

Dear Harsh,

My earliest memories of your father are as a child, being taken by my father to the CCI club in the summer vacation to learn swimming.

My father, like your father and grandfather, was an early riser. Our respective families were virtually the first few to enter the pool. Your grandfather Haribhai would dive into the pool from one end and your father from the other. What fascinated me the most was that your father would complete two full lengths of the pool swimming underwater. In those days I was told it was thanks to his ability to hold his breath due to the practice of Yoga.

But my fascination for him never ceased. His accomplishments in the swimming pool were nothing compared to his accomplishments in life and particularly in his practice as a lawyer. Having had the privilege of working with him as well as appearing against him, I cannot think of a better lawyer and a better advocate. He was an original thinker with an uncanny ability to read the mind of the judge. These attributes made him not only a formidable opponent but a great and inspiring leader to have.

I vividly recall having appeared with him in a matter where he had to cross examine some witnesses on a commission in South Korea. His forensic skills as a brilliant cross examiner came to the fore. During our spare time he regaled us with his deep and pervasive knowledge of world history, geography, philosophy, religion, Indian classical music, Buddhism, yoga, Hindu mythology, and almost any and every topic under the sun. A week went by like a bulletin train leaving me speechless. Similarly, I am sure you would remember his remarkable advocacy and the hard work which he put in when we appeared with your father in Goa for the then Chief Minister who we were defending from being disqualified under the tenth schedule of the Constitution.

I shall always remember Ashokbhai as one of the most congenial, amiable, friendly, ever smiling, humble, polite and gentle souls whose thirst for knowledge and discovery of new and interesting developments in the world always fascinated him. I will cherish his and your mothers' warm hospitality at their Delhi residence where the conversation would flow like wine, freely and intoxicatingly.

His loss is not just a personal loss for me and my family but for all of us whose hearts and minds he touched in so many different ways.

For you Harsh, Suvarnaben his inseparable better half, Ami, Jai and their respective families, it will be a hard loss to bear. But one must take solace in the fact that his was a life that every human being dreams of but very few achieve. We may have lost a good human being but heaven is enriched by his entry.

May his soul rest in peace.

Take care my friend,

Janak