

Ranjan Das: Wizard of Corporate Sky



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Ranjan Das, Managing Director of SAP INDIA LTD is no more ! He was 42 years old and considered, by many Corporate Gurus, as the ‘Wizard of the Business Management’. His passing away has created a void in the world of international business. The obituary of Ranjan appeared in National and International electronic & print media all over the world including The WALL Street Journal to Economic Times to quote a few. Assam remained mute spectator to this sad incident, perhaps, in agony; no Assamese knew how to react! He succumbed to heart attack soon after the morning work up on 21st October, at his residence in Bombay.

Ranjan was an energetic boy from Guwahati, Assam, with a determined dream in his eyes. He was born and raised initially at Guwahati by his middle class parent from Uzanbazar. His father was an Assistant Director of Industries. Ranjan had his initial schooling in Guwahati and later studied in Indore and Delhi. He graduated from MIT and did his MBA from Harvard Business School during his mid twenties, all on scholarship from both the well-known university itself.

When he died on October 21st he was only 42 years old. Ranjan’s meteoric rise was a story of success of will power, of Assamese middle class, over money. He always dreamt big. He was restless to achieve his dream. Rajan was selected as the Managing Director and CEO of SAP India Ltd., an international company, promoted by five Germans working once for IBM. Today IBM is one of their licensee in ERM business. Ranjan joined the group eight years ago as its Senior vice president when he was only 34 years old. He had a meteoric rise and within four years he headed his department in USA. On 2007 he was selected to head the organization in INDIA when he was only 39 years old.. A very few Indian has been able to achieve such a distinction in international arena of high business. SAP is the world’s greatest ERP company. Today, IBM, Price water house, TCS, WIPRO even Infosys are their licensees. HCL has joined the bandwagon too.

Ranjan came to India in JULY 2007 and created a niche in the business world. It is an accepted fact that SAP became one of the greatest success stories of Asia during last two years of his leadership. He could defy recession. WHEN MANY COMPANIES were STRUGGLING HARD DURING THIS PERIOD HE took SAP to a great height. Every business head were admitting superb business sense of Ranjan. Ranjan was a fitness freak too. He used to run five miles a day, used work up at gymnasium every morning to keep him fit. He was a fit person alright. Last year he participated in a cross country race in Chennai. Alas, his fitness manias brought him down and he died just after arriving home from gymnasium down below of his apartment. Hearing the news, his mother, at Guwahati, was stunned and devastated in such a way that she could not even manage to visit Bombay to attend the last right of her eldest son.

With his huge success in India, Ranjan was considered to be the next CEO of world wide SAP. If he would have survived the heart attack he would have been the first world leader of business from Assam.

Alas! Ranjan's death was a misfortune for ASSAM nay to Indian middle class rise. He would have taken professional skill to a rarefied height of international success.

I met Ranjan way back in the later part of eighty when he came to see me seeking my help when his American visa was rejected due to miss understanding of a clause in his i-20. Ron Lorton was then the Console General in Kolkata. During our discussion the miss interpretation was cleared and visa was granted to Ranjan. The MIT offered Ranjan full fees to pursue his studies leading to bachelor degree in computer science. Ranjan studied for full four years and came out with flying colours. After a brief work in Oracle he tried and obtained a scholarship

from HARVARD for MBA. He came out with flying colours and founded a company. He named it "Pataki network.com." His dream was not fulfilled. He joined back Oracle. Achieved greater success. German Bosses of SAP were observing him. They gave him an offer which he could not refuse for he wanted to fulfill his dream. Ranjan always felt that a Middle class Assamese is not inferior to anyone in the world. He wanted to prove it by his hard and dedicated work. He always felt to be a topper, is not important but sincerity of purpose, devotion and hard work are vital for success in life or in death. He strived to achieve that dream. He was successful too. He felt four hours sleep is good enough for a young man. HE hardly slept, mostly dreamt, worked and exercised. Perhaps HE PROVED HIMSELF WRONG. He needed more sleep to ward off his stress.

Ranjan has remained a symbol of empowerment to new generation. From a primary and high school of Guwahati, secondary school of Indore he showed how a middle class boy can get admission in MIT and HARVARD without having a penny of his own. In his entire dream and dedicated work it was his lovely wife RUPA contributed most. It was Rupa who took control of entire home affairs raising two boys and agreed to relocate from Bay area, for the sake of his dream, to India. Behind every successful man there remains a lady. Rupa fulfilled her responsibilities with pleasure. She was a journalist herself. She will miss him most.

Ranjan was a great person who loved his state most, named his company in USA with Assamese name. His dream to make ASSAM known for professional leadership remained unfulfilled. Hope someone from Assam will fulfill his dream in future! Once in Boston, accepting his hospitality, I asked him 'who inspired you most to dream great?' Without batting an eyelid he replied "It was my Mother who inspired me to dream and it was Rupa who tried to transform it to reality". Today, Ranjan is no more, but his legacy continues to inspire young boys from

Assam to dream... Today we salute to Ranjan' s indomitable spirit. Let his soul rest in peace.

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BY GPNARUA

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