

Ramchandra Neelkanth Bhogale

Ramchandra Neelkanth Bhogale, born on 8th Feb 1955 at Government Civil Hospital Akola, Maharashtra. His father Neelkanth Gopal Bhogale served the Indian Territorial Army and opted retirement when a Captain to pursue business. His mother Shailaja was a housewife.

He completed the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) from Shri Saraswati Bhuvan High School, Aurangabad Board in First Class. After completing his Pre University and Pre-Professional years from Government college of Arts and Science he graduated as Mechanical Engineer from Government College of Engineering, Aurangabad, in 1976

He participated in Marathi one act plays in his school days and represented the school at regional level competition. He won awards for acting in one act and three act plays. He jointly wrote with his friend scripts for folk drama (Wag Natya) for two consecutive years in Third and Final year of Engineering and performed it for engineering college audience. He was an active participant at the annual social gatherings of Engineering College. He was also an active member of community Ganesh Mandal participating in Marathi three act plays during Ganesh Festival.

He represented his college at inter college Cricket while in Government College of Arts and Science. He was a member of Engineering College cricket team for 4 years. In the final year of engineering he led the team as Captain. He also represented Engineering College as a team member of Badminton. He was selected to represent the Marathwada University at Inter-University Cricket for two consecutive years in 1972/73 and 73/74.

He was elected to represent his class at Students Council in first and final year of Engineering. He was also elected as Secretary of Mechanical Engineering Students Association in third year of Engineering. As a secretary he was instrumental in organising speeches of successful entrepreneurs for benefit of students.

As a student he led groups of students to donate blood in 1971 for soldiers wounded in Bangladesh war. He continued donating blood on every 26th January and 15th August motivating many of his friends to donate blood for the first time while in college. He also responded to calls to donate blood when needed by critical patients. He completed donations of 75 bottles of blood by the age of 49. The blood bank stopped accepting his blood due to higher Glucose levels after the age of 50.

On July 1 1976, he joined the family business as Graduate Trainee Engineer in Umasons X Ray Equipment Pvt Ltd. He designed a constant speed film dryer for roll films for Air Force and made a prototype.

In 1978 he joined other family owned business of NIRLEP to supervise production and improve process.

He introduced chemical cleaning in place of electro-cleaning process reducing the cost and increasing the productivity for making anodized aluminium lids. Introduced semi automation in polishing of utensils by modifying imported centre less grinder thereby reducing the cost, improving quality and increasing productivity by 200%. He was first to use vacuum clamping for utensils reducing the accident hazards. He is instrumental in development of many semi-automated special purpose machine for finishing utensils with added features. He redesigned electrical furnace for curing PTFE coatings that resulted in increased thermal efficiency and output. The company saved 40% on power costs due to reduced consumption. This was during the peak power shortage period of 1977/78. Within a period of 20 years in Nirlep with process developments and introduction of semi-automation he was able to increase production 20 fold keeping the number of employees constant. He designed a dust collection system for polishing machines based on air suction at point of generation reducing the health hazards in buffing department.

He played a key role in technology and project export to Kenya in the year 1981. He led a team of two workers to erect and commission a non-stick cookware plant in Kikuyu village adjoining Nairobi in Kenya. This was done in a record 63 days. He also won a contract for setting up an advanced technology non-stick cookware plant at Jebel-Ali free zone, UAE, in 1986. He was in Dubai for 6 months for setting up the plant.

Initiated development of high heat resistant paints for utensils and non-stick coatings suitable for use in automatic spray equipment. The initiative has resulted in a separate business vertical for the group. His initiative in alloying and rolling of aluminium by setting up separate facility for recycling of Aluminium scrap in the year 1990 has developed in to a separate business.

He set up the first auto ancillary for the group in 1992 for powder coating of wheel rims for an auto OEM. This was a major diversification for the family that led to entry in to auto components business. He designed a spray phosphating line for pre-treatment of petrol tanks that saved 75% space and 80% power as compared to traditional spray phosphating lines supplied by multinational paint shop companies.

The group is successfully running two auto component companies supplying to motorcycles, three wheelers and machines used in road building and mining. He has now initiated development of harvesters and farm mechanisation equipment.

He is a Director of family managed **NIRLEP Group** and Chairman of **Applied Innovation and Technology Group**.

He has led a loss making cooperative bank to become very profitable modern bank of the region. In the years 1996/97, under his Chairmanship the bank developed computer software for complete automation of front desk and was first bank to have fully air conditioned branch with tea/coffee vending machine and cash teller system. The customer's facilities included seating across table for banking transactions with every front desk handling all banking transaction except cash. The turnaround time for customers reduced from more than an hour to 7 minutes. The employee productivity increased from Rs 20 lacs to Rs 350 lacs and profit per employee jumped from a few thousand to Rs3lacs.

He also led a loss making Trust hospital to a modern tertiary care centre. When he started to help the hospital management it was a 25 bed hospital in a 20000 sq ft leased building with mounting losses and defaults in repayment. In 12 years he developed the Hospital in to a 150 bed modern facility having 1, 20,000 sq ft building on an 8 acre land. It has facilities for Kidney Transplant, Heart surgeries and best interventional radiology. It offers all tertiary care facilities in Cancer treatment and other medical conditions.

He was President of the Chamber of Marathwada Industries and Agriculture at the age of 34. During his tenure at the Chamber as Secretary and President, the state and central government were persuaded to complete many projects for helping industry. The prominent amongst them were a water supply line for Chikalthana from Waluj, an electronic telephone exchange for Waluj MIDC enhancing the capacity from just 100 lines to 1250 lines in first phase, night landing facility at airport and implementation of firefighting facilities in all MIDC areas of the state. He was instrumental in getting a piece of land allocated for construction and setting up of Chamber's office.

He was a founder member and secretary of the cultural organisation KALASAGAR. The organisation brought the best of performing artists to Aurangabad.

As Chairman of the Marathwada Auto Cluster, a PPP project of Chamber of Marathwada Industries and Agriculture, he led setting up Rs 85 crore common facility centre for making the MSME of the region cost competitive. It is one of the best clusters of the country. The Cluster also boasts of a well-equipped skill development centre.

He was appointed as the Convenor of Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) Industry cell in Maharashtra State for one year

He was elected unopposed as President of Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce Industry and Agriculture for two consecutive terms. During his tenure at the State level Chamber he initiated awareness campaign for use of high technology in farming and food processing for sustainable agriculture. He designed a scheme for use of standalone off grid solar pumps for agriculture. The proposal is accepted by state government and 10000 pumps are being installed as a trial run. The pumps will ensure reliable power supply to agriculture while reducing the power subsidy burden on Government.

In the year 1999/2000 he was appointed on Mumbai Port Trust as an industry representative. Through his sustained efforts the port was able to bring down handling charges from Rs 2150/ per 20 Ft container to Rs 550/- making the Mumbai port competitive in comparison with Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust across the creek. He also fought for starting a school in the new school building constructed for the purpose by the port trust. The decision was pending for many years due to administrative lapses.

He has represented industry on ESIC state level advisory committee, Western regional Provident Fund committee, Minimum wages and Mathadi Kamgar committees. His representation on

DRUCC in south central railways led to introduction of II tier A/C coach on Secundrabad-Manmad section.

He is recently appointed as Trustee of Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust. The representation has speeded up the process of setting up an in-land port at Jalna near the DMIC industrial park.

He is a member of Governing Council of Shri Saraswati Bhavan Education Society, Aurangabad. As Chairman of local management committee of Science College he introduced computer assisted student data management system. This has automated all student related administrative procedures and certification bringing down time and efforts. The class rooms and laboratory modernisation has led to better environment and enhanced capacity to handle students. The class rooms are complete with internet ready computer assisted AV equipment.

He was the member of Board of Management of SGGGS college of Engineering, Nanded. As the chairman of the Infrastructure sub-committee he was able to complete a building to house two departments, a separate building for student's canteen, an auditorium with 1000 seats and start the construction of student's hostels with 400 capacity.

He was President of District Cricket Association, Aurangabad.

For his contribution to industry, art and culture and development of the region he received following recognitions and awards

- 1) FIE foundation award 1999 for achievements in industry
- 2) Marathwada Kala Vikas award 2001 for contribution to performing arts.
- 3) Marathwada Gaurav award 2002 for social contributions and industrial contributions
- 4) Kusumtai Chavan Award 2004 for contribution to regional development.
- 5) Maxell Award 2012 for his industry group
- 6) Aurangabad Bhushan by Rotary Club 2015
- 7) Maxell award 2016, Marathwada Auto Cluster for a best PPP project having substantial impact on industrial competitiveness.
- 8) Corporate Excellence Award 2016 by Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University
- 9) Marathwada Gaurav Award 2017 for excellence in PPP projects

He has written a weekly column for Marathi daily "Loksatta". He has participated in television debates on Budget and Industry. His contribution at many seminars and conferences as a speaker is well recognised. He was one of the few industrialists supporting the Liberalisation and Globalisation of Indian economy. He travelled across state and country creating awareness about advantages of the new economic reforms.