

GULF TIMES SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

CELEBRATIONS

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MILESTONES:

WHY MOMENTS MATTER

Life unfolds not only through the passage of time, but through the moments that define us. While days, weeks, and years may pass quietly, it is the milestones we celebrate that give shape and meaning to our personal journeys.

These moments—birthdays, graduations, weddings, career achievements, anniversaries, and personal triumphs—serve as emotional signposts, reminding us of growth, resilience, love, and belonging.

In a world increasingly driven by speed and productivity, celebrations invite us to pause. They encourage reflection, gratitude, and connection, transforming ordinary time into meaningful memory. More than social gatherings or ceremonial traditions, life's milestones are affirmations of progress and purpose.



Marking milestones

At their core, celebrations fulfil a deeply human need: to feel seen, valued, and acknowledged. Recognising milestones validates effort and perseverance. A promotion acknowledges years of dedication. A graduation symbolises discipline, sacrifice, and ambition. A wedding or anniversary celebrates commitment and shared resilience.

Emotionally, these moments help individuals process transitions. Life is a continuous series of beginnings



and endings—childhood to adulthood, education to career, singlehood to partnership, work to retirement. Celebrating milestones provides emotional closure to one chapter and optimism for the next. It allows people to honour what has been achieved before stepping forward.

Psychological studies consistently show that marking meaningful moments strengthens emotional wellbeing. Celebrations boost morale, reinforce identity, and foster a sense of accomplishment. They also help people cope with uncertainty and change by grounding them in positive experiences and shared support.

Cultural traditions

Across civilizations, milestones have always been marked with rituals, customs, and communal gatherings. From birth ceremonies and coming-of-age traditions to marriage rites and golden anniversaries, cultures around the world have long understood the importance of recognising life's transitions.

These traditions are more than symbolic gestures; they are vessels of collective memory. They transmit values, beliefs, and heritage from one generation to the next. A wedding ceremony reflects cultural ideals of family and partnership. Graduation celebrations emphasise the value placed on education. Anniversary rituals honour endurance, patience, and mutual respect.

In Qatar, a nation defined by both deep-rooted traditions and global diversity, celebrations take on a uniquely inclusive character. Residents from different cultures bring their customs together, enriching the social landscape. While the rituals may differ, the emotions remain universal—joy, pride, hope, and gratitude.

Celebrations as social connectors

Beyond personal significance, milestones play a vital social role. They bring people together, strengthening relationships and reinforcing community bonds. In an era dominated by digital communication, celebrations create opportunities for genuine human connection—face-to-face conversations, shared laughter, and collective memory-making.

Family gatherings reconnect generations. Friends reunite across distances. Communities rally around achievements and shared happiness. These interactions foster empathy and belonging, reminding individuals that they are supported and valued within a wider social circle.

Celebrations also create space for storytelling. Elders recount past journeys, parents reflect on sacrifices made, and younger generations gain perspective. Through these shared narratives, identity is strengthened and continuity preserved.

The lasting power of memory

Long after decorations are taken down and guests have departed, the memories of celebrations endure. People may forget daily routines, but they vividly recall the day they graduated, the moment they said "I do," or the pride felt at a long-awaited achievement.

These memories become emotional landmarks. During challenging times, they serve as reminders of strength and success. During moments of reflection, they inspire gratitude. They shape how individuals remember their lives—not as a series of obligations, but as a collection of meaningful moments.

BEYOND PERSONAL SIGNIFICANCE, MILESTONES PLAY A VITAL SOCIAL ROLE. THEY BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER, STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS AND REINFORCING COMMUNITY BONDS.

Photographs, videos, handwritten notes, and keepsakes become tangible anchors to these experiences. Yet it is the emotion attached to the moment that gives them lasting power.

A celebration of life itself

Ultimately, celebrating milestones is a celebration of life itself. It is an acknowledgment that growth is worth honouring, relationships are worth nurturing, and time is worth marking meaningfully.

As individuals and communities continue to navigate an ever-changing world, these moments of celebration offer grounding and continuity. They encourage reflection in times of transition, joy in times of achievement, and unity in times of togetherness.

By celebrating life's milestones, we do more than mark dates—we affirm purpose, deepen connections, and create memories that define who we are and how we live.

GULF TIMES SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

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BELIEVE IN YOUR VISION, STEP CONFIDENTLY INTO ANY INDUSTRY, AND GROW ONE STEP AT A TIME

Reena Kooliyadath – CEO
OUTSTANDING TRADING & CONTRACTING (OTC)

consistent quality. A disciplined approach and strong family support played a vital role in overcoming early challenges.

Today, OTC is proud of its strong client relationships, high HSE standards, ethical business conduct, and steady expansion into engineering and support services. The company is recognized for quick mobilization, professionalism, and dependable performance—even under urgent project demands.

For Reena, leadership is rooted in integrity, accountability, empathy, and people-first values.

"My team is the backbone of the business," she says. She treats employees like family, empowers her workforce, and fosters a transparent, respectful, and positive work culture—believing that strong teams build strong companies.

Hailing from the Kannur district of Kerala and belonging to the Kandomvil family, Reena is currently a resident of Malaysia. She draws constant inspiration from her family—her husband, Arun, and daughters, Abiraamii, Vreentha, and Reshma—who's encouragement continues to fuel her entrepreneurial journey.

Key Achievements

- Successful market entry in Qatar as a reliable trading and contracting partner
- Strong client relationships with repeat business across oil & gas, construction, and engineering sectors
- Supply of skilled, certified manpower meeting timelines and compliance standards

These milestones motivate us to continue growing and improving," Reena emphasizes.

Looking ahead, her vision is to build a trusted and sustainable trading and contracting company, driven by innovation, digital efficiency, strong partnerships, and strict compliance. She firmly believes Qatar's business-friendly ecosystem—supported by major infrastructure projects, digital growth, and 100% foreign ownership—offers exceptional opportunities for emerging entrepreneurs.

Her message to aspiring women entrepreneurs is clear and empowering:

"Believe in your vision, step confidently into any industry, and grow one step at a time. Do not hesitate to enter male-dominated sectors—professionalism, consistency, and commitment to quality create success."

She adds, "Break every barrier. Chase your dream without fear. Never stop working until you rise as the strongest. I live this commitment every day."

Reena hopes her journey will be remembered not just for business success, but for building trust, creating opportunities, and inspiring women to lead with courage, integrity, and purpose.

With years of hands-on experience in manpower supply and industrial services, Reena Kooliyadath, CEO, Outstanding Trading & Contracting (OTC), transformed industry insight into entrepreneurship. After serving as a General Manager, she identified a clear market need for reliable service delivery, skilled manpower, and transparent business practices—and set out to build a company that delivers exactly that.

Outstanding Trading & Contracting (OTC), with Malaysian roots, proudly operates in Qatar. Founded in Doha, the company provides contracting services, HVAC & MEP solutions, manpower support, and industrial trading, serving Qatar's oil & gas, construction, and commercial sectors with a strong focus on quality, trust, safety, and compliance.

"The first few months were the toughest—establishing credibility, securing projects, managing operations, and facing financial challenges," says Reena. She worked late nights, stabilized cash flow, and leveraged her industry experience to ensure timely delivery and

JEBI K. JOHN

Entrepreneur, Philanthropist, and Beacon of Generosity

Jebi K. John, managing director of Qatar Tec, is widely recognized not only for his remarkable achievements in business but also for his unwavering commitment to philanthropy and community service.

A man whose life embodies resilience, vision, and generosity, Jebi K. John has left an indelible mark on both the professional and social landscapes of Qatar and his native Kerala. Born in Mannathur, Koothattukulam, in Ernakulam district, his humble beginnings shaped a deep understanding of the struggles faced by ordinary people and instilled in him a lifelong dedication to giving back to society.

Arriving in Doha in 1999 in search of opportunities, Jebi K. John began his career as an employee in a foreign land. Through sheer determination, hard work, and strategic vision, he rose to become an employer and an industry leader, ultimately founding Qatar Tec in 2008.

Under his stewardship, the company has earned a reputation for excellence, reliability, and professionalism, contributing significantly to several high-profile projects in Qatar, particularly in the oil and gas sector. Beyond business success, John has demonstrated that leadership is not only about growth and profits but also about uplifting others and fostering human connections.

His entrepreneurial journey is paralleled by an extraordinary dedication to humanitarian work. Through the Kolkunnel John and Chinnamma Foundation, Jebi K. John has spearheaded numerous initiatives aimed at improving the lives of the underprivileged. He has built homes for those in need, provided critical assistance during natural disasters such as floods and landslides, and supported students through scholarships and educational aid, ensuring that young minds have the opportunity to thrive.

His efforts extend to Qatar, where he actively engages with communities, organizes charity drives, and supports workers, reflecting his belief that success carries a responsibility to give back.

Jebi K. John also actively embraces cultural and religious diversity, participating in local celebrations and fostering mutual respect and understanding. During Ramadan, he has

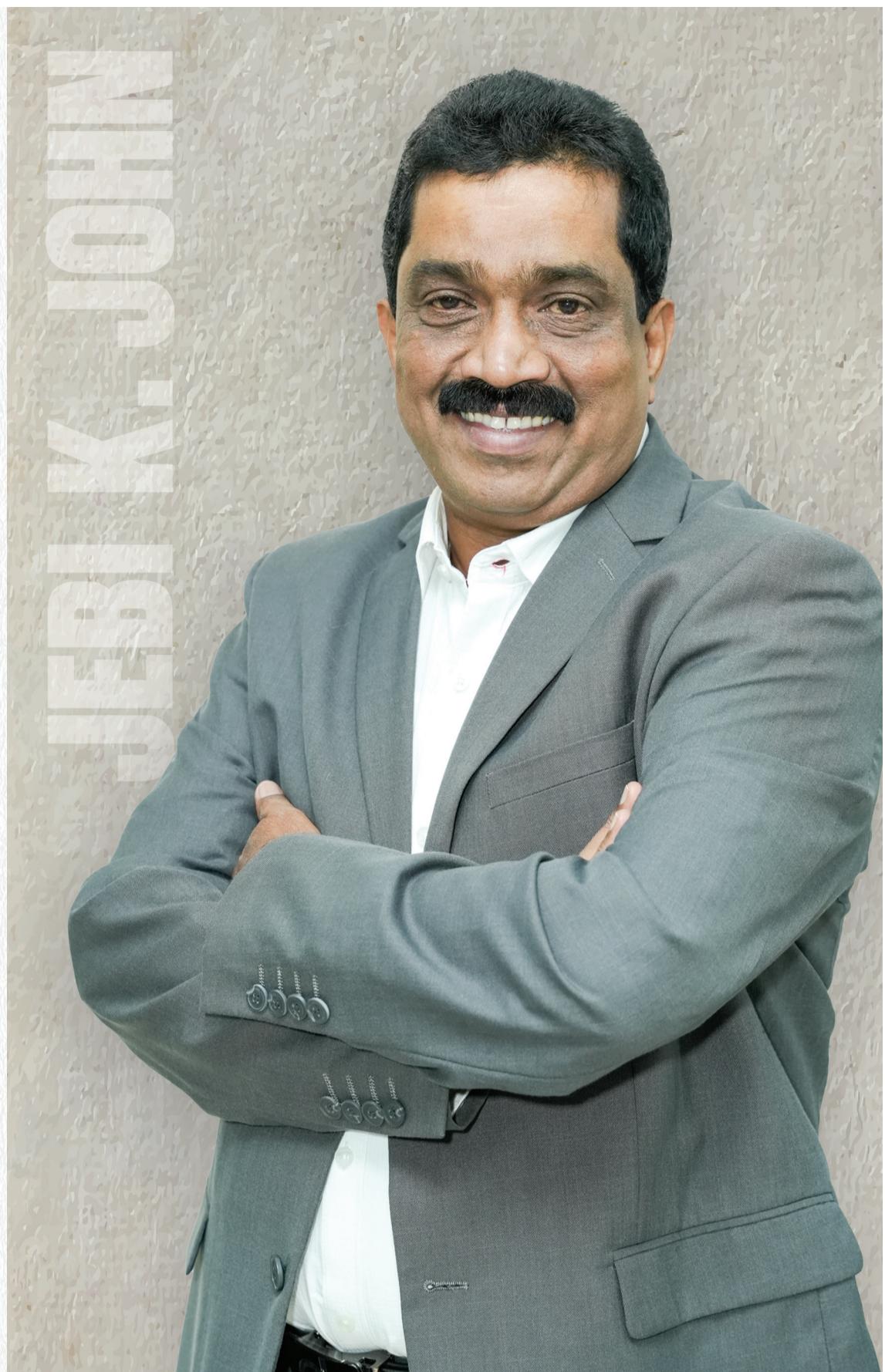
spent years organizing and distributing one-day Iftar kits, sharing in the traditions and culinary experiences of his Muslim friends and community in Qatar. This spirit of inclusion, generosity, and compassion has become a defining characteristic of his life and work, illustrating that philanthropy is as much about human connection as it is about material aid.

His exceptional contributions have been recognized on numerous occasions. Most recently, Jebi K. John was honoured by Kairali TV during the channel's 25th anniversary celebrations at the Etihad Arena, Yas Island, Abu Dhabi. The prestigious award was presented by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, in the presence of South Indian megastar and Kairali TV Chairman Mammootty and Kairali TV Managing Director John Brittas. This recognition highlighted John's exemplary leadership, his dedication to social welfare, and his far-reaching philanthropic efforts, both in India and abroad.

Over the years, he has also been the recipient of several other notable awards, including the Universal Record Forum 2023 Award, the NRI Council of India Manava Seva Award 2024, the Dr. B. R. Ambedkar International Foundation Award, the Bikshiknam Award, and the Mangalam Puraskar, further affirming his standing as a respected entrepreneur and humanitarian.

Jebi K. John's life philosophy is deeply rooted in the belief that every individual carries a responsibility toward others. He lives by the principle that wealth is not only for personal gain but also a means to uplift those who are less fortunate. Through his monthly charity initiatives, disaster relief efforts, educational support, and cultural engagement, he exemplifies how leadership and generosity can coexist, creating a lasting impact on society.

Supported by his wife, Asha Jebi, and their two sons, Eldhose Jebi and Jeas Jebi, Jebi K. John continues to lead Qatar Tec while simultaneously advancing his philanthropic mission. His story is a testament to the power of perseverance, compassion, and the enduring impact of giving back, making him an inspiring figure for aspiring entrepreneurs and philanthropists around the world.



28 Years in Qatar

Mahendra Chamlagai's Rise from Sweat to Success

Mahendra, who entered Qatar as a general worker 28 years ago, has been running Woodland Contracting and General Services for the past 14 years. The company currently has a capital of QAR 500,000 and employs around 2,000 people.

Mahendra Prasad Chamlagai's journey reflects the resilience, ambition, and identity of Nepali migrants who have helped shape global societies while remaining deeply connected to their homeland. Arriving in Qatar 28 years ago as a general worker, he today runs Woodland Contracting and General Services, a company he has led for the past 14 years, employing between 1,500 and 2,000 people with a capital of QAR 500,000.

The Paurkhi Pravasi series documents such inspiring journeys—stories that go beyond individual success to represent Nepal's growing global footprint through labour, enterprise, culture, and courage. These early migrants are not only economic contributors but also cultural ambassadors, carrying Nepali identity across borders.

From Jhapa to Doha

Born into a modest family in Bahradashi Rural Municipality-7 of Jhapa district (formerly Dangibari-3), Mahendra moved to Qatar in 1996 due to financial hardship.

"We were three brothers, and the family situation was very difficult. My elder brother was already in Qatar, so I came to support him and help run the family," he recalls.

At the time, Nepalis were few in Qatar. "Meeting another Nepali felt like reaching home," he says, noting how the community gradually grew over the years.

Mahendra spent nearly seven years working as a labourer. After starting as an office boy and later becoming a salesman, he felt the need to build something of his own.

Building a Business from the Ground Up

In 2003, he opened Doha's First Nepali bookstore, Everest Book Shop. Selling newspapers, novels, and literary works imported from Nepal, the shop quickly became a cultural hub and meeting point for the Nepali community.

While running the bookstore, Mahendra identified broader business opportunities. In 2006, he established Woodland Import-Export Company, entering the clothing trade by importing garments from Nepal, China, and Dubai.

His major breakthrough came in 2010, when he transitioned into the construction sector and renamed the firm Woodland Contracting and General Services. Starting with just 28 workers, the company expanded steadily. Today, over 70 percent of its workforce is Nepali.

A Rare Milestone in Ownership

Gaining full ownership of an established company in Qatar is rare for expatriates. Yet, earlier this year, Mahendra achieved 100 percent ownership of Woodland Contracting and General Services.

"I believe I am among the first Nepali businessmen to fully acquire ownership of an existing company here," he says.

Currently, 90 percent of the company is owned by Mahendra and 10 percent by his wife, Kanchan Chamlagai. He attributes this achievement to years of honesty, discipline, and compliance within Qatar's strict legal framework.



"Qatar trusted me because of my work ethic and integrity," he says.

Struggle, Faith, and Discipline

Mahendra believes his success is rooted in perseverance rather than luck.

"It's hard work. Someone who once started with 600 rupees now pays QAR 200,000 in rent," he reflects.

Remembering his own struggles, he treats his employees with empathy. "I see my workers as family. I've walked the same path they are walking."

Commitment to Social Service

Alongside business, Mahendra has played an active role in social service. He founded the Nepali Businessmen Association, Qatar, serving as its first president. Under his leadership, the association provided significant humanitarian aid to Nepal during earthquakes, floods, and the COVID-19 pandemic, including oxygen cylinders worth over Rs 12 million.

He currently serves as president of the International Jhapali Society and has previously been an advisor to NRNA Qatar and an honorary member of NRNA ICC.

"My goal is to unite Jhapolis worldwide and contribute to the development of our district," he says.

Qatar as a Second Home

Qatar has been central to Mahendra's personal and professional life. His children grew up in the country and are completing their education here.

"I never imagined I would reach this point," he says. "Time and hard work guided me. Whatever I've achieved is due to my parents' blessings."

Passion for Nepal and Call for Reform

Mahendra believes the skills, capital, and experience gained abroad must now support Nepal's development. Under his leadership, the Nepal Business Association, Qatar, has collaborated with the Nepal Exporters Association to promote bilateral trade.

"A large number of Nepali people are working in various professional sectors, and that through the Nepal Business Association, Qatar, my aim is to encourage and support the growth of more Nepali businessmen in Qatar," Mahendra said.

A Second Life

A serious health crisis a few years ago became a turning point in his life. After spending a long period unconscious in hospital, Mahendra describes his recovery as a "second birth."

"I survived because of God's grace and my family's love," he says. The experience strengthened his resolve to dedicate more time to social service and nation-building.

Looking Ahead

With his wife as co-shareholder and his children nearing the completion of their studies, Mahendra has already invested in a hotel, school, and rice mill in Nepal, with plans for further expansion.

"Those who dream big turn difficulties into opportunities," he says. "I am proof that leadership can be built even while working abroad."

For Mahendra Chamlagai, the mantra remains simple: faith, discipline, and relentless hard work.