



### ***My 43 years in a Snapshot***



*I wished to be a teacher, was running a successful coaching institute of my own at Dehradun during graduation. Since destiny has its own course, got selected for Paper-tech and later on joined Thapar Industries as a trainee in 1973. This is how journey to the paper industry began which was not only a great learning experience but also a totally new horizon full of challenges and opportunities in front of me. I got to know various functions of the industry and the process of making paper from the secondary fiber in various paper mills, initial training equipped me with the knowledge of how the paper industry works. Afterwards, worked for various organizations as a shift in-charge and project engineer. Joined Sehgal Papers Limited, an NRI venture where got the opportunity to work on soft tissue paper machine and produced soft-tissue i.e. SNOTEX brand for the first time in India on 15th August 1978 and Carbon-less Paper on 26th January 1979 as a papermaker in the guidance of Dr Krishna Gopalan and Richard Irwin Crane, an American expert on soft tissue. Working on soft tissue filled me with confidence in how to handle projects and work on a paper machine.*

*Here are some exciting moments during tenure with Sehgal Papers*

- As the mill was in its project stage a lot of new machinery and equipment were imported from USA, it was a totally new experience for us to work on them. It was start-up of soft tissue machine, everyone was excited. Everything from wire, top and bottom felts were placed on the YANKEE machine. All the staff including Richard Irwin Crane were working round the clock for 7 days tirelessly, but paper could not be reeled. Lots of pulp went in drain until one of the foremen poured two buckets of liquid alum on the top felt which had done the miracle, top felt started licking up the paper sheet and paper reeled on pope which was a big relief on the tiring faces and this is how soft tissue was produced for the first time in India.*

- *Another incident was of writing and printing machine where synthetic fabric of Huyck make was installed in 1979, as everybody was familiar with bronze wire, it became difficult to guide the new fabric which was slipping frequently, every time we have to stop the machine and it continued for almost 2 days. It was only after proper tension was given on it; the production started. Needless to mention here that first indigenous synthetic fabric produced by Shalimar in 1980.*

*In 1986, got a challenging job opportunity to head an Agro-based mill as a works manager, which was a turning point in my career, where I undertook an assignment to revive the unit which was not performing very well, was fortunate to turn around the plant with team work, to one of the finest agro-based mills in India. Mill got two IPMA awards among the category of small paper mills i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> prize in capacity utilization and 2<sup>nd</sup> prize for energy conservation in 1992. Mill also got Environmental award during 1997 from CPCB and UNEP. Whereas on quality front mill reached many milestones by producing BOND, LEDGER, MANIFOLD and high brightness writing and printing paper from rice straw, wheat straw and bagasse which was considered a difficult task in 80s. During 20 years tenure at Simplex, my services were recognized and position advanced from Works Manager to Group Director.*

*Following are few challenging moments out of many at Simplex*

- *In absence of chemical recovery, a notice for the closure of the unit was issued by MPCB due to the mounting pressure of pollution. A similar notice was issued to all the mills in Maharashtra. We were making Lignin out of Black Liquor which was not recognised by MPCB. We used to send raw Lignosulphonates to chemical factories at Durgapur for purification, which in turn were selling it to ONGC for oil drilling. To solve this problem, we invited CPCB experts along with MPCB officials to visit our plant and examine indigenously made Lignin recovery plant at our mill site. After staying 7 days in the mill and having seen that not a single drop of Black Liquor was drained out from the mills' premises the CPCB experts were convinced that any other alternative addressal of Black Liquor would be accepted. A bond was signed, and closure notice was withdrawn.*
- *I recall an incident that took place when Union decided to go on a strike for the fulfilment of their demand of hike in the wages. All the workmen left the plant and gathered in front of mill's gate. As a unit head a quick measure were necessary to keep the mill in operation so decided to motivate staff to keep plant running, this continued for 48 hours. When the workmen realised that the factory was not affected by their actions, they called off the strike and came back to work. After 3 months all the workmen were given a rise in wages more than what they have expected. Since then a strike never happened again.*
- *It was in early 90's when the demand of high brightness paper was rising in the market. Agro Residue is a weak fibre, addition of Hypochlorite is done to achieve brightness but excess of it weakens the fibre which disturbs the paper machine runnability. To solve the problem hydrogen peroxide was introduced, which helped in reduction of hypochlorite and maintain high level of brightness, further treatment with enzymes was done to maintain the strength. Our plant was among the first few plants to introduce H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> and enzyme in secondary fibre.*

*There are similar episodes which are not possible to be narrated here. Many challenges and incidents relating to administration, production, marketing and mill operations can be overcome by positive attitude and spirit of teamwork. Moved to Pudemjee Pulp and Paper (Pune) as a Director, where got exposure on specialty grades of papers and subsequently to Bhrikuti Pulp and Paper, Nepal and Tehri Pulp and Paper. From starting as a Trainee and rising to the position of Managing Director, credit goes to optimistic behavior, perseverance, hard work, and team management skills for success in the field. During my journey of these 43 years in the industry, visited 42 countries.*

*Apart from Professional achievements, hunger for education lead me towards completing Ph.D., D.Sc., MBA during the time in the industry. Various fellowships i.e. AIMA, FIMA, FIM, FMSPI, FUWAI were awarded.*

*Specially made rice straw pulp used in “Japanese YEN” to prevent duplicate of the currency which was blended with other pulp, exported to Japan from Bhrikuti Pulp and Paper Mill, Nepal during my tenure was another breakthrough.*

*Following are some of the significant achievements beside discharging the day to day duties in paper mills for 30 years as a unit head.*

#### **INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATIONS:**

*Represented India in International Forums as a speaker: Thailand (1998), Indonesia (1999), China (2000), Switzerland (2001), USA (2002), China (2003), Australia (2004), Canada (2005)*

#### **NOTABLE AWARDS:**

*Udyog Ratan Award (1997), Life Time Achievement Award (1998), Great Indian Achievers (1999), Millennium Medal of Honor (2001), International Man of the Year (2002), Environmental Award (2003) by NIEM & CPCB, Uttaranchal Ratan Award (2006)*

#### **PAPER PUBLISHED:**

*Published more than two dozen papers in national and international journals of IPPTA, TAPPI, APPITA etc. on wheat straw, bagasse, cleaner production, environment etc.*

**Patent:** *Granted by the Government of India on the invention of Lignin Recovery.*

#### **CONTRIBUTION TO IPPTA/PAPER INDUSTRY**

- *Member of Steering & Technical Committee of PAPEREX (2001, 2003, 2005)*
- *Regional Chairman (West) & Executive Committee member of IARPMA (2000-2005)*
- *Member of Research Advisory Committee of CPPRI (Govt. of India) (2000-2004)*
- *Member of Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS) (2000-2003)*
- *Member of Benchmarking study on cleaner production under NIEM phase III of United Nations Environment Programme (1996-2000)*
- *Member of Non-Wood Fiber Committee of TAPPI (USA) (2000-2005)*
- *Only Indian Speaker invited to present a paper on “ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES FACING INDIA.” During “SWISS ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTION FOR EMERGING COUNTRIES” at LUSANNE SWITZERLAND (2001)*

#### **LIFE MEMBER OF IPPTA, QCFI**

- *Vice President - (2000-2001)*
- *Executive Committee IPPTA - (1994-1996)*

➤ *Nomination Committee IPPTA - (1998)*

**Ex-Managing Director** Bhrikuti Pulp & Paper Ltd. (Nepal)  
**Ex-Director** Pudumjee Pulp & Paper Ltd. Pune (Maharashtra)  
**Ex-Director** Simplex Mills Co. Ltd. Gondia (Maharashtra)  
**Ex-Director** Tehri Pulp & Paper Ltd. Muzaffarnagar (U.P.)



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