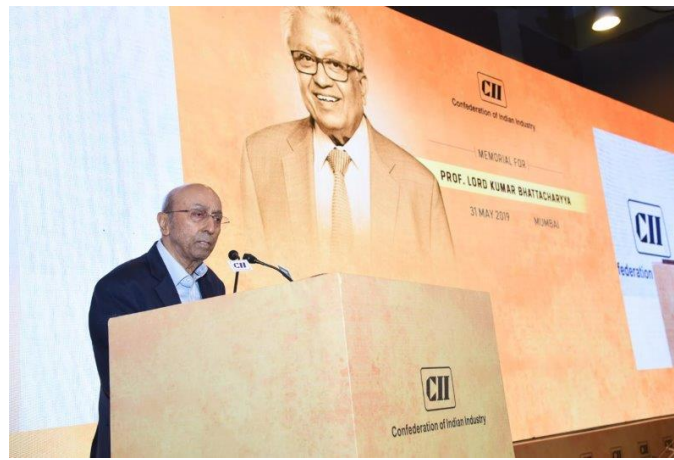


Remarks at Memorial Meeting for Lord SK Bhattacharya
31st May 2019, YB Chawan Centre, Mumbai



I spent 46 years of my life in CII and its great to be back with CII. Thank you is much Venu. Thank you, CB.

And, thank you, CII, for organizing this evening's Memorial Meeting for Kumar Bhattacharyya. 90 days after he passed away prematurely and 6 days before his 79th Birthday.

We celebrate his life and work with Malini, his daughter and the WMG-today.

I am going to be personal and proud of this amazing man. Kumar was my meal-ticket in London – he never let me pick up the cheque. He let me do as I hosted in India.

Kumar was my transport provider in his Range Rover.

Kumar was my very dear friend of 25 years, long and far beyond the work milestones we crossed together, be it IBPI the CII-WMG Partnership or other areas.

I want to say something to Venu about Venu and Kumar. Venu was the CII President when I stepped out in 2009. Ever gracious, considerate and kind. But, that's not the main point. Venu, you were the son Kumar valued and loved. You were most special to him and deeply embedded in his heart. You were always there for him as you are now for Kumar's Family. Bridie, Anita, Malini and Tina. In honouring Kumar, I do want to honour you, too, Venu, Kumar's special one.

At the beautiful memorial service in Coventry Cathedral which I was sad to miss, Tina had a lovely reference to her Father. She spoke of a very typical wave of his hand accompanied by a 2-word comment "Don't worry"!

I, actually experienced this.

Kumar had gone to Chennai for a major event in Venu's family. There, he met a couple of businessmen who were senior office bearers of CII. They told him that I was building up an organization which would compete with CII.

Kumar shared this with me, hurtful and untrue as it was because we shared both pleasure and pain. My life has been CII and I owe everything to CII. Kumar knew that and he ended his report by the famous wave of his hand and "Don't worry". He gave me courage. He gave me strength.

Malini, some years ago, your father visited our home, sometimes alone, sometimes with British Ministers, such as Stephen Byers, who needed private briefing. He made friends with our Black Labrador, Zippy. So, maybe, we can take a little credit for Hugo, in your home, who appeared 1 day with your father! He happily forgot to mention Hugo to me!!

I can, of course, go on with many, many anecdotes.

One, that I must share relates to his mentorship of our top scientists. Quietly done, discreetly done, always below the radar, but a consistent process of consultation at the level of the late Dr Abdul Kalam, once Principal Scientific Advisory to the PM, earlier, head of Defence Research and later President of India.

And, in addition, informally advising Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee for several years.

The Govt's National Award to Kumar was for all the work he did quietly, not only for the publicly-known activities.

Our friendship went far beyond just working together. Trust was the foundation. And, in recent years, he was deeply anxious for the Tata UK issue and Ratan for whom he had enormous respect and affection. Some of our lunches were dominated by his concerns and his commitment to help. And, he knew that I was a lifetime loyalty club member to the Tatas. There was a strong umbilical chord between Tatas and CII. And, when he brought Ratan and Venu together, I think he was giving his son to join the Tata team.

So, a great, happy friendship. Deep and abiding.

Malini, you and your family – your mother, Bridie, your sisters, Anita, Tina, and, you have a large family of friends and well-wishers in India. Venu, of course. Ratan, of course. But, others, too. We love all of you. We care for all of you. We cherish your father. And, we are here for you, always.

I close with a line about my friend:

“Whoever has courage can give courage to others, just as the flame of a candle can light up another.”

This was Prof. Lord Kumar Bhattacharyya.

THANK YOU.