

*In the fond memory on July 6, 2010 :*

## **The One and Only**

### **Dhirubhai Ambani**

*- Parimal Nathwani*

Dhirubhai Ambani became the real time hero with his incessant efforts, hard work, tremendous struggle and focused accomplishments. Though he created inexhaustible national wealth and assets, he also created values in abundance. He taught the world what it has to be the 'trustworthy' in the eyes of shareholders and common public as an industrialist. Mahatma Gandhi once said about himself that his life was his message.

Dhirubhai Ambani's life also is a message to many. His is a torch-bearing life before us. Though he become a role model for many he himself never advocated, propagated or professed any 'ism' in his name. He went on creating niche after niche in the area of his business and industry. He, as Robert Frost told, continued to choose the untreaded path, made a safe road for a long journey and showed the way to others. Like a true Karmayogi, he never retired from work. He never stopped thinking. Ideas were nobody's monopoly, he often would say. He was never afraid of failure. He would overcome any obstacle in his pursuit with courage and conviction but would never give up. We often say: 'If there is a will, there is a way.' Dhirubhai in fact practiced it. He always willed it and found ways. He would not accept 'no' for anything. Rather he would tend to know how best a particular thing could be done.

Dhirubhai was never complacent in life. Contrary to the meaning of his name Dhirubhai (a man of patience) he was in haste. He was perhaps unhappy that why India was not in a race of progress with the rest of the world. He had all the faith in the potential of Indian people. He wanted to put India in the league of top nations of the world. He did it in several areas of his working and certain products, created records and earned name for him and for the country. In the process, he made the country self-sufficient in several sectors of our industrial economy.

Synthetic fabric, Japanese '80-20' cloth (80 per cent polyester, 20 per cent cotton) etc were the reach of very few at one point of time. It used to enter the country in a smuggled way. Dhirubhai Ambani, within the framework of the then regime, created capacities to become self-sufficient in polyester. He did ditto in case of petrochemicals. His untiring zest and quest for vertical backward integration of his business and industry brought about a great deal of transformation in the areas of energy security. Creation of Jamnagar refinery by Mr. Mukesh Ambani under stewardship of Dhirubhai Ambani over night made India a 'net exporter' of fuels; from a country of 'net importer' of fuels. Those who experienced and witnessed the fuel crisis of 70s and 80s during gulf wars only could realize the contribution of Dhirubhai and Jamnagar refinery in the overall energy scenario of the country.

Bidding for oil and gas fields under NELP and acquiring fields in India and abroad during his life time by Dhirubhai is testimony of his vision that we talk today of providing east-coast gas to our industries and households throughout India. Dhirubhai, who himself hailed from a modest middle class background, always aspired to create ways and means, products and markets as well as industries and economy that would transform living standards of our lot.



*(Mr. Parimal Nathwani is Group President of Reliance Industries Limited; and is also the rajya sabha member).*