

AMTOI

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NEWS



SILVER JUBILEE YEAR CELEBRATING MULTIMODALISM AND FAMILY BUSINESS



ASSOCIATION OF MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT OPERATORS OF INDIA

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ASSOCIATION OF MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT OPERATORS OF INDIA

Editor

Shantanu Bhadkamkar

Publisher

Sailesh Bhatia

Registered Office

H-Wing, Unit No.: 234, Kanakia Zillion,
BKC Annexe, LBS Marg, CST Road Junction,

Kurla (W), Mumbai - 400070

T: +91 8452049684 | +91 8452049685

E: info@amtoi.org

W: www.amtoi.org

Printed by

Kite | kitethestudio@gmail.com | +91 9930052087

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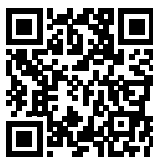
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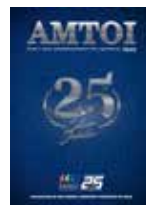
About AMTOI

AMTOI, The Association of Multimodal Transport Operators of India, was formed with the object of organizing Multimodal Transport Operators at the national level and improving the quality of their services. The members of the Association are Multimodal Transport Operators registered with the Directorate General of Shipping, Mumbai under the Multimodal Transportation of Goods Act, 1993 which also includes some associate members like CFS operators, tank container operators etc. The Association is a non-profit making body registered under the Indian Companies Act and is managed by the Managing Committee comprising of 7 members elected by the Operator members. The Committee is assisted by a Board of Advisors consisting of the representatives of Government / Public Sector Organizations. Also, it has various trade association representatives on its extended board and is thus likened to an apex body. As a unique initiative, AMTOI has set up a forum called the Grievance Redressal Forum (GRF). The objective of this Forum is to create a platform for dispute resolution and thereby addressing grievances of the members of the trade. The Association has a two-tier membership – Ordinary members who are registered as MTOs and Associate members who are not MTOs themselves but who are involved in operations connected with multimodal transport. The Associate members are not eligible for voting rights or contest in the Elections. The Association from time to time has made suggestions for the consideration of Government and in fact the suggestion for amending the Multimodal Transportation of Goods Act and for

adopting other related measures. AMTOI has been able to secure representation on Government bodies like the Standing Committee on Promotion of Exports, (SCOPE Shipping and SCOPE Air), Task Force on Multimodal Transport and various other forums of the Ministries of Shipping, Commerce & Finance of the Government of India. The Association is also a member of the International Multimodal Transport Association based in Geneva and has thus acquired international recognition. For the benefit of its members, regular training courses are conducted by it on tax issues, insurance or other such related subjects. An awaited event of the year is the MULTIMODAL DAY or an AMTOI DAY which the Association organizes as an 'Annual Day' for the last many years wherein the entire shipping fraternity of Shipping Lines, Ports CFS operators, Freight Forwarders, NVOCC's, CHA's, Airlines, Government authorities in addition to MTO's come together to network and interact with each other under one roof. Members are kept abreast of the happenings in the industry by MULTIMODAL TIMES or AMTOI Newsletter which is published as a quarterly magazine currently and we hope to graduate into a monthly publication which will attempt to capture critical issues that are close to the industry and along with opinions of the industry leaders. Lastly, keeping abreast with the advancing technologies, AMTOI continuously improvises its website and offers tools for various industry players to come together and thus endeavoring to be a leader in its class.



AMTOI News



AMTOI Knowledge Sessions

From The President's Desk



Xerrxes Master
President, AMTOI

president@amtoi.org

In the current year as AMTOI celebrates its Silver Jubilee, we decided that the next four editions dwell on multimodalism and family run businesses which form ninety percent of our membership.

The next few editions promises to be true collectors' items filled with insightful information and rich history.

I hope you enjoy the effort put in by our editorial team for the same.

Family businesses are unique entities that come with their own set of advantages, challenges, and nuances. Here are some key aspects to consider:

1. ****Long-term Perspective****: Family businesses often have a long-term perspective, with the goal of passing the business down through generations. This can provide stability and continuity but may also lead to resistance to change or innovation.
2. ****Family Dynamics****: Family dynamics can heavily influence decision-making and relationships within the business. Conflicts, rivalries, and disagreements among family members can impact operations and strategy.
3. ****Succession Planning****: Planning for the transition of leadership and ownership is crucial for the continuity of a family business. Succession planning involves identifying and preparing the next generation of leaders, which can be complicated by issues such as favoritism, competency, and sibling rivalry.
4. ****Roles and Responsibilities****: Clear delineation of roles and responsibilities is essential to prevent confusion and conflict. Family members may occupy various positions within the business, including leadership, management, and ownership, each

requiring specific skills and expertise.

5. ****Governance and Decision-Making****: Establishing effective governance structures and decision-making processes helps manage conflicts and ensure accountability. Family businesses may adopt formal mechanisms such as family councils or boards of directors to facilitate communication and decision-making.
6. ****Work-Life Balance****: Balancing family obligations with business responsibilities can be challenging for family members involved in the business. Clear boundaries between family and work life are necessary to maintain harmony and prevent burnout or resentment.
7. ****Legacy and Values****: Family businesses often prioritize preserving their legacy and upholding core values passed down through generations. These values can serve as guiding principles for decision-making and shape the culture of the organization.
8. ****Financial Considerations****: Financing and capital allocation decisions may be influenced by family dynamics and ownership structures. Conflicting financial interests among family members can complicate investment decisions and capital allocation strategies.
9. ****External Relationships****: Building and maintaining relationships with non-family employees, customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders is essential for the success of a family business. Balancing familial loyalty with professional relationships is crucial for fostering a positive organizational culture.
10. ****Adaptation and Innovation****: Family businesses must adapt to changing market dynamics and embrace

innovation to remain competitive. Encouraging a culture of openness to new ideas and external perspectives can help drive innovation and ensure long-term sustainability.

Navigating these nuances requires effective communication, transparency, and a commitment to addressing conflicts and challenges proactively. Seeking external advice from consultants, mentors, or industry peers can also provide valuable insights and support for family businesses.

Some of the greatest institutions and I used the word institutions deliberately because these organizations have now grown to such an extent that they are institutions in themselves and have a rich legacy are all family run !!

Here are a few examples of global family run institutions.

1. ****Walmart****: Founded by Sam Walton in 1962, Walmart is one of the world's largest retail corporations. Despite its massive size, it remains a family-controlled business, with Walton's heirs owning significant stakes in the company.
2. ****Ford Motor Company****: Established by Henry Ford in 1903, Ford Motor Company revolutionized the automotive industry with the introduction of the assembly line. The company has remained under family control for over a century, with Ford's descendants maintaining influence over its operations.
3. ****Samsung Group****: Started as a small trading company in 1938 by Lee Byung-chul, Samsung has grown into a global conglomerate with interests in electronics, shipbuilding, construction, and more. The company is still controlled by the Lee family.
4. ****Berkshire Hathaway****: Led by Warren Buffett, Berkshire Hathaway is a multinational conglomerate holding company with diverse interests, including insurance, railroads, utilities, and manufacturing. While Buffett is not related to the original founders, the company operates with a family-like culture and has significant family ownership.
5. ****Mars, Incorporated****: Founded by Franklin Clarence Mars in 1911, Mars, Incorporated is one of the largest candy manufacturers in the world. The company remains privately owned by the Mars family and has expanded into other sectors, including pet care and food products.
6. ****Tata Group****: Established by Jamsetji Tata in 1868, Tata Group is an Indian multinational conglomerate with interests in steel, automobiles, telecommunications, hospitality, and more. The Tata family has played a significant role in shaping the company's growth and direction.
7. ****Hyundai Motor Company****: Founded by Chung Ju-yung in 1967, Hyundai Motor Company is a leading global automotive manufacturer headquartered in South Korea. While it has diversified ownership, the Chung family continues to exert influence over the company's operations.
8. ****The Estée Lauder Companies****: Founded by Estée Lauder and her husband Joseph Lauder in 1946, this cosmetics giant remains under family control. It has expanded to include numerous well-known brands in skincare, makeup, fragrance, and haircare.
9. ****H&M (Hennes & Mauritz)****: Founded by Erling Persson in 1947, H&M is a multinational clothing-retail company known for its fast-fashion clothing offerings. The Persson family maintains control of the company, with several family members holding executive positions.
10. ****SC Johnson & Son****: Established by Samuel Curtis Johnson Sr. in 1886, SC Johnson is a global manufacturer of household cleaning supplies and other consumer products. The company remains family-owned and has been passed down through five generations of the Johnson family.

These examples demonstrate the resilience, innovation, and long-term vision often associated with successful family-run businesses.

Closer to home there are quite a few example of family run business in the Shipping and Logistics industries as well. Some of the known examples are :

1. ****Maersk Group****: While it has grown into a global shipping and logistics giant, Maersk Group has its roots in a family business. The company was founded by Captain Peter Mærsk-Møller and his son Arnold Peter Mærsk-Møller in 1904. While it has evolved into a publicly traded company, the Mærsk family continues to maintain significant ownership and influence.
2. ****CMA CGM Group****: Founded in 1978 by Jacques Saadé, CMA CGM is now one of the largest container shipping companies in the world. Though Saadé passed away in 2018, the company remains family-controlled, with his son Rodolphe Saadé serving as Chairman and CEO.
3. ****Kuehne + Nagel****: Established in 1890 by August Kuehne and Friedrich Nagel in Germany, Kuehne + Nagel is one of the world's leading logistics providers. Although it is publicly traded, the Kuehne and Nagel families still own a significant portion of the company's shares, and the Kuehne family remains actively involved in its management.

4. ****Toll Group****: Founded by Albert Toll in 1888 in Australia, Toll Group is a global logistics and transportation company. While it was acquired by Japan Post in 2015, it still operates as a family business within the larger conglomerate, with members of the Toll family involved in its leadership.
5. ****Hapag-Lloyd****: Dating back to 1847, Hapag-Lloyd is one of the oldest and largest container shipping companies globally. While it has undergone various mergers and acquisitions over the years, the Oetker family, which has historical ties to the company, remains influential through its stake in the parent company.
6. ****Bahri (The National Shipping Company of Saudi Arabia)****: Bahri is one of the largest shipping companies in the world, specializing in transportation and logistics services. Founded in 1978, it is owned by the Saudi Arabian government, with the Al-Mojil family playing a significant role in its management.
7. ****Sinotrans Limited****: Sinotrans Limited is a Chinese state-owned logistics company with operations spanning freight forwarding, shipping, and express delivery services. While it is a state-owned enterprise, the company has historical ties to the China Merchants Group, a conglomerate with family roots dating back to the Qing Dynasty.

These examples illustrate how family-run businesses have played a significant role in shaping the shipping and logistics industry, with many of them evolving into global leaders in their respective segments.

Thus Family businesses form the fulcrum of the economy. As we go into future editions we would dwell further on their changing dynamics and how should they innovate and stay relevant in these dynamic times.

In addition, we will always focus on multimodalism in logistics which is the growth engine of any economy !!

Read on and enjoy !

Editorial

Stay updated with 'AMTOI News', the go-to source for new initiatives in the multimodal network.



Building Synergy in the Logistics Family

-A Multimodal Approach

Shantanu Bhadkamkar

Immediate Past President &

Executive Committee Member, AMTOI

ssb@atc.co.in

Family businesses are like a deck of cards.

In the hands of a good player, they can be a winning hand.

In the hands of a poor player, they can end up in a discard pile.

At AMTOI, we strive to ensure all our members are dealt a winning hand!

Family-owned businesses in India strongly focus on long-term sustainability, driven by their desire to maintain their legacy for future generations. This long-term perspective allows them to make strategic decisions that benefit the company in the long run. Family-owned businesses play a vital role in the Indian economy, which also holds for the logistics sector. Many of our distinguished AMTOI members are family-run businesses with generations

of expertise and an in-depth understanding of the local landscape. This rich heritage, combined with their dedication to innovation, positions them perfectly to leverage the power of multimodal transport. You will find enlightening interviews and articles on family business in India, the current issue, and the following three issues.

In this AMTOI News editorial, we'll explore how these

“logistics families” can achieve remarkable synergy by adopting a multimodal approach, optimising their operations and propelling the entire industry forward.

Are you intrigued by the prospect of reduced transit times, minimised costs, and a happier customer base? Dive deeper as we explore the secrets of a well-coordinated multimodal network featuring inspiring case studies that showcase the power of collaboration in action. Buckle up, logistics family, and get ready to unlock the true potential of your business!

Imagine a family business where every member plays a crucial role, contributing unique strengths for a seamless operation. ‘Joint Family Business’ - ‘Seamless Multimodal Transport’ isn’t just a heartwarming analogy; it’s the very essence of a successful multimodal transport system! At AMTOI, we understand the power of collaboration, and in this AMTOI News editorial, we’ll unveil how the logistics “family” can unlock remarkable synergy through a multimodal approach. Imagine a bustling joint family business, each member contributing unique skills for a shared goal. This analogy perfectly captures the essence of successful multimodal transport.

Join me in exploring this concept; we can uncover its full potential together.

The Multimodal Family: Seamless Collaboration - Shared Responsibilities and Synergy: Each member has a specific role in a joint family business. Similarly, each mode of transport fulfils a crucial function, and multimodal transport involves the seamless collaboration of various modes:

- **Roadways:** The efficient “workhorse” provides flexibility, ensuring first-mile and last-mile connectivity.
- **Railways:** The reliable “backbone,” offering high-capacity, long-distance transportation, excelling in cost-effective bulk transportation
- **Waterways (including Ocean Transport, Coastal Shipping, and inland Waterways):** The cost-effective, energy-efficient “bulk haulier” is ideal for high-volume, oversized cargo and large shipments over long distances.
- **Airways:** The “expedited flyer,” ensuring swift delivery of critical goods and perishables.

A multimodal transportation system efficiently integrates various modes, resulting in a harmonious synergy, similar to that of a well-run family business.

- **Customers:** Experience a **streamlined** door-to-door service with **reliable** pick-up, **on-time delivery**, and **cost-effective** options tailored to their specific needs. Multimodal transport empowers them to choose the most suitable mode (or combination of modes) based on factors like urgency, budget, and cargo type. This flexibility ensures they receive their goods efficiently and conveniently while reducing overall shipping costs.
- **Sellers:** Can unlock new market opportunities by reaching a broader customer base. They can optimise

shipping costs by choosing the most cost-effective mode based on urgency and cargo type, while still meeting customer demands for speed and efficiency. This flexibility allows them to cater to broader customer needs and expand their market reach.

- **Logistics Providers:** Can expand their service portfolio to encompass a wider range of transportation options, catering to diverse customer needs more effectively. This diversification can enhance their competitiveness and potentially increase profitability by attracting a wider client base. Collaboration within the multimodal ecosystem can also lead to cost optimisation and improved efficiency, further strengthening their service offerings.

The Role of AMTOI: Fostering a Collaborative Ecosystem:

Building a robust multimodal transport ecosystem requires collaboration like a successful joint family business. The Association of Multimodal Transport Operators of India (AMTOI) plays a vital role in this endeavour:

- **AMTOI Silver Jubilee:** Their 25 years of experience highlight their commitment to promoting multimodal integration.
- **AMTOI Initiatives:** By staying informed about AMTOI’s latest initiatives, stakeholders can actively participate in shaping a more robust multimodal network. These initiatives may include advocacy efforts for policies that promote multimodal transport, collaboration with government agencies to develop infrastructure, or educational programs to raise awareness about the benefits of multimodal shipping.

A Shared Journey Towards Efficiency: India can achieve a genuinely efficient logistics network by fostering collaboration between different transport modes (like a family working together). Organisations like AMTOI are crucial in connecting stakeholders and promoting best practices. As the Indian logistics sector progresses, a collaborative approach, inspired by the synergy of a joint family business, will be instrumental in creating a robust and sustainable multimodal transport ecosystem.

Highlights of this issue: This issue of our publication is replete with insightful interviews of eminent personalities from the industry and government, thanks to the valuable contributions of our long-standing supporters from the professional arena. We are grateful to **Mr Ramprasad Ravi**, Editor-in-Chief and Publisher of Gateway Media Pvt Ltd, **Mr Sandesh Vasant Mestry**, a Family Business Advisor, Mentor, Speaker, and Writer, and **Dr Mita Dixit**, Director and Family Business Advisor of Equations Advisors Pvt. Ltd., who have taken the time to personally interview these distinguished individuals and enhance the quality of our content. Their long association with AMTOI and unwavering support have been instrumental in our growth and proliferation. Please take five minutes to read these interviews, which are sure to enrich your knowledge and understanding of the industry. On behalf of AMTOI, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our supporters for their invaluable contributions.

Building a Stronger Logistics Ecosystem Together - A Call to Action for AMTOI Members: As explored in this editorial, the multimodal transport system is the backbone of a thriving logistics industry, mirroring the collaborative spirit of a successful family business. Here at AMTOI, we celebrate this very spirit – our 25th anniversary (AMTOI Silver Jubilee) is a testament to our enduring commitment to fostering collaboration amongst our members, many of whom are family-owned businesses with rich legacies.

The AMTOI News is a powerful platform to share knowledge, showcase best practices, and keep the industry informed. But its success hinges on your active participation, our esteemed members. We invite you to contribute articles, share industry news, forward copies to stakeholders, and, most importantly, volunteer your expertise. AMTOI belongs to its members. Your voice,

contributions, and shared responsibilities power every initiative we undertake. Your active participation is vital for our community's success. Let's work together for a brighter future. Let's join forces to create a vibrant logistics community where knowledge is shared, challenges are tackled collaboratively, and a collective vision shapes the future of multimodal transport.

Lend your support to AMTOI News! We are committed to maintaining the integrity of our newsletter by not publishing any sponsored content. However, we do welcome advertisements from our valued members. Your financial contributions ensure high-quality content that informs industry leaders and policymakers alike. Together, we can propel the Indian logistics sector towards a brighter and more sustainable future.

For 25 years,
AMTOI has been a driving force,
leading the way as the orchestra conductor of multimodal transport,
ensuring a seamless and effective flow of goods,
keeping the Indian economy in perfect harmony.
The impact is silent but immeasurable!

Feature - 1



Achieving seamless multimodalism: The way forward

Sailesh Bhatia
Past President, AMTOI
Managing Director, Bhatia Shipping Pvt Ltd

Lead: Robust physical infrastructure for multimodal logistics is in place. It's time all the stakeholders in an end-to-end logistics cycle integrate on soft infrastructure to improve documentation and benefit with time and cost efficiencies

The government has put in great initiatives to make logistics multimodal, while this is a step in the right direction, but the goal should be to make multimodal logistics seamless. By seamless we mean the movement of cargo and documentation across different modes and between different stakeholders should be smooth, timely and without redundancy. This integration has to be not only in movement of cargo between different modes but simultaneously the documentation has to be processed in

an agile manner, removing redundancies. A historic move by the central government in this regard has been the launch of the National Logistics Portal, offering a single window for all the challenges the trade is facing. In fact, during the late 1990s, the Ministry of Shipping, through IPA had signed an agreement with Crimson Logistics of Singapore who were the architects of the Port Community System of Singapore. Back then Singapore was the first country in the world to have a robust PCS, which had all the logistics players integrated on a single platform and since then business is being performed digitally.

The port community system in India was launched and then in late 2018-19 we did PCS 1 followed by 1X, which is an upgrade with certain modifications. But still the

National Logistics Portal in India is yet to reach that level as has been achieved by Singapore.

The Port Community System was initially for ports and direct users, then it was to be integrated with indirect users like the forwarders and transporters etc. This system was capable of not only doing vessel numbers and vessel profiling, but also billing for the vessel arrival and departure. These were the basic things. Then we had the delivery orders and instructions for pickups etc. But port billing was never done by the PCS since its inception till its upgrade came in. Even after the upgraded versions 1X came in, port billing is still not done through the PCS. So we are still using the basic features and the goal should be to bring seamless end-to-end logistics onto the PCS.

A shipper should be able to contact a forwarding agent and the agent taking the DO, can intimate his transporter, allowing a pickup and all documentation aligned with an exim movement should take place on a PCS with Customs and shipping lines also being integrated. Here the true value of a PCS will be achieved. An exim transaction starts with a booking order, so there is a data to be given to a shipping line, then the shipper gives supplementary information by giving bill of lading by adding more details in it. Separately the shipper is contacting a transporter online and giving him instructions for pickup, separately information is going to empty container yards for release of container to exporters. You are again filing a shipping bill with Customs authority.

All this should happen on a digital platform by only supplementing non-available information to the relevant authorities, rather than replicating the whole information repeatedly to all the authorities. In an exim transaction, major fields are the exporter, consignee, gross weight, number of boxes, description of goods, point of loading, destination, vessel on which goods are to be loaded, only thing which changes is entity to entity.

Starting with shipping line which wants to know whether it is hazardous or non-hazardous cargo, classification of hazardousness and shipping instructions. Information to the Customs includes, shippers' goods classification, invoicing details, clearing incentives or if goods are being exported under any scheme. E-way bill authorities will require the vehicle number and transporters name. All these details have to be on a single platform, then the shipper will be supplementing the information rather than replicating it, saving a lot of human work and time.

Speed and authenticity improves with a single source of information

Saving the time is one element, but a more critical issue is the speed at which this information is being shared and its authenticity, because in a scenario where there are segmented operations, errors crop up when data is being repeated. The third element is that of security. As there are a number of silos of operations, there is a clear opportunity

for some body trying to play foul, by presenting some information to one entity and different information to another entity. If all the stakeholders are integrated on a single platform then not only the processes becomes fast, but it is error free, crucial man-hours are saved and most importantly nobody can play foul.

It has to be a single source of truth and it can only be supplement without being tampered. There will be some silos within this system also which only relevant authorities can see.

The exim community is ready for a digital revolution

There is a huge amount of digitisation being done by various entities. Indian Customs is the pioneer in digitisation. They had started digitisation back in 1980s when shippers submitted data to the Customs it would be fed into the system by their appointed vendors and now we can file documents with Customs on-the-go anytime. Now the efforts of everybody have to be integrated to achieve a robust single platform.

Standardisation of procedures is a must

If we are to achieve a robust platform, which could be a sort of cargo community system, integrating exim logistics and documentation end-to-end on a portal will create tremendous betterment in the whole system. Today, across the country Customs Act is the same, RBI rules are the same, procedures set by CBIC are the same, then why do practices at different ports differ a lot? Now if a Cargo Community System is introduced PAN India, one of the major achievements will be standardisation, ensuring portal security. When standardisation comes in the user exactly knows what he has to do for moving cargo from one place to another. Today, if a shipper who uses Nhava Sheva port, if he goes to Tuticorin Port, there suddenly he has to adapt the procedures for documentation and practices which the local authorities have developed.

Predictability and accuracy in timing with respect to cargo movement

There is one more soft side which is very important for multimodalism and that is predictability. Across the world wherever multimodalism is successful, people can time their movements by the clock and the connections do take place in hours. In India, our multimodalism has much improved over the past, but we need to improve on predictability. Because multimodalism doesn't work well without predictability. The whole sequence of different modes of logistics has to be connected timely. The moment there is a mismatch in timely connectivity, there will be a cascading effect. Conscious effort has to be made by all modes of logistics to maintain their arrival and departure schedules. Another important aspect is capacity building before the demand grows and no capacity should be used beyond 85%. As soon as we achieve the 85% capacity the next level has to be ready, blending smoothly. This is the only way we are going to be the global factory.

With the launch of PCS 1X, Customs ICEGATE and the government's thrust on promoting multimodalism in its true sense, a beginning has been made in the right

direction. It's time stakeholders integrate on these platforms to seamlessly improve the efficiencies.

Feature - 2



The Journey from Growth to Goodwill

Philomena Pereira
Entrepreneur & Founder,
PV Agencies Freight Forwarders Pvt. Ltd.

AMTOI's several members are women entrepreneurs. In this article, we are featuring Mrs. Philomina Pereira (Philu), a successful businesswoman and a prominent member of AMTOI.

Dr Mita Dixit, a well-known family business advisor, interviewed her and discussed several topics close to her heart and business. Here are the excerpts.

Mita: You are one of the few women entrepreneurs in the male dominated multimodal transportation industry. How did you start your journey in this industry?

Philu: I come from a humble family background. My father was a sailor and mother a homemaker. I did not have any business background. After I finished high school, I got a job at a custom broker's office. I continued my graduation studies while working.

It was the mid-1970s' when I started my career. In those days, operations were not organized like today. Custom brokers were more like Mukadams. English was not much the business language but its use was increasing. I was convent educated with a good command over written and spoken English. This was a big boon for my career advancement.

The entrepreneur with whom I worked was very enterprising. He was not only my boss but also the mentor. With his acumen and our team's efforts, the business grew. We moved from a table space office to a large office. The business expanded from a mere custom brokerage to transportation and multimodal transport operators in the 1980s.

I was highly interested and involved in my work. When

you enjoy what you are doing, commitment and dedication are bound to be there. I used to visit the docks. Warehouse stuffing was allowed on payment of overtime fees to customs. So, I got the opportunity to interact with customs officers, address the queries during examination of goods and thus my confidence grew in this industry. I travelled frequently visiting the customers in the hinterlands. My rapport with the customers was excellent. I think the first fifteen years of my job made me an allrounder in custom clearance, freight forwarding and transportation business.

Mita: You enjoyed your job and progressed with the company. Then what triggered to take the entrepreneurial journey which is usually difficult, especially for a woman?

Philu: I think, the seeds of entrepreneurship were sown during 1980s. I enjoyed my job and at the same time I wanted freedom to do more, more time for myself, and improve the way we were doing business. In 1989, I got an opportunity to pass the custom broker's exam. After I got the license, I continued to work with the company and started my business in a small way as a proprietary firm. I had a mutual agreement with my employer to serve some clients so there was no conflict of interest.

As a woman entrepreneur, I must say if you are knowledgeable, competent, and understand your customers, they will respect you. I got a lot of support, guidance, and recognition from various people including custom officers, shipping lines and my clients. Family support is also quite crucial.

To start and grow the business is a challenge in any industry but what matters is your attitude. I think today's young women who want to start their businesses, must first

acquire enough knowledge about the business, products, industry, and have a go-getter attitude.

Mita: Your business has grown and now it is a family business where your husband and son are also involved. Tell us how do you manage a family's expectations and business goals?

Philu: After I started my custom broker's business while continuing my job, at some point I realized that I needed to either completely focus on my business or focus on the job. So, I decided to leave the company where I had worked for many years.

As my business grew, we made a private limited company and my husband who was working with the Mazagaon Docks, joined me as a director. We expanded our operations in transportation business. In 2004, we started freight forwarding business. In 2007 my son joined after completing his MBA. Today we have three companies in three different verticals, offices in Mumbai and Delhi, and still a long way to go.

Mita: Nowadays next-generation has many career options and prefer not want to work in the family business. In your case, your son has joined the business. How did you plan succession?

Philu: Surprisingly, we did not ask our son to join the business. From a young age, he used to come to the office and see us working. When he completed his MBA, he asked me whether he could join the business. I was not sure he

would fit into our work culture, but he liked the way our business was run. He graduated in BSC-IT, He is qualified from the Garware Institute's shipping course and Diploma in Custom Clearance and has also done a family business management course from NMIS. Thus, well qualified to take the business to the next level. We have three companies, owned, and managed by us, the family.

I believe succession planning should start with children from a young age. Don't push them for their career choice but create a positive environment such that they feel proud about working in the family business.

Mita: Tell us how you feel being a successful woman entrepreneur. What message would you like to give to the budding entrepreneurs?

Philu: I get tremendous self-satisfaction and a sense of achievement as a woman. I have always been passionate about uplifting employees from our Industry. Ours is a journey from growth to goodwill. One may earn huge money but earning goodwill is what matters. So, I would say first, there is no shortcut to hard work. One must build in-depth knowledge and get experience. Second, be well read, have a curious mind, and prepare yourself. Communication and people skills is a must to achieve success in any field, not only the business. If you are people-centric, your success will last for a long time.

Mita: Thank you for sharing your views and growth journey with us.

Feature - 3



Generation to Generation

Afzal Malabarwala

Managing Director, Galaxy Freight Pvt Ltd

In its silver jubilee year, AMTOI decided to publish the stories of successful intergenerational family businesses from its fraternity. In this initiative, Mr. Sandesh Mestry (SM) and Dr. Sharmila Amin (SA) had a discussion with Mr. Afzal Malabarwala (AM) and his son Fardeen (FM).

This interview has been edited for clarity, conciseness, and coherence. Certain sections may have been rephrased or

omitted to enhance readability while preserving the integrity of the interviewee's responses.

SA: You started in 1988. You studied in Kerala and then moved to Mumbai. How has it all started?

AM: Basically, we are Memons from Porbandar; our forefathers had migrated to Kerala for trading business, and they settled there. That is how my schooling and

graduation happened in Kerala. But most of our relatives and connections were in Mumbai and Gujarat only. We speak Kachhi at home.

My mother was the only child, and when my grandfather got sick, she decided to shift to Mumbai, and I followed her. At that time, I had graduated from commerce, so I joined Memon Cooperative Bank, where I worked for 6 months, followed by a 1-year stint at the Bank of Cochin, which later got amalgamated into the State Bank of India. At that time, my childhood friend was in this trade; he asked me to join this trade. I joined his company, Air Cargo International, in 1978.

By 1988, my father had wound up all his business activities in Kerala and shifted to Mumbai.

At that time, I thought we would have to start our own business. He said, You start the business, and I will support you. That is how, in 1988, I started my own business with my father as a proprietor called Speed Cargo Movers.

My father supported me in a big way. I used to do the running around to get business to recover collections and everything else under the sun; it was a one-man show. I had no office, but one of my very close friends, Lalit Seth, gave me table space in their office at Andheri. After three years, we bought a small office in Andheri.

SM: At that point, were you focused on air cargo? How did you get into sea cargo activities?

AM: I was completely concentrating on air. It was always air, air, air. I never knew what the sea was. I had never been to Port. It was one of the customers from the US who clearly told me that they don't want a different agent for Sea; either we do it or they will move the business. So, sea vertical started.

In 1995, we formed Galaxy Freight, a private limited company, to obtain an IATA license. My father and I were the shareholders and directors of the company. In 1996, we got the IATA. We progressed slowly. My son, after completing his education in the UK, came back. Normally, they don't come back. But he did come back and join the business.

SM: What made him come back?

AM: You see, my father had a habit; he always used to take the children to the office at a young age and make them do some errands and sit outside. He used to pay them 50 rupees a day. I think that created an attachment to the office at a very young age. When he came back, luckily, he got interested. Although he had studied in the UK for five years, he got interested in the business, and he joined me in the business. After his joining, I could think of growing the business, as there was a trusted helping hand for me to take care of the operations. After my father passed away in 2013, he became one of the directors and shareholders in the company. Now, there are three shareholders: me, my

son, and my wife. Almost 14 years ago, my son joined us, and by the grace of God, we have expanded our operations to 14 offices all over India.

SA: How did the expansion happen?

AM: You know, when I was working with my father, I did not want to expand because it was very difficult. Although my father was supporting me, I was managing everything single-handedly, so expansion was difficult. One of my customers said he could not have multiple agents for multiple locations, so we had to open a Delhi office.

When I started my private limited company, I was one of the first person to get FMC approval for my MTD. That was almost, you know, 20–25 years ago. I did not want to depend on one agent in the USA. If I had my own document, I could have my own terms.

SM: Was it challenging to manage both air and sea at that time?

AM: It was definitely a challenge, but the scenario was different. At that time, not many airlines were operating, the rates were lower, and more importantly, there was healthy competition. Even if competitors walked into your office, there would be papers lying on the table, and we had no fear. Today, it is unhealthy competition, we hide papers, as you don't know the motive of the person visiting.

SA: Is it because the number of players has increased and the customer pool has remained the same?

AM: Cargo has increased. There is no doubt about it and the number of players has also significantly increased. Today, every third person leaving a company becomes a sub-agent. He carries a bag and starts visiting customers. He knows the buying rates as well as the selling rates. He goes to the same customer and offers a better price and a longer credit period. The barrier to entry is extremely low for the business. It's a different story; if the payment is not realised in time, that creates another challenge.

SM: Is it that our service has become a commodity and offering a longer credit period is the only differentiator?

AM: Yes, we are indirectly financing the customer. We are not afraid of that. But that's also a challenge in some ways. How much you can finance becomes your limitation.

When GST was implemented, the happiest person was my banker. For a medium-sized agent like me, every fortnight for a payment, I would need an additional 18% of the amount; that's a huge chunk of money, and they were most happy to fund it for a customer like me. It was an additional business for them.

SM: Coming to this credit itself, do you feel that, as an industry, we need to think about this credit policy because we are competing with each other and cutting each other out?

AM: In air freight, the reality is that we are cutting each other to get business. Agents are eager to grab other agent's

business when the existing agents are fighting to get money from the customers. As a friend, if we inform the new agent that the customer has not paid us and it's a struggle to get timely payment from that customer, they say the customer pays them on time for their business; then why should they not work for them? Ultimately, after some time, when their money is delayed or not paid, they cry.

SM: Because of such cutthroat competition, are we always afraid that we may lose business if we do rigorous payment follow-up with the customer?

AM: That day although the customer confirms payment on certain days, they never pay on time. Around 60–70% of payments get realised in a reasonable time; otherwise, you cannot survive on bank funding with increasing interest rates. Day by day, your profit margin is eroding. You have no option but to do a rigorous payment follow-up. We have people only to make the collection. Their only job is to follow up with customers and collect money.

SM: There is a competition coming from organised players. Even shipping companies are entering this space. They can offer a better rate because of their scale. They can also offer initial discounts to lure customers. Can they offer the personalised service that you offer?

AM: Absolutely. I think in India, it is person-to-person relationships that make a lot of things happen. The bigger players will finance the customers to the extent that they are dependent on them, and then they will start charging more. They do a lot of nomination shipments. They will give all sorts of benefits to the consignee and get the shipment nominated for them. But ultimately, what the customer needs today is also immediate information when they call you. It's a personalised service that matters most. Generally, when you call a multinational, you get connected to an IVR, and ultimately it ends up with, thank you for calling; our people are busy at this moment; please call later. If you directly connect to a person, either he is driving, he is on a call, or he is in a meeting.

In India, you know, although there are one thousand sites to check the shipment status, all your customers want to know from you is: Has the shipment sailed? That is the most important information your customer requires from you in person; that's why I say in India it is a person-to-person relationship. Of course, the MNCs are coming with muscle; they have their network. But having a fear that they will finish our business is unnecessary. We are still surviving and growing despite the MNCs. In my assessment, they are concentrating on their nomination shipments, as no senior person at the MNC setup wants to take on the responsibility of collection. Today, if I keep a salesperson, his job is not only to go and get the business but also to collect the money. His job is not over until the money comes into my account. They have a different attitude and a different style. They will threaten to hold back the cargo until the payment is made, but in reality, you cannot hold back prepaid cargo.

SA: Is this scenario creating new opportunities for us? In

partnering with them where they are weak.

AM: Today they are on a buying spree. There are large takeovers and mergers happening in Europe or the USA. But in India, still, person-to-person relations matter a lot. Whether the customer pays in time or pays 15 days later, we are sure that their money will not go anywhere, and we will continue to give the same service. I have customers who tell their children that you work with this agent only unless it is a nominated shipment. The kind of 24 x 7 service we give to the customer is difficult for the multinationals to give, as after 6 o'clock, you won't find them in their office. For us, we are doing time-critical next-flight shipments. We have a control tower that operates 24 hours a day, and people are replying to customer queries day and night.

SM: In the last 40 years, how has business changed?

AM: Technology has changed, but the system is the same. Today, we have an electronic airway bill; earlier, we had to type it. Today, people are talking about paperless, yet I must give six photocopies to the airlines at the time of handing over the cargo. If I don't provide photocopies, I cannot hand over the cargo. The security department needs a copy; the airport authority needs a copy for making terminal charges; even the banks need a copy or they will not negotiate the document. Every department must be interconnected, so it becomes paperless. Some airlines take the print on their own, but that's an exception.

SM: The government has taken initiatives to digitise; has it helped your fraternity deliver faster, or has it become an impediment because now you don't know who to contact in case of a query?

AM: Today the system has changed, and it is faceless. Query comes if you reply, you know, you get a proper immediate reply. Earlier, you were running from pillar to post everywhere, not knowing what to do, and catching hold of everybody. But today, you don't have to catch hold of anyone. Complete information is fed into the software, and the shipper knows right from the manufacturing stage until the cargo goes on the shelves exactly what is happening and the exact status of their goods. At the same time, with digitisation, we must have staff who possess different skill sets, and that's a challenge for most of us. We get them trained on a continuous basis on our industry-specific software.

Technology has changed the process. Today, we don't have to send any payment everything is transferred electronically. You file the airway bill electronically with the airlines, with the customs, everywhere. Electronic terminal charges are paid, and the gate pass and the truck challan are made in your office. It's just the click of a button; you pass all the information, and your truck goes and gets unloaded over there.

SA: Is digitization helping us reduce costs, or is it increasing costs?

AM: Trained staff needs more salary; there is software cost; there is training cost; there are costly software updates. It is

difficult to recover these costs in a short span. Yet, we have to keep ourselves updated, or we will be left behind. I think the use of technology is now mandatory. There is nothing that you cannot do.

SM: What emerging trends do you envisage for your industry? How do we need to align ourselves to grow?

AM: We must go as per the time, change, and update us with it. If you don't do that, you will be left behind. As I mentioned before, the big players will come with many updated things. To compete, we need to gear up and be able to offer comparable products; then only we will be able to compete. We have to be competitive, if not 100%, but at least 60–70%.

SM: Given the circumstances that our margins are shrinking and there's competition from bigger players with deep pockets to sustain, how do we compete in this scenario?

AM: As I told you, we don't have to worry at all; relationships equally matter. You compete on personalised service. We are working 24 hours a day. Our team is working 24 hours a day in certain sections. At 2:00 a.m. in the morning, we reply to the e-mail and WhatsApp messages. Most of the bigger players are concentrating on the nomination shipment. If they must get a prepaid shipment, it becomes very important for them to collect the money. And that's not their cup of tea. So, we don't have to worry. We must be there.

SM: But there is a limit to finance as well.

AM: Everybody plays on their strengths. Nobody overstretch; otherwise, they will fall flat.

SA: Given this scenario, everybody wants to talk to the owner. Do we get the time to understand where we stand in the business? There are demands from all sides when most of you are actively involved in association work and liaison with government officials.

AM: My son was always fighting with me until last year. I was the President of Air Cargo ACAAI, and most of the time I was unavailable. My son complained that you give all the time to association work and are unable to focus on our business. But I think that is an important aspect of your work. You have to give back to the industry that you are in when the industry has given so much.

As I told you, only after the arrival of my son in my business did I think of growing. Before that, I was never thinking of growth, as I was one man who put limits on how much I could grow.

SM: That's an interesting point. Fardeen, you are from the next generation, so I'll take this liberty to ask you a question. What is your view on this business and the opportunities ahead?

FM: My perspective is different. I feel we are where China was 15 years ago. It is India's century, and to be very honest with you, in the last 15 years, the growth that we have had,

we have ridden the wave. The opportunities came our way, and we organised ourselves to absorb them. We upgraded our software, and we upgraded our organisation in terms of better use of software. To a certain extent, now we have defined our roles and responsibilities. Hence, we can concentrate on different places; that's about it.

SA: Do you think a complementing team at the top is required to manage the business?

FM: If I can change answer: Yes, everybody plays a part and everyone shoulders a different responsibility. Alignment to the same goal and complementary to each other is absolutely necessary.

Then there are different locations: Ahmedabad, Delhi, and Chennai. Each person plays his or her own role. You empower people and don't just onboard them and teach them; rather, learn from them and grow them further.

SM: Is it challenging to get the right talent and groom that talent?

FM: There are two generations. One is my father's generation, where we have employees working for us for a very long time, and then there is my generation, where employees join with the perspective of three to five years. So, you also have the same perspective. You have to be clear in telling them that the experience from your organisation is going to land them a much better job, and then you better stay with me for three years. We have to accept that we are the breeding grounds for a bigger MNC. Our type of companies are training institutes, where we train people, and then multinationals pick them up with that experience. Like MNCs, we cannot have somebody in data management at a higher cost; hence, we accept the fact that training is part of our job.

SM: Is there a flow of new people coming to this industry?

AM: Now that the salary structures are changing, people's views have changed. Earlier, the salary scales were low, but today the salary structures are getting better and are comparable with other industries. In the last couple of years, so many logistics institutes have come up, which was unheard of. The jobs are not very technical in nature; they require a basic skill of reading and drafting emails; all the other things can be thought of. It's not very complicated.

SM: What is your view on end-to-end logistics, as large customers are demanding a single source who can manage their entire supply chain?

FM: We want those customers, because then what it means is that you get married to me.

It is something that we want to push and compete on. It creates a barrier to entry. It would take a new entrant at least 10 years to get such a contract. I want customers where I can manage their all-India-level work or handle Bangladesh or Sri Lanka for them. In such contracts, it becomes difficult for them to leave me, and it becomes difficult for me to leave them.

SM: Is this something the industry is moving towards?

AM: Everybody wants everything, with a single table at their fingertips. It is the need of the hour. The government is also making every change paperless and faceless. In our last convention, the topic was artificial intelligence, so now the aircraft planning and load planning are done by artificial intelligence, which was earlier done by humans. Of course, you need humans for loading, but the plans are made by AI. AI also calculates the fuel requirement and how loads need to be distributed to keep the balance.

FM: It is just the same data presented differently. Not very high-end software, but a simple data management tool. We are just organising and showing this data better; that is of value. Earlier, it was prepared manually; now the software does it, and since it's a repetitive task, the chances of errors are less, which improves efficiency and reduces cost.

SM: Are we adopting to software's processes?

FM: Our challenge is that now we have a boutique of at least four pieces of software, like one for pricing, one for human resources, one for accounting, one for Dubai operations, and then there is the ERP. So, the challenge is integration. If you ask me, in the future I would still need software—in fact, not just upgrades, but faster upgrades. The software is now defining your workflow. If we embrace it, our lives become much easier because, across your offices, you speak the same language. Getting that discipline in place is the biggest challenge. At the same time, making an exception and still getting the same quality of result is what differentiates us from the MNCs.

SA: To scale, we'll need to operate on a system without making an exception. Then only managing a higher volume is possible.

FM: Yes absolutely.

SM: Afzal Sir, for your generation, this is a big change. How are you adapting to such changes?

AM: It is difficult for us. We were doing everything manually. To be very honest, today I have a laptop, an iPad, but I use it only for checking email and accessing the bank account; I hardly use other functions. I don't need a high-end laptop, although Fardeen gets one for me, I am unsure of how to make the best use of it.

FM: You present the right data, and the person of his experience takes the most accurate call.

SM: That's an interesting point. So, as a family that owns and manages the business, how do different generations complement each other?

FM: We deliver what is required. I don't expect Dad to know how to make an airway bill in the system, but when he looks at a report, he will be able to point out who's lagging and will highlight that. Drawing a report from the software is not his job. He's the managing director. He should not even be bothered; credit control and the finance person

are responsible for it. In the organisational structure, they come and report to him.

AM: But in reality, you are still involved in day-to-day business. Even today, all important emails come to me. I track if it has been replied to or not, and who has replied to it.

FM: It is out of the habit of his generation, where the boss has to reply to everything.

SM: Is it because of our culture that every customer wants to talk to the boss?

AM: Ultimately, people want to come to you for the final price negotiation, regardless of what has happened or what my team has already given. Sometimes they want to hear the flight details from you.

SM: Is this an advantage for us to build a stronger relationship with the customer, which technology-driven companies are unable to give?

FM: I think the MNCs understand India much better than you and me because of the kind of volumes they handle. They invest money in gaining this understanding.

AM: Basically, MNCs have their own nomination business. They can open offices, pump the money, open offices in every nook and corner, which you and I cannot do. We do it only after our business increases in that location. In 1988, when I started without an office, with a table space in a friend's office, it is only today, after so many years, that I have a network of 14 offices in India and an office in Dubai. As time changes, the requirement changes. I must adapt and change. We keep on changing to be up to date. We still have experienced old people with us, even though most of the processes are software driven. Despite the software, my 1995-recruited employee still gives me the exact report of the airline's payment to be made.

FM: Because of their wealth of experience, they know the pulse.

SM: Is working from home feasible?

FM: I hate it. I don't have the systems to monitor it. I have invested in Google Workspace but still don't use it completely. If I use that, I should be able to achieve it.

SM: Will it help you reduce your costs?

FM: It helps me give comfort to my team. One of my colleagues since COVID has been working from home, which I'm OK with. She is saving me office space; I can put somebody else in her place, and she can train my team. But if you ask me, I'm not a fan of it. 70% of our staff are women. So, they would get pulled up in both departments—taking care of their homes as well as working.

FM: Honestly, going ahead, we as a company need to invest in those things. The problem is our mindset. For us, we are

more class monitors who keep on asking, What have you done? or we don't get that satisfaction. In addition, I feel our work requires teamwork; we have a pricing team, a booking team, and an operations team. If these teams don't speak amongst themselves, optimisation won't come. To give you an instance, if you are in pricing and you know that "A" airlines is selling at a higher price now, this information needs to be immediately passed on to the floor people.

There are a lot of things that affect you at home. I am not happy when I do work from home and my son's coming and playing with me. I have other duties. Honestly, I am not a big fan of it. But if you ask me, in the coming years it will be a part of your organisation as your employees will demand it, like the five-day work culture. When I was in Europe this year, they admitted they hate it, but they have to do it; otherwise, they will not be able to attract and retain the desired talent. They are designing their companies in a way that is work-from-home friendly and planning to outsource activities to countries like India, which is the next level.

SM: Do we get outsourcing opportunities in our industry? And do you think that is something that should be actively pursued?

FM: Yes, it depends on your appetite. You see, a service like PO management is you are moving data, but it is important; otherwise, the goods are just going to go there and sit.

SA: What challenges do you see going ahead for the industry, and how do we adapt to them?

AM: Everything is changing; we have to adapt to it, or we will be left behind and end up only sitting and looking at the fence and doing nothing. We have to make the changes, we have to be with the world, and we have to act with the world.

Today, India is growing day by day, and every foreign company wants to be part of that growth story. We must be at par with them. We must adopt to systemic changes; we have to be prepared to invest in them. We need to invest in training our people. Accept that people will come and go; that is part of the industry trend. You cannot do anything about it; this is the best you can get until the person is with you. When somebody takes your business—you are also taking away someone else's business—the competitive landscape is changing; we have to be prepared for it or we will be left behind, then we cannot sit and cry.

SM: Does it also mean that we need to be vigilant and prudent in our money management, otherwise we will not be able to set aside sufficient capital outlay to grow the business?

AM: Collection is the most important thing. Technology will give you the outstanding amount; it will not collect the money for you. Your people have to personally be behind the customer to recover the money. As I told you, 70% of the money will get collected on time; otherwise, no one can

survive. Money will come. But you will also be prepared for 5 to 7% of bad debt every year.

SM: In that case, aren't your profits eaten away by the bad debts?

AM: It is a market trend. You cannot do anything. You have to survive on that. All technologies give you the figures. But as I mentioned, it would not do the collection for you. It will require human intervention. Efforts will have to be made.

FM: Technology will raise the alerts for you. Technology will help you control; technology will help you monitor. It will deliver the right report to you, and you need to act upon it.

AM: You can always say that I can stop a customer if he is not paying in time; that will take 1 minute, but how many customers will you stop? You can set credit limits. MNCs can afford to wait for a month to get credit clearance from their internal departments; the question is, will your customers wait that long? Your system may give you a credit limit now; what happens when you want to increase the business volume? The business will go to someone else.

FM: That's the primary difference between MNCs and us. Their system says no, while we are scared to say no to a customer.

AM: I don't agree with that. Let's understand well that the MNCs are not dependent on Indian business. In their home market, they extend large credits to their customers. Indian business is a small portion of their business. I lost a client to one of the shipping companies. Why? They offered freebies to the customer, like 25 days of free warehousing, and that too in New York. They will have all the rules in India, where their business exposure is limited. They will threaten the customer with holding cargo. But where they have large business opportunities, they are liberal with their business terms. We can't have such policies in our home market; otherwise, we will lose our business.

SM: One final question to both of you, when you have divergent views amongst both of you, how do you manage?

AM: We talked it out; we discussed it among ourselves.

FM: We have been father and son for 38 years; who knows us better than ourselves? We always have a healthy argument. When we have divergent views on an issue, we discuss it, and the policy is either you convince me or I convince you. We evaluate each other's point of view.

AM: I have had people in my office who have been working with me since 1989; at that time, when Fardeen used to visit the office as a kid, he still called them uncles; but for work, we always discuss and decide on how to go ahead on an issue where we have divergent views.

FM: Over the years, we have had our areas of responsibility clearly defined, and we don't step into each other's domain while taking decisions. Dad gives me the opportunity to fail. If I don't trust him, then he will not trust me. That means that we'll never be able to look at the bigger picture.

AM: Whenever we want to take an important decision, we discuss it internally first. But once the decision is taken, we stand by it. Then we don't blame each other if the decision goes wrong. Then, it is an organisation's decision. Even if any of our employees take a decision that results in a loss to the organisation, we still stand by it. We make the person

aware of the result of their decision and ask them to be cautious in the future.

FM: For me, it works as a negotiation tactic. In any situation, when I have to say no, I can always say to the other person that I am all for this, but Dad is not agreeing; hence, I cannot go ahead, and it works.

SM: Thank you, both of you, for such a candid discussion. It was a great learning session personally for me and Sharmila, and I believe our AMTOI members can draw valuable insights from this discussion.

Feature - 4



The Path of Growth to Governance

Dushyant Mulani
Chairman,

Federation Of Freight Forwarders' Associations In India

Dr Mita Dixit: You belong to a leading family business in the multimodal transportation industry with a legacy of four generations. Tell us about the genesis of your family business and the growth journey.

Mr Dushyant: I belong to the fourth generation of cousins' consortium. We are four cousins leading four business verticals and our business is closely held among the family.

Our founders were into traditional business of cotton, oil seeds, castor, bullion trading. After the second world war, there was a surge in imports and the British Collectorate issued licences in 1946. We were one of them. Since then, our business has grown manifolds, vertically and horizontally. Predominantly we are into logistics business besides custom clearing, freight forwarding, and a few other products.

We, as a family believe in doing the business with total integrity and uprightness. Ethical Code of Conduct is built within the family. I think, our exponential growth is the result of our clear transactions, compliant working conditions, and doing aboveboard transactions. We value the Values of our founders and practice them consciously.

Dr Mita Dixit: As you are four decision makers, each one responsible for his business and also collectively responsible for the business growth, how do you manage communication that does not result in disputes and conflict?

Mr Dushyant: Transparency is the key for family's cohesion and bonding. When you are transparent and have a charter to operate the company, chances of conflict are minimal. When you are operating a company that has a structure, a Charter, performance parameters, and it aims to give back to the society through charity, longevity of the business and the company is high. I call it the moral character of the company. If that is strong, backed by a strong moral character of the family and individual members, the family's business legacy could last for decades and centuries.

We have our Charter, Family Constitution, and Family Office in place. Our businesses run with good governance practices. When family members work together, there are bound to be expectations and differences. But once the family gets used to the family governance culture where open and transparent communication is paramount, differences get aligned for a greater good.

Dr Mita Dixit: Your business is deeply rooted with a strong network of customers, vendors, suppliers, transporters, and other stake holders. How do you ensure your network stays strong?

Mr Dushyant: In our field, our performance is seen while holding onto the right values. We practice these values which clearly sends message to other industry players. For example, any crucial function in the business if not backed by qualitative performance and a sense of ownership by the employees, it is bound to create problems.

It is important to create an ownership content, sense of ownership among employees. The network of relationships with employees, customers, vendors, and anyone related to our business directly or indirectly, is created through trust, confidence, and ethos. I think that is the reason for our strong network with the industry and industry players.

Dr Mita Dixit: How do you handle difficult situations or challenges in the business?

Mr Dushyant: In any business, managing difficult situations is a part of life. In our industry, if you are handling a right mix of clients, commercial challenges can be sorted out. In fact, we scrutinize our clients' backgrounds, do right paperwork, get correct regulatory permissions, and do transactions in an organized manner.

When family members work together, setting up a Charter is important, be it in any function, marketing, finance, legal, and so on. Governance structures like family office and holding company help considerably in mitigating challenges and take prudent decisions.

Dr Mita Dixit: What are your views on succession planning, especially for closely held companies like yours?

Mr Dushyant: Indeed, it is a crucial subject. Without succession planning, the business would not sustain for long. In our case, fifth generation is still the still "the work in progress".

However, for any family owned-and-managed businesses, there are four critical aspects of succession planning:

- First, the next-generation has to be inducted and a growth mindset has to be developed.
- Second, ethical business practices cannot be compromised.
- Third, capability and capacity to visualize the future and comprehend changes are crucial for business growth.
- Fourth, the next generation must develop a mindset of problem solving, irrespective of their education.

I come across many families who do not consider succession planning an important matter. When children grow up and decide to take up another career path, they wake up and worry about succession planning. As an advisor you must be also coming across such families. It is important that the promoters start thinking and planning about their business future at the right time.

Dr Mita Dixit: Logistics industry is going through a paradigm shift. What is your vision about the future of the industry and what message would you like to give to new entrants in the industry?

Mr Dushyant: I think one needs to look at the entire decade. Given the upsurge in our economy, manufacturing and other sectors growing, logistics industry is also bound to grow. National Logistics Policy under PM's GatiShakti plan will make this decade as the decade of logistics. I believe, we must become Atmanirbhar Bharat in logistics. Why not Indian companies go global and take over companies?

For growth and success, we must nurture a commonsense approach, look out for opportunities, and be quick in execution. To start-ups and new comers, I would say there is enough capital available in the industry if you have good, practicable ideas. My belief is what really matters on the personal and the corporate front is the "right karma". It helps you to generate goodwill, be on the right path of integrity and compassion for people around as they drive the business.

Dr Mita Dixit: Thank you for sharing you frank views and beliefs about family businesses, legacy, and growth path.

Feature - 5



Liquid bulk logistics: Is it safe to compromise on safety?

By Haresh Lalwani
Hon. Treasurer - AMTOI
Managing Director, Sun Logistics

Lead: The global safety norms should be followed strictly be it for domestic movement or international movement of hazardous cargo, as Indian chemical exports are only going to grow in the future.

Liquid cargo logistics happens either in bulk or unitised form. Bulk movement is in large tanker ships, while unitised movement happens in flexi tanks, drums, jerry cans, etc. Bulk movement is considered relatively simple as the cargo arrives in mega ships and is transferred into shore tanks, before it is further supplied to the importer.

Now let's examine the safety aspect throughout the entire product lifecycle – right from the manufacturer till the product reaches the importer. The safety precautions are best practiced at the manufacturing site, as the manufacturer is fully aware of the composition of the chemical being produced and its reactive nature. So, entire activity happens in a fully controlled and monitored environment. But, when the cargo moves out from the factory and is enroute to the port, the security scenario becomes blurred. A lot of latches have been observed in the logistics system, such as the driver carrying the chemical cargo in a tanker is not trained to handle the product and sometimes doesn't hold a valid license.

The environment at the port is relatively secure as the officials there understand the IMDG code to be followed for vessels coming in or for tankers bringing in chemical cargo to be exported. But outside the port, when the cargo reaches the warehouses, here BIS has drafted standards for handling dangerous cargo, but still they are not imposed by the government. Even the clearing agent also has no idea about the harmful effects of the cargo.

It is observed that safety precautions are completely compromised when the liquid cargo is delivered to the final consignee and he actually starts selling it. Be it the kind of vehicles used for delivery or the safety precautions that need to be followed – they don't exist, because there are no rules or regulations. This logistics cycle keeps moving in an uncontrolled manner until a certain problem arises.

Absence of proper record

A proper record needs to be maintained as to which chemical has been moved in a particular tanker in order to check whether the next cargo to be loaded into the tanker is reactive to the one earlier moved. But no such record is being maintained, which is a major hazard. If a food grade cargo is filled into a tanker earlier used for moving chemical grade cargo then it can be perilous to the lives of the users and the environment.

Unitised movement of cargo

Coming to movement of unitised cargo, if a dangerous cargo is being moved in unitised way, then an IMDG code has to be followed and if the cargo is non-dangerous then a Cargo Transport Unit (CTU) code has to be followed. None of these things are followed in India. For instance, if chemical drums are being loaded into a container, a normal container can be ideally loaded with 80 drums, but people in order to save on logistics cost, try to adjust more number of drum by rolling them horizontally into the container. A drum is strongest when it is kept straight and it is in a weak position when it is put horizontally. Here safety aspect has been completely compromised.

Packaging of hazardous cargo

For packaging of hazardous cargo the UN approved packing regulations are followed which is also approved by the Indian Institute of Packaging. The regulations clearly indicate the amount of cargo to be filled in a single packaging. But often to save on logistics cost, people try to overfill the container to its brim. Suppose a drum has a capacity of 220 litres, but it has to be filled only upto 195 litres and some empty space is deliberately left in order to accommodate any expansion in the cargo during logistics due to external factors, but not all businesses comply with these practices.

Lack of self-regulation

Many businesses in order to cut corners opt for the logistics provider who moves the cargo at the lowest cost. Alternatively, a supplier can invite bids from logistics providers who can move the cargo at a lower cost while

complying with the said safety norms. So, there is a basic lack of self-regulation.

If the government imposes regulations and penalises non-compliance, still people don't agree with it. So there has to be self-learning, self-discipline, right from the person selling the cargo to the person importing it.

Customs should have trained personnel to examine chemical cargo

When a liquid bulk cargo is imported, the Customs authority checks the documents and has to examine the cargo as well. Here the Customs officer who has to sample the cargo has no knowledge about the cargo he is about to handle. Customs need to have an expert on IMDG or chemicals.

AMTOI has offered training for Customs, ports and other stakeholders in liquid logistics. They are also approaching the businesses to come and get trained. These courses are approved by even the IMO for gaining basic understanding for handling dangerous cargo. And it is very important to be updated with the rules as they change every two years.

The need to educate and sensitise on safety norms

AMTOI has conducted several programmes for training on liquid logistics, moving dangerous cargo. These programmes are also offered through the extended committees onboard. A lot of effort is being put just to make sure that everyone is aware. Awareness programmes have propagated loud and clear the importance of certifications. In Indian industries as well people handling dangerous cargo are getting trained

and certified. The Association has also authored a course for Logistics Skill Council (LSC) and they are also offering a course which is updated as per the IMD 4122 which was recently released.

But still the people who are opting for these training and certifications are very less, these are only those businesses who are conscious, such as logistics operators of ISO tanks. As per the IMDG Code, the first chapter says, "If you are not trained and certified you cannot handle dangerous cargo," because there are several links in a logistics chain and if one link is weak, the entire chain collapses.

Future belongs to those who follow safety norms

Businesses in US and Europe are cautious, they follow the regulations and deal with only certified logistics providers, even if it costs a bit more. Dangerous and non-dangerous liquid cargo account for about 27% of the exim trade moving in and out of India. In the next four years the industry value is expected to touch \$30 billion.

India is among the few countries in the world which offer quality chemical products, this is because when India started manufacturing chemicals it was exporting to MNCs, so standards are being followed since the inception of the industry. The industry is only going to grow because the global demand for chemicals is only going to increase by the year, be it pesticides, pharmaceuticals and what not. Logistics service providers who adhere to and are experienced in following safety norms will definitely have an upper hand over the novice.

Feature - 6



Family Businesses in the Logistics Industry in India

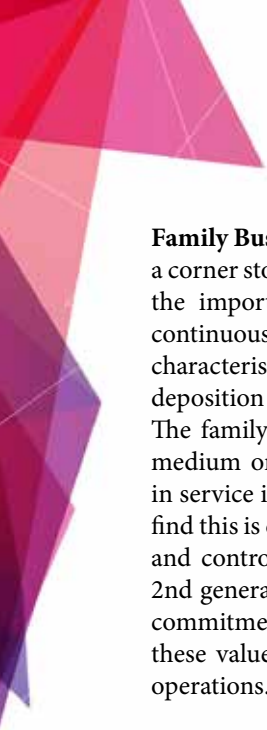
Nityam Khosla

Director - Teamglobal Group

Ex-President - Consolidators Association of India

This article explores the pivotal role of the family owned businesses within India's logistics industry, their significant contribution to the economy, the unique challenges they face and the vast opportunities available in the wake of digital transformation and policy reforms.

By integrating real-time information and insights, I have tried to provide nuanced understanding of their operational dynamics, strategic approaches and future prospects.



Family Businesses in the **Logistics Industry in India** form a corner stone of nation's economic structure, underscoring the importance of family legacy and the ambition for continuous and sustained expansion. An extremely notable characteristic of Indian family business is their strong disposition towards retaining control and ownership. The family businesses in India are predominantly micro, medium or small enterprises both in manufacturing and in service industries. When you deep dive into it, you will find this is complimented by multigenerational involvement and control with the strong hold engagement of 1st and 2nd generation in these businesses. You will also find that commitment to family values and the transmission of these values across generations are the epicenter to their operations.

The Logistics Sector in India is a backbone in its journey towards being a developed nation by 2047. It is benefitting from technological advancements, infrastructure development initiatives, policy simplification and implementation offering a fertile platform for these family businesses to thrive rather than survive. The growth of this industry in India is further propelled by India's bold strategic initiatives to enhance operations efficiency, expands supplier's networks and simplify incursion & execution of value chain to meet and nurture last mile reach to consumer demand. Moreover, Govt. initiatives like Gati Shakti, Sagar Mala and National Logistics Policy are giving opportunity to MSMEs to compete and grow in this field. Despite these positive trends family business in logistics industry face multiple challenges particularly in governance and compliance structures, digital adaptation, succession planning and fueling financial resources to tap the growth opportunities. Currently we are experiencing immense growth in ecommerce and last mile business. The incorporation of digital technologies and online sales strategies is the core priority for a segment of these businesses among SMEs which is shifting towards modernization and great market reach. However to be honest, this part is not easy and faces multiple challenges like trust gap with stakeholders, digital adaptation and navigating complexities of family dynamic and governance. We also find that normally such businesses are actively working towards protecting their legacy while aiming for expansion indicating a blend of tradition and ambition in their growth strategies.

For a family business to be successful, it is important to have a strategic focus on creating formal structure and policies to manage and resolve family disputes and ensure business continuity. Strategic focus on governance ofcourse cannot be ignored. In New India, we find involvement of women in managerial roles and important strategic leadership positions is on rise reflecting a gradual transformation and shift of traditional family business model.

The above initiatives are crucial for fostering trust with stakeholders and aligning with global trends towards sustainability and inclusivity. We seem to be at a crossroad

balancing traditional values and imperatives of growth and modernization.

Family Structure – The structure of the family refers to its organization and how family members relate to one another. This structure may not be static or fixed and may change over time.

These relationships can never be fully captured by a diagram but a Genogram helps us describe family structure showing family member name, ages and relationships. One of the most important benefit of drawing multigenerational genogram of a family is the historical prospective it provides.

By tracing a family's lineage over three or more generations, one may observe patterns concerning, birth, divorce, death and other life events. Genograms help us understand family history and develop insights about patterns of individual behaviors and relationship within families.

Talking about family business in logistics, we see in the vibrant tapestry of the Indian economy, family businesses stand out for resilience contribution to GDP and their unique challenges and opportunities especially within the logistics sector. As a senior member of this trade for nearly 3 decades and Ex-President of Consolidators Association of India, I have experienced firsthand evolution of these businesses in a landscape, which is diverse and equally complex. I have also been one of the founder employees of a family business in logistics industry where I have seen business transform from professional to family business model achieving great heights in this logistics sector globally. This article aims to dissect the multifaceted nature of family run businesses of India, shading light on the opportunities for growth, the predicament they face and threats glooming on the horizon and the inherent advantages and disadvantages they navigate. I think it would be interesting to do a SWOT and explore various opportunities and challenges which family business face in this era.

Opportunities

- 1. Strong and deep rooted relationship and trust** - Family businesses in logistics sector benefit immensely from long standing relationships with customer, vendor and partners. These relationships are not only built on trust but also on personal connections, which very often translate into more flexible business dealings and client loyalty.
- 2. Extensive Industry Knowledge** - Many successful family businesses in this sector are multigenerational with rich legacies of specialized in depth knowledge of custom regulations procedures in the logistics industry. This deep understanding of the logistics landscape positions them ideally to innovate and adapt.
- 3. Swift and prompt decision-making** – Unlike their

corporate counterparts, family run logistics companies enjoy the advantage of swift & nimble decision-making. The close-knit nature of these businesses allows for quick responses to market challenges enabling them to capitalize on emerging opportunities.

However, in light of the above opportunities family business also face some challenges, few of which are as follows:-

1. **Succession Planning** – Succession planning remains a highly controversial and a difficult issue, with many family businesses struggling to navigate the transition between generations smoothly. Sometimes we have seen this can lead to internal conflicts and in some cases jeopardize the continuity of business.
2. **Adapting To Technological Changes** – If we really analyze the business trends today, we are on the other side of the chessboard. The rapid pace of technological advancement possess a challenge for family run logistics firms, many of which may lack the resources or expertise to invest and adapt new technologies.
3. **Talent Retention And Professionalization** - One of the significant challenges is professionalizing the business while controlling the attrition and attracting talent. As these family businesses grow, there is a critical need for a structured approach to management and operations, which can at times be at odds with the informal family - centric ethos.

Now let us examine few **Threats**, which family businesses face,

1. **Global Economic Fluctuations** – As we know the logistics business is deeply intertwined with global trade. These businesses are very much vulnerable to economic downturns and vagaries in the international market.
2. **Govt. Policies & Regulatory Changes** – In last few years there have been repeated threats of logistics industry getting unfairly regulated. The frequent changes in policies and understanding can have a disproportionate affect on smaller, medium size family run operations. As these businesses may not have a buffer to quickly adapt to such regulatory changes.
3. **Intensifying Cut-throat Competition** – The inherent trait of the logistics industry of India is that it is fragmented and unorganized. The entry of multinational corporations and the rise of tech driven logistics start-ups have intensified competition, which is not only threatening the market share of these family businesses but also imposing questions about their sustainability and survival.

After the above SWOT let us also run through the **pros and cons** of the family businesses

1. **Value System** - Many family businesses run operations with a strong set of core values, which fosters a unique company culture and employee loyalty.
2. **Speed and Flexibility in Operations** – The ability to make quick decisions without bureaucratic delays is a significant advantage over their corporate counterparts.
3. **Long-term Orientation** – We have seen family business often focus on long-term growth and sustainability enabling them to invest in lasting relationships and assets. The tendency towards the balance of asset heavy and asset light model is a unique advantageous feature.

Some **cons** are as follows:

1. **Limited Access to Capital** – Compared to public companies family business may generally have limited access to capital markets, which can be a major constraint to their growth potential.
2. **Resistance to Change** – This can be a major impediment to innovation and adaption as many times family businesses have a deep reverence for tradition which can make them rigid and resistant to change.
3. **Nepotism** – The preference for family members in key strategic positions, regardless of merit can hinder professional growth and efficiency.

To conclude on the above family businesses in the Indian logistics sector embody a blend of tradition and ambition, facing unique challenges and opportunities in a rapidly evolving landscape. As they navigate the complexities of modernization, globalization and technological advancement, the key to their sustained growth and success lies in balancing their rich heritage with the imperatives of professional management, strategic planning and innovation. This journey ahead is myriad with challenges but for the ones who can adapt and evolve, the opportunities are immense and boundless. By fostering open discussions, embracing change and leveraging their inherent strengths family businesses in logistics can continue to thrive thereby contributing significantly to India's economic landscape.

Future of Logistics: Biggest problem of Future is it is **Uncertain**

As India embarks its journey towards developed economy, logistics sector will play a crucial role as a backbone supporting countries trade and commerce. Among the key players are the resilient family businesses that have long dominated this landscape, their operations are interwoven with India's growth story. Yet, as the digital age accelerates these traditional dynasties face, pivotal moment that is either evolve or risk obsolesce.

My aim with this paragraph is to delve into the future of

family businesses within India's logistics sector exploring how they can leverage innovation sustainability and strategic partnerships to thrive in the coming decades.

Digital transformation could be one of the major current challenges. This infact is impacting significantly on traditional logistics models. Many successfully leading family businesses are finding way of integrating technology into their operations. The role of ecommerce growth is also playing a major role in shaping logistics demands. Innovation and sustainability will drive a major change in logistics future, there has to be a continuous adaption to IOT, AI, Blockchain, Machine Learning, Robotics. In future sustainability will be a major competitive advantage. The consciousness and demand for green logistics and carbon foot print reduction is only increasing day by day. The family businesses will also have to closely look at the importance of collaboration with tech companies and startups. The growth has to expand beyond borders for which we have seen **few success stories of family run business** and one great example for this would be companies like **Chinubhai Kalidas & Sons**. These businesses will also have to work towards nurturing the next generation to cope up with the challenge of succession planning in family businesses. Educating and integrating new generation in the logistics industry will be of prime importance. In the **modern family businesses, women will play an important role in shaping family business dynamics**, a classic example of this in Indian logistics business would be of **Mrs. Mrunal Tanna, Links International**.

In the end, we would like to highlight a little on **the key achievements and contributions by family businesses in the logistics industry**.

1. **Supporting MSMEs** - By offering logistics solution to MSMEs, which play a key role in the development of the Indian economy.
2. **Strengthening Supply Chain** – These businesses have played a crucial role in establishing a robust supply chains across India ensuring seamless movement of goods within the country and beyond its borders. Their in-depth understanding of the local market and culture had enabled customized logistics solution enhancing trade efficiency and economy.
3. **Employment Generation** – A number of family run companies contribute significantly to job creation across various levels right from operation staff to management. This has a direct positive impact on economic growth and social stability.
4. **ESR Initiatives** – Increasingly family run businesses are moving in the direction of implementing green logistics practices, which is need of the hour and humanity.

Family businesses in India's logistics sector stand at a critical juncture, facing distinctive challenges at the same time armed with significant opportunities through technological advancements and policy initiatives. Strategic adaptation and innovation will always be a key to thrive and continue their vital contributions to India's economic growth. I think it would be very interesting to do some case study analysis of successful family run business models for deeper understanding of this complex subject.

Feature - 7



Chandrakant Govil
ACTIVAIR Airfreight India Pvt Ltd, New Delhi
President, The Air Cargo Agents Association of India

India handles more than 10,000 different types of products and employs all possible modes of transport. We are the

proud owners of the fourth largest railway network globally, after the US, Russia, and China. We have the world's second

largest road network, spanning 6.3 million kilometres. We stand third for our maritime strength and are en route to becoming the third largest aviation market in the world this year.

When it comes to critical commodities, India serves the world. We have garnered many accolades for being the global pharmaceutical hub, even though we rank third in trade volumes. Major economies like the US and UAE rely on us to get essential goods such as petroleum, electronic items, basmati rice, and chemicals.

Further, after the launch of PM Gati Shakti in October 2021, India's rank on the World Bank Logistics Performance Index improved by six positions. We now rank 38th among 139 countries present on the index.

All this would not have been achieved relying on just one mode of transportation. We needed a network. A major contributing factor to India's performance on the global indices is said to be the strength of our multimodal transportation system.

India recognised the significance of multimodal transportation in the 1970s and 80s. Container Freight Stations (CFS) and Inland Container Depots (ICDs) were being developed nationwide to facilitate the integration of road, rail, and sea transport.

The enactment of the Multimodal Transportation of Goods Act 1993 was a significant milestone in promoting all forms of transport in India. But just bringing out a law is never enough. It needs to be conveyed in understandable terms to those involved. It needs to be executed well.

That is where the emergence of AMTOI as the body overlooking multimodalism and its advent in India was a boon. It brought all stakeholders under one roof, including Multimodal Transport Operators (MTOs) and non-MTOs involved in intermodal transportation.

Today, the logistics industry is highly fragmented. The modes of transport are aplenty. An integrated approach linking road, rail, waterways, and airports with logistics parks is crucial to reducing logistics costs and making India a \$5 trillion economy.

Benefits of Multimodalism

Multimodal transport is the key to smoothening our end-to-end supply chain. This type of integration offers several benefits, such as:

- Enhanced connectivity.
- Reduced traffic congestion, logistical costs, and cargo handling duration.
- Improved operations, sustainability, and flexibility.

- Increased safety and accountability.

Although enticing, we need to first clear a few hurdles to ensure a smooth multimodal transport system in the country.

Let's take a look.

Focus areas for the logistics industry

To reap the benefits of multimodalism, we first need to focus our efforts on six key areas:

1. **Overall infrastructural upgrades.** We are witnessing speedy infrastructural development everywhere, with more roads and airports coming up across the country. A similar pace needs to be picked up for all transportation modes to make multimodalism successful in India. For example, India needs to develop shipyards to build and repair ships and strengthen its position as a maritime service provider.

2. **Simplifying regulatory hurdles.** Switching between transportation modes demands adhering to regulatory requirements. They need to be made easier to understand and implement. That's where public-private collaboration is required.

Private sector participation needs to be raised in regulatory reform planning. Many family businesses in India have operated and survived under different weathers over decades. They can provide adequate insights on how to catalyse multimodalism. They only need a platform to present their thoughts and access to public sector entities for discussions.

3. **Technological upgrades.** Integrating GPS, IoT, and RFID devices and employing Artificial Intelligence to assist in daily operations will facilitate smoother movement of goods and switching hands. Technology can improve our tracking, route optimisation, and load planning and offer operational automation for enhanced efficiency. Electronic receipts delivered via email, WhatsApp messages, or in-app notifications can polish the delivery mechanism.

Moreover, AI-based apps are the need of the hour for our industry. For example, National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation (NICDC) is developing one app to track all multimodal shipments travelling via air, road, rail, or sea. This is a terrific step towards promoting multimodalism in India. It will make the job easier for logistics service providers and customers.

4. **Resolving last-mile connectivity.** The last mile poses several challenges, especially in congested areas in metro cities. Hurdles can be removed with better infrastructure and deploying technological solutions, like a unified payment gateway, wherever possible.

5. **Sustainability.** While we focus on promoting a multimodal transport system in the country, it will be rendered ineffective unless eco-friendly. Sustainability and net zero emissions are a part of India's and IATA's goals over the next few decades. They need to be included in our plans to push multimodal transport in the country.

6. **Inviting private sector participation.** Successful multimodal transportation demands effective planning, collaboration, and proper execution. Otherwise, processes can go bust quickly, thus causing physical damage or financial loss. Several family businesses in India can help the government ideate and create processes that benefit all involved parties.

This is where I would like to highlight and applaud AMTOI's efforts towards bringing all industry participants, like the Transport, Warehousing, Coastal, Inland Waterways, Port, Vessel operators, Heavy lifters, Liquid Bulk, Breakbulk, and CFS, on a single platform.

AMTOI will play a more prominent role in achieving national goals like making India a \$5 trillion economy, achieving 10 million MT air freight by 2030, and carbon net zero emissions by 2070.

AMTOI at the helm

The industry expects AMTOI to take the lead in:

1. **Effective collaboration with stakeholders.** AMTOI's events draw the industry players to a common platform for networking sessions. Besides that, its Grievance Redressal Forum is a stable platform for conflict resolution among trade bodies. And on the other hand, its collaborative efforts bring businesses together to benefit the industry.

Collaborating parties include transportation authorities, shippers, carriers, logistics partners, and, above all, customers. Since our industry doesn't operate in silos, a strong partnership with international governing bodies and associations is also needed. Moreover, India's public and private sectors need to join hands to catalyse multimodalism. AMTOI will need to keep the end consumers' interests in mind while undertaking such partnerships.

2. **Efficient implementation of governmental policies.** AMTOI has made marvellous strides in implementing the guidelines of the Multimodal Transportation of Goods Act, 1993, and its amendments. Its role has become more elaborate after the launch of the National Logistics Policy.

As a spokesperson for the logistics industry, AMTOI will need to work with regulatory bodies to facilitate policy making and execution in sync with the best

interests of the supply chain industry. The policymaking focus will need to be on:

- Promoting multimodalism and infrastructure development in the country. For example, setting up Multimodal Logistics Parks (MMLPs) across the country is a critical requirement for the industry right now.
- Optimising operations for better efficiency.
- Facilitating and monitoring the use of technology.
- Reducing logistics costs below the current 7.8 – 8.9% of the GDP and tax reforms.
- Abiding by the ESG, that is, Environmental, Social, and Governance practices.

3. **Industry-wide adoption of technology.** Installing GPS trackers, RFID, and other digital tools has enabled the sector to facilitate speedier operations and communication and more accurate data processing. The unified tracking app being developed by NICDC is an example that will require the entire industry to unite to ensure the smooth movement of goods across transportation modes.

Besides, the Internet of Things (IoT), blockchain, and artificial intelligence are quickly becoming the backbone of every industry. eCommerce is driving most advancements in the logistics industry, including the need for a unified payments gateway for deliveries, accurate data processing and dissemination, and minimal errors. We need to embrace technological advances to achieve the desired levels of performance.

AMTOI needs to spearhead this movement across the logistics industry by generating awareness. It can optimise operations, boost safety, and reduce costs. Acceptance is key to making advanced technology the backbone of our industry, but it is also a necessity. Without industry-wide acceptance, adoption will not occur. AMTOI has a lot of work to do in that arena.

4. **Sustainable industry practices:** The logistics industry is the largest emitting CO2 emitting sector, contributing over a third of worldwide carbon emissions.

With widespread awareness, corporations in our industry are resorting to sustainable operations. However, we know we need to be responsible in utilising resources but achieving net zero emissions is a different ballgame. People need to be made aware of how they can contribute.

With its impressive reach and all-encompassing membership, AMTOI can help. The logistics sector

needs to reduce emissions by at least 20% to meet the global net zero emissions target. The world has geared up to achieve this feat.

In January 2023, the World Economic Forum launched a new International Standard guidebook, ISO 14083. The standard was released by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the non-profit organisation working for climate action in logistics, Smart Freight Centre. It guides logistics companies in implementing decarbonisation plans and quantifying and reporting greenhouse gas emissions arising from transport chain operations.

5. **Adequate training:** Our industry is being driven by millennials and Gen Z. They need sufficient training sessions to understand the nuances of the sector and how to best ensure operational efficacy. AMTOI's webinars and workshops have created a trustworthy space for industry players to get trained in various practices. Especially those running a family business can rely on AMTOI's family business empowerment modules to guide them in successfully running their businesses.

Many family businesses in India have contributed to creating a solid foundation for the Indian logistics

industry. They have the experience and resources to see a shipment through to the destination by involving multiple modes of carriage. They have witnessed the industry evolve over the years. Their knowledge and expertise can help uplift the multimodal transport system in our country.

Multimodal transportation is the primary mode for international shipments. For the past few years, there has been a tremendous push toward making India a transshipment hub, and multimodalism is the preferred route to achieve that goal. The recently announced infrastructure project to connect India to the Middle East via railroads is a step in the right direction.

Although, it is currently in the limelight due to the ongoing Red Sea crisis. Exporters are looking for varied modes just to get their shipments to Europe and the US without getting attacked. It has brought forth the need for India to develop and invest in this concept.

We shouldn't wait for a crisis like this to promote multimodalism. It was a step forward in the '70s, but now, it is a dire necessity. The private and public sectors need to join hands in catalysing this movement, and AMTOI needs to be at the helm.

Feature - 8



MIS and KPI

Dr. Pramod Sant
Industry Expert, Former Vice President, Head of Import Export and Customs, Siemens Ltd.

International trade is becoming more complex day by day. Supply Chains are facing additional challenges due to cost, sustainability requirements, and geopolitical situations. In the Supply Chain Multi-model transportation is far more complex than shipping, rail, Air, or road modes of transport. Measuring performance and key performance indicators become the most unique and challenging.

What are MIS and KPI?

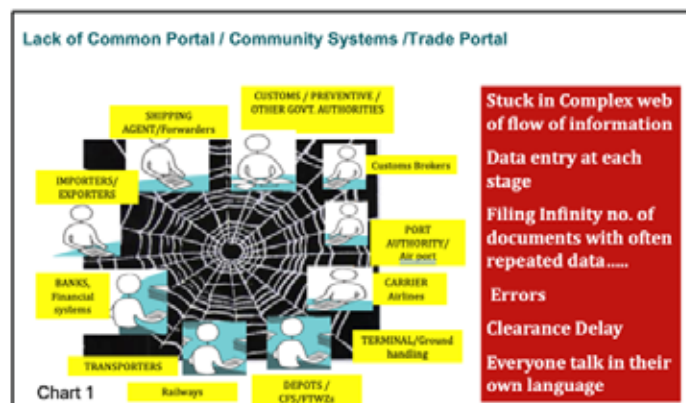
Firstly, it is important to know the difference between Management information systems (MIS) and Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

Criteria	MIS	KPI
Purpose:	Designed to collect, process, store, and distribute information to support decision-making and organizational operations.	Specific metrics used to measure the performance of an organization, department, process, or individual against predefined goals or objectives.
	MIS provides managers with data and reports to monitor the performance and activities of various functions within the organization.	KPIs help assess progress, identify areas for improvement, and make informed decisions to drive performance
Scope	Encompass a broader range of functions and processes within an organization, including data collection, storage, analysis, and reporting across multiple departments and functions.	Focused on measuring specific aspects of performance related to strategic objectives, goals, or critical success factors. KPIs are often targeted at specific areas of the organization and are used to track progress and performance against targets.
Nature:	Typically technology-driven systems that automate the collection, processing, and dissemination of information within an organization. MIS may include databases, software applications, reporting tools, and communication networks.	Quantitative or qualitative measures used to evaluate performance and progress towards strategic objectives. KPIs are often defined based on strategic priorities and are aligned with organizational goals
Functionality:	Provide a platform for capturing, processing, and presenting data in various formats, such as reports, dashboards, and analytics tools. MIS may include features for data integration, visualization, and analysis to support decision-making.	Specific metrics or indicators used to assess performance against targets or benchmarks. KPIs may be tracked over time to monitor trends, identify deviations from targets, and take corrective actions as needed.

Challenges in Multimodal Transport in MIS /KPI

Multimodal transportation involves the movement of goods using multiple modes of transportation (shipping, air freight, rail, and road) within a single journey, which inherently adds complexity compared to traditional single-mode transportation.

When we check the criticality of multimodal transportation compared to normal transportation by a single mode following are the main challenges and requirements Chart 1 below gives complexities.



Complexity of Operations: Multimodal transportation involves coordinating and managing different transportation modes, terminals, carriers, and logistics providers. The complexity increases significantly, requiring a robust MIS to integrate and synchronize various processes and information flows across different entities.

Intermodal Handoffs: In multimodal transportation, goods often undergo multiple handoffs between different carriers and transportation modes. MIS is essential for tracking and managing these handoffs to ensure seamless transitions, minimize delays, and maintain the integrity of shipments.

Data Integration Challenges: Each transportation mode has its own systems and data formats, leading to challenges in integrating information across different platforms. An effective MIS should be capable of consolidating and standardizing data from disparate sources to provide a unified view of operations.

Visibility and Tracking Complexity: With goods moving through multiple transportation modes, achieving end-to-end visibility becomes more complex. MIS is critical for providing real-time tracking and monitoring of shipments across the entire multimodal journey, enabling stakeholders to proactively manage exceptions and optimize logistics processes.

Regulatory Compliance: Multimodal transportation involves crossing international borders, which introduces additional regulatory and compliance requirements. MIS

must facilitate compliance with customs regulations, trade agreements, security protocols, and documentation standards across different jurisdictions.

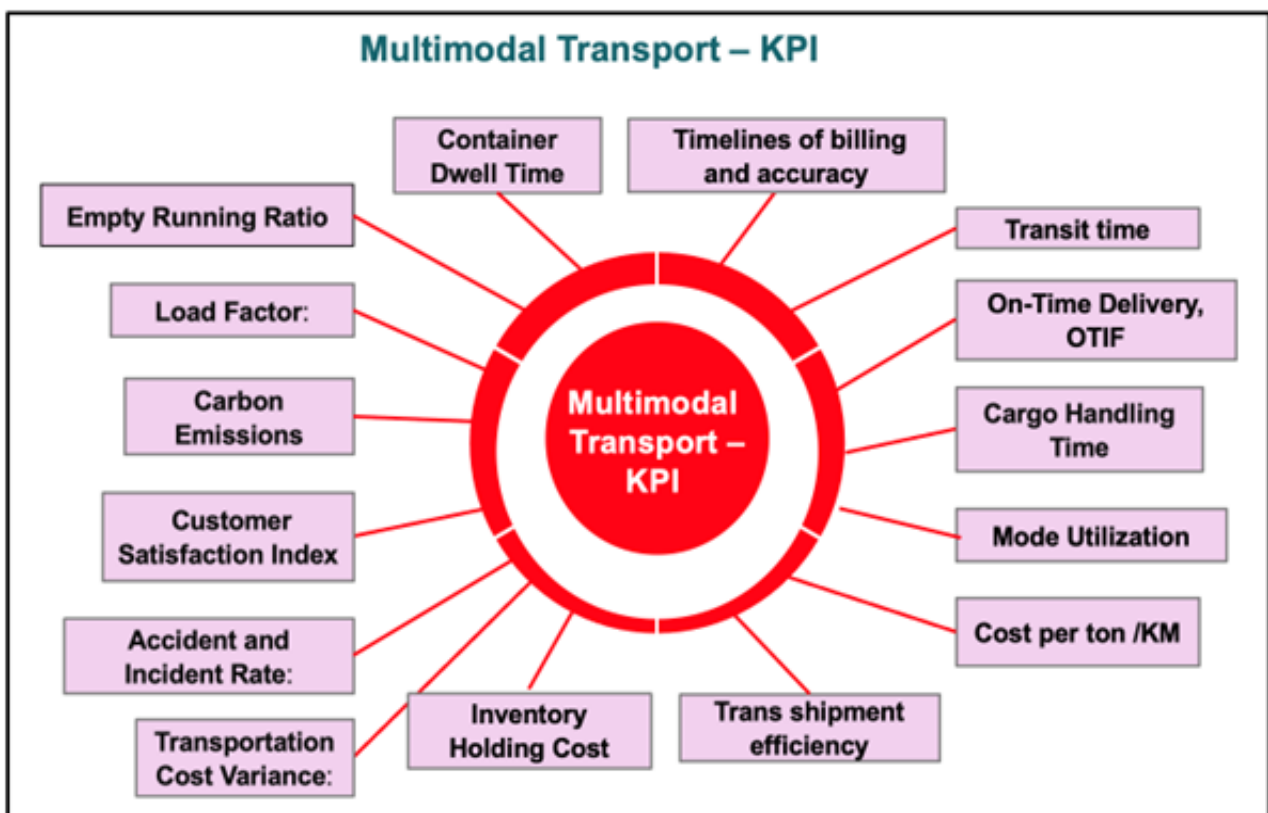
Risk Management: Multimodal transportation exposes shipments to a wider range of risks, including delays, damage, theft, and regulatory issues. MIS plays a crucial role in identifying, assessing, and mitigating these risks through real-time monitoring, analytics, and decision support tools.

Customer Expectations: Customers in multimodal transportation expect higher levels of service, transparency, and responsiveness compared to traditional single-mode transportation. MIS enables transportation companies to meet these expectations by providing accurate and timely information, proactive notifications, and efficient problem resolution.

Operational Efficiency and Cost Control: Multimodal transportation requires optimizing routes, modes, and resources to minimize costs while meeting service level agreements. MIS helps identify opportunities for efficiency improvements, such as route optimization, load consolidation, and modal shift, to achieve cost savings and competitive advantages.

KPI in Multimodal Transportations

In multimodal some of the KPIs could same as any other mode but a few KPIs are specific to Multimodal Transport. Chart no 2.



Cargo Handling Time: As there is multiple handling with each type of mode the time required for loading, unloading, and transshipment of goods at various terminals and modes of transportation.

Mode Utilization: The proportion of shipments utilizing each mode of transportation (e.g., road, rail, sea, air) within the multimodal network. This is the most interesting KPI and will vary from route to route and is worth monitoring.

Cost per Ton-KM: The cost incurred for transporting one ton of goods over one KM, taking into account all transportation costs, including freight charges, handling fees, and administrative expenses.

Transshipment Efficiency: The efficiency of transshipment operations is measured by factors such as turnaround time, handling capacity, and accuracy of cargo handling.

Inventory Holding Cost: The cost of carrying inventory in transit is a common KPI but in Multimodal it needs special attention. This includes storage fees, insurance premiums, and financing costs, expressed as a percentage of the total inventory value.

Accident and Incident Rate: The frequency and severity of accidents, incidents, or damages occurring during transportation, including collisions, spills, thefts, and damages to cargo. Considering multiple handling and transfers this is the area of focus

Carbon Emissions: The amount of greenhouse gas emissions generated per unit of cargo transported, including emissions from fuel combustion, energy consumption, and auxiliary activities. This is becoming more relevant as in India we need to use more rail, and coastal and inland waterways against road transport.

What must be done to ensure proper MIS and KPI?

For each mode of transportation such as Sea, Air, Rail, and Road there is a list of challenges and initiatives already, Multimodal Transportation requires the best of each mode and a combination of all modes to arrive at an optimum solution.

This is not easy and will take some time

Technological Interoperability & Collaborative Logistics Platforms:

- Adopting open standards and protocols for communication and data exchange between different infrastructure technologies and systems.

- Implement middleware solutions and data integration platforms that facilitate seamless interoperability between legacy and modern infrastructure systems.
- Develop open-source logistics platforms that enable resource sharing among multiple stakeholders.
- Implement blockchain or other distributed ledger technologies to ensure trust and transparency in collaborative logistics networks.
- Provide incentives such as cost savings or revenue sharing to encourage participation in collaborative logistics initiatives.

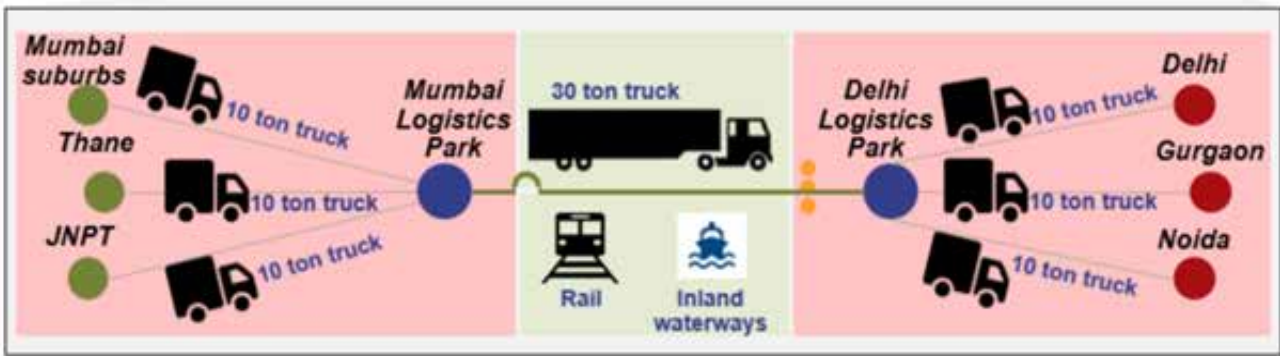
Routing and Navigation Optimization:

- Use machine learning (ML) algorithms to predict traffic patterns and optimize route planning.
- Integrate real-time data from GPS, traffic sensors, and delivery management platforms. The higher the integration better MIS and KPI. In India more and more local solutions and approaches will be required
- Develop dynamic routing systems to adapt to changing conditions in real time. This is very important from the Indian point of view considering Regional issues, festivals, and seasonal challenges

Micro-Mobility Solutions & Smart Parking Solutions:

Referring to the general concept of a Multimodal logistics park by MORTH -LEEP. A lot much work is further needed to provide end-to-end solutions to customers and achieve sustainable results.

- Deploy shared vehicles, and electric vehicles in urban areas.
- Implement dedicated lanes/ parking areas for micro-mobility devices.
- Integrate micro-mobility options into multi-modal transportation apps for seamless trip planning.
- Install IoT sensors in parking spaces to monitor availability and integrate with Mobile apps to provide real-time parking information and reserve parking spots. Along with dynamic pricing strategies to incentivize efficient use of parking spaces.

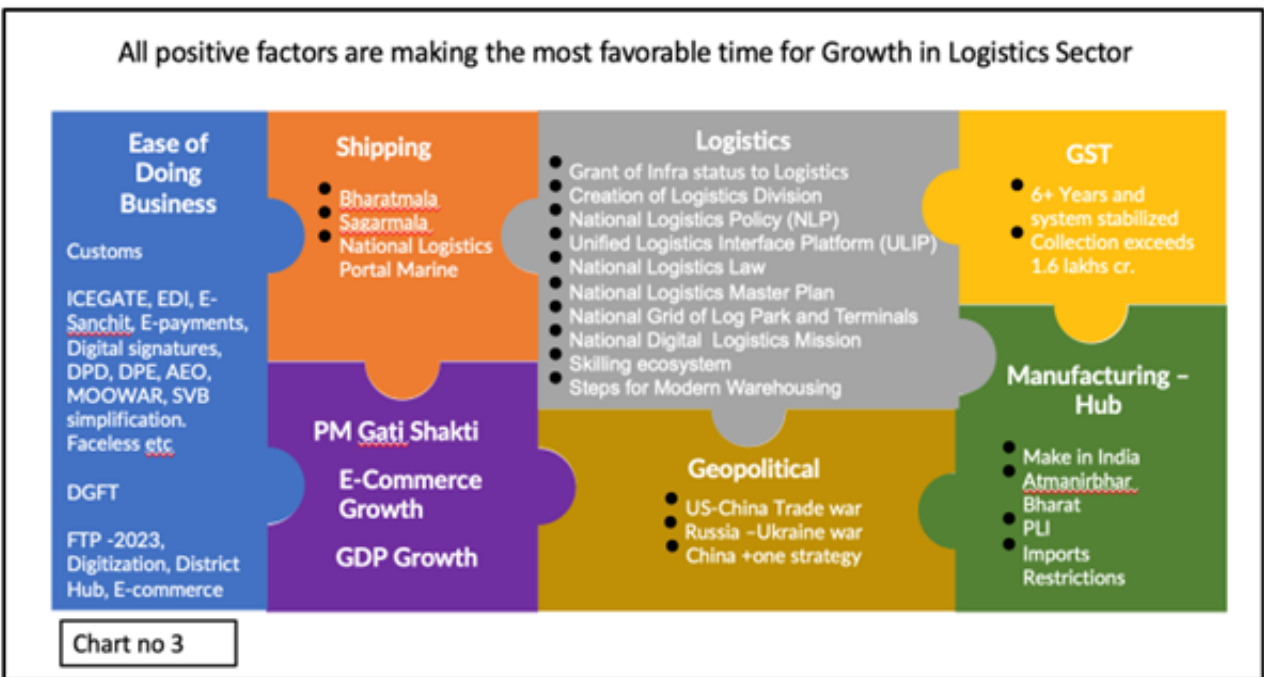


Source: MORTH concepts note LEEP, development of Multimodal Logistics Park

Why India is in the best position to make a difference?

India has a success story of UPI which is now being admired by the world and many countries are requesting India's support. We need such success in Multimodal Transportation. We have the best IT skills and talents and the largest pool of Logistics startups.

Most important is the large number of initiatives taken by Govt in various areas refer to chart no 3. It is a most interesting time to develop the best Multimodal Transportation practices



India's multimodal transportation sector is undergoing significant evolution, propelled by extensive infrastructure development, technological integration, and policy reforms. Efforts to enhance intermodal connectivity, address last-mile challenges, and promote sustainability are

positioning India for greater efficiency and competitiveness in the global transportation landscape. With continued investment and innovation, India is poised to realize its vision of a seamlessly integrated and sustainable multimodal transportation network.

Feature - 9



Navigating the Complex Waters of Harmonized System Classification: A Tale of Auto Components and Legal Precedents

Dr. Joshua Ebenezer
Principal Consultant, NuCov-Facili Trade

In the intricate world of international trade, the process of classifying goods under the HSN in India has unfolded like a strategic game between importers and customs authorities, especially notable in the automobile sector. The landscape of auto component classification, marked by its propensity for higher customs duties, has consistently been a focal point for the Revenue's scrutiny. The plot thickened with the implementation of the GST on July 1, 2017, setting the GST rate for auto components at a steep 28%.

Unexpectedly, a past Supreme Court verdict from July 2003 concerning G.S Auto International, which ratified the classification of various vehicle fasteners under heading 8708 using the 'sole and primary use' criterion, resurfaced. Despite the court's clear stance, which contradicted the Revenue's opposing view—a stance that had remained dormant for 14 years—this decision suddenly found new relevance.

Armed with this precedent, customs formations were directed to scrutinize filings under the G.S Auto International ratio, sparking a flurry of notices for differential tax on components destined for motor vehicle use. This action seemed to disregard the guiding principles outlined in the Section Notes under Section XVII and the explanatory notes of the HSN.

This situation escalated with two pivotal developments: the increase in the peak customs duty rate for several auto components to 15%, and the influential Westinghouse Saxby decision by the Supreme Court. The latter effectively opened the floodgates, convincing even the skeptics within the Revenue of the 'sole and principal use' test for classification under 8708.

Fortunately, prudence prevailed, and directives were issued to customs formations to adhere to the Section Notes, HSN

Explanatory Notes, and a series of Supreme Court rulings that reinforced these classification standards, moving beyond the singular perspective offered by Westinghouse Saxby.

Just when the industry began to find respite, the Tribunal Delhi's involvement in the case concerning M/s Continental Automotive Brake Systems India Private Limited presented a fresh challenge. The tribunal's deliberations on the classification of Electronic Control Units (ECUs) for Electronic Stability Systems (ESCS) used in vehicles took centre stage.

The Tribunal concluded that neither the Anti-lock Braking Systems (ABS) nor the ESCS manufactured, nor the ECUs imported could be classified under CTH 9032, thus siding with the Revenue's argument to classify the ECUs under CTH 8708. This decision, echoing the use of ECUs in ESCS, marks a significant moment for the auto industry, given the vast number of vehicles now equipped with ESCS and ABS. The implications are vast, potentially leading to substantial differential duty demands.

This analysis sheds light on the tribunal's findings and underscores the critical role of the Electronic Stability Control (ESC) system—a cornerstone of modern vehicle safety, emphasizing the nuanced understanding required for fair and accurate classification.

As we stand at this juncture, the auto industry must brace for an extended discourse on classification, potentially escalating to the Supreme Court. Amidst these challenges lies an opportunity for clarity and advocacy, ensuring that the journey toward equitable classification standards continues with vigour and purpose.

1st Silver Jubilee Event - 25 years of Catalysing Multimodalism

8th December 2023, Hotel Lemon Tree Premier, Aerocity, New Delhi



2nd Silver Jubilee - Event hosted by Western Region

7th February 2024, Blue Sea Banquets –Worli Sea Face- Mumbai



External Board Meeting hosted by Mr Nailesh Gandhi alongwith Thought Provoking Session by Behram Sabawala

12th March, 2024 at Wodehouse Gymkhana, Nariman Point, Mumbai



14th Edition of CTL 2024 concurrent with BHP 2024

14th -15th February, 2024 at Jio World Convention Centre, Mumbai



AMTOI tie-up with the International Ocean Freight Forwarders & Logistics Association, Taiwan

7th March 2024, Master Group Office, Mumbai,



Women' Day

7th March 2024, AMTOI Office, Mumbai



LOGIXINDIA

26-28th March 2024, Bombay Exhibition Center, Mumbai



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- ▶ AMTOI membership certificate can be prominently displayed in the office and AMTOI logo can be used on your stationary, website and other collaterals.
- ▶ Participation in various Training sessions and seminars organized by AMTOI (Dangerous goods handling and transportation being one of them)
- ▶ AMTOI Dialogues - A monthly virtual event where an eminent personality is invited for a short interview followed by Q&A session
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- ▶ Participation in Annual AMTOI event and get to meet who's who in the industry which is an excellent platform for networking.
- ▶ Assistance in registration/renewal of MTO License.
- ▶ GRF (Grievance Redressal Forum), a platform to air your grievances with various private and Govt authorities and AMTOI organizational support to resolve them
- ▶ Differences / problems between members are amicably resolved by the intervention of Managing Committee Members hence the need to approach the regulators is reduced
- ▶ Have a say in drafting and amendment of various Maritime related laws
- ▶ Become a part of the only trade body which caters to the benefits of the MTO's
- ▶ Promote / growth of Indian flag ships and container owners

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Key Contributors



Mr. Arvind Parikh



Mr. Shashi Kiran
Shetty



Mr. R K Rubin



Mr. Sunil Vaswani



Mr. Vaishnav Puri

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Regional Offices

Chennai (South)

+91 44 4344 3600

info.chn@globallogistics.co.in

New Delhi (North)

+91 9310926263

info.del@globallogistics.co.in

Kolkata (East)

+91 33 4067 5100

info.kol@globallogistics.co.in

Ahmedabad (Gujarat)

+91 79 4019 0216

info.ahd@globallogistics.co.in

Branches

Pune +91 22 67757000 info.pune@globallogistics.co.in
Mundra +91 7490023015 info.mdr@globallogistics.co.in
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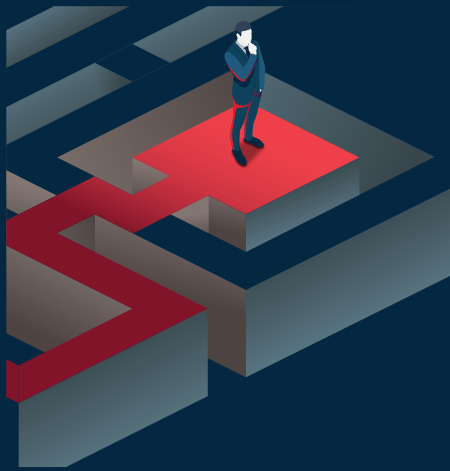
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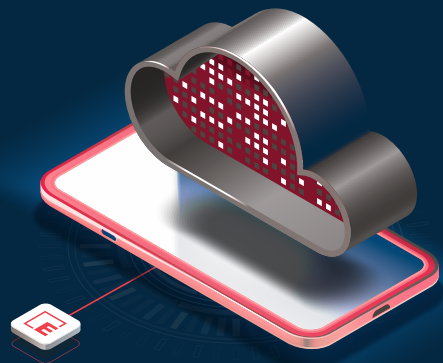
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