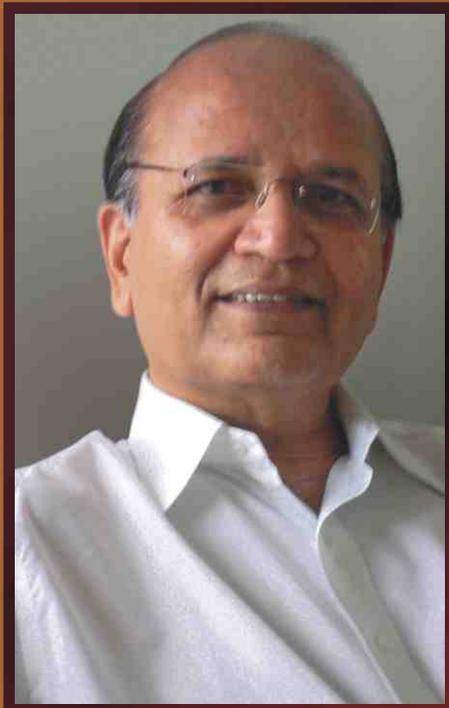


Celebrating

70<sup>th</sup>  
birthday



**Dr. Ashok Mehta** MS, FRCS, FICS  
Medical Director

Compassion, knowledge, and a faith in the body to heal itself has guided Dr. Ashok Mehta's life as a healer, family man and karma yogi

A decade before Independence, in December of 1937, in the household of an affluent Palanpuri Jain family in sleepy North Bombay, the birth of a boy was met with jubilant cheer and a deep, silent gratitude. Outside, the country was gripped with patriotic fervor:



**Dr. Ashok at graduation**

Gandhi's slogans, a collective cry for ahimsa, and a return to swadeshi values were the guiding forces. By the time the British left, in 1947, the boy Ashok was ten years old, and lucky enough to take in the brilliance of minds all around him: his neighborhood, Vile Parle, was peopled with firebrand revolutionaries, political poets and impassioned writers. Little Ashok, who enjoyed the minor eccentricity of refusing to eat with his bare

hands, grew up inspired not only by reigning Gandhian philosophies but also by his immediate family. His grandmother, in the town of Palanpur, was an independent, hardworking woman who taught him to value every drop of water. Palanpur, after all, is drought prone and showed him the dignity of labor as she washed the household vessels herself, with ash and sand. Ashok's mother, bold and kind and generous, took her son on shopping expeditions, taught him to bargain for vegetables, mended his clothes, prepared foods, inculcated values, confronted his prejudices and somehow found a way to be there for him at all times: she was his brightest sentinel in the churning waters of childhood.

Ashok had a natural predilection for sports: he excelled at cricket, playing with competitive fervor and learned swimming under unique circumstances. No sooner had he

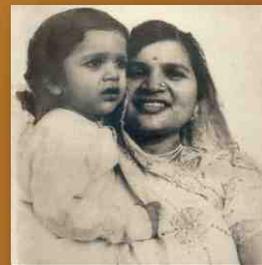


**G. S. Medical College Cricket Team 1958**

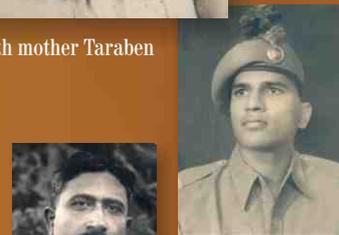
mastered swimming at a large outdoors pool in Vile Parle then he came home and dove into the well in the backyard of his home



Ashok with his parents



With mother Taraben



As NCC Cadet

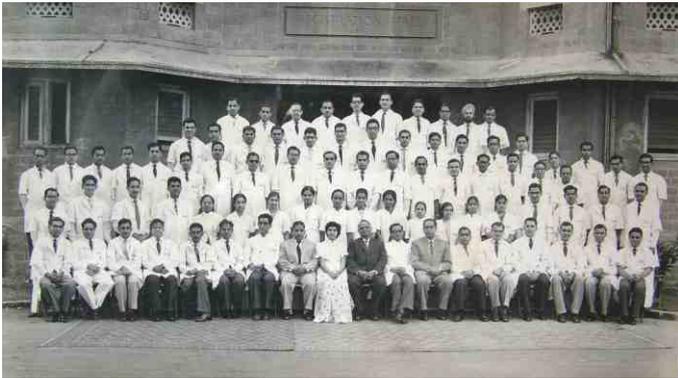


Father Rajmalbhai

“Ashok, is an "icon" for Head and Neck Surgery in India, and deserves all the accolades, there are to celebrate his distinguished career. My very best wishes to him, for continued success and contributions to Education, patient care and leadership in Head and Neck Oncology in India.”

**Dr. Jatin Shah**

Chairman Dept of H&N Surgery  
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre - New York



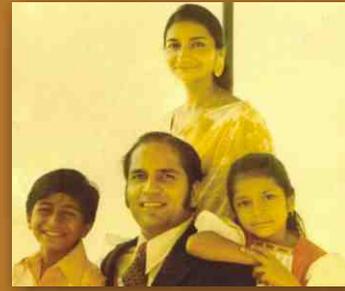
RMO's Group 1961- 62 KEM Hospital, Mumbai

this brave and reckless leap into the deep waters signaled his romance with adventure, and strengthened a nascent relationship with courage. Waghjibhai, who owned the outdoors pool, sharpened the nerve of swimmers in his own way: he kicked their heads and if they came up without losing their cool or their breath then they had succeeded. To swim without losing ones breath, to finish lap after lap, to take a kick and to keep swimming, these were all vital lessons in survival learned early on, perfect prep work for a life that would extend itself in the service of public health.

Elphinstone College, where Ashok enrolled in science, was a rambling old structure, famous as much for the quality of its education as its student body (Madhav Apte and Subhash Gupte, cricketing luminaries, were alumnus). From here, he quickly moved on to G S Medical College, where the dedicated, disciplinarian staff egged him to work harder and aim for the stars. Raised a Jain, he was intuitively uncomfortable with dissections, an anathema he overcame when he realized that his future depended on the surrender of private beliefs in the pursuit of larger good. His



Dept of Surgery Tata Memorial Hospital - 1971



Samir, Ashok, Shirin and Sonal - 1971



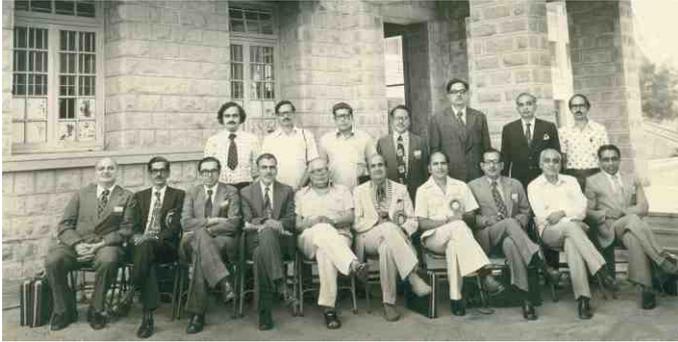
Grandchildren  
Sanjna and Arjun

“ You have not only been a doyen of surgery at the national & international level but your social obligations & commitments are a source of inspiration for all. ”

Dr. A. A. Hai, Patna  
President Elect. ASI



With Samir, Mona, Chetan, Sonal



Formation of Oncology Section Association of Surgeons of India, Delhi 1976

dedication to his field of study medicine received a further push when he met Shirin, who would grow to become his partner in his dharma. Elegant, fine-boned, regal, masterfully resourceful and effortlessly kind, Shirin was harbour for not only his mind and heart but also, after their marriage, his family. Putting her own life on hold, she helped create a climate for his success, a selflessness that shone at her core like a diamond in the dark. Their shared interest in spirituality allowed their marriage to evolve over the years, bringing them so close as to share the perfume of the divine that breathes between two people.

On his first job as house surgeon with Tata Memorial Hospital, Ashok met Dr. Ernest Borges, a paragon of dedication to patient care. Ashok gleaned knowledge from Dr. Borges with such hunger and passion that he hardly ever went home save for his wedding anniversary! Dr. Borges not only treated his patients with a radiant, heartfelt empathy but also expected nothing in return; his value system was admirable and, for the young Dr. Ashok Mehta, intensely motivating. One of Ashok's first patients at Tata was a refined Parsi woman who suffered from advanced ovarian cancer; only a few days under Ashok's care, she soon came to insist that only Ashok administer the



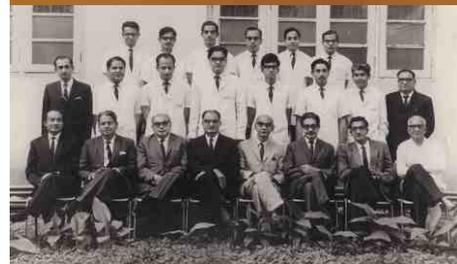
International Federation of Head & Neck Oncologic Societies - Mumbai 1997



As President Association of Surgeons of India -1986 with past president Dr. Sundara Rajan and Dr. Rangabashyam

“  
 Congratulations to Ashokbhai for a life that has brought so much service to humanity, not only through professional skill but through excellence of character.  
 ”

Neville Hodgkinson  
 Science Reporter, Oxford, UK



Dept. of Surgery Tata Memorial Hospital 1968



Indian Society of Head & Neck Oncology Agra 1986 Second Annual Conference



Dept of Head & Neck Surgery Tata Memorial Hospital - 1997



President ASI - 1986

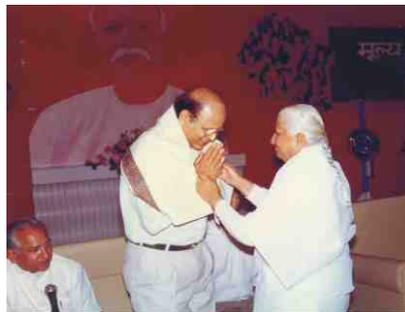
intravenous injection, thus building faith in that magical quality: doctor's touch, which is a certain ineffable je ne sais quoi that distinguishes the great doctors from the good ones. The torch Dr. Borges had handed Ashok was kept burning bright thanks to his next mentor Dr. Jussawalla.

Dr. Jussawalla's faith in his young charge was significant, and significantly purposeful: in the five years Ashok spent with him, sepals of

knowledge opened in him as he took on his varied tasks fund raising, data collection with enterprise and enthusiasm. Dr. Jussawalla, on the other hand, grew to rely on Ashok, trusting and confiding in his young student, passing on insight and wisdom, the only legacy worth passing and worth receiving.

In 1970, Ashok was appointed assistant surgeon at Tata Memorial Hospital, on a basic salary of Rs. 900, and then quickly promoted to surgeon

after four years on the job. In a little over a decade, he was already consulting for Jaslok Hospital (in 1975) and he was soon assigned the role of head of department oncology at Nanavati Hospital. Early on in his career, he helped introduce and popularise the concept of primary



With Dadi Prakashmani & BK Nirwairbhai



Dr Stephen Ariyan of Yale University with doctors at Nanavati Hospital

reconstructions to close surgical defects after the removal of cancer from the cheek, mouth or throat, thereby reducing the role of the plastic surgeon in reconstructive surgery and also reducing recovery time for patients; this was, at the time, considered avante garde. He was also a pioneer in voice-preserving operations - such as supraglottic laryngectomy - in cancers of the larynx, and the restoration of voice within a fortnight after



At Golden Jubilee celebrations, Shisu Shala Palanpur



Receiving Dr. B.C. Roy National Award from President K.R. Narayanan - 1996

“ Formal time I spent under your tutelage was not long, I still regard it as one of the major formative influences on my growth as a surgeon, and I still consider you as one of my esteemed mentors. ”

**Dr. Sandeep Kathju**

Plastic Surgeon, West Penn Hospital, Allegheny General Hospital, Pittsburgh PA 15212



With Dadi Gulzar at Panchgani 1999



Foundation function Lilavati Hospital, Mumbai - 1986

the removal of the voice box won approbation from his peers.

But Ashok's intrepid adventures in

medicine were frequently met with resistance, a fate common to all radicals. As a proponent of specialty cancer management, he was opposed by his seniors at Tata Memorial Hospital (mainly because senior doctors refused to give up general surgical oncology in favor of specialty oncology). If anything, this resistance only stirred him to reach higher, and his long cherished dream of developing head and neck surgery at Tata Memorial Hospital was realized; before long, surgeons all across India followed suit, took cues from Ashok's achievement. Although his career put him in touch with countless people from public life luminaries from the world of cinema, politics and the arts his attentions were firmly focused on the economically underprivileged. At Tata Memorial Hospital, patients were treated for free or at subsidized rates; even in private practice, he followed the coda of treating the poor for free, going as far to guide them towards the right charitable institutions from where they could secure funding.

In a long and illustrious career which we are here to celebrate and honor in this December of 2007 Ashok has met many milestones. He initiated, planned and developed the surgical oncology department at Nanavati Hospital (inaugurated in 1980 at the hands of Mother Teresa and J. R. D. Tata). Ashok helped develop cancer detection and treatment facilities in Surat and Porbander, and he also helped set up Lilavati Hospital in Bandra. His commitment to developing medical facilities resulted in the creation of a 120-bed hospital in Mount Abu, Trauma Centre and Eye



Inauguration of BSES MG Hospital managed by Brahma Kumaris GHRC, Mumbai - 2002

“ Doctor Mehta spent an hour with me explaining the stage, procedures, recovery process, etc in a way that was so crystal clear that I immediately knew that I had found my doctor. He speaks the truth directly without hiding or protecting, his experience with his subject being what it is, there is not a single question left in one's mind. ”

Ms Chhanda Bihari - Patient  
Commander Watertech Pvt. Ltd. - Mumbai



Annual Conf. Int. College of Surgeons Mt. Abu



With Dr. Stephen Ariyan and Dr. Jatin Shah



Formation of Indian Soc. of H&N Oncology, Delhi 1985



ISHNO Workshop on H&N Cancer, Nanavati Hospital

Hospital in Abu Talheti. In 1995, he was elected fellow qua surgeon of Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow and, a year later, the President of India conferred upon on him the Dr. B. C. Roy National Award for development of Head and Neck Surgery.

Although medicine and family are the two pillars of his life, spirituality is the soul his existence. At school, after reading Gandhi's My Experiments with Truth, he was intrigued by the idea of offering his life to a purpose that was more meaningful than otherwise codified conventionally by a pursuit of wealth and fame. But these existential rumblings were bare audible at the time. Decades later, in the sixties, he heard Acharya Rajneesh, and found himself in thrall of the master's elocution of Indian philosophy. But the real spiritual shift occurred only in the eighties, when he was introduced to the Brahma Kumaris and found himself involved in the development of the Global Hospital and Research Center in Mount Abu. The simplicity of the approach of the Brahma Kumaris soon won over any hankering for an intellectual approach to spirituality, and although he'd always been an extraordinarily compassionate doctor, his compassion now found itself honed and laid at the service of others with a self-effacement that could be available to someone who had taken on a rigorous and fulfilling spiritual practice. One of his great inspirations on this path has been Dadi Gulzar, who is Additional Chief of Brahma Kumaris, who affectionately calls Ashok 'doctorji'. Dadi Prakashmani and Dadi Janki are equally motivating, and he finds their presence to be sublime and pure, a shadow of divinity in mortal figure. Ashok's dedication to his spiritual practice has allowed him to overcome a plethora of hurdles in his private and public life, and he firmly believes that young doctors should develop a spiritual practice to be able to fully partake in the moral obligations and ethical complications that sandpaper a doctor's life. Compassion, knowledge, and a faith in the body to heal itself has guided Dr. Ashok Mehta's life as a healer, family man and karma yogi, and although this evening is a celebration of the life he has spent so uniquely and so admirably it also flag horns the resplendent future that lies ahead of him, to which his mind and heart unite to touch the heart of all creation.



With Smt. Indira Gandhi - Delhi 1983



With Shri Rajiv Gandhi - Mt. Abu 1991



Release of Book on "Diagnosis & Mgmt. of Cancer" Lucknow - 2003



Dr. Mehta has made a remarkable impact on all of us involved in surgical oncology and thanks to his hard work and dedication that he has been able to revolutionize the field of surgical oncology in India.



**Dr. Ashok Shaha**

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre  
New York

## His achievements

- 1974 First CME in India at TMH, Mumbai
- 1975 First CME for Association of Surgeons of India, Ahmedabad
- 1975 Comprehensive Cancer Care Facility at the Dr. B. Nanavati Hospital
- 1976 Founder Secretary of Oncology Section, ASI (now IASO)
- 1978 President, Oncology Section ASI
- 1980 Lions Cancer Detection Trust - Cancer Detection and Treatment Centre, Surat
- 1980 Lions Cancer Detection Centre, Porbandar
- 1983 UICC Post Graduate Course in Chemotherapy, Delhi & Madras
- 1985 Founder Secretary, Indian Society of Head & Neck Oncology
- 1986 President, Association of Surgeons of India
- 1988 President, Indian Society of Head & Neck Oncology
- 1991 J. Watumull Global Hospital and Research Centre, Mount Abu
- 1995 Elected fellow qua surgeon of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow (FRCS)
- 1996 President, Indian Society of Oncology
- 1996 Dr. B. C. Roy National Award in the category of Development of Specialities
- 1997 First World Congress of International Federation of Head & Neck Oncologic Societies in Mumbai
- 2002 Medical Director, BSES Municipal General Hospital, Andheri
- 2003 Publication of Book on "Diagnosis and Management of Cancer
- 2007 Radha Mohan Mehrotra Global Hospital Trauma Centre at Abu Road



**BSES M G HOSPITAL**

MANAGED BY

**BRAHMA KUMARIS'**

GLOBAL HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE

S. V. Road, Opp. Railway Station,  
Andheri (W), Mumbai - 400 058.  
Tel: 66487500 Tel. Fax: 26714000  
Email: [armehta@vsnl.com](mailto:armehta@vsnl.com)

Book Post

**Dr. Ashok Mehta** MS, FRCS, FICS  
Medical Director

Celebrating  
**70<sup>th</sup>**  
birthday



**BSES M G HOSPITAL**

MANAGED BY

**BRAHMA KUMARIS'**

GLOBAL HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE

S. V. Road, Opp. Railway Station,  
Andheri (W), Mumbai - 400 058  
Tel: 66487500 Tel. Fax: 26714000  
Email: [armehta@vsnl.com](mailto:armehta@vsnl.com)