

Publication: India Times

Date: 9 May 2017

Headline: Ex-Mistry aide Kumar joins S'pore B-school

Ex-Mistry aide Kumar joins S'pore B-school

Mumbai: Former Tata Sons strategist Nirmalya Kumar joined the Singapore Management University as a marketing professor last week, marking his return to academia. From July 1, he will take up the position of the Lee Kong Chian Professor of Marketing at the university, a statement from the business school said.

Kumar, 57, had joined Tata Sons from the London Business School in 2013. But following the removal of Cyrus Mistry from the chairmanship of Tata Sons last October, Kumar — who was a key member of Mistry's core team — was dismissed too. In his blog, the Kolkata-born academician, who is also one of the biggest collectors of Jamini Roy paintings, had said, "It was not as if I was fired for non-performance (my last evaluation was excellent)... I was fired for just being there at my position — working intensely and extensively with Cyrus."

Along with Kumar, other close aides of Mistry — Madhu Kannan, head of business development, and N S Rajan, HR head, — were also asked to leave Tata Sons. Kannan and Rajan have subsequently joined Uber and IDFC Bank, respectively.

In a statement, Kumar, who previously taught at Harvard Business School, IMD (Switzerland) and Northwestern University (Kellogg School of Management), said, "There will eventually be one Asian school in the top 10 business schools of the world. With Singapore as its base, the substantial endowment, accomplished faculty and growing reputation of its programmes, there is no reason why Lee Kong Chian School of Business cannot challenge to be the one. It is this potential of Singapore and SMU that has drawn me here from London."