

LEAD ESSAY

# World Beneath Her Feet

How India's 50 Most Powerful Women are taking decisive steps, using their power to drive change in the world of business.

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# MPW



**WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH**, the more the power in their hands, the greater its impact.

How the most powerful women used their influence in the past year, may go down in history as folklore.

When Covid 2.0 was on the rampage in India, timely access to medical oxygen was the biggest challenge. That's when Sindhu Gangadharan, MD and senior vice president, SAP Labs India, put together a team connecting the Government of India with medical oxygen suppliers using the Oxygen Digital Tracking System. With 80% of India's large medical oxygen suppliers already using SAP, the integration was enabled within 36 hours.

Cipla's executive vice chairperson, Samina Hamied was among the six

Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance [IPA] CEOs who worked with ICMR, using global best practices and recommendations of WHO, to introduce standard operating procedures [SOPs] for the industry. And Ameera Shah, promoter and MD of Metropolis Healthcare, was expecting her first child when India went into lockdown. Test kits were in short supply and most labs were not equipped to test the virus. Shah, who also holds the industry role as secretary, NATHEALTH, the association of private healthcare providers, got into action within a couple of days of giving birth, getting Metropolis ready to do large-scale testing and screening. Another power woman Divya Gokulnath, co-founder, Byju's who also delivered a baby during the lockdown, launched free-live classes in 2020 just after schools were shut down. Byju's even launched new subjects for K-12 such as

history, civics and geography.

In the midst of this, some others were creating far-reaching impact in their businesses. Pallavi Shroff, managing partner at law firm Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas facilitated over 300 deals worth \$75 billion between June 2020 and July 2021. And Isha Ambani was part of the team that raised \$15.2 billion for Jio from the likes of Google, Facebook and a host of PE firms. Isha also negotiated Reliance Retail's \$6.4-billion fundraising from global investors, giving the company enough firepower to buy Urban Ladder, Netmeds and Just dial, and a stake in Zivame. She was instrumental in Reliance Retail's acquisition of the iconic British toy retail chain Hamleys in 2019.

In the following pages read the fascinating exploits of India's Top 50 superwomen. ■