

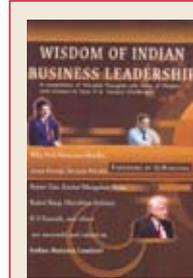
# THE STORY OF 26 BUSINESS VISIONARIES OF INDIA RETOLD

India Inc. has come a long way in establishing itself as a force to reckon with in the global industrial scenario. The establishment of the East India Company in 1601 was solely to help the British amass the inherent wealth of India, to aid in exporting highly valuable merchandise to England and to import such necessities for the comfortable living of the British in India, i.e., it was more of a trading concern than an industrial or manufacturing one. Most of the heavy engineering machinery, construction material as well as other items, from locomotives, motor cars, trains, printing machines to 'ice' for human consumption were imported by the British.

But the pre-independence Indian entrepreneurship had the guts and wherewithal to visualize and create mammoth projects in iron and steel, mining, jute, cement, textiles, shipping, etc. against all odds like political turmoil and suppression by the British. In this build-up, great roles were played by the Tatas, Birlas, Scindias, Morarjees, Godrej and their likes.

The post Independence era, i.e. from 1947 to 1991, saw the cautious approach of the Government towards the private industrial sector since it had to counter multifarious negative aspects like provision of food, shelter and infrastructure, jobs to the ever-growing population (mostly illiterate, unskilled and poor), caste and religious divides, famines, etc. Thus, the Indian business leadership had to overcome the rigours of Licence-Raj, protectionism, bureaucratic red tape, as also various ambiguous enactments that made them spend more time in procedural and compliance matters than in executing their business plans and meeting targets within the decided timeframe.

The year 1991 brought a ray of hope to Indian entrepreneurs when the Government set in motion the process of economic liberalization, albeit very cautiously. This made India Inc. bolder, and brought out innovative ideas to the economic scene. The boom in stock markets, aided by the confidence of



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small and large investors, threw up huge amounts of hidden as well as sleeping capital into the hands of the entrepreneurs. Thus, the last decade of the 20th century saw the emergence of many dynamic and innovative business leaders with vision and missionary zeal, who now form part of the list of the global 'Who's Who'. This could not have been imagined in the 1970s or the 1980s.

The grit, determination and success of these business leaders are truly inspiring. The author CA. Bimal R. Bhatt has thrown more light on the achievements of 26 such business visionaries in his book 'Wisdom of Indian Business Leadership'.

For simplicity's sake, he has analyzed them according to their names, in alphabetical order. In all the analyses, he has substantiated their achievements not only by listing the many awards won by them but also by their financial performance data for the past 4-5 years. The author has taken immense pains in perusing annual reports and picking important and invaluable inputs for his comments and commendations.

The book has, in respect of each of them, brought out the corporate and personal philosophies that drove them to such eminence. The book does a wonderful analysis of the interconnection between their philosophies and the ultimate success of these business tycoons.

This book is worth reading. We hope to read the next volume including other great names such as Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Dr. Anji Reddy, R. Seshasayee, Venu Srinivasan, Vijay Mallaya, etc. □