

On December 28, 2011-the birth anniversary

Dhirubhai Ambani-the Real Star

-Parimal Nathwani

It is time we as a nation think of recognizing the real stars of our times who contributed for the Indian economy at large. We often forget those who caused paradigm change in the life of the nation. Dhirubhai Ambani is one such name whose deeds substantially gave direction to the course of economic and industrial growth in the country.

'Growth is life' has been the tag line of Reliance which he founded and nurtured. While Dhirubhai is well-known and recognized for rejuvenating the stock-markets, his industrial projects brought the whole nation in the global main stream. Textiles or fibers, petroleum or petrochemicals; he came up with the projects comparable to the world-class. His mobile telephony dream completely overhauled the contemporary thinking. He oriented telephone business towards masses which until then catered to only classes. He was indeed a change agent, a catalyst who accelerated pace; and caused change in the mindsets.

The mindsets of our people of late seem to be driven by media and marketing hype on felicitating the nation's real stars. The chairman, Press Council of India (rtd) justice Markandey Katju other day raised a very valid point of giving Bharat Ratna awards posthumously to real heroes of India. He has been, of course rightly, advocating a case of Mirza Ghalib and/or Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay; the two legendary litterateurs of yesteryears; the former being the world acclaimed Urdu poet and the latter being the renowned Bengali author. Both of these litterateurs, no doubt, are immortal and left an indelible mark through their writings.

Though Dhirubhai Ambani and several others in different fields of nation's life did make indelible mark by their meaningful contribution; ultimately it is the prerogative of the power that be to consider the cases for the highest national honor. But at least accepting a thought of awarding the award posthumously is also worth considering.

While this is certainly not an attempt to put up a case for Dhirubhai Ambani for the highest honor; rulers, parliamentarians and media at large are morally bound to keep the nation reminded of the role the real time stars like Dhirubhai Ambani played in the life of the nation.

The government did honor Dhirubhai Ambani sometime back by issuing a posthumous postal stamp in his fond memory. Notwithstanding the state honor, Dhirubhai is still enlivened in thousands of hearts. He has been still a role model for several budding and established entrepreneurs; and large number of young people of the country. Such an iconic figure was he that some unknown people virtually have idolized him in the temples.

It is significant on his birth anniversary December 28, 2011 that a memorial in his name is shaped up at a place from where he began as a young entrepreneur. The house in Chorwad, the village near Junagadh in Gujarat where Dhirubhai lived till he left for Eden (now Yemen) is transformed into a memorial. A memorial in the name of an industrialist is first of its kind and unheard of in this part of the country, at least.

The memorial itself is also not less than a Bharat Ratna type fitting tribute to the patriarch Dhirubhai Ambani.

(Mr. Parimal Nathwani is member of rajya sabha and group president at Reliance Industries Limited.)

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