

Sam F. Wadia

Born on 22 November 1936 to Farmroz and Aloo Wadia in Bombay. Sammy as everyone fondly called him did his schooling and college from Raj Kumar College & Saint Peters in Panchgani. He has two sisters Mehroo and Persis.

He was always on the move, his love for fast wheels taking him all around Saurashtra from a very young age.

In 1965 he married Farida Ferozeshah Pestonji and they have 3 children, Sanaeya Tehzeeb, Naushad and Dilshad.

In 1969 Wadia Body Builders was established with a capital investment of Rs. 12000 in a makeshift garage. Here he lived out his passion for building quality vehicles for the services. They built busses, ambulances, fire tenders and all kinds of special purpose vehicles. For years the AMTS busses of Ahmedabad carried proudly the logo of Wadia on their front. In 1971 he introduced the fire tender to their existing line of busses, since then the company has supplied more than 3000 different types of fire fighting vehicles. This was followed by several technical tie-ups with international firms in the fire fighting as well as disaster management equipments and services. In 1990-91 India's first indigenously manufactured portable pump for fire fighting was developed in-house. This was followed-up in the next year by the development of India's first rescue truck based on international design & standards. In 1995-96 they exported the first fire-fighting vehicle out of India while the rest of the companies were still importing. The list of firsts is endless. They are now known for many other types of specialised vehicles than fire-fighting, you may come across the Wadia logo anywhere in India on motor homes, out door catering vehicles, blood collection vans, exhibition vans, mobile ICUs, mobile Hutch shops, large defence vehicles, fully loaded rescue vehicles. The name Wadia is synonymous with quality. Sammy's dream was to only supply quality vehicles and no compromise was to be made on this one fundamental requirement.

He was a tall towering man, with a large moustache and soft brown eyes and a booming voice; menacing and endearing at the same time. He would be accompanied by the fragrance of his pipe which went everywhere with him. Sammy was a hardworking man; he was well known in Ahmedabad society and was the face of Vimal suiting. He was a silent philanthropist, and would help anyone in need and remained anonymous for his deeds towards the Parsi community.

Sammy met with a very bad accident in 2001 on his way to Rajkot, near Limbdi. Though his driver came through without a scratch he never recovered from the consequences and remained bed ridden till his demise on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2002, surrounded by family and friends.

Today his children are well settled and the 3<sup>rd</sup> grand child is on the way. Wadia Body Builders is a name to be reckoned with in the field of special purpose vehicles. Post earthquake several state of the art rescue vehicles have been supplied to many cities of Gujarat and the Defence department. Naushad continues on the road set out by his father under whom he trained for 15 years, supported by his mother Farida.