Ordinarily extraordinaire

Having turned 60 today, Narayan Murthy looks forward to a familial bonding in his new home in Bangalore

By KAVITHA SRINIVASA

N R. Narayana Murthy, chairman and chief mentor of Infosys Technologies, who turns 60 today, is building a second home. That the Infosys campus exudes hi-tech sophistication is legendary and has become part of IT folklore, but very little is known about the development on his personal front.

Rating it as a modern home in south Bangalore, the unassuming industry leader described it as the place where he will spend time with his author-wife Sudha and children Rohan and Akshata. Considering he's only there for them 10 days in a month, one understands his eagerness to bond with the family.

The second home is a perfect spot for him to sit back and reflect on life. “I could probably do my video conferencing with my colleagues,” explained the mentor of a company that turned 25 this year and clocked a revenue growth of $2.15 billion on March 31, 2006.

A multi-faceted personality, Murthy could be described as “Young at 60.” Retirement has opened out fresh opportunities, the most crucial being education.

As a keen promoter of education, he is on the board of several universities in India and abroad. Despite his jet-set schedule, Murthy lectures on education. He enjoys it, as it enables him to connect with youngsters. Quite natural, as his company itself is throbbing with young minds.

While he hopes to be an educational advisor, somewhere along the line he felt it appropriate to emulate universities like the Harvard, Stanford and Singapore Management University to improve India’s educational scene.

“The government should contribute towards improving the primary education in rural areas. Children should be given meals and better books. The primary education in urban areas should be handled by the private sector, with the government providing subsidy to a section of disadvantaged people,” said Murthy, adding, “The higher education should also be left in the hands of the private sector.”

Repeated requests to share many such insights in a book have been put off. Instead, he prefers being a satisfying mentor. “It’s a private relationship where one distills wisdom of past experiences,” concluded Murthy.