



ON THE SPOT... Arun Kumar Dukkipati

Arun Kumar Dukkipati is Vice President of the All India Glass Manufacturers' Federation (AIGMF) and President of the Packaging Products Division of HSIL Ltd.

GW: In general, how healthy is the glass container sector in India?

Very significant capacity was added to the glass container segment in a short space of time, resulting in the recent overcapacity and a setback for the industry. In the next couple of years, the new capacities will start to be utilised and the industry will be in a better position, so prospects are still positive. These problems happen in many countries once in a while but we are confident that it is a passing phase.

GW: What position does AGI glaspac (a strategic business unit of HSIL Ltd) hold in the Indian glass industry?

With two state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities, AGI is one of the country's leading glass container manufacturers and the largest in south India. We employ approximately 2000 people and manufacture high quality glass containers to meet the stringent and demanding quality standards for the packaging needs of food, pharmaceuticals, soft drinks, spirits, beer, wine and other industries.

Our first plant in Hyderabad started in 1972 and following several phases of significant investment since 2000, is now a modern plant with a capacity of about 600 tonnes/day. A second plant about 45km away in Bhongir was opened in 2009 with a capacity of 500 tonnes/day and a new furnace was commissioned in 2013 with a capacity for a further 500 tonnes/day.

GW: What is your role with AGI glaspac?

I have been with the company since 1990, first as Vice President and then as President of the packaging product division. Glass packaging accounts for

approximately 50% of our company's business. Within this division, other activities include businesses for PET containers and caps.

GW: Are any further major plant investments/upgrades planned?

Yes, we definitely plan to expand further. It could be another greenfield plant but no firm plans can be announced yet. We certainly want to continue to grow our overall business in the packaging product division.

GW: Where is AGI's core client base and how does the company differentiate its products from the competition?

Our product range covers flint, amber and green containers used in all market segments. Some 90% of customers are in India, with the remainder of production exported to East Africa, Europe and South East Asia. Our domestic and international >



The AIGMF conference on 'Cost Effective Technology in Container Glass for Tomorrow', staged during GLASSPEX India 2015 was very interesting and beneficial according to Arun Kumar Dukkipati.



The AGI facility in Bhongir was commissioned in 2009 and a new furnace was constructed in 2013.

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customers include well-known brands that are very vigorous in their selection criteria and only choose the best.

A core strength of AGI is rapid product development. We are renowned for producing new products in four-six weeks but sometimes, it can even be within two weeks! We also boast ISO quality management certification and comply with all social requirements. We are really customer-focused and our company motto is 'To take care of the customer'.

GW: How have technology partners contributed to the modernisation in Hyderabad and the new factory in Bhongir?

Critical equipment is supplied by technology manufacturers but for non-critical equipment, we tend to get the specifications and drawings from the original manufacturers and build the machines in India ourselves to help reduce costs and avoid importation. This approach has been very successful. We also have a philosophy to make 60% of moulds and accessories within our company, with Strada and Toyo Glass counted among the suppliers of the remainder.

All of our bottle making machines are state-of-the-art technology from Bucher Emhart Glass, from whom we also source quality control machines, along with IRIS Inspection machines, AGR and Heye International. Our furnaces are supplied by SORG, who we find very efficient and convenient to work with.

We are always very keen to import the latest advanced technologies. For example, other leading suppliers used include ZIPPE for batch plant, Teka for batch preparation, Sheppee for hot end handling, Zecchetti for cold end handling and Pennekamp and Antonini for lehrs.



Arun Kumar Dukkupati with AIGMF Secretary, Vinit Kapur (centre) at GLASSPEX India 2015.

GW: Is the company taking any specific measures to control energy, raw materials and other production costs?

Yes, energy efficiency is definitely a priority for us. For example, we work on different combinations of forehearth set-ups. Every year, we target a 4%-5% reduction and are usually very successful in achieving this.

GW: How does AGI glaspac co-operate with Wiegand Glas, one of the top four glass container manufacturers in Germany?

It's a formal co-operation on an ongoing basis that works very well. It involves sharing information on the best operating practices, narrow neck press and blow (NNPB) technology, mould management and machine maintenance and operation. Our employees visit Wiegand Glas to learn new technologies and we also invite their technicians to our factories. It's a very successful relationship that works both ways and will continue.

GW: What is your personal involvement with the AIGMF?

Having been involved with the AIGMF for over 10 years and an executive committee member for six years, I am currently Vice President. We have a responsibility to take care of the industry's best interests and a priority is to make representation where necessary to the Indian government and other governing bodies. We have recently been involved in influencing such matters as anti-dumping duty on soda ash and raw materials exports, for example.

An advantage of being Vice President is that I can have influence and help protect the glass industry.

GW: With Sanjay Ganjoo from Asahi Glass India serving as President, is it beneficial to the AIGMF to now have representation on the executive committee from both the flat and container glass sectors?

It's good that the AIGMF has increased flat glass representation because it's an important segment that was not previously covered comprehensively by the federation. The major flat glass players are now involved, giving more >

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Arun Kumar Dukkupati with Glass Worldwide's Dave Fordham.

strength to the AIGMF as a body. Our activities in the glass container sector remain just as important but as a body, we should not focus on one segment alone; it is also possible to represent specialty glass, tableware and other segments of the Indian glass industry.

GW: How successful was the AIGMF conference on 'Cost Effective Technology in Container Glass for Tomorrow', staged during GLASSPEX India 2015 last March?

Including educational presentations from such leading players as EME, Fosbel, HORN, IRIS, Tiana and ZIPPE, the conference was very



Glass Worldwide is preferred international journal of the AIGMF in association with Kanch.

interesting and beneficial to an impressive number of delegates. The conference added extra value to GLASSPEX India, which was a very useful event for all those wishing to learn more about modern technology.

GW: Glass Worldwide is exclusive preferred international journal of the AIGMF. How does this benefit the Indian glass industry?

Glass Worldwide is the global industry's best magazine and is the most informative and useful for me and for my colleagues at AGI glaspac. Since the start of the relationship, the quality of Kanch magazine has further improved and the longer the co-operation between AIGMF and Glass Worldwide, the better! ■

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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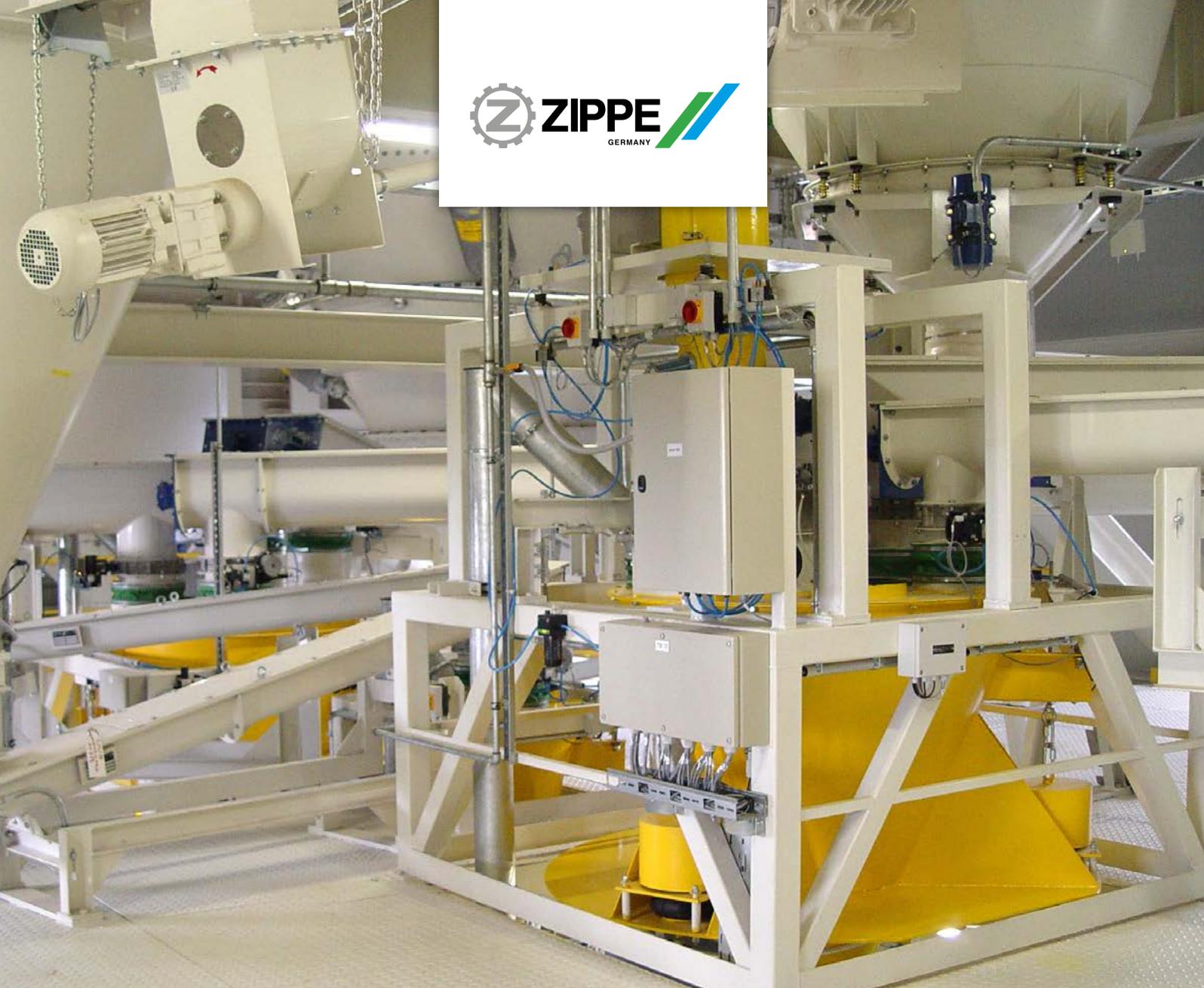
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