OBITUARY

In Memoriam

Dr Laxmikant N. Vora, MS FRCS MCh (1931–2020)

N. S. Laud¹

Published online: 11 August 2020
© Indian Orthopaedics Association 2020

Laxmikant N. Vora was born on 12 March 1931 in Vakaner, Gujarat. His parents were prominent members of the Gujarati Sthanakvasi Jain community, and his father, Dr. Naranji Monji Vora, was a well-respected physician practicing in South Mumbai. At school, he was awarded the title of "Shatavdhani"—avadhan or concentration of 100 objects—three times for his extraordinary capacity to concentrate and memorize. After graduating from Elphinstone College, like his father, he chose medicine as his calling. He did his Masters in General Surgery, specializing in Orthopaedics. He was one of the favourite students and later a colleague of Dr. K. T. Dholakia. After acquiring his FRCS and Mch (Orth) Liverpool in the United Kingdom, he returned to India and was appointed as an Honorary Assistant Professor of Orthopaedics at the Seth G. S. Medical College and KEM Hospital, Parel, Mumbai in 1962. Later he became the Unit Head and Honorary Professor at KEM Hospital. His career with KEM Hospital and Seth GS Medical College lasted for a long 27 years and he retired in 1989, but he

continued clinical practice till 31 March 2020. He was also associated with the Sir Harkinsondas Nurottamdas Hospital. In his brilliant career of 58 years in orthopaedic surgery, he trained and mentored many orthopaedic surgeons like me. He had a brilliant academic career.

During residency, Dr. Vora met his future wife, Bindu, nee Vinaybala Ratilal Thakkar, the daughter of a freedom fighter, while working at "The Bombay Clinic" of his professor, Dr. K. T. Dholakia. KTD and his wife Sarojben decided that they would make a good pair and acted as matchmakers. They got married and were blessed with two children, Niraj and Poorvi. Dr. Vora's wife was a pillar of strength for the young family. In 1971, the couple bought a place in Opera House and ran a private nursing home. For the next three decades, Dr. Vora's wife ran the show here, managing everything from the matchboxes for the kitchen to the autoclaving needs of the hospital.

I had the good fortune of being trained by him as a resident in 1963–1964. He was a strict disciplinarian and was very particular for time. I could set the time on my watch when his black Morris car entered the Orthopaedic Center of KEM Hospital. He was a very meticulous surgeon, his nerve dissection was a delight to watch. I have learned tissue handling by observing him. His ward rounds used to be exceptional. He would always question and stimulate a resident to think about the answer. He was a firm believer in learning rather than teaching. I still remember his tradition of giving a "Bombay Special Bhel" party to all the residents who had finished their training. His teaching commitment is reflected in the book "Orthopaedics for Undergraduates," he co-authored with the late Dr. P. M. Desai.

He had an excellent rapport with his colleagues and was very popular. He was a man of few words, but he was a great organizer. A hallmark of his organizing capacity was seen at the Silver Jubilee Congress of the Indian Orthopaedic Association in 1980. As an Organising Secretary of this conference, his silver jubilee lecture was a tribute to his academic

✉ N. S. Laud
nslaud1937@gmail.com

¹ Laud Clinic/Center for Joint Replacement, 180 Hindu Colony, Dadar, Mumbai 400014, India

commitment. He was also the international delegate of SICOT for India from 1985 to 2001 and was SICOT's Vice President in 1990–1993. He had held the vice president's position for the IOA and several other leadership positions.

He was the founder secretary of the Bombay Orthopaedic Society, and his contribution to its growth is incomparable. He was brilliant in finance and accounts, and at General Body Meetings of the Bombay orthopaedic Society, every member appreciated Dr. Vora's presence and advice. His

presence in the front row of every WIROC meeting was a familiar sight every year. As to many of his students, and for me, it is a personal loss.

He has passed on his legacy to his children. His son, Niraj, is a well-respected Arthroplasty surgeon in Mumbai, following his father's footsteps. His daughter, Poorvi is a brilliant academician. The Orthopaedic community will miss him. May his soul rest in peace.