

## TELUGU NRI OF THE YEAR

**Name: BALA THERESA SINGAREDDY**

### **PROFILE:**

Bala Theresa **Singareddy** (Angele) was born in **Reddipalem**, a village in the state of Telangana in India. During her youth, she studied in India, in the United States and in the Philippines. While in the Philippines, she met **Andre Gingras** a Canadian whom she married. In 1975, in their hometown of Limbour, Gatineau, Québec, they began to raise awareness amongst their friends and neighbors about the living conditions of people in India. These discussions led to the formation of a small group, “**Partage Reddipalem**”, dedicated to sponsoring the education of poor children in India. In 1977, SOPAR was founded.

For the first 13 years of its existence, Bala Theresa Singareddy managed **SOPAR** as a volunteer from her own home. In 1990, she left for India with her husband who, after a 25-year career with the Canadian International Development Agency, took one last overseas posting.

In India, Bala Theresa **Singareddy** devoted her time to creating a new organization – Bala Vikasa – aimed at ensuring the effective implementation of SOPAR’s programs in India. In 1991, Bala Vikasa became a registered NGO with the Indian government. Since then, these two organizations have pursued a common objective: to support the development process of rural Indian communities. As a result of their vision, dedication and familiarity with the reality of India’s rural areas, the founders were able to establish a model organization that has changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

### **Activities and services rendered under Bala Theresa’s leadership:**

- Water and sanitation: 710 community water purification plants benefiting 1.5 million rural poor in 710 villages with Rs.2/20 liters, 6350 bore wells and 440 overhead tanks benefiting over a million poor and 21553 family toilets.
- Environment & Food Security : 714 **irrigation tanks** de-silted, organic farming & drip irrigation in 25 villages benefiting over 100,000 small and marginal farmers.

- Education: 1600 orphan children, 800 semi-orphans, 700 handicapped and 2500 poor children are supported every year for education, 300 rural **government** schools are provided **infrastructural** facilities.