



# A visionary with a timeless legacy

Born 175 years ago, in 1839, Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, the Founder of the Tata group, was a visionary who felt the need to use the resources and capabilities at his command to the service of the people of the country and make India a self-reliant economy. Motivated by the early nationalists of the Indian freedom movement in the latter half of the

nineteenth century, Jamsetji Tata devoted his entire energy and effort to implement his vision of building an industrial enterprise in India that would provide economic freedom to the country.

An enlightened entrepreneur and a great nationalist, his vision for “a free enterprise” was one that would make the community “the very purpose of its existence”. A simple and altruistic viewpoint, it enveloped within it a complex, hitherto unheard of, holistic ideology of business enterprise as corporate citizens. His basic premise was that just as other citizens had both rights and duties, the duty of a corporate citizen required it to serve the plural interests of diverse stakeholders – perhaps collectively viewed by him as the community.

Even long before the steel plant was established, Jamsetji had the vision that Tata Steel’s business practices should follow few principles for common good including adopting an ethical value system and transparent business practices, driven by the ideals of good governance that consider the interests of the shareholders our own, and focus on the health and welfare of the employees. His vision for Tata Steel was not restricted to the steel works but also of a planned city with a lot of greenery around where the contented and productive work force would reside. In later years, the city thus born out of his vision aptly came to be named as “Jamshedpur”. He consciously abjured philanthropy, choosing instead to equip India to climb out of poverty by establishing the means to harness its finest minds.





Jamsetji believed that the route to the creation of wealth was “widespread industrialisation and the infusion of modern science and technology into the country’s economic life”. He balanced it with the notion that in its pursuit of industrial growth, Tata Steel’s value system must act as a lodestone, continuously guiding its social consciousness to stretch beyond its vision - the end goal - to select and deploy ethical means or strategies that ultimately serve its primary purpose.

Viewed in the context of the expectations that the community and the society have of businesses today, Jamsetji Tata’s vision of the purpose of an organisation

more than a century ago is still immensely relevant. Thus, even before the turn of the twentieth century, Jamsetji Tata laid the principles of Tata Steel’s future business proposition of being a fair and transparent company whose actions would foster trust and have the ability to deliver common good.

Tata Steel over the last century has always endeavoured to align its strategy and actions that are focused on building sustainable and long-term business by placing equal emphasis on stakeholder value creation and corporate citizenship.

