



C K Somany created one of the international glass industry's most enduring family dynasties.



C K Somany received the 43rd annual Phoenix Award from Gordon Jungquist, 2013 Phoenix Award Committee Chairperson.

Visionary Indian entrepreneur mourned by international glass community

Last May, the champion and father figure of the Indian glass industry, Shri Chandra Kumar Somany passed away, age 84, after a prolonged illness. Born and raised in Kolkata, C K Somany headed India's principal glass manufacturing group for more than 60 years. Under his leadership, Hindusthan National Glass & Industries emerged as the region's dominant supplier of containers and also diversified into the rapidly expanding float glass business.

Together with his sons Sanjay and Mukul and grandson Bharat, C K Somany created one of the international glass industry's most enduring dynasties. Having started with a semi-automatic glass container production facility, HNG was India's first to convert to fully automatic operation in 1952. The business was guided throughout by a visionary entrepreneur, who maintained his involvement latterly as non-executive Chairman.

After qualifying in financial management in London, Mr Somany immersed himself in the glass industry, acquiring a strong reputation for his business and technical acumen. Over the years, advanced training was sought on various aspects of the glass manufacturing process, including the operation and maintenance of IS machines, mould design and factory instrumentation, relevant elements of which were integrated within HNG's expanding glassmaking operation.

Throughout his illustrious career, Mr Somany maintained a strong association with the Indian glass industry, serving as President of the All India Glass Manufacturers' Federation, the Bengal Glass Manufacturers' Association and several other commercial and non-commercial organisations. He served as Chairman of the Indian Government's development panel for the glass industry between 1995 and 1997 and was associated with various charitable and philanthropic organisations.

Four years ago, just after his 80th birthday, C K Somany

was the proud recipient of the 2013 Phoenix Award. His nomination as the 43rd Glass Person of the Year was a richly deserved recognition for his efforts in the creation and constant development of HNG over a period of more than six decades. "Being the first Indian to receive the Phoenix Award makes me extremely proud on behalf of my nation, as well as everyone within the extended HNG family" he explained at the time to *Glass Worldwide's* Editorial Consultant, John Wallis. "It has been

a collective effort that has resulted in this recognition, involving many colleagues in India."

John Wallis was fortunate to have known Mr Somany for more than 30 years, interviewing him on numerous occasions. "C K was a special person, who gained the respect of his peers throughout the world" he recalls. "He was extremely knowledgeable and always happy to share his experience... a very generous and charitable gentleman, who will be sadly missed." ■



Four generations of the Somany family were present to see C K Somany receive the 2013 Phoenix Award in Berlin.