

# Five Eminent Personalities Felicitated at Manipal Groups' New Year Awards 2026

Category: Business

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**Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE)**, an Institution of Eminence Deemed to be University, in collaboration with Academy of General Education (AGE), Manipal Education and Medical Group (MEMG), Bengaluru, Manipal Media Network Ltd and Dr. TMA Pai Foundation successfully organized the "**New Year Awards 2026**" to honor the five eminent personalities for their outstanding contributions to society, art and culture.



### **Distinguished awardees honoured at the Manipal Groups' New Year Awards 2026 ceremony, held on 10 January in Manipal**

The event was graced by Dr H S Ballal, President-AGE and Pro Chancellor MAHE, Mrs Vasanti R Pai, Trustee, MAHE Trust, Dr Ranjan R Pai, Chairman, MEMG, Bengaluru, President, MAHE Trust, and Registrar, AGE; Shri T Satish U Pai, Executive Chairman, Manipal Media Network Ltd and Vice President, AGE; and Shri T Sachin Pai, Trustee, Dr. TMA Pai Foundation, Manipal. Their presence underscored the continued commitment of the Manipal institutions to recognizing excellence and societal impact.

The eminent personalities for New Year awards 2026 were: **Shri K Jayaprakash Hegde**, Former Minister Ports and Fisheries, Government of Karnataka, **Shri K Lakshminarayanan**, Former Executive Director, Canara Bank, **Dr Thumbay Moideen**, Founder President, Thumbay Group, UAE, **Mrs Vinaya Prasad**, Indian Cine Artist, and **Lt Gen (Dr) M D Venkatesh**, VSM, (Retd), Vice

Chancellor, MAHE.

Addressing the occasion, **Dr H S Ballal, President-AGE and Pro Chancellor MAHE**, said, *"It is with immense pride that we gather once again to celebrate excellence and recognise individuals whose contributions have enriched our society in meaningful ways. At MAHE, we believe that recognizing such excellence goes beyond mere acknowledgment as it strengthens the cultural and intellectual fabric of our society. Their journeys inspire us to continue fostering an environment where creativity, scholarship, and social responsibility thrive together. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the recipients and thank them for being the torchbearers of positive change."*

Expressing his gratitude on receiving the award, **Lt Gen (Dr) M D Venkatesh, VSM, (Retd.), Vice Chancellor, MAHE**, said, *"As I reflect on this honour, I am reminded that education is, at its core, a collective endeavour. No achievement in this field belongs to one person alone. It is the result of the shared commitment of countless individuals, faculty members whose teaching inspires, researchers who push the boundaries of knowledge, staff who ensure the seamless functioning of our campuses, students whose curiosity fuels innovation, and partners who believe deeply in our mission. I accept this award on behalf of the entire MAHE community, whose tireless efforts make recognitions such as this possible."*

**Shri K Jayaprakash Hegde, Former Minister Ports and Fisheries, Government of Karnataka**, said he was extremely humbled on receiving the award and emphasized *"Appointed by the Government of Karnataka, I was entrusted with the responsibility to oversee social inclusion initiatives and*

*classification reforms. In this role, I sought to modernize representation frameworks and address long-standing social inequities within our state. One moment that stands out is submitting Karnataka's first report advocating the inclusion of orphans for reservation- ensuring that children without families or communities would not be left behind and could compete on a fair footing with their peers."*

**Shri K Lakshminarayanan, Former Executive Director, Canara Bank**, went down the memory lane and shared "*I had the opportunity to meet Shri T A Pai when he was the head of the Canara Industrial and Banking Syndicate, with Dr TMA Pai as the chairman of the Board of Bank. As my boss was on a tour, I took care of Sri Pai's requirement. After which, I received an offer letter, and I joined Shri Pai in his bank. Initially, I was not familiar with local languages and conversed in English, which later got down to broken Kannada, and local people were kind enough to accept me as such. During the time, the bank expanded its services to overseas and I got the opportunity to learn banking practices from Germany, and in subsequent years when the bank opted to operate from London, I was managing the branch for some time. After satisfying years, the Government of the day chose to appoint me as the Executive Director of the Syndicate Bank and subsequently the Executive Director of the Canara Bank.*"

Conveying her happiness after accepting the award, **Mrs Vinaya Prasad, Indian Cine Artist**, said, "*My artistic journey has taken me across many film industries—Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, and Telugu—and each phase has taught me invaluable lessons in sincerity, discipline, and dedication. Cinema has a way of shaping one's understanding of people, emotions, and society. Udupi has always been a place where learning and art walk hand in hand, and MAHE has amplified that tradition on a*

*global scale. I express my heartfelt appreciation and admiration for this special recognition.”*

Honored by the recognition **Dr Thumbay Moideen, Founder & President, Thumbay Group, UAE** expressed his gratitude “*This recognition of bestowing me the New Year Award for 2026 is not only a personal honor but also a testament to the collective vision, relentless dedication, and unwavering commitment of the entire Thumbay Group team—especially our healthcare, education, and research professionals—who work tirelessly every day to advance human well-being and knowledge across the UAE and beyond. My journey in building institutions that bridge healthcare, education, and community service has always been inspired by the same values that define MAHE: excellence, innovation, compassion, and a deep-rooted belief in the transformative power of education and healing.*”

The event was concluded with a sincere vote of thanks by **Dr. (Cdr) Anil Rana, Director, Manipal Institute of Technology (MIT), Manipal**, acknowledging the overwhelming participation and support for the entire community.

