

9. PAYING RESPECTS TO SHRI. NARAYANABHAI AND SUJANABEN ON THEIR 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.

At the outset, Usha and myself are extremely happy at saluting and paying our respectful compliments to Shri.Narayanabhai and Sujanabhabhi on this wonderful occasion of them completing 50 long years of being together!

On this occasion, it is very nice to recall our long association with them and to travel down the memory lane!

We first came in contact with Narayanabhai at Baroda (now Vadodara) at our group Company Transpek, where my brother Atulbhai Shroff used to invite him for discussions on Bhagwad Geeta, which is one of the great masteries of Narayanabhai. This was in mid 80's. At that time, he was operating one of India's first IT related companies Procon in Vadodara.

His grasp and authority on Geeta and its message, especially in the modern context, to corporate managers and entrepreneurs, in simple language, is awe-inspiring.

He has been a voracious reader, with a quick grasp, on various subjects, mostly pertaining to life, behaviour, management, spirituality, finding solutions to everyday problems.

His curiosity and deep desire to learn from India's wealth of knowledge and wisdom stored in our scriptures, which is mostly in Sanskrit, made Narayanabhai undertake study of Sanskrit, and he became a master of the language by his own study.

Not only reading, but his great flair and urge to give back to the community his understanding of various difficult to learn and comprehensive subjects, has led him to write profusely on various subjects, in his unique style, which is sometimes half prose, half poetry.

Apart from writing books, his urge to give back what he has learnt, to share his wisdom, has made him a very popular speaker at many an important forums, be it Management Conventions of Management Associations, Universities, Religious gatherings, Senior Government Officials, Teachers' gatherings and others.

Narayanabhai and Sujanabehn together are a wonderful pair, each busy and content in their own "world" – he more outside exploring and sharing his insights and she more inside, in her music world and her family. Sujanabehn is a very natural singer and musician. She is very passionate about classical music. A visit to their house surely gives a glimpse of her musical and culinary skills.

Narayanabhai's help and contributions and influence on me and Usha are too numerous to capture in a short narrative, but I will attempt it.

Narayanbhai has been associated with Excel Group of Companies for over several years and in various ways – Corporate Adviser, Director, Chairman and Chairman Emeritus.

Like all companies, Excel Group Companies also have gone through ups and downs, of periods of opportunities and downturns, of difficult events, of milestone events like completion of 50 years, etc.

During difficult periods, when one needs good guidance and active help, Narayanabhai has always been there, rolling up his sleeves and participating, fully involved, on the battlefield, leading, inspiring, extolling, demonstrating by personal example, quoting appropriately from our scriptures and from his own writings

The examples that come to my mind are – Excel's turnaround in 80's, purchase of shares from Tata Group in 90's, negotiating foreign participation in Transpek, Netafim association, Nufarm association, the defence strategy for our major product Endosulfan, etc.

In all the above situations, he had to think not only on tactical and strategic lines, but also reach out to some very important and at times, difficult persons, appeal to them, convince them to see our point of view and get help in time. His ability to reach out boldly, with conviction and courage, to form lasting friendship and network, has been exemplary.

At our personal level, as family, like all families, we have also gone through happy and difficult times. He has shared our joys and added to them. He has been always there in difficult times, standing by, involving completely, offering wise counsel and active help, at great personal inconvenience like a father, mother, friend, philosopher and guide.

On behalf of my immediate family and corporate family, our grateful salutations to Narayanbhai and Sujanabehn on this wonderful and joyous occasion!

Ashwin Shroff (Chairman & Managing Director Excel Industries Ltd.,)
Usha Shroff (Executive Vice Chairman, Excel Industries Ltd.,)

