



“Today’s business needs dynamic and faster decisions”

LSPs, which will be able to provide innovative solutions and adapt themselves with the changing macro economy requirements, will survive and grow, says **Ramesh Babu, Managing Director, Seashell Logistics Pvt Ltd.**



Tell us about the major milestones achieved by your company so far.

Seashell Logistics Pvt Ltd, an ISO 9001:2000 certified company, established in the year 2007 at Mumbai was having staff below 10 members and today is spread over 21 locations in India with employee strength of around 400. The company is India’s leading logistics service provider in the shipping and allied industry, actively involved in all facets of shipping providing total logistics solutions under one roof with global reach. Through our sister company, M/s Seashell Exim Services we have gone one step forward to provide specialised services

that are complex in nature to the industry like getting refund of SAD, RD, Customs Duty, Excise Duty, availing exemption from payment of duty, obtaining all Export Import Licenses such as AA, EPCG, SFIS, FMS, FPS from DGFT through our presence on pan India basis. We also render our services for sale and purchase of Transferable Licenses.

Milestones:

- 1st Branch in 2009 at Chennai
- 2nd Branch in 2010 at Hyderabad
- Crossed turnover of Rs 100 crore in 2011
- 2012 - added nine branches and crossed turnover of Rs 150 crore
- 2013 - other branches are being added

What are the emerging trends in LSP globally?

Logistics is a very dynamic industry and there were lots of improvement in the recent past which were primarily driven by the customers’ changing demand, stiff competition among LSPs, improvement in

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infrastructure and government economic policies.

One area which saw a dramatic improvement in last one decade is the real time information about the cargo movement on road/rail/sea and air. With the improvement in communication and tracking devices, it is now easier to track cargo and pass information to the customers, which resulted in faster information leading to higher customer satisfaction.

Projects like port connectivity, Delhi - Mumbai/Mumbai-Bangalore Industrial Corridor, Dedicated Freight Corridors will decide the future of logistics in India. All LSPs in India will have to align themselves with the changing infrastructure of the country and equip themselves to take maximum benefit of it.

One more trend I see around the globe is of manufacturing clusters/ Special Economic Zones/Special Investment Regions around the ports. The Govt of India in association with self initiated federal states in the coastal belts are taking initiative by coming forward with maritime policies to develop new ports hand in hand with industrialisation. This is being promoted by all the governments globally to reduce their logistics cost and bring in efficiency. This initiative has to be supported by our industry and corporate India as well, because the success of these new initiatives depends on feasibility which in turn depends on traffic. I personally feel Indian industry is not taking much initiative in making use of this as they are still in inertia of wait and watch for others to start, today's business needs dynamic and faster decisions so we hope there will be change in situation sooner than later.

So one thing is sure that in future, LSPs, who will be able to provide innovative solutions and who can adapt themselves with the changing macro economy requirements, will survive and grow.

What major challenges are faced in providing project logistics in the

construction sector?

We feel the following are few of the challenges faced in providing project logistics:-

- Lack of skilled manpower
- Inadequate infrastructure
- Delay in getting clearances
- Taxation is a major issue for the transportation industry

Which is the most challenging project you have executed in the construction sector?

Seashell Logistics today caters services to 70 per cent of the construction or infrastructure development companies in India. We have handled almost all kinds of flagship Indian infrastructure projects that we have seen in last one decade like water supply, water reservoir/ dams, national/ state highways/ expressways, metro rail projects, power projects which includes - generation, distribution of thermal, hydel, gas-based, wind, solar, even renewable energy like biomass, airports, seaports, telecommunication. We are glad to share that Seashell is chosen by even large foreign construction companies in associating with them in execution of their foreign projects in Africa, Latin America and GCC countries.

As a long standing CHA, what reforms would you like to see in customs clearing procedures, especially a convergence towards Single Window clearance?

In India, customs clearance is still a licence raj because of outdated act and complex indirect taxation structure. With changing scenario and upgraded technology the enforcement and execution becomes effective if the same is synchronised time to time, we still have a procedure where CHA license issued by Govt of India has to be registered at all the ports separately even though the rules and guidelines are uniform this only increases the administrative work both to department and to CHAs. I believe this could be avoided by allowing CHA to conduct trade in any port across India after all ports and icds are inter connected electronically. In recent days, we see reforms of the customs which

are limited to paper and not in reality, reason the spirit is missing, today customs electronic internal risk management systems are really sound and strong, the administrative tools are not effective as they still follow traditional good olden days zonal control centres where every department functions on their own with less coordination. The tax structures need to be made as simple as possible.

Tell us about your Multi Modal Transport capabilities?

Seashell is recognised by Govt of India as Multimodal transport operator (MTO) 2008. We have the capability of transporting any kind of goods irrespective of the size and weight as multimodal on door-to-door basis. We provide single window customised solution to our customers' right from picking their goods from their manufacturing facility to deliver goods to their client's project site for import as well as export consignments. We have our own fleet of trailers to fulfil the needs of land transportation across India, own containers and special equipment, our own Chartering team who are in regular touch with the major Project/Heavy Lift/Bulk/Bagged cargo vessel owners to arrange. For handling projects and heavy lift cargoes, we have a strong network of agents worldwide across the globe to take care of operations across the sea in other countries. We have been handling bulk cargoes in rail and have good experience in rakes handling. Also, we have been regularly chartering Aircraft in order to move time-bound project cargoes as per our customers requirement. In addition, we also have our Reefer Division where we offer total logistics solution to our direct shippers taking care of their temperature controlled cargoes such as fruits, seafood, perishable agriculture products and pharmaceutical products etc. As a service provider our capabilities depends on our skilled and dedicated manpower having a professional approach. Having highly skilled and motivated team members, we have been able to establish ourselves in this highly competitive industry, in a very short time. ●