Business Standard



Sat, 30 Jun-18; Business Standard - Mumbai; Size : 173 sq.cm.;
Circulation:30029; Page : 2

# Manwani retires after 42 years with HUL

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Mumbai, 29 June

A 42-year-long career drew to an end on Friday as Harish Manwani, 65, chaired the annual general meeting of Hindustan Unilever (HUL), the country's largest consumer goods company, a final time.

Addressing shareholders at the AGM, which was the company's eighty-fifth, Manwani, who was HUL's longest-serving chairman (appointed in 2005 in a non-executive capacity), said these were unpredictable times and that the nearly ₹350-billion firm would have to respond with a new paradigm that was 'great to good'.

"Going from great to good requires businesses to embrace a larger purpose that goes beyond generating short-term financial results. A corporate purpose that is relatable, a purpose that goes beyond physical products and services, and makes a real difference to society," he said, acknowledging shareholder gratitude for his tenure at the company.

Manwani also reiterated the importance of digital and technology, saying they were key for the success of the company in the future. "We are leading the digital transformation with significant investment in automation, robotics and artificial intelligence across the value chain. Through advanced data analytics, we are reinventing the way we market our brands through digital media and our go-to-market models," Manwani said.

**Manwani was HUL's longest serving chairman**

HUL, he said, was using GPS tagging technology to identify and prioritise markets for distribution among other its digital initiatives. And was also using technology to increase its presence in e-commerce, a small but growing channel.

Manwani also said the company was working on a food strategy that was centred on building a platform of brands that were innovative and met consumer needs.

The statement acquires significance since earlier this month, HUL said it was bringing its food and refreshment verticals together, effective July 1 this year, in keeping with global portfolio alignments.

Manwani also said the introduction of Goods & Services Tax in July 2017 had led to lower output tax on over half its portfolio and that the new tax regime was good for overall category and market growth.