a highway through your living room," he laughs. The land acquisition meant that the institution had to be relocated, a process fraught with logistical nightmares and bureaucratic red tape.

This challenge, however, became a catalyst for the birth of Hindustan International Schools. Forced to rethink their strategy and location, Dr. Anand saw an opportunity amidst the chaos.

The relocation led to the identification of new sites, which were not just suitable for a university but also perfect for setting up international schools. This unforeseen disruption thus paved the way for Hindustan International Schools, turning a potential crisis into a groundbreaking opportunity.

Another interesting anecdote that shaped the journey of Hindustan International Schools was the failure to acquire an existing school. Dr. Anand's father had always dreamed of starting a school, and the plan initially involved acquiring an established institution to fast-track the process. However,



things didn't go as planned.

"We had everything lined up, or so we thought," Dr. Anand recalls. "But acquiring a school isn't like buying a piece of furniture. There are emotions, legacies, and a lot of paperwork involved." Despite their best efforts, the acquisition fell through, leaving them back at square one.

Rather than seeing this as a setback, Dr. Anand took it as a sign to start from scratch. "Sometimes, the universe has other plans. When one door closes, it's probably because there's a bigger, better one opening somewhere else," he philosophizes. This failure pushed them to build Hindustan International Schools from the ground up, ensuring that every brick laid, every curriculum designed, was perfectly aligned with their vision of holistic education.

One of the most memorable moments for Dr. Anand was the first annual day celebration. Seeing the students perform on stage, showcasing their talents and confidence, was a poignant reminder of why he had embarked on this journey.

The smiles on the faces of the children and their parents were the ultimate validation of his efforts.

As the years went by, Hindustan International Schools grew in stature and reputation. It became known not just for academic excellence but also for its nurturing environment and emphasis on character building. The challenges that once seemed insurmountable were now milestones in a journey marked by perseverance and success.

Expanding from higher education to school education was a significant leap. The decision to adopt the Cambridge curriculum, which required extensive overhauling of facilities to meet international standards, was a bold move. "It was something that we thought, nobody is doing this. Why is nobody adopting the international school curriculum? Because there were only one or two international schools in Chennai at that time."

Despite the initial hurdles, the schools saw remarkable acceptance from the public. Dr. Anand attributes this success to the dedication and passion invested into these institutions. "There's nothing more than putting your mind and soul into it," he says. Managing the schools, with their unique challenges, required patience and a willingness to learn about the nuances of dealing with younger children.

Dr. Anand's vision was clear—each new school was not just an addition but a vital part of the educational tapestry he was weaving. The sequential opening of these schools, year after year, like episodes in a thrilling series, showcased his unwavering commitment to expanding the horizons of education. "It's a different field where we ventured into," he muses. "Initially, you went into institutes, higher education. And these are two different things, school education and higher education."

From the initial challenges to the notable achievements,

the story of Hindustan International Schools demonstrates innovation, perseverance, and a firm belief in the power of education to transform lives.

If Hindustan Group of Institutions was a major success in education, then Hindustan International Schools is the next chapter, where learning is continuous and engaging. Conceived by the visionary Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, Hindustan International Schools have transformed mundane school days into an epic school adventure.

In a world where traditional schools often march to the beat of the same old drum, Hindustan International Schools stand out—they are loud, vibrant, and unapologetically joyful. Imagine a school where textbooks and tech gadgets go hand in hand, where learning is not just about absorbing facts but launching into a cosmos of creativity. That's Hindustan International Schools, a trilogy of campuses each with its own personality, yet united in their mission to educate, enlighten, and entertain.

Dr. Anand, a charismatic lead in this educational saga, never believed in doing things by halves. When he envisioned the dream school, he wasn't just aiming for academic excellence; he was scripting a revolution. "Schools don't have to be predictable," he once said while sipping his morning filter coffee. "Why not make them as engaging as a great story?"

THE CAMBRIDGE CONNECTION

One of the bold moves that set Hindustan International Schools apart was the decision to adopt the Cambridge curriculum. This was no easy feat, as it required extensive overhauling of facilities to meet international standards.

The curriculum at the schools, distinct in each of the schools, based on the Cambridge framework, was designed

to be dynamic and engaging. Appointing competent principals was a significant challenge in this endeavor. The curriculum combined traditional subjects with modern teaching methods, emphasizing critical thinking, creativity, and physical development. Dr. Anand also introduced a wide range of extracurricular activities, including arts, sports, and community service, to ensure that students received a well-rounded education.

The decision to go with Cambridge was driven by a desire to provide a globally recognized education that could stand toe-to-toe with the best in the world. The transition involved a lot of hard work, from training teachers to upgrading infrastructure, but the results were worth it. Hindustan International Schools quickly gained a reputation for excellence, attracting students from diverse backgrounds who were eager to experience this innovative approach to learning.

THE SPIRIT OF HINDUSTAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS: CREATIVE CLASSROOMS

Dr. Anand, driven by grand dreams, envisioned a new era for education. "Why should schools be dull?" he mused under the starry sky one night. With that spark of inspiration, Hindustan International Schools emerged, casting its spotlight on campuses at Guindy, Karapakkam, and Padur—each a star in its own right.

These are classrooms where the lesson plan is crafted not just by the book, but by the students' boundless imaginations. Dr. Anand's philosophy? "Why try to fit the mould when you can break it and make a new one?" He turned classrooms into innovative and enjoyable learning hubs, and exams looked suspiciously like episodes of "Shark Tank."

In the annals of Hindustan Group folklore, there's a story

that tickles the funny bones of alumni whenever it's told. One bright morning, Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, the Chairman known for his quirks, staked a tent smack in the middle of the football field. His challenge was simple yet bizarre: "Make this tent the Ritz-Carlton of tents!" The gears in students' heads started whirring and what unfolded was nothing short of a science fair crossed with a circus.

Students dove into the challenge with gusto. Out came solar-powered fans, ingeniously rigged from abandoned car parts (who knew that old sedan could breeze new life?). Then there was the rainwater harvesting system, jury-rigged with pipes and funnels that could confuse a plumber but worked wonders. The school gardener scratched his head, bewildered but clearly impressed, as his watering cans weren't needed that week.

But Dr. Anand's antics weren't all about tech wizardry and engineering marvels. His heartbeat echoed a rhythm of change that inspired more than just academic prowess—it sparked a wave of philanthropy. He transformed traditional fundraisers into festivals of joy and generosity. Take the 'Dance-a-thon,' where every footstep wasn't just a move to the beat but a step towards charity; a rupee for every rhythm matched. Or the 'Cook-off contests' that turned the heat up in the kitchens, where dishes were served with a side of goodwill and judged not only by their flavor but by the funds they raised for local charities.

These events became the stuff of legend, a carnival where every ticket, every snack, and every laugh contributed to a cause. Dr. Anand often joked, "If our cooking can't make you smile, the cause will!" And indeed, it was hard not to leave these gatherings without a grin as wide as the campus lake.

The impact was palpable. Under Dr. Anand's guidance, students didn't just learn to calculate profits or master



scientific concepts; they learned to leverage their skills for societal benefit. They became magicians of change, turning ordinary school projects into extraordinary community service.

BACKWARDS DAY: A LESSON IN EMPATHY

At Hindustan International Schools, not every day is a regular day. Take, for instance, the infamous "Backwards Day." It's exactly what it sounds like: a day where everything goes topsy-turvy, and I mean everything. On this particular day, the students became the teachers, and the teachers, well, they tried their best to keep up as students!

Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, the chairman with a penchant for the playful, embraced "Backwards Day" with the zest of a freshman. Sporting a baseball cap flipped backwards (because why not?) and a grin that was nothing short of mischievous, he shuffled into classrooms ready to be schooled by his own students. His review at the end of the day? "I might have

learned more today than at any conference!" And considering his love for educational conferences, that's saying something!

The concept was simple yet brilliant. For one whole day, students prepared lessons and stepped into the shoes of their educators, delivering lectures on everything from quantum physics to the fine art of cafeteria etiquette. Teachers, on the other hand, packed their backpacks, scribbled in notebooks, and yes, even got a taste of their own homework deadlines. The roles reversed, the classrooms buzzed with a new kind of energy—a blend of excitement and a slight, comical chaos.

"Backwards Day" wasn't just about fun and games; it had a heartwarming twist. Every laugh and lesson was aimed at raising funds for a local orphanage. Dr. Anand had always believed in blending philanthropy with education, and this event was a perfect example. Students and teachers rallied together, their efforts culminating in a significant donation that brought smiles not just to their campus but to the community.

Amidst the role reversals, some standout moments included the physics class where a student-turned-teacher attempted to explain the theory of relativity with a comic strip, and the mathematics session where algebra was taught through the art of dance moves. Yes, you read that right—dance moves to learn algebra! As Dr. Anand observed, "Who knew x's and o's could be so groovy?"

The day ended with a role-reversal assembly where teachers performed a skit, a humorous take on a day in the life of a student, complete with exaggerated yawns, frantic last-minute cramming, and melodramatic pleas for extended deadlines. The students roared with laughter, seeing their daily dramas mirrored and magnified on stage.

Dr. Anand, reflecting on the event, shared, "Today wasn't just about stepping into each other's shoes, but seeing the heart

and hard work it takes to fill those shoes." He emphasized that "Backwards Day" was a lesson in empathy, teamwork, and the sheer joy of learning in unconventional ways.

As night fell on the Hindustan International Schools, the echoes of laughter lingered in the air, a testament to a day well spent. For everyone at Hindustan International Schools, "Backwards Day" was more than just an event; it was a celebration of learning, a testament to their chairman's vision of education as an adventure, full of unexpected turns and delightful detours.

And as for Dr. Anand, his backward cap wasn't just a fashion statement but a symbol of his willingness to view the world from new perspectives, proving yet again why at Hindustan, education is anything but backward.

THE HISTAR PROGRAM: CRAFTING LITTLE DREAMERS

The very special HISTAR program at Hindustan International Schools is like a superhero training camp for tots—minus the capes and plus the crayons. Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, our very own educational director, didn't just break the mould when he launched this; he turned it into confetti!

Imagine a classroom where the ABCs aren't just sung; they're performed with the gusto of a Broadway debut. HISTAR, which might stand for 'HISTorically Astounding Radical thinkers', isn't just a curriculum—it's a launch pad for pint-sized dreamers. Introduced in 2020 and married harmoniously with the Cambridge Early Years Programme, it has set standards that even adults scramble to keep up with.

One sunny morning, a young learner named Arjun decided that the Storytime mat was a spaceship. The mission? To chart the alphabet galaxy. With a teacher as his co-pilot, they zipped past 'A for Asteroid' and made a quick pit stop at 'M for Moon'. By the time they reached 'Z for Zenith', not only

had Arjun learned his letters, but he'd also done a full orbit around the sunroom.

Why play, you ask? Because at Hindustan International Schools, play isn't just play; it's serious business. "If a child can play a role, they can play a rule," Dr. Anand remarks, watching a group of HISTARians (as they are affectionately known) turn sandbox economics into a thriving cookie trade. It's all about learning through doing—whether that's trading snacks, sharing toys, or negotiating who gets to be the captain of the playhouse boat.

But HISTAR isn't all fun and games—there's genius in the giggles. Take, for example, the water table experiment where tiny tots tested whether objects would sink or float. This simple play led to a discussion about buoyancy that would make Archimedes proud. One enthusiastic explorer, Priya, exclaimed, "My rubber duckie floats, but my clay boat sinks—why?" That question sparked a clay boat redesign session that would rival any engineering workshop.

At Hindustan International Schools, every student is part of a bigger story, and the HISTAR program ensures these first chapters are written in bold, bright colors. Dr. Anand believes in "community choreography," where every little step or misstep is a dance move learned. "It's not about keeping in step," he says, "it's about stepping together." Whether it's planting seeds in the garden or painting murals on the playground walls, HISTAR kids are making their mark—literally and figuratively.

And yes, there are awards—plenty of them—but not your typical gold stars or stickers. At HISTAR, a successful day might be rewarded with the 'Golden Paintbrush' or the 'Master Builder Badge'. Dr. Anand loves ceremonies, and at the end of each week, there's a mini-Oscar night where every child is celebrated for something incredible, they've

done or learned.

The HISTAR program isn't just an educational initiative; it's a promise—a promise that these early years are just the beginning of a lifelong journey of curiosity, learning, and dreaming big. So, as we roll credits on another day, remember: in the world of Hindustan International Schools, every little learner is a star in their own epic tale.

At Hindustan International Schools, extracurricular activities aren't just the icing on the cake; they're the sprinkles, the cherry, and the sparklers on top—turning the ordinary school day into an epic movie marathon of fun and learning. "Why let textbooks have all the limelight?" says Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, the mastermind behind the curriculum.

This is a school where every day is a ticket to a new adventure. One day, the students are huddled around computers, coding robots that could dance the tango better than most reality TV stars. The next, they're out on the field, bows in hand, aiming arrows with the precision that could make Robin Hood want to join for a refresher course.

"Who says learning can't have a blockbuster weekend?" Dr. Anand quips as he watches a group of students program their robots to navigate a maze. "Here, we don't do boring!"

Forget about plain old school discipline. At Hindustan International Schools, the NCC Naval Unit is about as ordinary as a spaceship in your backyard. It's not just about standing straight and marching; it's about learning to navigate the choppy waters of life. "Think of it as boot camp for the brain," Dr. Anand explains, saluting a squad of students as they synchronize their steps with the precision of a Swiss watch.

"Here, we train captains, not just cadets. Tomorrow's leaders who'll steer through any storm with a smile," he says, watching proudly as the students tackle a navigation

challenge that involves real boats and a lot of splashing.

But the action doesn't stop at the dock. Step into the language labs, and you'll find yourself in a United Nations meeting—but with more laughter and less diplomacy. On Mondays, it's French, where 'Bonjour' and 'Comment ça va?' echo through the halls. By the time Friday rolls around, you might mistake the campus for a mini Tokyo as students bow and exchange greetings in Japanese.

Back outside, the archery range is where physics meets fun. Dr. Anand, never one to miss an opportunity for hands-on learning, uses the archery sessions to explain trajectory and force, all while dodging the occasional wayward arrow. "Remember, it's not about hitting the bullseye every time—it's about understanding why you missed it," he advises, much to the amusement of his young archers.

As the school day winds down, the campus doesn't slow its pace. The robotics lab is still buzzing with the latest upgrades, and the language labs are alive with students practicing their newest phrases. The archery range is quiet, but the targets bear witness to a day well-spent.

With that, the students pack up their bows, robots, and phrasebooks, leaving the campus abuzz with plans for tomorrow's adventures.

THE ACCOLADES ROLL IN

One sunny morning, the announcement came through that Hindustan International Schools had once again topped the charts in the QS-I Gauge assessment—an accolade that evaluates schools across multiple criteria including teaching quality, innovation, and holistic development. The campus erupted in cheers so loud, you'd think they'd just discovered the formula for perpetual energy.

"Our schools won the 'Best Use of Technology in Teaching'

award for a virtual reality project that brought history lessons to life." Dr. Anand noted, "Why read about history when you can walk through it?"

Celebrations at Hindustan International Schools are always lively. When an award is announced, it's a festival with music, dancing, and joy. Dr. Anand says, "We don't just win; we party!" The schools collect accolades by staying curious and innovative. He further shares, "It's about dreaming big and having fun. Our students, teachers, and staff are the key to our success."

As the sun sets, the Hindustan International Schools campus remains vibrant. Students leave classrooms, their laughter mixing with the hum of drones capturing views of the campus.

Dr. Anand Jacob Vergheese, the leader of this educational journey, smiles as he watches from the steps of the main building. "If there was a rupee for every bright idea here, they'd be billionaires here," he jokes, waving at students working on a robot.

The campus buzzes with energy as students work on projects and debates. It's a place for future thinkers and leaders. At Hindustan International Schools, the end of the school day means reflection and celebration. Students relax on the lawns, soaking up knowledge and camaraderie. "Our school is like a good book; you just can't put it down," Dr. Anand says, walking through the campus.

From college to university to international schools, Hindustan Group of Institutions has been on an exciting journey.

Today, Hindustan International Schools stand as a testament to Dr. Anand's vision and hard work. From its humble beginnings to becoming a respected institution, the schools embody the belief that with passion and dedication,

even the most ambitious dreams can come true. His journey with Hindustan International Schools is a story of resilience, innovation, and the unwavering commitment to shaping the leaders of tomorrow.

As night settles in, the campus finally quiets, but the light in Dr. Anand's office remains on, a solitary beacon planning the next big thing. After all, in the world of Hindustan International Schools, the learning never stops, and the dreams never cease.

**“SCHOOLS SHOULD
BE LIGHTHOUSES OF
LEARNING, NOT JUST IN
SCALE OR STRUCTURE,
BUT AS BEACONS
GUIDING YOUNG MINDS
TO SUCCESS AND
BEYOND.”**

— DR. ANAND JACOB VERGHESE

Chapter 9

A Legacy of Excellence: TRANSFORMING HINDUSTAN UNIVERSITY

Imagine a bustling campus in the heart of Chennai, where ancient traditions blend seamlessly with the buzz of modern innovation. Here stands the Hindustan Group of Institutions, a great mix of colleges, a university, and schools, each shining brightly in the vast universe of Indian education. At the center of this academic hub is the Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, a deemed university known for transforming budding engineers and scientists into leaders of tomorrow.



In a vibrant office adorned with more than just degrees—with student doodles and heartfelt notes—sits Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, the man at the helm of this educational empire. His office, a kaleidoscope of academic and personal achievements, reflects a career that transcends conventional scholarly pursuits.

Dr. Anand isn't your typical institutional leader; a commander who leads with a subtle strength and believes in the power of a good chuckle. His leadership style is as unique as his personality—infusing humour and diligence wrapped in warmth into the fabric of Hindustan's culture. Whether he's orchestrating a seamless merge of vacation plans with official trips to optimize family time or navigating the complexities of running an expansive educational network, he does it all with a smile that's as strategic as it is sincere.

EXPANSION CHRONICLES: A TALE OF TENACITY AND TRIUMPHS

In the thrilling saga of expanding the Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science (HITS), our protagonist starred not just as the visionary director but also as the enthusiastic narrator. Each step in the expansion was like crafting a scene in an epic movie, with Anand ensuring every detail added to the grand narrative of educational empowerment.

In 2008, Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science, previously a well-respected college, was about to become a university. This wasn't just a name change; it involved overcoming many bureaucratic obstacles. With Anand's perseverance and strategic diplomacy, Hindustan University was finally established.

Securing university status for the college was no small feat. It required navigating a labyrinth of bureaucratic hurdles and stringent evaluations. Dr. Anand's tenacity and strategic acumen were instrumental in this transformation. In 2008, the college was conferred university status, marking a significant milestone. "It wasn't just about a title; it was about broadening horizons and creating new opportunities," he reflects.

Under Dr. Anand's leadership, Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science embarked on a path of rapid expansion, both in infrastructure and academic offerings. New departments were established, state-of-the-art laboratories were built, and international collaborations flourished. "We wanted to ensure our students were not just job-ready but future-ready," he asserts.

His inclusive approach to education started with vocational training programs aimed at those who had fallen through the cracks of the traditional education system. These programs were the precursors to what we now call skill development

initiatives.

This foundation of inclusivity and skill development became the bedrock upon which Dr. Anand built the Hindustan Group of Institutions. He expanded the mission, ensuring that higher education was not just accessible but also successful for every student. "The government says nobody should fail in school, but when it comes to higher education, the success rate drops to 40%. We aim to change that," he emphasizes.

Dr. Anand's leadership style is characterized by his accessibility and open-door policy. He is often seen engaging with students and faculty, offering guidance and encouragement. "A leader should be accessible, approachable, and always ready to listen," he asserts. This approach has fostered a culture of innovation and collaboration at Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science.

As Dr. Anand reflects on his journey, he remains humble and grateful for the opportunities and challenges that have shaped his leadership. "I've had the privilege of working with incredible people and witnessing the transformation of countless students," he says. "It's been a remarkable journey, and I'm excited for what the future holds."

His leadership, characterized by diligence and compassion, has left an indelible mark on Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science. The university's success is a testament to his vision, dedication, and unwavering commitment to excellence.

THE GLOBAL CLASSROOM CONCEPT

In the educational odyssey helmed by Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, the world doesn't just come to Hindustan; Hindustan goes to the world. With a gleam in his eye and a world map often rolled out on his desk, he champions

the idea that “The World is our Classroom,” a concept that brings a whole new meaning to field trips and study abroad programs at Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science.

“Why limit ourselves to learning within four walls when the whole world can be our learning lab?” Dr. Anand muses, often caught plotting the next international collaboration over a globe that looks suspiciously well-used—spinning from one country to another, his finger stops on nations not just as geographical entities, but as potential classrooms.

Under his visionary leadership, Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science has inked pacts with no fewer than 68 illustrious universities and institutions around the globe. From the historic halls of Trier University in Germany to the innovative campuses of Arizona State University in the U.S., these partnerships are not just about swapping students; they are about swapping ideas, cultures, and futures.

Take, for example, the time a group of Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science students ventured to Deakin

University in Australia. They didn’t just return with suntans and souvenirs, but with cutting-edge research ideas on sustainable technologies that soon sparked a green revolution back home. “Our students went down under and brought back not just memories, but ways to make our world a better place,” Dr. Anand quips, his pride in these global adventurers evident as he recounts their journey.

The campus itself mirrors the United Nations at times, bustling with students from across continents. It’s not uncommon to hear fragments of French, bursts of Mandarin, or the rhythmic intonations of Swahili mingling with Tamil and Hindi in the corridors. “We’re like a big, happy international family; just with a lot more homework,” jokes Dr. Anand, watching a lively cultural exchange unfold during the international food festival, a hit event where sushi rolls share table space with samosas.

Dr. Anand believes that these international experiences sculpt students not just into global professionals but into global citizens. “It’s one thing to read about the world’s challenges; it’s another to see them firsthand and be inspired to solve them,” he says. This philosophy has led to initiatives like the summer program in South Korea, where students tackle real-world engineering problems, or the dual degree options with the University of Southern Denmark, offering insights into different educational and societal frameworks.

And it’s not just the students who benefit. Faculty exchanges have become a cornerstone of this global classroom, with professors from Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science jetting off to share their expertise on foreign campuses and returning with fresh perspectives and teaching methods. “Our teachers sometimes come back speaking in accents I can’t place,” Dr. Anand laughs, “but they also come back with innovative teaching techniques that enrich our classrooms.”



Commemorating the Silver Jubilee celebration of HITS with Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus Suffragan Metropolitan pride and joy.

The impact of these global engagements is evident on campus. The diversity in thought, culture, and approach fosters an environment where innovation thrives. Debates are richer, projects are more varied, and the solutions to problems are as diverse as the student body.

“Every passport stamp is a new lesson learned,” Dr. Anand remarks, leafing through a student’s travel diary brimming with experiences and epiphanies. This global outreach has turned Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science into a buzzing hub where knowledge knows no borders, and education is a passport to anywhere.

In Dr. Anand’s global classroom, the syllabus is the world, and every day is an opportunity to learn not just about physics or philosophy, but about people and places. It’s a classroom as vast as the imagination and as boundless as the sky—a fitting setting for an institution that looks to the stars while keeping its feet firmly on the ground.

A LEGACY OF INNOVATION AND INCLUSION

The Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science stands out for its exceptional blend of cutting-edge research and professional training, equipping students with the skills and knowledge needed for successful careers. Under the vigilant eye of Dr. Anand, this beacon of education doesn’t just aim for scholarly heights; it ensures its students land safely in the dynamic terrain of the working world.

“Education is not just about learning what is in the books,” Dr. Anand often says. “It’s about making sure that once you close those books, the real chapter begins with a bang.” And indeed, at Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science, every student’s journey from classroom to boardroom is scripted with precision and a touch of flair. This includes naming classrooms after distinguished scientists and

laureates, aiming to inspire students with their remarkable achievements.

With a stellar placement rate, the campus is less of a quiet study hall and more of a launching pad for careers. Dr. Anand likes to joke that the students here are more sought after than front row seats at a blockbuster movie premiere. “Our graduates don’t just walk out with degrees; they stride into jobs with confidence,” he shares proudly, as another batch aces its corporate interviews.

The secret sauce? A rigorous meld of academic prowess with hands-on industry training. This is a campus buzzing with the latest tech—where students aren’t just coding for grades but are crafting solutions for real-world corporate giants. “Our labs are like the bat caves of innovation,” Dr. Anand quips, referencing the gadget-laden hideout of a certain caped crusader.

Beyond the classrooms, the corridors of Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science echo with languages and ideas from around the globe. With partnerships stretching across 42 countries, the institute is a miniature global village. From joint research with Sweden to internships in Silicon Valley, the students’ passports get as stamped as their library cards. “We have more MoUs than I have ties,” Dr. Anand jests, referring to the over 150 Memorandums of Understanding with various global institutions and industries.

These international collaborations mean that Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science isn’t just participating in the global dialogue on education—it’s leading it. The campus thrives on a multicultural mix, hosting symposiums that might as well be UN meetings, except with more coffee and fewer vetoes. “It’s a cultural potluck every day,” says Dr. Anand, pointing out a group of students from Denmark brainstorming with peers from Delhi.

The campus itself is a living lab, not just for learning but for implementing ideas that benefit society. Projects that begin as classroom ideas can morph into startups addressing social issues, backed by the very professors who taught the entrepreneurs. “We don’t just grow students here; we grow ideas,” Dr. Anand explains, recounting a project that turned into a successful clean water initiative in rural India.

As the sun sets on another bustling day at Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science, the laughter of students mixes with the buzz of drones capturing aerial shots for the next campus brochure. It’s more than a school; it’s a universe of possibilities that nurtures the next generation of thinkers, leaders, and innovators.

“And remember,” Dr. Anand concludes with a smile, “At Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science, every day is an innovation day. Some days, we just have extra coffee.” The legacy of innovation and inclusion he’s building is not just about making a mark on the world but about making the world a better place, one graduate at a time.

THE STUDENT-CENTRIC APPROACH

At the heart of Dr. Anand’s leadership is a deep commitment to student success. His student-centric approach is evident in every aspect of university life, from academic programs to extracurricular activities. “Our goal is to provide a holistic education that prepares students not just for careers, but for life,” he states.

This philosophy has led to the development of a wide range of support services for students. Counseling centers, career guidance offices, and health and wellness programs ensure that students have the resources they need to succeed. “We’re here to support our students in every way possible,” Dr. Anand affirms.



Extracurricular activities play a vital role in this holistic approach. The university offers a diverse array of clubs, sports teams, and cultural events that provide students with opportunities to explore their interests and develop new skills. “Education is about more than academics; it’s about personal growth and discovering your passions,” Dr. Anand explains.

One of the highlights of the extracurricular calendar is the annual Cultural Fest, a vibrant celebration of creativity and talent. “It’s a chance for students to showcase their skills, have fun, and build lasting memories,” Dr. Anand enthuses. The event features performances, competitions, and exhibitions, creating a lively and inclusive atmosphere on campus.

THE ORIENTATION AND BEYOND

One of the standout features of Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science is its comprehensive orientation program for new students. Dr. Anand personally oversees

this initiative, ensuring that each new batch of students feels welcomed and prepared for the academic journey ahead. The program, affectionately dubbed "The HITS Experience," includes campus tours, interactive sessions with faculty, and workshops on academic and personal development.

Dr. Anand's personal touch is evident in every aspect of the orientation. He often shares anecdotes from his own student days, blending humor with valuable life lessons. "When I was a student, I made every mistake in the book—sometimes twice, just to be sure!" he jokes, eliciting laughter and easing the nerves of the new arrivals.

Beyond orientation, Dr. Anand maintains a strong connection with the student body through regular town hall meetings and informal gatherings. These sessions provide a platform for students to voice their concerns, share their ideas, and interact with the university leadership in a relaxed setting. "It's important for students to know they have a voice and that it's heard," he states.

EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

In today's digital age, technology is integral to education. Dr. Anand has been at the forefront of integrating technology into the curriculum and campus life at Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science. From smart classrooms to online learning platforms, technology is woven into the fabric of the university. "Learning should not be confined to the classroom," he asserts. "Our digital platform allows students to learn at their own pace, anytime, anywhere."

A hallmark of his tenure as Chancellor has been the emphasis on research and innovation. Recognizing the importance of a research-oriented culture, Dr. Anand established cutting-edge research centres across various disciplines. One of the most notable initiatives was the Centre

for Aerospace Research, which quickly became a leader in aerospace studies. "We aimed for the skies, quite literally," he quips, highlighting the centre's achievements in satellite technology and drone research.

The university has also embraced artificial intelligence and machine learning to enhance the learning experience. Virtual labs, AI-powered tutoring systems, and data analytics tools provide personalized learning paths and support for students. "We're preparing our students for the future, and that future is digital," Dr. Anand emphasizes.

One of the flagship initiatives in this regard is the Digital Learning Platform, which offers a wide range of online courses and resources to students. "Learning should not be confined to the classroom," Dr. Anand asserts. "Our digital platform allows students to learn at their own pace, anytime, anywhere."

MASTERING WORK-LIFE HARMONY

In a world where calendars are crammed and smartphones never stop buzzing, Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, our cheerful champion of Hindustan Group of Institutions, has mastered the elusive art of work-life harmony. It's not about finding balance—it's about making it, often with a hefty dose of humour and a sprinkle of ingenuity.

Imagine a typical Monday morning. Most people would be snoozing their alarms, grumbling about the week ahead, but not Dr. Anand. He's probably perusing a glossy travel brochure while planning the next educational conference or seminar. Paris, Sydney, maybe even a floating office on a gondola in Venice—his meeting venues are as diverse as his interests.

"Who says you can't discuss quantum physics on the Eiffel Tower, or review business proposals overlooking the



Anand presenting a garland to Former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda in a moment of honor.

Sydney Opera House?” Dr. Anand chuckles as he plots the coordinates of his next big adventure. It’s not just about pinning locations on a map; it’s about connecting dots across a global classroom.

This isn’t your run-of-the-mill Monday motivation. For Dr. Anand, it’s an art form—blending work and play with the skill of a seasoned chef mixing spices. Why settle for the same old coffee in a conference room when you can sip espresso by the canals of Venice, discussing the finer points of educational reform?

His philosophy is pretty straightforward: If life hands you a conference, pack your bags and make it an expedition. It’s about seizing every opportunity, not just to educate or lead but to enrich life’s tapestry with vibrant experiences.

“Ah, Venice,” Dr. Anand might reminisce, “where we decided on the new curriculum between gondola rides. And remember Paris? We finalized our international partnerships at the top of Montmartre!” His office walls, adorned with maps

and postcards, bear witness to these productive escapades.

Dr. Anand’s approach is infectious. He’s the pied piper of the educational world, leading his team and family on these grand adventures. His wife, often by his side, juggles itineraries like a pro. “She’s the true travel expert,” he says with a smile. “While I attend the meetings, she manages the important details, ensuring everything runs smoothly.”

Their children, globe-trotters in training, have their educational curriculum peppered with real-world experiences. “Why read about the Colosseum when you can touch its ancient stones?” questions Dr. Anand, as his kids nod enthusiastically, already veterans of many such “field trips.”

But it’s not all passports and landmarks. Dr. Anand ensures that each trip serves a dual purpose—blending personal rejuvenation with professional development. A seminar in Sydney might end with a family barbecue by Bondi Beach, or a conference in Singapore could coincide with the Grand Prix, turning a routine business trip into a family vacation.

Back at Hindustan Group of Institutions, these stories transform into lessons—of culture, adaptability, and the sheer joy of learning. Dr. Anand’s office, a mini-museum of souvenirs, serves as the backdrop for his tales of adventure. A Venetian mask here, a miniature Eiffel Tower there, each item carefully chosen to spark curiosity and laughter among his staff and students.

“Every souvenir has a story, and every story has a lesson,” he quips, often pulling out a random artifact to make a point during his lectures. Whether it’s a boomerang from Australia that illustrates the concept of ‘what goes around comes around’ or a Swiss watch that teaches precision and punctuality, Dr. Anand’s anecdotes bring education to life in the most unexpected ways.

And so, as another Monday dawns, while the rest of the world reluctantly starts their week, Dr. Anand is already plotting his next grand educational escapade. “Why dread Mondays when they can be marvelous?” he laughs, inviting you to see the world as he does—not just as a place to visit, but as a vast, vibrant classroom.

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Sustainability is a cornerstone of Dr. Anand’s vision for Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science. Under his leadership, the university has implemented numerous green initiatives aimed at reducing its environmental footprint and promoting sustainable practices. From solar power installations to rainwater harvesting systems, Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science is a model of environmental stewardship.

The campus itself is a testament to this commitment. Lush gardens, energy-efficient buildings, and eco-friendly transportation options create a vibrant and sustainable environment. “Our campus is not just a place to learn; it’s a place to live and thrive,” Dr. Anand proudly declares.

One of the most ambitious projects has been the development of the Green Campus Initiative, which aims to make Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science a carbon-neutral institution. The initiative that aims to build a sustainable future includes a wide range of activities, from tree planting drives to waste management programs, all designed to foster a culture of sustainability among students and staff.

“Every small step counts,” Dr. Anand insists. “Whether it’s reducing plastic use or participating in a campus clean-up, we all have a role to play in protecting our planet.”

As Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science

continues to grow and evolve, Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese’s vision for the future remains focused on excellence, innovation, and inclusivity. His strategic plan for the next decade includes expanding the university’s research capabilities, enhancing international collaborations, and further integrating technology into the curriculum.

Dr. Anand’s vision also includes a strong commitment to community engagement and social responsibility. The university regularly partners with local organizations to address pressing social issues and contribute to the well-being of the community. “Education is a powerful tool for change, and we want to use it to make a positive impact,” he states.

LEADERSHIP AT HOME AND AT HINDUSTAN

Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese leads both at Hindustan and at home with dedication and care. At Hindustan, he guides the institution towards educational excellence. At home, he manages a lively household where each family member has an important and unique role, contributing to the family’s harmony and success.

His, is a home, where the job chart is as dynamic as the roster of courses at a university. “In our house, everyone’s got their specialty,” Dr. Anand chuckles, “from the kitchen to the garden, and even sorting the recycling—every task is tailored to passions and strengths, not just age or convenience.”

For instance, his wife, the family’s acclaimed ‘Minister of Finance,’ manages the household budgets with the precision of a seasoned accountant, often jesting that she’s considering a side career as a financial consultant. “She can stretch a rupee farther than I can stretch a metaphor,” Dr. Anand boasts.

Then there’s his son Enid Verghese, dubbed the ‘Director of Technology.’ From setting up the Wi-Fi to syncing all

household devices, he ensures the Verghese home stays on the cutting edge. “Last week, he automated our lights and fans. Now, they turn on with just a clap! It’s all fun and games until a really good F1 race turns the living room into a light show extravaganza,” Dr. Anand laughs.

Their daughter, Tiya Liz, the 'Creative Head,' is in charge of everything from interior decor to planning family events. “She organized our last Christmas party. I’m convinced she missed her calling as a festival planner. The house was lit up brighter than my first chemistry experiment gone wrong,” he reminisces with a chuckle.

This delegation isn’t just about keeping the household running smoothly; it’s about instilling a sense of responsibility and pride in every family member, qualities that Dr. Anand champions at Hindustan as well. “Leadership isn’t about telling people what to do, it’s about inspiring them to see what they can achieve,” he notes. This philosophy is evident in how responsibilities are shared at home, mirroring the leadership style he cultivates at his institutions.

Just as at Hindustan, where innovation and personal growth are the cornerstones, the Verghese household thrives on similar values. Challenges are met with creativity, and every setback is viewed as a stepping stone to improvement. “We have a saying at home,” Dr. Anand shares, “‘If you’re going to make a mistake, make it a new one each time.’ We celebrate originality, even in our blunders!”

This approach has created a home atmosphere charged with enthusiasm and laughter, much like the campuses of Hindustan. Dinner discussions often revolve around sharing new ideas or solving puzzles, turning mealtime into brainstorming sessions that would mirror any boardroom meeting.

In every aspect, Dr. Anand's leadership at home mirrors

his role at Hindustan—fostering an environment where learning is joyous, and everyone is encouraged to explore their potential. It's a testament to his belief that whether at the helm of an institution or the head of a family, the heart of leadership lies in nurturing and empowering those around you.

A LEADER’S LEGACY

His leadership, characterized by diligence, compassion, and a touch of wit, has left an indelible mark on Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science. The university’s success is a testament to his vision, dedication, and unwavering commitment to excellence.

“We’ve grown from a small college to a busy university and now to international schools,” Dr. Anand says with a smile, leaning back in his chair decorated with children's drawings.

His gaze sweeps across the mini universe he’s helped shape, a smile playing on his lips as he reflects on a career that’s been anything but conventional. “You know, they say every good story has an end, but in education, every ending is just a new beginning,” he muses, his voice tinged with a hint of nostalgia yet brimming with excitement for the future.

Under his leadership, Hindustan hasn’t just been a place to learn; it’s been a stage for the grandest adventures—where exams might as well be quests, and graduation, a hero’s ascent. “And remember, while I might be nearing my retirement, the sequel to this saga is just getting warmed up. The best bits are yet to come!” he promises, winking as if letting students in on a secret plot twist awaiting them in the chapters ahead.

This chapter of Dr. Anand’s life may be drawing to a close, but his legacy is far from fading. It’s woven into the very fabric of the institution—into every classroom that buzzes not just with lectures but with laughter, into every policy that

champions innovation as much as integrity, and into every sunset that promises another sunrise of opportunities.

“As we stand on the shoulders of this educational giant, we look not just to carry on a legacy but to build new ones,” Dr. Anand declares, his voice echoing through the corridors that have borne witness to countless dreams taking flight. “Here at Hindustan, we don’t just teach students; we launch leaders into the universe of their ambitions.”

“Think of this place not just as your alma mater but as your launch pad to the stars,” Dr. Anand advises a group of students, his eyes gleaming with the same fervour that has ignited countless young minds over the years.

As twilight embraces the campus, the day’s end is not just a conclusion but a pause—reflective and hopeful. The legacy of Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese, characterized by his unyielding commitment to education imbued with compassion and humour, continues to resonate throughout Hindustan. It’s a narrative punctuated not just by accolades but by the genuine impacts made on lives across generations.

“The magic of Hindustan isn’t in its sprawling buildings or even its prestigious accolades; it’s in its ability to foster a sense of wonder, to challenge the status quo, and to craft a haven where education and joy are synonymous,” Dr. Anand reflects, his voice soft yet firm.

This is the story of Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese and the transformative journey of Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science—a legacy of excellence that continues to shape the future, one student at a time.

**"TRUE LEADERSHIP
IS NOT ABOUT BEING
IN CHARGE. IT'S
ABOUT TAKING CARE
OF THOSE IN YOUR
CHARGE."
— DR. ANAND JACOB VERGHESE**

Chapter 10

Horizons Uncharted: THE JOURNEY FORWARD

As a new day begins at Hindustan Group of Institutions, the echoes of laughter, the hum of drones, and the quiet murmur of students deep in discussion form a symphony that captures the essence of this vibrant educational haven. In his office, surrounded by mementos of his remarkable journey, Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese reflects on the road traveled and the horizons yet to be explored.

FUTURE VISION: CHARTING NEW TERRITORIES

Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese's vision for the Hindustan Group of Institutions extends far beyond the present. He envisions a global footprint where Hindustan Group of Institutions' educational excellence reaches every corner of the world. Integrating cutting-edge technology into the curriculum, enhancing research and development, and fostering a culture of continuous learning are pivotal to his plans. New campuses, international partnerships, and innovative student exchange programs are on the horizon, promising a future where Hindustan Group of Institutions remain at the forefront of education. "We're not just building institutions; we're building futures," he asserts, his eyes gleaming with anticipation. "Our



Anand's personal philosophy is to keep on growing, while lifting each person connected to Hindustan University.

goal is to create a global network of learners and leaders, equipped to tackle the challenges of tomorrow."

One of Dr. Anand's most ambitious goals is to expand both horizontally and vertically. This involves not only increasing the number of campuses and programs but also enhancing the depth and breadth of the educational offerings. The Orient Flights Aviation Academy, a legacy project dear to his heart and originally envisioned by his father, will see significant enhancements.

Dr. Anand plans to introduce new courses in advanced aviation technology and pilot training, addressing the global demand for skilled aviation professionals. The focus will be on developing specialized programs that blend traditional aeronautical engineering with modern aviation management and safety protocols. "Our goal is to make the Orient Flights Aviation Academy a global hub for aviation education," he explains. "We want to produce not just pilots, but leaders in aviation."

In the K-12 segment, Dr. Anand envisions a network of schools that prioritize holistic development and global readiness. These schools will be equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, smart classrooms, and a curriculum that integrates STEM education with arts and humanities. "We want to prepare our students for the future by giving them a well-rounded education," he says. "This means not only focusing on academics but also on developing critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence."

The expansion plans include setting up new schools in underserved regions, ensuring that quality education is accessible to all. "Education should not be a privilege but a right," Dr. Anand emphasizes. "Our mission is to reach the unreached and provide them with the tools they need to succeed."

At the university level, Dr. Anand's vision is to transform Hindustan University into a research powerhouse. He aims to establish cutting-edge research centres that focus on emerging fields such as artificial intelligence, renewable energy, biotechnology, and advanced materials. "Research and innovation are the keys to solving the challenges of tomorrow," he states. "We want to create an environment where our students and faculty can push the boundaries of knowledge."

To facilitate this, Dr. Anand plans to forge partnerships with leading international universities and research institutions. These collaborations will provide students and faculty with opportunities to engage in joint research projects, exchange programs, and global conferences. "Our goal is to create a vibrant research ecosystem that nurtures creativity and fosters innovation," he explains.

Dr. Anand's vision also includes expanding the charitable activities of the Dr. K.C.G. Verghese Charitable Foundation. The foundation, named in honour of his late father, has been instrumental in providing education, healthcare, and social support to thousands of individuals. "My father's legacy is built on the principles of care, concern, and compassion," he says. "We want to continue and expand this legacy, reaching more people and making a greater impact."

The foundation's future plans include launching new initiatives focused on healthcare, education, and community development. This includes setting up medical camps in remote areas, providing scholarships to deserving students, and supporting sustainable development projects. "We believe in giving back to society and uplifting those in need," he states. "Our vision is to create a better world for future generations."

His father's health issues in the late 1990s meant that

many of his ambitious plans had to be put on hold. However, Dr. Anand sees this as destiny. "The delay allowed us to learn and adapt," he explains. "We were able to see the gaps in employability and industry readiness, which led us to develop programs that address these issues."

One of the key areas of focus for Dr. Anand is the integration of new technologies into the educational framework. He believes that advancements in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and digital technologies will revolutionize education. "The next five years will see AI embedding itself into every aspect of our lives," he predicts. "We need to be prepared for these changes and ensure that our students are equipped with the skills to thrive in this new landscape."

Dr. Anand has introduced courses that focus on AI, cybersecurity, and digital transformation. These courses are designed to provide the students with hands-on experience and practical knowledge, ensuring they are ready to meet the demands of the modern workforce. "It's not just about learning new technologies but understanding their ethical implications and societal impact," he adds.

Dr. Anand's vision includes fostering a sense of global citizenship among students. He believes that in a globalized world, it is essential for students to understand and appreciate different cultures and perspectives. "We are all connected in this global village," he says. "Our students need to be global citizens who can work collaboratively across borders and cultures."

To achieve this, Dr. Anand plans to expand the student exchange programs and international collaborations. He envisions partnerships with universities in Europe, North America, Asia, and Africa, creating opportunities for students to study and work in diverse environments. "Exposure to different cultures and ways of thinking will broaden their

horizons and prepare them for global leadership roles," he explains.

Recognizing the growing importance of online education, Dr. Anand has been a strong advocate for integrating digital learning into the mainstream curriculum. Under his leadership, Hindustan University has launched several online programs by establishing Centre for Online and Digital Education in the year 2021, that cater to working professionals and international students. "Online education provides flexibility and access to a wider audience," he says. "We want to leverage this platform to reach students who may not have the opportunity to attend traditional classes."

Dr. Anand's son, Enid Verghese, is spearheading the university's online education initiatives. Enid is responsible for developing and managing online courses that meet the highest standards of quality and relevance. "Our goal is to provide an engaging and interactive learning experience that is on par with our on-campus programs," he asserts.

Just as Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese once received training under his father, his son, Enid Verghese, is now the Deputy Director of Hindustan Group of Institutions, preparing for a significant role in the family legacy. Enid joined the family in their educational mission and is being meticulously prepared to take the legacy forward. Under his leadership, the Hindustan Group is achieving new heights in innovation and educational excellence. This dedication ensures that the next generation, consisting of Anand's nieces and nephews follow suit – and is equipped with practical skills and profound knowledge to tackle the challenges of the modern world.

Dr. Anand is also committed to promoting ethical technology and responsible innovation. He believes that technology should be used to benefit society and address global challenges. "Technology has the power to transform

lives, but it must be used responsibly," he states. "We need to ensure that our students understand the ethical implications of their work and strive to make a positive impact."

The university's curriculum includes courses on ethics, professional responsibility, and social impact, ensuring that students are well-versed in the principles of ethical technology. "It's about creating a balance between technological advancement and societal well-being," Dr. Anand explains. "We want our graduates to be not only skilled professionals but also conscientious citizens."

Dr. Anand Jacob Vergheese's vision for the future of Hindustan Group of Institutions is one of growth, innovation, and global impact. He is committed to expanding the institution's reach, enhancing the quality of education, and fostering a culture of continuous learning. His plans to integrate new technologies, enhance research, and promote global citizenship reflect his forward-thinking approach and dedication to excellence.

With his visionary leadership, meticulous planning, and unwavering commitment to ethical and impactful education, Dr. Anand Jacob Vergheese is poised to take Hindustan Group of Institutions to new heights. His journey is a testament to the power of vision, perseverance, and the relentless pursuit of excellence.

CSR ACTIVITIES: THE HEART OF HINDUSTAN

When discussing his future vision for the Hindustan Group of Institutions, Dr. Anand Jacob Vergheese's eyes lit up. His plans to integrate cutting-edge technology, foster global partnerships, and create innovative educational programs painted a picture of boundless potential. As he shifted the conversation to the group's community services and CSR activities, his tone softened with characteristic humility. "It's

not about the recognition," he said softly, "but about the impact we can make. The true measure of success is how much we can uplift those around us." This seamless blend of ambitious vision and heartfelt commitment to social responsibility truly defines his leadership.

Recalling the memory of his father, Dr. Anand's eyes often glisten with a mix of pride and nostalgia. "My father was not just an educator; he was a patriot and a humanist," he reflects, his voice trembling slightly with emotion. "He believed that education was the key to transforming lives, and he dedicated his life to making that belief a reality."

Dr. Anand's philosophy is deeply rooted in the principles of care, concern, and compassion that his family instilled in him from a young age. These values have become the cornerstone of the Hindustan Group's community initiatives. The Dr. K.C.G. Vergheese Charitable Foundation, named in honour of his late father, embodies these principles, working tirelessly to assist the needy and deserving without ever seeking the spotlight.

"In times of disaster, it's our duty to come together and support our fellow citizens," Dr. Anand emphasizes, his voice firm yet compassionate. Under the umbrella of the foundation various donations have been made, including the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund for the Gaja Cyclone relief efforts. "Seeing the devastation firsthand was heart-wrenching," he recalls. "We had to act swiftly to provide relief and support to those who had lost everything."

In Kerala, the foundation's contribution to the Pain and Palliative Care Society shows Dr. Anand's resolve of providing relief and comfort to those in their final stages of life. "It's about offering comfort and support during the most vulnerable times," he says, his voice barely above a whisper, resonating with profound empathy.

The foundation's healthcare initiatives are a testament to this legacy of compassion. Dr. Anand remembers each case with the tenderness of someone who has personally been touched by various stories.

Education, another pillar of the foundation's work, is equally dear to Dr. Anand's heart. He speaks of the scholarships and financial aid provided to the underprivileged students with a sense of fulfilment. "These students have so much potential," he says, a proud smile breaking through, "It's our duty to help them realize it."

One notable initiative was the construction of a new block at Marthoma Vocational Higher Secondary School in Kunnam, Kerala, near his ancestral home with a generous contribution. "The joy on the students' faces when the building was inaugurated was reward enough," Dr. Anand recalls, his eyes shining with the memory, as if reliving the moment.

Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese's journey with Y's Men International (YMI) is a significant part of his community service efforts. His commitment to the organization and its causes has been unwavering.

Anand served in numerous roles within YMI. He was awarded the highest Area Service Director- Cancer Care from 2010-2015 and International Service Director-Membership Conservation from 2018-2019. He was elected as International Council Member Elect and India Area President Elect in 2020-21, and served as AP and ICM India from 2021-22. His contributions have been recognized with several awards, including the Elmer Crowe Award at the International Convention in August 2010 in Yokohama, Japan.

In 2014, as Chairman of the Host Committee for the 71st Y's Men International Convention (IC 14) in Chennai, he organized an event that offered 100 free registrations to Y's



Youth for the International Youth Convocation. His tenure as Regional Director (RD) of South India Region from 2016-2018 saw the addition of over 20 new clubs and numerous projects, earning him the Best Regional Director Award - India Area for 2017-18.

Anand's contributions to YMI include instituting the "Best Y's Leader of India Area Award" in memory of his father, the late HRM Y's men Dr. KCG Verghese. He also established the Y's Men COVID warrior scheme in collaboration with the Hindustan Group of Institutions, providing scholarships and aid for COVID-19 frontline workers and their families.

Anand's involvement with YMI extends beyond India. He has attended Y's Men International Conventions in various countries, fostering international collaboration



Photo at the stage of the marathon organized by Y's Men, with actor Chiyaan Vikram and former Olympian Bhaskaran.

and understanding. In April 2021, YMI Madras District awarded him the VidyaBhushan Award in recognition of his philanthropy and continued service to education.

Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese's journey with Y's Men International highlights his commitment to community service, leadership, and making a positive impact. His contributions have strengthened YMI and created a lasting legacy of compassion and excellence.

During the Michaung Cyclone, Dr. Anand and his team distributed rice bags to the affected people living in Karapamman, Kelambakkam, Arambakkam, Navalur, Chinandikuppam, and Thalumbur. "We worked tirelessly, often through the night, to ensure that help reached those in need. It was about being there for our community in their darkest hour," he says, his voice reflecting the gravity of the situation and the determination to make a difference. He

personally led the efforts, ensuring that the relief materials reached the affected areas promptly. "In times of crisis, we must stand together," he emphasizes. "It's not about who gives the most; it's about the collective effort to rebuild lives."

Smart classes were introduced at the Government School in Kelambakkam, transforming the educational experience for the students. "We wanted to bridge the digital divide and provide these children with the tools they need to succeed in the modern world," Dr. Anand explains. He vividly remembers the first day the smart classes were launched, seeing the wonder and excitement in the students' eyes. "It was like watching magic happen," he says, a smile spreading across his face.

Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese's leadership in CSR activities reflects his deep-rooted values of humility, compassion, and service. His quiet yet impactful approach to philanthropy has transformed countless lives, embodying the true spirit of Hindustan Group's commitment to community development. The foundation's contributions to healthcare, education, and community service have made a tangible difference in countless lives. His leadership and personal commitment to these causes reflect a profound sense of responsibility and compassion. His humility and dedication shine through in every initiative, making a significant impact without seeking recognition.

As he often says, "Success is not just measured by our achievements but by the difference we make in the lives of others." This philosophy is evident in every action taken by the foundation, guided by the principles of care, concern, and compassion. Through his leadership, Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese continues to transform lives and communities with quiet dignity and unwavering commitment.

And not to forget the pandemic, a global uncertainty when



Felicitating the winners at a sports event organized by Y's Men, promoting athletic excellence.

under Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese's leadership, the K.C.G. Verghese Charitable Foundation and Hindustan Group of Institutions came together to make a significant impact. The foundation's response was swift, compassionate, and far-reaching.

Dr. Anand's approach was both strategic and heartfelt. Camps were set up across various villages, including Illalur, Kayar, Vembedu, Kelambakkam, Pudupukam, Neelankarai, and Injambakkam in Chennai, as well as throughout the Chengalpattu district. "Our goal was to ensure that no one was left behind, that every family received the support they needed to get through this unprecedented crisis," he said, his voice filled with determination.

These relief camps were more than places to hand out

supplies; they became centers of hope and support. Volunteers, including many students and staff from Hindustan Group of Institutions, worked hard to distribute the supplies, even putting their own health at risk to help others. "It was a team effort," Dr. Anand says. "Everyone united with the common goal of helping those in need."

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when fear and uncertainty gripped the world, Dr. Anand and his team launched an extensive relief operation. Recognizing the immediate needs of the vulnerable, the foundation allocated a substantial fund to support families severely affected by the crisis. This initiative reached out to 5000 families, providing essential groceries and medical kits, ensuring that basic needs were met even in the darkest times.

In addition to immediate relief, the foundation also focused on long-term support through educational scholarships. Recognizing the financial strain the pandemic placed on families, Hindustan Group of Institutions provided more than Rs. 5 crore worth of scholarships to students excelling in academics and sports. Two special scholarships were introduced during this period: the COVID Frontline Scholarship and the COVID Martyrs Scholarship. The former was designed to support children of frontline workers who had tirelessly battled the virus, while the latter honored those who had lost their lives to COVID-19, ensuring their children could continue their education without financial burdens.

"The pandemic tested us in ways we could never have imagined," Dr. Anand says, his eyes reflecting the weight of those challenging months. "But it also brought out the best in us. It reminded us of our shared humanity and the importance of standing together in times of crisis."

Dr. Anand's leadership during the pandemic was a beacon of hope for many. His humility and unwavering commitment

to serving others were evident in every action taken by the foundation. Through their efforts, countless lives were touched, and communities were strengthened, embodying the true spirit of the Hindustan Group's dedication to making a positive impact on society.

**"LEADERSHIP IS NOT
JUST ABOUT SETTING
THE PATH BUT ALSO
ABOUT LIGHTING THE
WAY, INSPIRING OTHERS
TO DREAM MORE, LEARN
MORE, DO MORE, AND
BECOME MORE."
— DR. ANAND JACOB VERGHESE**

Chapter 11

The Journey Continues: A ROAD TRIP FROM CHENNAI TO DELHI

In a time when air travel is the norm for long distances, Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese and his friends embarked on a remarkable road trip from Chennai to Delhi. This journey was not just a testament to their adventurous spirits but also a reflection of meticulous planning, camaraderie, and the joy of exploration. The road trip was a memorable experience for Dr. Anand and his three close friends—Anoop, Vivek, and Samar—each bringing their unique backgrounds and stories to the adventure.

Dr. Anand, known for his detailed planning and foresight, took the lead in organizing the trip. He meticulously prepared a comprehensive map highlighting every petrol pump, hospital, major city, and potential pit stop along the way. His preparation even extended to identifying car workshops and mechanics, ensuring that any unforeseen issues could be promptly addressed. "It's all about being prepared," Dr. Anand would say, embodying his philosophy of planning for every contingency.

The journey began early one February morning. The crisp air was filled with excitement as the four friends gathered their belongings and loaded them into the car. Anoop, who loved driving, took the wheel for the first leg of the journey from Chennai to Hyderabad.

The route to Hyderabad was smooth, with well-maintained roads and scenic views. The friends enjoyed light-hearted banter, sharing stories and laughter that set a joyful tone for the trip. Dr. Anand, fond of photography, captured the beauty of the landscapes with his camera, documenting the early moments of their adventure.

Upon reaching Hyderabad, they explored the city's rich history and vibrant culture. They visited the iconic Charminar, tasted the famous Hyderabadi Biryani, and marvelled at the architectural beauty of the Golconda Fort. The stay in Hyderabad was filled with both relaxation and exploration, a perfect start to their long journey ahead.

The next leg of the journey took them from Hyderabad to Nagpur. This part of the trip was particularly picturesque, with lush green landscapes and winding roads. Dr. Anand's meticulous planning proved invaluable as they navigated the route smoothly, stopping at predetermined petrol stations and rest areas.

Nagpur, known as the "Orange City," offered them a chance to visit local markets and enjoy fresh oranges. However, this part of the journey also presented some unexpected challenges. As they approached Nagpur, they encountered a significant crowd and disturbances due to a local issue. Dr. Anand's calm demeanour and detailed planning ensured they navigated through without much hassle.

Samar recalls, "It was the only place where we encountered such a crowd, but thanks to Anand's foresight and planning, we managed to get through it unscathed." They visited the DeekshaBhoomi, a prominent Buddhist monument in Nagpur, adding a cultural touch to their journey.

Leaving Nagpur, the friends headed towards the Pench Tiger Reserve, a highlight of their trip. Pench is known for its dense forests and wildlife, including the majestic Bengal tigers. The drive to Pench was filled with anticipation, as the friends looked forward to spotting tigers and other wildlife.

As they arrived at the reserve, the excitement was visible. Dr. Anand, with his camera ready, was eager to capture the wildlife. However, nature had other plans. Despite their best efforts and multiple safari rides, they only managed to spot owls. Samar, with his characteristic humour, quipped, "You brought your 2-foot-long lens to capture owls?" This light-hearted jest brought laughter to the group, even as Dr. Anand sheepishly closed his camera, accepting that the elusive tigers would remain a mystery for this trip. Funnily enough, Samar was the one who requested the stop at Pench for shooting wildlife, and later he was nowhere to be found after he spotted a lady from his hometown – forgetting his friends and the trip

itself in the process!

The cold winter mornings in Pench added to the adventure. Bundled up in warm clothes, they sipped on hot masala chai and enjoyed the serene beauty of the forest. Though they didn't spot tigers, the experience of being in the wild, surrounded by nature, was enriching. They appreciated the tranquility and the opportunity to disconnect from their busy lives.

From the wilderness of Pench, the journey continued towards the historic city of Gwalior. Known for its magnificent fort and rich history, Gwalior offered a completely different experience. The roads from Pench to Gwalior, passing through the ghats near Itarsi, were a delight to drive on. Dr. Anand's friends were particularly impressed by the quality of the roads and the scenic beauty of the ghats.

In Gwalior, they visited the Gwalior Fort, a majestic structure that stands as a testament to the city's historical significance. The intricate architecture and the stories of valour and bravery that echoed within the fort's walls fascinated them. They also visited the Jai Vilas Palace, experiencing the opulence of the erstwhile rulers of Gwalior.

The stay in Gwalior was a blend of cultural immersion and historical exploration. They relished local delicacies, interacted with locals, and soaked in the rich heritage of the city. Dr. Anand's love for photography found ample opportunities as he captured the architectural marvels and the vibrant street scenes.

The final leg of their journey took them from Gwalior to Delhi. The anticipation of reaching their destination was mixed with a sense of fulfillment from the experiences they had shared so far. The roads leading to Delhi were

bustling with activity, a stark contrast to the quieter routes they had taken earlier.

As they approached Delhi, the friends reflected on their journey. It was an ideal mix of excitement, careful preparation, and strong friendship. They had navigated through bustling cities, serene forests, and historical landmarks, each stop adding a unique chapter to their story. Upon reaching Delhi, they were joined by their wives, turning the conclusion of the road trip into a larger celebration. It was also a significant moment for Samar, whose 60th birthday was celebrated with much joy and festivity.

The night of Samar's birthday celebration was filled with laughter, music, and reminiscing. The group gathered around a bonfire in the spacious garden of the Delhi hotel, their faces illuminated by the flickering flames. The warmth of the fire was a stark contrast to the cool evening air.

As the night deepened and the celebrations mellowed, Vivek and Anand found themselves sitting slightly apart from the group, the glow of the fire casting shadows on their faces. Vivek turned to Anand, a nostalgic smile playing on his lips.

"Remember our first adventure together?" Vivek began, his voice tinged with amusement.

Anand chuckled, nodding. "The rally? How could I forget? It was more a comedy of errors than a rally," he replied, his eyes sparkling with the memories.

Vivek laughed. "You were so confident, insisting you could navigate with that tulip chart. And look where that got us—lost in the middle of nowhere more times than I can count."

Anand shook his head, smiling. "It was my first real

taste of planning and improvisation. We had no idea what we were doing, but we had the time of our lives."

Vivek leaned back, gazing at the stars. "Who would've thought that the reckless young boy from the rally would grow into the meticulous planner of this road trip? You've come a long way, Anand."

Anand's smile softened. "Those early days were crucial. They taught me the importance of preparation and the value of flexibility. I had to learn that while enthusiasm can take you far, it's the careful planning and attention to detail that ensures you reach your destination."

Vivek nodded thoughtfully. "It's funny. Even back then, in the chaos of the rally, I could see the spark in you—the potential to lead, to inspire. But seeing you now, the transformation is remarkable. You've channeled that raw energy into something truly impactful."

Anand glanced around at their friends, then back at Vivek. "It's not just about the journey, but who you travel with. The people around me, like you, have always been my greatest strength. The rally was our first test, a wild ride that showed me the importance of teamwork and trust."

Vivek raised an eyebrow, a playful grin on his face. "So, what's next for the maverick turned leader? Another rally, perhaps?"

Anand laughed. "The love for cars and the open road is still very much alive. But now, it's more about the journey itself, the experiences, and the people I share them with. There's still so much to explore, so many more adventures to be had."

Vivek's smile turned thoughtful. "Do you ever miss those simpler times, when the biggest worry was whether we'd make it through a rally without crashing?"

Anand paused, considering the question. "I miss the



Anand with his friends Samar, Vivek and Anoop sharing a light moment, that captures the essence of true friendship.

simplicity, the carefree nature of it. But I don't miss the lack of direction. Now, every journey has a purpose, a goal. It's about making a difference, not just for myself, but for those around me."

Vivek nodded in agreement. "You've grown into a leader, Anand. Not just in the sense of guiding others, but in your vision and your ability to inspire."

Anand's eyes gleamed with gratitude. "Thank you, Vivek. It means a lot coming from you. You were there from the beginning, through every twist and turn. Your support has been invaluable."

Vivek shrugged modestly. "It's been an incredible journey, watching you grow and evolve. And to think, it all started with a wild rally race."

Anand chuckled. "Life has a way of taking us on unexpected paths. That rally was just the beginning. It ignited a fire in me that has continued to burn brightly."

Vivek raised his glass in a toast. "To the journey, and to the maverick who became a leader."

Anand clinked his glass against Vivek's, the sound ringing clear in the night. "To the journey," he echoed, his heart full of gratitude and anticipation for what lay ahead.

As the fire crackled and the stars shimmered above, the two friends sat in comfortable silence, their bond stronger than ever. The road trip had come to an end, but the journey, both past and future, continued to unfold. With a smile, Anand looked forward to the new adventures, challenges, and triumphs that awaited, knowing that with friends like Vivek by his side, there was no road too long or path too difficult to traverse.

In the quiet moments of the night, surrounded by the warmth of friendship and the promise of new beginnings, Anand reflected on his journey. From a young prankster to a rally enthusiast, and now a visionary leader, each step had been a chapter in his story. And as he looked to the future, he knew that the journey was far from over. The road stretched out before him, filled with endless possibilities and the promise of even greater adventures. The journey continues, and with it, the story of a maverick turned leader, driven by passion, guided by purpose, and inspired by the friends and experiences that shaped him along the way.

This road trip was more than just a travel experience for Dr. Anand and his friends. It was a reaffirmation of their bond, an adventure that tested their planning and adaptability, and a journey that enriched their understanding of India's diverse landscapes and cultures.

Dr. Anand's meticulous planning and attention to detail ensured that the trip was smooth and enjoyable. His ability to foresee potential issues and prepare contingencies

highlighted his leadership qualities. Despite being a naturally shy person who wouldn't openly take the lead, his actions spoke volumes. His friends admired his ability to manage the trip seamlessly, balancing safety, comfort, and enjoyment.

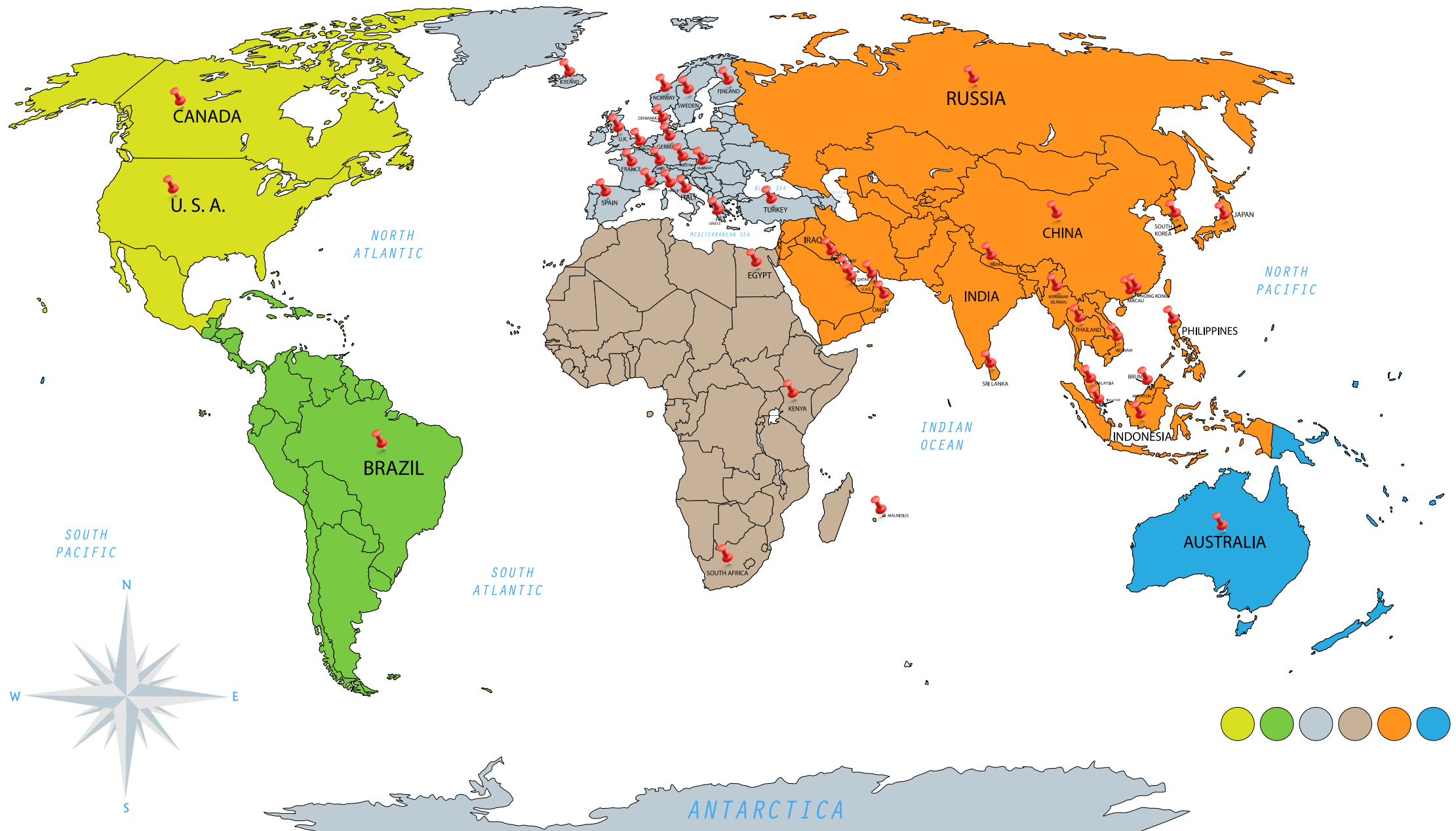
Samar aptly summarized, "Anand's planning was impeccable. From mapping out every petrol pump to ensuring we knew where the nearest hospital or mechanic was, he thought of everything. His quiet leadership and thorough preparation made the trip memorable and stress-free."

As Dr. Anand reflects on this journey, he sees it as a metaphor for his approach to life and leadership. "Every journey, whether on the road or in life, teaches us something new," he says. "It's about the people we meet, the experiences we share, and the lessons we learn."

The journey of Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese and the Hindustan Group is far from over. With new projects and initiatives on the horizon, his legacy of leadership, compassion, and continuous learning will continue to inspire and guide future generations.

And so, the journey continues, driven by a commitment to excellence, a passion for education, and a heart full of compassion. The road ahead is filled with endless possibilities, each turn bringing new opportunities and adventures, ensuring that Dr. Anand's story of vision and leadership remains an enduring inspiration.

DR. ANAND JACOB VERGHESE'S GLOBAL ODYSSEY: 47 COUNTRIES AND COUNTING!



- | | | | | | |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. UAE | 9. SWITZERLAND | 17. JAPAN | 25. NEPAL | 33. NORWAY | 41. CANADA |
| 2. KOREA | 10. EGYPT | 18. CHINA | 26. INDONESIA | 34. DENMARK | 42. IRELAND |
| 3. SINGAPORE | 11. OMAN | 19. MACAU | 27. TURKEY | 35. FINLAND | 43. BELGIUM |
| 4. BRUNEI | 12. SRI LANKA | 20. THAILAND | 28. SPAIN | 36. MYANMAR | 44. GREECE |
| 5. USA | 13. AUSTRALIA | 21. FRANCE | 29. VATICAN | 37. SOUTH AFRICA | 45. PHILIPPINES |
| 6. UK | 14. KENYA | 22. BRAZIL | 30. SWEDEN | 38. MONACO | 46. QATAR |
| 7. BAHRAIN | 15. MALAYSIA | 23. HONGKONG | 31. GERMANY | 39. AUSTRIA | 47. MAURITIUS |
| 8. RUSSIA | 16. KUWAIT | 24. ITALY | 32. VIETNAM | 40. HUNGARY | |

Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese is a visionary leader and an inspirational figure in the realm of education and industry. With decades of unwavering dedication and innovative educational expertise, Dr. Verghese has revolutionized educational standards, empowering countless students and professionals to achieve their highest potential. His relentless pursuit of excellence has facilitated the growth and transformation of Hindustan Group of Institutions into one of the top institutions, offering world-class education and fostering holistic development.

Within the pages of this book, Dr. Anand Jacob Verghese unveils a detailed chronicle of his extraordinary journey, from his early life influenced by his illustrious parents, Dr. KCG Verghese and Dr. Mrs. Elizabeth Verghese, to his current role as a dynamic leader. His story is one of resilience, innovation, and relentless pursuit of excellence, inspiring readers with his remarkable achievements and enriching experiences. This biography is not just a testament to his professional triumphs but also a tribute to his enduring legacy in shaping the future of education and industry.

As the Chairman of Hindustan Group of Institutions, Dr. Verghese has spearheaded numerous initiatives, driving academic excellence and industry collaboration. Under his leadership, the institution has not only expanded its academic programs but also made significant strides in research, innovation, and community engagement. His visionary approach has earned him numerous accolades and titles, cementing his reputation as a trailblazer in the educational sector.

Beyond academia, Dr. Verghese plays a pivotal role in various industrial and philanthropic organizations. His contributions extend to sectors such as aviation, automotive, and information technology, where his strategic insights and leadership have led to remarkable advancements. As a respected board member and advisor, he continues to influence policies and initiatives that drive societal progress.

Through this biography, Dr. Verghese aspires to ignite the spark within each reader, encouraging them to embrace their true potential and play a vital role in shaping a brighter, evolving world.



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