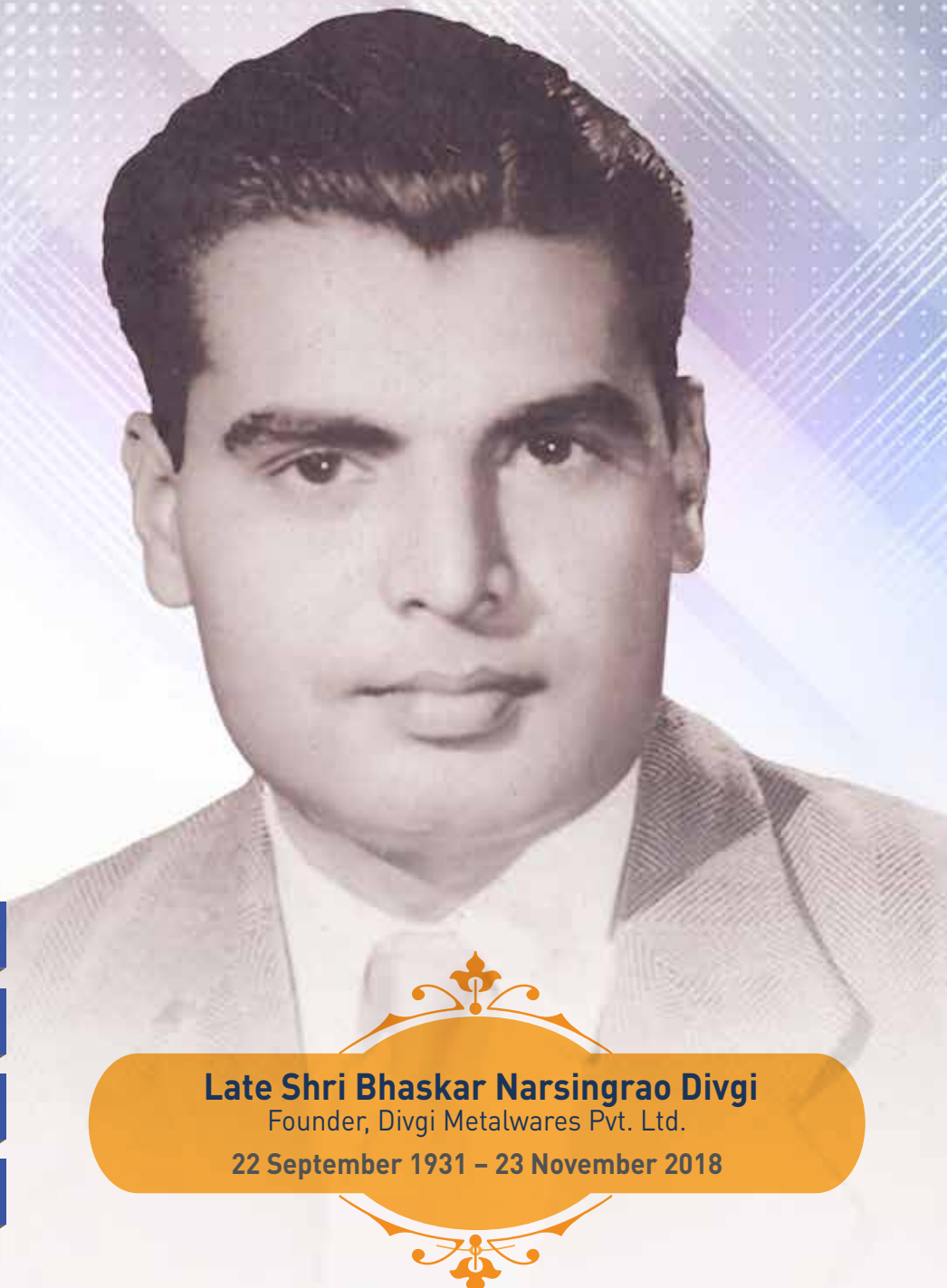




# Innovation TIMES

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## 'BN' DIVGI A REMEMBRANCE



**Late Shri Bhaskar Narsingrao Divgi**

Founder, Divgi Metalwares Pvt. Ltd.

22 September 1931 – 23 November 2018

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## BHASKAR NARSINGRAO, 'BN' DIVGI – A REMEMBRANCE

22 September 1931 – 23 November 2018

*“Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising up every time we fail.”*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

On Ram Navami Day in 2017 which was in the month of April, I got a call from Srinivas Belgaumkar, who you might call a founding member of Divgi Metalwares in Pune. He fondly recalled that 60 years ago, on Ram Navami day in 1957, he had seen my father, Bhaskar Divgi, popularly known as BN, commission the first TOS gear shaping machine in Kraft Tools in Harihar, Karnataka, and manufacture the first parts for commercial supply to Mahindra & Mahindra. The machine was imported from Celakovice in Czechoslovakia, to manufacture parts of the BorgWarner T90 3-speed gearbox for Mahindra & Mahindra’s Jeep Manufacturing Division in Worli, Mumbai (then Bombay). The Willys Kaiser Jeep was made under licence at the Mahindra assembly line in Mazagaon. Mahindra’s Jeep project was a significant contribution to India’s fledgling industrialization after independence in 1947 and BN and older brother Ramrao, fondly remembered as RN or Babu, correctly grasped the significance of the contract for their fledgling manufacturing enterprise. It was the start of a journey that is still continuing today, touching many diverse corners of the world from Korea, China through Asia, India, Europe, and the USA all the way to California.

The genesis of this story goes back to the small idyllic village of Divgi in the district of Karwar in the British Presidency of Bombay (later the state of Karnataka in 1960) where Bhaskar Divgi was born on



Divgi Village

September 22, 1931 to Shantabai and Narsingrao Divgi. The Great Depression had spread its tentacles all over the world and swept up the little village of Divgi in its wake. As the family business collapsed and father Narsingrao died prematurely to cancer, the family faced its most acute test ever. Older brother RN went to Bombay in search of a job while Bhaskar, just barely in his teens, was sent to Sirsi to stay with his aunt Gangakka and uncle Venkatrao Nilekani.



Venkatrao Nilekani Home

It was in Sirsi that he finished his schooling in Kannada at the Marikamba High School.



Marikamba High School

With brother RN’s support he then shifted to the science course in Jai Hind College in Bombay that prepared him for higher studies in engineering at the Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute, VJTI, in Bombay. He graduated from VJTI in the academic year 1954-55 with a dual Licentiate in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering that prepared him for a career in manufacturing entrepreneurship.

By 1956, older brother RN had built the reputation of what we today would call a serial entrepreneur in international trading and construction. With the capital and self-confidence he had accumulated, he ventured forth, with his engineer-brother Bhaskar, in manufacturing to become part of the new Nehruvian

vision of an industrialized India. In theory, Nehruvian policies in the India of that era were supposed to incubate and nurture indigenous economic activity with the industrial licensing system to temper, in the eternal wisdom of New Delhi's babudom, the unbounded and vaulting economic ambitions of India's businessmen. In practice, the realities were harsh with crippling shortages of everything from capital and trained people to equipment, raw materials, and markets. Starting a small-scale manufacturing enterprise in India in the 1950's took imagination, self-belief, and confidence, and, at the key testing point, tremendous courage to stay the course through complex uncertainty.

Along the way, the idea to develop and manufacture cone type speakers for the infant audio industry in India with technology developed at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA was struck down by the imperious mandarins of the DGTD (Directorate General of Technical Development) in New Delhi thus perpetuating the monopoly of the Dutch multinational Philips. The minutes of a Board Meeting held in 1964 faithfully, and poignantly, record this development

signalling the end of a carefully laid business plan and application of hard-earned financial capital and energy in trying to transfer technology over the previous two years from KLH Corp in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Undeterred, RN and BN picked themselves up and along with their band of brothers, Umesh, Bhalchandra, Anant, and Mohan, and the remnants of their business plan, and struck out with what they knew best – the manufacture of precision tools, and machined parts including transmission gears and shafts.

They say that the hardships of pioneering new things are a test of the value and belief system of an organization and the people who lead it, and so it was with Divgi Metalwares. The early entrepreneurial days were marked by seemingly insurmountable challenges, but also a certain can-do spirit and a down-to-earth drive for results. This got the attention of customers like the Kirloskar Group, Mahindra & Mahindra, TATA Motors (then known as TELCO), Escorts and Eicher of Faridabad in Haryana, Siemens, VOLTAS, Hindustan Motors and various other companies. When I joined the business in 1990, I observed that my father was often criticized



BN standing 1st row from bottom; 4th from right.



Divgi Metalwares, Shivare



Divgi Metalwares, Pune

for what appeared to be his constant tinkering and experimentation. Gradually, I learned that his style could be described by two maxims:

***“The only way of discovering the limits of the possible was to venture a little way past them into the impossible.”***

***“While daring ideas could get beaten like pawns in a chess game, they could always start a winning game.”***

*BN Divgi*

Under his benevolent and easy style of leadership Bhaskar Divgi built an organization that integrated India’s diversity of ethnicity, language, religion, and ideologies in a Pune that was still a conservative little town. The organization learnt to question the status quo, observe trends and patterns in the marketplace, connect individual dots to see a bigger picture,

network with all stakeholders, and continuously experiment to discover the next basis of competitive advantage. These lessons in creativity and innovation snowballed to enable Divgi Metalwares to assemble an impressive portfolio of capabilities that won the attention of a new generation of customers like John Deere, JCB, Caterpillar, and BorgWarner. The relationship with BorgWarner evolved into a market and product development arrangement that quickly metamorphosed into a Joint Venture in 1995.

The management team of Divgi Metalwares under the leadership of BN implemented a system of management that pioneered many elements of standardization in all aspects of running a manufacturing operation. Many years later the world would come to know of these systems as the ISO 9000 standard for a fundamental and comprehensive quality system. These investments in assets, knowledge and capabilities made in the 1970’s enabled the technical achievements of the

1980's and 1990's leading to the eventual graduation to making complete transmission systems on some of India's iconic models from TATA Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra and Ford Motor Company.

BN's invaluable legacy to the next generation was a huge network of goodwill in India's automotive industry without which it would have been impossible to build the relationships needed to innovate, engineer and integrate contemporary drivetrain technology into subsequent generations of India's vehicles.

Today, as we stand at the dawn of a new global era of industrialization in India, the challenges seem even more daunting as the world's mightiest companies have descended on the Indian marketplace for what seems like a winner take all gladiatorial contest. Once again it is a test of imagination, competence, and self-belief. We have to draw learning and inspiration from the legacy of pioneering and innovation that BN brought in laying the foundation of this enterprise. We

have to once again question the status quo, draw our unique perspectives and insights, act with integrity and use a global ecosystem of knowledge, resources, and opportunities as a force-multiplier to meet the future. Bhaskar Divgi's legacy was that economic needs were always combined with the passion for knowledge and excellence to yield continuous innovation so critical to staying future-ready:

***My object in living is to unite  
My avocation and my vocation  
As my two eyes make one in sight.  
Only where love and need are one,  
And the work is for mortal stakes,  
Is the deed ever really done  
For Heaven and the future's sakes.***

*Jitendra Divgi*

*First son of BN and Managing Director and CEO  
Divgi TorqTransfer Systems*

#### ANNU

As I gaze across the lush green meadow before me,  
Memories of a parched fallow land seem so hazy,  
I search for the force that caused this transformation,  
And discover the work of a silent stream.

As I gaze across the golden sand of the inviting beach,  
Memories of a harsh rocky shore seem so hazy,  
I search for the force that caused this transformation,  
And discover the perseverance of the incessant sea.

As I rest in the shadow of the mighty banyan tree,  
Memories of the scorching heat seem so hazy,  
I search for the force that caused this transformation,  
And discover the love of the unassuming seed.

As I stand up in the world confident and strong,  
Memories of an uncertain youth seem so hazy,  
I search for the force that caused this transformation,  
Annu, in you I discovered the seed, the sea and the stream.

*Hirendra Divgi*

*Second son of BN and Member, Board of Directors  
Divgi TorqTransfer Systems*



## The Corporate Journey



*Divgi brothers Anant Divgi, Umesh Divgi, Bhaskar Divgi, Ramrao Divgi, Mohan Divgi, Bhalchandra Divgi*



*Daily routine at office*



*At work with brother Mohan Divgi*



*During the visit of His Holiness Swami Parijnananshram III of Sri Chitrapur Math Shirali Uttara Kanada, Karnataka*



*With executives of Saraswat Bank at the Ground Breaking Ceremony during setup of the Sirsi Facility in 1984*



*With employees of DivgiWarner*



## Pioneering Moves



*Nissan 70 HP Engine & 5-Speed Synchromesh Gearbox Components*



*Gears & Shafts for Cummins Heavy duty Diesel Engines*





Isuzu MGS/T-5 5-Speed Synchromesh Gearbox Components



Gears



Power Take Off Assembly for Jeeps & Trucks



## Eulogies

### Smt. Anuradha Gokarn

Sister-in-Law and Former Managing Director  
Triton Valves Limited, Bengaluru

Dear Bhaskarbhayya came into our lives when Ambi and I were in our teens. With his stunning good looks and charming personality, he won Ambi's heart instantaneously. I tried to avoid the cliché "Love at first sight" but it was that in its true sense in their case. The love affair continued permanently. Ambi and Bhaskarbhayya were made for each other and made their home a warm and welcoming place for both the large Divgi and Samsi families. It often sheltered siblings, aunts, uncles, nephews and nieces and many others.

Bhaskarbhayya wholeheartedly supported Ambi in all her multifarious activities, social and cultural. They made full use of their home by hosting music programmes, bhajans, keertans and of course several family get-togethers. The "Sam" fest and our father's birth centenary were memorable events. They supported the Sapling School for many years and their house resounded with childrens' laughter and chatter. Bhaskarbhaya's contribution to the building of the family business was immense and invaluable. He gave it the strong foundation that sustained it even after the major setback it suffered on account of his tragic illness which incapacitated him and prevented from playing an active role. He had won the hearts of his workforce many of whom described him as

"देवमाणूस". He was generous to a fault with everyone who worked with him. When he was asked to donate to Karnatak School run by the Karnatak Sangh, he made it a condition that his staff children should get admission. So much was his concern for his people. He bore his condition with great tolerance, unparalleled dignity and grace. He did not let it overshadow the family's day-to-day life. He remained ever smiling, not letting anyone feel the pain of what he had to endure for almost three long decades. A most rare quality.

Personally, I owed a lot to him. Their home has been like a parental home to me. When I was expecting my first child, I was with them for over two months. Most of our vacations were spent there. My 17<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated there. All the happy days we spent with him and Ambi are too numerous to count. Bhaskarbhayya was a source of comfort after my husband's untimely demise. I frequently turned to him for advise and guidance with which he was always forthcoming. Some major decisions were taken by me just before he went down with his illness. He was a true Karmayogi who had mastered the art of giving his all to a task in hand and yet remaining detached. He lived the ideal of the Bhagawati Geeta message, "कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।...". Ambi tells me he also frequently word the shloka, अश्वत्थम एनम सुविरुढमूलम असङ्गस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा. He was indeed a great and noble soul. We are privileged that such a person was there in our lives and his departure leaves a great void.



Smt. Sindhu Padhalkar

Cousin and Former Headmistress  
Parle Tilak Vidyalyaya, Mumbai

24.11.2018

भास्कर

आणि  
दुःखीने

नावाप्रमाणेच प्रकाश देणारा घराण्याचा सूर्य भावळला. जात्याच समजूतदार, कागळ्यात सरळ, स्वभावाने प्रेमळ, व्यनहारात सजोटीने कागळारा, असा होता भास्कर. 'दिनशी मेटल बर्कस'चा डोळारा मेहनतीने त्याने उभा केला. आपली कर्तव्यगारी सिद्ध करतानाही थोरल्या बंधूंना मात्र राखून त्यांच्या संल्ल्याने सर्व व्यनहार केले. होशी, गुणी जोडीदारीण, कर्तव्यगार मुले असा पारिवार आणी सर्व नातेवाईकांना सामावून घेऊन त्याने संसार केला. गरीबांच्या वडल कष्टव बाळगून असणारा भास्कर स्वतः मात्र तळवेतीच्या अनिष्ट फेऱ्यात सापडून डोवटपर्यंत शर्मीने झगडत राहिला, झुंज देत राहिला.

मृत्यूची झुंज देताना तो जिकला कारण पक्षाघाताने नरी त्याला मृत्यूच्या दारता लोटले तरी तिथून तो परत आला. मृत्यूने हातमा एक राखून माघार घेतली. तो हातमा होता त्याचा राख त्याचा आवाज, त्याची वाचा! अनेक उपाय झाले; अंबीवहिनीने शर्मीचे प्रयत्न केले. कोणतीही कसर ठेवली नाही. तिच्या जिद्दीची आणी प्रेमळ सासरीची परतावधीच होती तो. मुलांनी, कुटुंबीयांनी पण सर्व प्रकारे साध दिली.

गेल्याच शर्मी भी पुण्याला आले तेव्हा आवजून त्याला भेटायला गेले. तेव्हाही अंबीवहिनीच्या अगव्यपूर्ण स्वागताने भी आराखून गेले. त्या दिनशी नोकरीची मदत नसतानाही पद्मिनीने सर्व स्वैपाक करून सांगला आशाने जेवू घातले. या सर्व गोष्टीत भास्करही आनंदाने सहभागी झाला. न बोलताही त्याच्या देहबोलीतून त्याने खूप काही व्यनत केले. तो दिवस भी कधीच विसरवार नाही.

अंबीवहिनीला स्वतःच्या तळवेतीचे चटके सहन करित हे दुःख सोसायचे बळ मिळू दे हीच मनोगत प्रार्थना. हे दुःख सोसायचे बळ जितेन आणी पद्मिनीच तिला देऊ शकतील.

भास्कर-प्रवळला तरी त्याच्या आठवणी नंदादीपाप्रमाणे मनात तेवत राहतील. भास्करच्या आत्म्याला निरशान्ती मिळो अशी प्रार्थना करून इथेच गांबते

सिंधु



## Gopal Mukerjee

Nephew and Writer and Novelist

### On Bhaskar Bappa's Passing: The End of Something

When a well loved man passes on, the impact of that departure is felt keenly by family, friends and well-wishers. He is mourned sincerely by those who knew him and those who knew of him. But there are individuals of this stripe whose demise is a great deal more consequential, whose sudden absence reveals some irreplaceable value that their presence served, unwittingly, to conceal. Bhaskar Bappa was such an individual. His passing represents not just the end of a man adored and respected by all. It marks the end of a certain world view, a way of being. It is, in other words, not merely the end of someone but, to quote Ernest Hemingway, "the end of something".

My sister Gouri and I share a privileged and perhaps distinctive perspective on Bhaskar Bappa by virtue of the fact that we more or less grew up around him. For us, he wasn't just another grown-up we took for granted. He was special, larger than life, a warm, laughing, playful figure whose presence was savored, whose absence, rued. There was a mystique about him we were quite conscious of, an intangible quality fore-grounded by the immense love and regard my parents had for him. For my mother, Bhaskar Bappa was a beloved younger brother. For my father, he was a comrade in arms, a kindred spirit, and a true friend. For Gouri and myself, the discontents of a burdensome 'convent' style schooling were alleviated by hours spent at the erstwhile Divgi family home off Tilak Road. There we enjoyed Ambi Pachi's lavish hospitality and the company of our cousins Jiten and Hiren. There was always, in that house, an air of bustling conviviality, a warm clamor, a tumult of children at play. But that hubbub would yield and reshape itself when Bhaskar Bappa appeared in the early evenings. He would stride in with his roguish grin and ensconce himself in his living room armchair, drink in hand, playfully teasing Ambi Pachi, mock-scolding his boys, sharing laughter and conversation with visitors, relishing it all with kingly abandon.

That same relish was in full evidence when he was at work, in the heart of the company he started from scratch. For Gouri and I, trips to the old Divgi Metal Wares factory held a unique charm. Visiting the factory meant visiting Bhaskar Bappa. And he was there always with his inimitable smile, ushering us into his office, treating us to cold drinks and

affectionate banter. We weren't just little children, we were important guests basking in the warmth of his beneficence. On occasion, Gouri and I would step out of his office and lean over the railing of the gallery, squinting down at men and machines nimbused in diffuse light, in the hum of sound and voice, in the heady redolence of oil and metal. We understood, instinctively, that this was an atmosphere marked by Bhaskar Bappa's singular presence, by the force of his authority and character. The men on the shop floor worked not for an abstraction but for him alone, in obeisance to his strength, his noblesse and his generosity.

But it was at home, in the evenings after work, at ease in his armchair, his family close at hand, that Bhaskar Bappa was most himself. Here we saw Bhaskar Bappa in full spate, imperious and insouciant, brimming with mischief and merriment, his charisma aglow. Gouri and I have recalled this scene frequently over the years, wondering if we could put a name to what we saw and felt there as children. We decided that if there was one word that truly captured Bhaskar Bappa, it was the word PANACHE. Panache as strength, nonchalance and good humor. Panache as authenticity, fearlessness and "soul".

As a businessman, Bhaskar Bappa was, at all times, entirely and unfailingly himself. In a field already riven with corporate posturing, "image" management and mendacious self-promotion, Bhaskar Bappa was ever at ease with his humble and very "native" origins. He was, by his own account, the boy from Divgi village who made good in the big city through sheer effort and honest enterprise. No more, no less. Gritty authenticity grounded in the plain truth.

Bhaskar Bappa grew up under British Rule, amid colonial narratives designed to terrorize and humiliate the people of India. Those narratives gave rise to a population of fearful and shame-faced 'natives' imbued with a sense of defeat and driven by self-loathing to disavow the culture of their ancestors. But there was nothing fearful or shame-faced about Bhaskar Bappa. Fierce pride in his origins coupled with a spirit of flamboyant daring imparted an almost visible swagger to his gait. But that swagger was never a pose. Rather, it was the mark of an innate, undaunted virility, of genuine, unstudied heroism.

My uncle Pandit Dinkar Kaikini, grandmaster of the fabled Agra Gharana of traditional Indian raag sangeet, often spoke of the importance of "rangeelapan" in aspiring artists. Rangeelapan isn't just colorfulness of character but a quality of sensual lushness, physical

intensity and raw feeling. It's the quality African American artists refer to as "soul". Dinkar Bappa had no trouble acknowledging the rangeelapan of two of his best friends: Bhaskar Bappa and my father Dr. Tonmoy Mukerjee. Theirs was a lifelong friendship nourished in a solvent of soulful ardor, masculine vigor and free-spirited mirth. Much has been said in praise of Bhaskar Bappa's entrepreneurial talents, all of it true. But for Gouri and myself, Bhaskar Bappa wasn't a businessman who happened to have 'soul'. He was a 'soul man' who happened to run a successful business.

Legendary American writer Ernest Hemingway created bleak, sparse fictional landscapes tenuously commandeered by tough, sardonic men of action. The protagonists of his narratives have come to be known as 'Hemingwayan heroes'. Hemingway himself was at pains to prove his own heroic credentials and sought to craft an image of himself as lover, adventurer, artist and pugilist. I am quite certain that he would have seen, in Bhaskar Bappa, a compelling embodiment of his fictional ethos, a Hemingwayan hero come to life. I can see Hemingway persuading Bhaskar Bappa to go deep sea fishing, or attend bull fights or step in the boxing ring for a bit of manly roughhousing. And I have no doubt that Hemingway would have caught a beating in that boxing ring, because Bhaskar Bappa was tough as nails. The iron grip that carried him through life was evident even at the very end. And if Hemingway had marked that quietus with a requiem, I'm quite sure it would have read "A Valediction for Bhaskar: The End of Something".

## Vishwas Kajrekar

Consultant and Former Long Service Employee

It was shocking to digest the news of the sad demise of Shree B. N. Divgi on 23rd November, 2018. It will take a long time for me to come out of the loss of our beloved leader and co-founder of Divgi Metalwares.

From 1972, as a trainee engineer to my retirement in 2008, it has been a long association with Divgi Metalwares, Shri Divgi and his family. He was gem of person and was a combination of different characteristic like openness, kindness, generosity, filled humor, taking bottom line responsibility, never criticized or blamed others. He was a great visionary leader & entrepreneur.

He believed in people and that was his strength. Machinery & Equipment were close to his heart.

I saw him spending most of his weekly holidays/Sundays in factory to ensure detailed attention and focus on condition of machinery. If required he was not hesitating to work with own hands on critical maintenance.

He led Divgi Metalwares to become leading gear manufacturing company in Asia in those times. He had an ability to think ahead of future and to attract highly competitive people. He had many talented people in his team who came from well-known organizations. Many people took his guidance for starting or establishing new businesses who become successful businessmen in future.

His customer focus was so high that in crunch situations, he has even developed parts for customers within 24 hours and ensured their production on their assembly lines.

**I am proud that he was my mentor, guide, motivator and well-wisher. He will be remembered for his love, smiling face and the legacy. I pray to GOD for peace to his soul.**

## Chaitanya Rao

*(Chaitanya Rao's father Somashekhara Rao used to head the machine tool division at Tata Motors.)*

School friend of Jiten from 45 years and Former Head of Machine Tool Division, Tata Motors

Dear Jiten,  
My sincere condolences on the passing of your father. Mr. Bhaskar Divgi was a gentle soul very dignified and decent. Even as a boy in school, I remember my dad always speaking about Mr. Bhaskar Divgi in the most glowing terms, about his integrity and classiness in running Divgi Metalwares. They knew each other for a very long time, starting with a professional connection, I understand from the early 60's in Harihar. There were many years of friendship behind that sentiment. He always had a kind word for us to go with his gentle smile. When I met him in 2013 at your home, I was struck by his calm acceptance of the paralysis that had afflicted him for more than 2 decades. My best wishes to Hiren and your mother and may God give you and your families the strength to cope with this loss. RIP.

Chaitanya Rao, school friend from 45 years. His father Somashekhara Rao used to head the machine tool division at Tata Motors



## Bharat Parekh

Former Top Management, Purchasing and Strategic Sourcing, Tata Motors

Dear Jiten

I am deeply saddened by the news of the passing away of BN as he was popularly known at Telco. I was not aware of the news and would have to miss the occasion on the 5th as well due to other commitments. I was fortunate enough to come in close contact with him in my early years at Telco. He represented an ideal example of all that is fair in business relationships. He was a statesman in the business world and his infirmity for the last few years was a big blow to raising Tata Motors and Divgis' relationship to yet another level. You and Hiren are his worthy successors. May God give you and the family strength to bear this loss and carry on with his mission in a distinguished manner.

*Regards, Bharat Parekh and family.*

## R.Y. Abhayankar

Consultant and Former Long Service Employee

I have been associated with the Divgi Group for last 39 years and I feel blessed to have worked under shri B.N .Divgi for almost 2 decades. I still distinctly remember the principles shared by him to be followed in professional life on my first interview with him was on 23rd Feb 1980 for heading the metallurgical arm of the company.

- 1) Be available 24/7 to cater the needs of customers
- 2) Don't compromise on Quality under any circumstances
- 3) Sharing personal expertise with customers is critical to customer satisfaction.
- 4) Quality of service, efficiency and excellence are pivotal to delivering the best product irrespective of the scale of business.

I, am following his teachings in my professional life for so many years and I, feel honored to be associated with him.

## Jonathan 'Johnny' Mapgaonkar

Former Head of Purchasing, Mahindra

Dear Jiten,

I am very sorry to read about your father. I remember him and also the terrific bond Divgi Metal and M&M had. I have fond memories of our relationship. I have always believed that in any organization the culture flows from the top. Your dad definitely was the 'Ugamasthan' of the fair upright, honest industrious and innovative culture M/s Divgi followed. May God give you and your family fortitude to bear this irreparable loss. 'What is lovely never dies, it just passes into another loveliness'.

*Yours in grief, Johnny Mapgaonkar.*

## Anant Nadkarni

Advisor, Value Creation and Former Tata Group VP for CSR and Sustainability

Dear Jiten.

Mr Bhaskar N Divgi, who is Bhaskar uncle to me, had a significant impact on my life sometime from the end of 1976 to middle 1978. I was more a student at the "university of the shop-floor at Divgi Metalwares". This was after my graduation and also while on a stint with Cooper Engineering Machine Tools in Pune.

While during the day I was learning different functions, I was an informal observer in meetings and even visited a major client to see their work processes. During this time I got some really exciting and deep insights that are with me all along the years later.

Discipline in Business is integrated with your Personality: Most generic and profound of insights are from realising that the 'who' we are is integrated to the 'what' we do and become. For instance, financial discipline and value for time are always basic to running business (*the what*); but beyond systems, regulations and all such externalities, Bhaskar uncle was always fresh, smartly dressed, with his hair set perfectly, well on time at work and face lit up with a smile (*the who*)! This was truly beyond a superficial inspirational or momentary value! It is when one looks back and see it sustained well there is a different ha ha effect! In his personal life I saw that although he was well up to mark, there was a

natural sense of contentment in being simple and focusing well on needs, rather than put up any kind of a front and unnecessary frills around something. My first learning which vibes with my own persona was that in business one should be able to assess, restrain and balance a personal sense of fulfilment in oneself before you can even talk much to others about cost reduction, financial discipline, quality and such softer issues. So integration builds authenticity and sustenance.

**From an Adventure to an Enterprise:** At a time when the automotive sector in India was setting up to zoom into terrific scales, it was rather unfair to expect those who supplied to these giants also to grow that way. And they were by and large family owned and supported, were conservative and lacked in systems thinking and process organisation. These companies were known to work from one year to the next delivering orders one after another. Systems reform was slow at that time. Even the larger and technologically superior giants did not have proper operational systems and processes. *(I was one of the fortunate to be part of setting some of these in a world class automotive giant three to four years later!!).* In these really uncertain times Bhaskar uncle was perhaps the only Chief Executive I know who, whether in this company and several other well-known enterprises, took a major challenge up front: to give back and invest in family or known founder employees to strengthen trust, stay committed to responsibility; and at the same time, spend discrete amount of energies in building systems, formal work processes and introduce professional grooming. Very valuable learnings came to me and in such abundance, I liked to call it in a single phrase, "... from an adventure of an enterprise" story, which evolves in every growing and maturing business.

**Heightened Levels of Wisdom and Compassion - hallmark of great leaders:** In the later years of my career I had to learn how leaders actually create more leaders; and that leadership is beyond mere skills and problem-solving; and it is much more about the developing personality. As is appropriately

said, 'deeper these roots taller the trees'! What I learnt here was how this was applied to institutions and businesses, and is regardless of their size or sector.

Again there will be a huge number of instances to quote because they happen by the day; but that sort of a narrative might sideline the essence. A person like Bhaskar uncle had tremendous personal challenges on how a sense of authority, power of position and so on had to be tremendously restrained and create a realisation in himself and colleagues that, what sustains in the long run is treating people in a manner they be encouraged to think and realise on their own, that they have to become learners, and grow professionally and individually independent ... and I felt all this is so simple, but not easy! I admired Bhaskar uncle for this tremendous personal effort taken and the difficulties there are to take on to maintain it over time and grow. In fact recently when the Divgi group completed fifty years, to me it was so much more than just run a factory for five decades!! My most critical insights in fact come from here. I have never seen Bhaskar uncle abuse or shout, ill-treat or humiliate and in any manner whatsoever lower dignity of people around him. At that point the pressures in some ways could have perhaps been justification for many ... that we see so much misbehaviour and indiscipline even in most professional enterprises. As a tribute to Bhaskar uncle allow me to quote Dr Cindy Wigglesworth who in her famous work SQ 21 described

***Spiritual Intelligence at work is something like this: at all times, to be on your highest level of wisdom and your most stretchable point of compassion, with inner and outer calm, regardless of the situation!***

*Dr. Cindy Wigglesworth in 'SQ21: The Twenty-One Skills of Spiritual Intelligence'.*

Even if this can be practiced over time gradually, many of us may become like Bhaskar uncle and be remembered for some outstanding virtues in his leadership which is required more now than ever before!



In Fond Memory of  
**SHRI BHASKAR NARSINGRAO DIVGI**



**22<sup>nd</sup> September 1931 - 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018**

तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता  
भवन्ति संपदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥

Spiritual lustre, forgiveness, steadfastness, purity,  
absence of malice, absence of pride - these  
belong to one born of the divine state, O Bharata!

...Bhagavad Gita 16.3

A True Karma Yogi who touched and inspired all  
who met him by his humble grace, generosity and kindness.

**FONDLY REMEMBERED BY**

Divgi, Samsi, Kalbag, Idgunji, Mukerjee, Hosangady,  
Kaikini and Gokarn families  
All Stakeholders of the Divgi Group



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