



ON THE SPOT... Sanjay Somany

Sanjay Somany is Vice Chairman and Managing Director of the Hindusthan National Glass and Industries.

GW: As a leading flat and hollow glass manufacturer in India, what challenges and opportunities is HNG currently facing?

Our major challenges are low capacity utilisation and high production costs. However, we are working hard on fully utilising our capacities and cutting the cost of production. It's a lot of hard work, with attention to small details resulting in a downward cost trend. Our technology partners are also pitching in to make a difference. It is a slow process but it is working.

GW: How has the gradual managerial restructuring over recent years benefited HNG?

With my father C K Somany as non-executive Chairman, my brother Mukul Somany and I are managing the Indian business, together with a team of professionals. I have additional responsibility of HNG-Global (in Germany). My son Bharat is taking care of IT and infrastructure, in addition to his responsibilities at Glass Equipment (India). The management structure is working fine and we have a very clear vision.

GW: Does HNG still hold the ambition to be one of the top 15 glassmakers in the world?

That is still our ambition and we are moving in the right direction. Presently, we are producing about 3500 tonnes of glass in India, as well as around 350-375 tonnes/day in Germany.

GW: How is the technically advanced production factory in Germany performing?

The operation in Gardelegen is running really well. We have achieved our target of pack to melt efficiencies of approximately 88%-89% and the furnace capacity utilisation is always 100%.

Preparation has already begun for a second line to be added; although there are no immediate plans, the blue prints are prepared and will be executed when the market is ready.

We have also achieved our objective of increasing sales directly to customers as opposed to selling through distributors. Our sales will be close to 105,000 tonnes this year.

GW: Is HNG still looking to expand further in other regions outside India?

It will happen. We are actively looking at opportunities but there is nothing directly to move forward with right



Sanjay Ganjoo, AIGMF President (left); Arun Kumar Dukkipati, AIGMF Vice President; and Sanjay Somany at the AIGMF International Conference during GLASSPEX India 2015.

now. Generally, conditions in Europe are still in turmoil, so we have to be careful. We still have the ambition of having 50% of our business outside India but the opportunities have to be correct to move forward.

GW: How will the company develop its activities within India?

Expansion has to continue in the future. We have identified land for greenfield float and container plants in the north of India but progress will take longer than initially expected because of the hollow glass market being a little down. We have lost substantial tonnage because of customers facing hard situations, especially in the liquor industry.

We have almost recovered from that scenario but the market is still unstable and challenges remain. I estimate it will take about another two years for overcapacity to be resolved in the Indian hollow sector. But the long-term future is definitely positive and we will need to add greenfield plants to fulfil the needs of our customers. >



The HNG Global glass container operation at Gardelegen, Germany is achieving all targets.



Sanjay and Bharat Somany with members of the Glass Equipment (India) Ltd team at GLASSPEX India 2015.

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"Outside India, *Glass Worldwide* is easily the industry's best magazine" says Sanjay Somany.



Sanjay Somany with members of HNG's management team and family members during the 2013 Phoenix Award banquet for C K Somany.

GW: How is HNG's float glass operation performing?

The plant is delivering 90% yield on a continuous basis. The float market is quite good and we are committed to major growth in this area. We are talking with our partner Trakya Cam Sanayii (Sisecam) about adding more capacity with another line at the Halol plant. We are also looking at the alternative of greenfield options elsewhere and will make a business decision based on the market and cost of production.

GW: What are the latest developments at subsidiary company, Glass Equipment (India) Ltd (GEIL)?

In recent years, GEIL has been taken apart and completely rebuilt. It now offers state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities, extending from the design to manufacture of fully automatic glass forming machines and related engineering products.

The young leadership team is working excellently and Glass Equipment can now offer high performance equipment that is the 'best of the best' in the industry. The company provides not just equipment but expertise in all areas of the glass manufacturing processes. Led by Bharat Somany, we have a fine group of young engineers that are 'adding feathers in their cap'; they are performing miracles.

GW: A former President of the All Indian Glass Manufacturers' Federation, do you still maintain an involvement with the committee?

Bharat takes care of most HNG activities with the AIGMF. I am only needed to attend one or two meetings each year because the federation is being managed very well by Vinit Kapur and the AIGMF committee. So I don't need to pitch in much as in previous years! Mr Kapur has done very well and is receiving good input from most of the industry. His networking and interaction is very good and he has an excellent rapport with members; for his type of work, that is very important.

Basically, it's a very good situation for all parties and it will be continued. My previous comment is still valid that *Glass Worldwide* is the only magazine outside India that I read from cover to cover. Outside India, it is easily the industry's best magazine, in my opinion.

GW: What did the AIGMF International Conference add to GLASSPEX India 2015?

Visitors made good use of the conference and there was a real energy this time. I was personally involved in creating the programme and it exceeded all expectations.

GW: The AIGMF used the committee meeting during the recent GLASSPEX India 2015 exhibition to reaffirm Glass Worldwide as its exclusive preferred journal (in co-operation with Kanch). How does this close co-operation benefit the industry?

GW: Overall, how did GLASSPEX India 2015 perform? My colleagues reported that there were a lot of good discussions with participants and they were very excited. There were very few exhibitors with whom we are not doing business. ■



Sanjay Somany with representatives of Italy's Car-Met SpA at a previous GLASSPEX India event. According to Mr Somany, there were very few exhibitors at the show with whom HNG is not doing business.



Sanjay Somany (right), with son Bharat and *Glass Worldwide's* Dave Fordham at GLASSPEX India 2015.