

# Synthesis

INHOUSE MAGAZINE OF SYNTHITE INDUSTRIES LTD

# Hearty 40

Search Kadayiruppu on Google Earth and you will find a typical Kerala village, green, with winding roads on which houses, schools and colleges stand. It would not show regular signs of an industrial area hosting a unit which partners the world's top companies and serves customers in more than 100 countries.

The journey of Synthite Industries Limited from this sleepy village in the last forty years becomes a landmark in Kerala's industrial history not only because of its success as an industry. Synthite started off at a time when the State was known for its militant trade unionism. The

growth of Synthite proves that it has not only negotiated the treacherous track skillfully, but also set a new paradigm to do so. It was no secret, no miracle that made industrial relations in Synthite a model for the corporate world. It was some plain logic and common sense and a heart large enough to accommodate the needs and aspirations of the men and women who move the machines and materials that made it happen. Read old timers in Synthite recollect how they were nurtured in their company.

Report on Page 4

## Proud moments



*Synthite Chairman and Managing Director Mr C V Jacob receives the V C Padmanabhan Memorial Award for 'Business Excellence Leading to Development of Society At Large' from Mr Vayalar Ravi, Union Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs at a function held at Lulu International Convention Centre, Thrissur, on June 22, 2012. The award carries a cash prize of ₹1 lakh and a bronze plaque. The immediate past recipient of this award was Mr E Sreedharan, former managing director of the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation*



*Dr Viju Jacob, Director, Synthite Industries Limited, receives the Golden Achievement Award in Business-2012 instituted by the Institute of Economic Studies, New Delhi, at a scintillating function held at Pelangi Beach Resort, Langkawi, Malaysia on May 21, 2012*



*Ms Smruthi Srinivasan, management trainee at Synthite, has bagged the Gold Medal in the PGDM in Agri Business Management examination of IIPM Bangalore (2009-2011 Batch). She received the honour from Mr H R Bhardwaj, Governor of Karnataka and Kerala, at a function held on the IIPM campus on May 26, 2012*

## New joiners



Mr Robin Mathew has taken charge as the General Manager of Riviera Suites on May 7, 2012. A graduate in hospitality management from Sarosh Institute of Hotel Management, Mangalore, Mr Mathew also holds a diploma in AH&MA Hospitality Supervision from Nitle Institute.

Mr Zhenghua Cai has joined as Sr Associate (Human Resources), Synthite Xingjiang Biotech Company Ltd, China on June 6, 2012. Mr Cai is a graduate in sociology from Changzhou University.



Mr Ravi Shankar has joined as management trainee-fast-track in the operations department. An engineering graduate from University of Mumbai, Mr Ravi Shankar holds PGDM from Indian Institute of Management- Kozhikode and MS in Industrial Engineering from Ohio State University, US.

Mr S Ajith has joined as Lead-Marketing in Spice division. He is a B-Tech (mechanical engineering) from IIT Bombay and holds PGDM from IIM Kozhikode.



Mr Vikas Temani has joined as Executive Assistant at the Directors Office. Mr Temani holds a dual degree in biochemical engineering and biotechnology from IIT Delhi and PGDM from IIM Kozhikode.



# Hot pursuit

New plant at Ongole will help meet growing demand for chilli products



**S**ynthite Industries Limited is strengthening its operations in Andhra Pradesh by setting up a new plant to process chilli in Ongole. The plant is part of the company's strategy to move towards the source of raw materials.

The new plant, coming up at Methernetla close to the Chennai-Kolkata corridor of the Golden Quadrilateral, will help the company come close to Guntur, known for its chilli-growing regions. Guntur, which trades about 5 lakh metric tonne chilli a year, is the world's largest chilli market. The plant is expected to help the company meet the increasing demand for chilli products, which at present is met partly by the Harihar unit.

The project will be completed in three phases. In the first phase, to be completed by 31 March 2013, a 40 metric tonne-plant, complete with facilities for extraction and purification and a 500 metric tonne-cold storage will be set up. In the second phase, the capacity of the chilli plant will be doubled to 80 tonnes and it is expected to be completed by December 2013. In this phase, the cold storage capacity will be increased by another 500 tonnes. A 5000 tonne spice powdering unit of the Spice division is also part of Phase III.

The company has chosen the location after extensive study, according to Mr Saji K Mathews, Head, New Projects. Apart from the proximity to the Guntur chilli market, the presence of Krishnapattanam port, just 100 km away, will be an advantage in the future, he said. Work on the project is being completed at a fast pace, Mr Mathews said.

The total project cost is around ₹42 crore. The project is entitled to Central government subsidies as per the Integrated Cold Chain Project of the government.

## Factfile

### Phase I

**Chilli plant capacity:**

40 metric tonne

**Cold storage capacity:**

500 metric tonne

**Date of commissioning:**

31 March 2013

### Phase II

**Chilli plant capacity:**

80 metric tonne

**Cold storage capacity:**

1000 metric tonne

**Date of commissioning:**

31 December 2013

### Phase III

Unit of Spice division

**Date of commissioning:**

March 31, 2014

**Total project cost:** ₹42 crore

# When people make it happen

## University of Synthite

**A A Jose**

*Designation: Team Lead*

*Year of Joining: 1987*



I have been with the company for 25 of its 40 years. I met the chairman after passing ITI and was directed to work on the boilers in the main plant. The

Marudur plant of the company was to be opened soon, and I was sent there to operate the plant. It was a new boiler and I had a chance to learn a lot more. I then worked with Kolencherry main plant, Synthite Taste Park and Synthite Calicut before joining the Harihar unit in 2006 as shift in charge in the production department. It was a job well done, and I was made production in charge.

I had little exposure about professional ways of life before joining Synthite but can now easily navigate in a company which has put in several global best practices. I knew nothing about computers when I joined. But we went along smoothly with the roll-out of ERP and SAP softwares. Now, we work in a totally computerised environment. Several reports have to be prepared everyday on computers, and we do it.

The personal mentoring we got at Synthite has helped mould the professionals in us. We were introduced to the ethos of the company by the chairman himself. Once there was seepage of some waste into a pond within the factory, and the fish in the pond died. Jacob sir was furious, and gave me a mouthful. He grilled into us the idea that we have no right to play with nature. One has to be careful not only about the big things, but the other seemingly small things as well. I still carry those lessons with me.

I came here with little knowledge about my work. It was learning on the job. I learned how to be a professional here. I say I am a graduate of the university of Synthite.

## Efficiency matters

**Babu Abraham**

*Designation: Specialist*

*Year of joining: 1991*



I joined the Kolencherry plant with a diploma in mechanical engineering. After a brief stint at Synthite Calicut, I was back at Kolencherry, in charge of the newly installed CO<sub>2</sub> extraction plant. It was a totally new and challenging experience for me: there were hardly a couple of such plants in India at that time. We worked hard with great team spirit on making the process a success. And we all got rewarded: I was put in the charge of the plant. At present, I am in charge of the engineering department at Harihar and am also involved in production.

As a professional I have learned this: efficiency is the single most important ingredient to your success. And once you are at it, then your career is safe here. This is despite the personal touch we have with one another. I still recall my meeting with the Chairman before I left for Harihar: he explained to me how significant the Harihar plant is in the company's scheme of things. I was really proud of the assignment that the management thought it fit to entrust me with key responsibilities.

## A company that cares

**Ajith Kumar VR**

*Designation: Sr. Specialist*

*Year of joining: 1997*



I joined the company as a junior executive (finance) after completing my CA (Intermediate). It was a routine accounting job in the beginning, but it changed when I was sent to Harihar. I was introduced into the world of finance and materials there, and it was a great experience. On returning to Kolencherry, I joined the Spice division. After a year, I was deputed to Harihar as deputy man-

ager.

I am happy with the assignments that I get. Generally, people with my profile would look for an opportunity outside all the time. I never have done that as the assignments here are challenging and the rewards commensurate.

Implementation of SAP was a defining point in my career. I was part of the core team which was implementing the system. I still remember the sleepless night in which we rolled it out. The finance department at Synthite is now fully run on this software. It takes us to a different league of professional environment. I am also proud of the fact that the company is second to none in introducing global best practices such as SAP and job banding. There may be glitches in the beginning, but in the long run, such systems would help us become a truly global company.

My salary has increased more than 10 times after I joined here. In Kerala, it would be hard to find many companies which take care of its people so well.

## Fulfilling dreams

**P B Rajendran**

*Designation: Team Lead*

*Year of Joining: 1985*



For someone who has studied only up to SSLC, it will be of great satisfaction if he could afford good education for his children. My elder son has completed his B-Tech this year, and the younger one will join the government engineering college in Kozhikode this year. Their education has been my biggest dream, and I could fulfil it. All thanks to my job with Synthite.

The company has a system to recognise merit, and reward it. I joined the stores department and then moved to the plant as an operator and then as a supervisor. Now I am a Team Lead. And the company has been mindful of our contribution and was there to



From the  
Chairman's desk

## Doing well by doing good

The success of Synthite Industries Ltd in the last four decades is the result of teamwork of the people at various levels. I have always held the view that the people who make the machines work and run the show 24 hours a day 365 days a year must be taken proper care of. To me, it's the human element that takes precedence of all other considerations.

support us all through life; I have never faced financial hardships, thanks to the timely help the company has extended to me.

### Thank you, all

**V C Unnikrishnan**

*Designation: Production Associate*

*Year of Joining: 1993*



For a person with education up to 8<sup>th</sup> standard, Synthite has treated me well. I was part of Sijmak which Synthite took over in 1991. I have completed 20 years here and am due for retirement soon. The job has been fulfilling as I was able to take proper care of the family's needs thanks to the support the company extended. It gave me loans for children's education and maintenance of the house. I owe to the company all that I have earned in this time. I am looking forward to a peaceful retired life now.

### Great learning experience

**Mathai M V**

*Designation: Team Lead*

*Year of joining: 1985*



I joined Synthite after my SSLC as a raw hand in the plant. Today, I work at the Spice division with responsibilities in production and civil construction department.

It has been a great learning experience for me all these years. The

It is easier to preach this than practice, and hence we have tried to do all that is possible to make the life easy for our people. The most important thing for a human being is a house to which she/he can return every day. We have designed and implemented financial support schemes with such efficiency that more than 80 per cent of our people have a house of their own. We have been very liberal with vehicle loans as well. The company also has a comprehensive healthcare plan so that treatment does not become too much of a burden on them.

We as a company are committed to the growth of our people as world class professionals. We have training

company created opportunities for me to grab and learn the skills that are required to meet them successfully. I remember an occasion when a client wanted a new product with tough specifications. It was considered a real challenge. I moved in the trial and error method, and the Chairman stood by me during failures and at the time of success. The client was very happy; even now we have him with us for the product.

### Think independently

**K I Saju**

*Designation: Sr Specialist*

*Year of joining: 1992*



I joined the company as lab assistant after my B Sc chemistry, and have spent most of my professional life in the Marudur plant. We had a small quality control unit there when I joined; today it has become so advanced that we can call it a mini R&D lab.

The company's stress on quality has given me a chance to learn great many things as a professional. The physical infrastructure has always been excellent; and we have been called upon to update ourselves with the latest in the field. I have had the opportunity to train in institutions such as the Spices Board and Central Food Technological Research Institute, which helped me become a good professional. The company has ensured that we, as professionals, are always on our toes. The

programmes at various levels so that people are kept abreast of the latest trends in the industry. I can say with pride that Synthite has been the pioneer in Kerala in implementing several modern management and organisational practices. They have helped instill the confidence in our people that they work for a truly global company. Being in the food ingredients industry, we put a premium on quality and hygiene, and we ensure that our people are adequately equipped to meet the very high standards our customers expect of us.

To me the message of the last four decades is simple: we can do well by doing good.

implementation of SAP has aided this process as information is available real-time, and we get to know it instantly.

The company has always encouraged our independent thinking at improving processes. Every experiment is encouraged and success acknowledged and rewarded.

### Opportunities galore

**Neethu Jose**

*Sr. Specialist*

*Year of joining: 2008*



You could call it luck, but I would like to see it as a big opportunity that landed on my table. Six months after Joining Synthite after my MBA, I was put in charge of an assignment my senior was looking after. It was a swim or sink situation; and I chose to swim. It has been a great learning experience ever since. It was a proud realisation that the company thought it fit to entrust me with the job.

What helps a newcomer learn on the job are two factors: the support of the senior members, including directors, and the team spirit. The company has its own organisational structure but that does not deter an employee from seeking the seniors' help, nor in their helping the newcomer learn. "You can do it," is what the seniors tell us, and that is the real motivating spirit. The team spirit is another remarkable feat, which makes it work.

# Sustainable farming

More than 20,000 farmers benefit from the association with Synthite



Synthite Industries Limited is today a movement of farmers as well: more than 20,000 farmers are associated with the company, producing raw material that meet global food safety standards. It partners the farming community offering it the latest technology, seeds, equipment and trains them in modern and efficient agricultural practices. Farmtech, a dedicated division of the company, is coordinating and implementing the farmer contact programmes in various States.

“Synthite believes in sustainable business growth and hence our stress on sustainable agricultural practices,” said Mr George Paul, Director in charge of Farmtech. “We work closely with the farmers and introduce to them the best and sustainable practices.”

Mr G Jainendran, who heads the division, said Farmtech works with farmers in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu on crops such as chilli, marigold and rosemary. “The total area under cultivation at various sites will be about 25,000 acres. The farmers with whom we partner don’t own huge tracts of land nor are they exposed to modern practices. Our association helps them earn financial sustainability to a great extent,” he said. For example, a marigold farmer can earn up to

₹50,000 for a crop season which lasts just about four months.

Farmtech has seven offices all over South India and has deployed about 50 people who work with associates on the field in reaching the inputs to the farmer. The stress is on making them think differently from the conventional way: to use better seeds, to reduce the use of pesticides, to implement IPM practices and to optimise the use of inputs such as water, fertilisers and micro nutrients. The farmers are trained in post-harvest practices, which are critical in meeting food safety standards. The net result is low input cost, optimum use of resources and better yield for the farmer. They also get a premium on the produce cultivated as per the quality standards. As for the company, it ensures assured supply of quality raw material.

As part of its efforts to introduce renewable energy equipment to the farmers, Farmtech has supplied five solar pumps at hugely subsidised price to the farmers in Tamil Nadu in collaboration with Bern University of Switzerland. Farmtech is also planning to provide solar driers for chilli farmer groups, which will help reduce the drying time by half. “We have more projects in the pipeline for the benefit of the farmers,” said Mr Paul.

Sustainability, by all means!

## Ongole, here we come

CVJ Foundation rolls out scheme to improve quality of education

**cvj** foundation

CVJ Foundation, the corporate social responsibility arm of Synthite Industries, has launched a novel scheme to improve the quality of education among schools in Ongole district in Andhra Pradesh.

The Foundation has tied up with Makkala Jagruthi, an NGO working in the field of education, and identified 11 schools for rolling out the programme. It seeks to create a holistic learning environment which will help them get not only better education but also life skills which they can put to use in daily life.

“We have selected five schools to begin with,” said Ms Liza George, the Secretary of the Foundation. “We will provide the schools with books and other reading materials in the local language. After assessing the implementation and effectiveness of the scheme, we will introduce more components in the scheme,” she said. For this financial year, the Foundation will spend about ₹15 lakh on the project.

The project, when fully functional, will benefit about 1,200 children. It will involve volunteers, parents, school teachers and the community to enrich the learning experience.

# On the cutting edge

With competition hotting up, companies look for tools that help them get and retain competitive edge, to remain and grow as the market leader. Synthite Industries Limited, world leader in spice oleoresins, also follows global majors in introducing new processes and concepts that help it retain the cutting edge. The company is now in the process of rolling out Total Productive Maintenance programme. **Pramod Simon** Lead-Production elucidates the points and processes that TPM involves. And the expectations from the employees to make it a success.

Total Productive Maintenance is a programme that has proven its utility in the manufacturing industry across the world. Born in Japan, it is a plant improvement methodology which enables continuous and rapid improvement through enhanced employee empowerment and involvement at all levels and closed-loop measurement of results. Developed in the 1960's, TPM is the prime mover behind the operational excellence of many Japanese companies and also of many top notch Indian companies today. It has been fine-tuned over the past several decades by the Japan Institute of Plant Maintenance (JIPM), Tokyo.

TPM is based on zero-loss concept viz., zero break downs, zero accidents and zero defects by addressing the root cause of the same. This helps to achieve high reliability and utilisation of equipment and reduce costs through minimising wastage of man-hours, raw material, power, tools etc and thus freeing up spare capacity. Thus TPM helps to markedly increase production while, at the same time, increasing employee morale and job satisfaction.

### Why TPM?

Following are some of the important objectives of TPM

- Avoid wastage in a quickly changing economic environment
- Producing goods without reducing

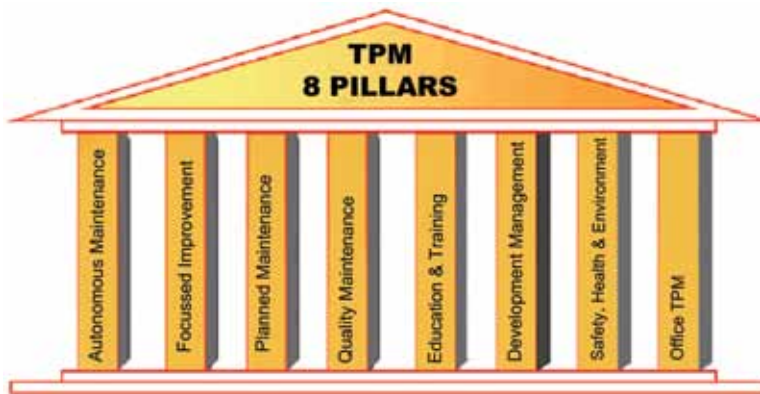
product quality

- Optimise cost
- Produce a low batch quantity at the earliest possible time
- Zero accidents
- Minimum life cycle cost
- Zero unplanned downtime
- Zero waste

### TPM Characteristics

- Optimum relationships between people, equipment and process
- Involvement of everyone from top leadership to shop floor workers
- A cross-functional approach, involving all departments
- Implementation through small group teamwork
- Data driven

### TPM is built on the following 8 pillars with 5S as a base.



### Difficulties faced in TPM implementation:

One of the difficulties in implementing TPM as a methodology is that it takes considerable time, even years, depending on the size of the organisation.

There is no quick way for implementing it. This is contradictory to the traditional management improvement strategies. Following are the other difficulties faced in TPM implementation.

- Typically people show strong resistance to change.
- Many people treat it as just another 'programme of the month', without paying any focus and also doubt about the effectiveness.
- Insufficient understanding of the methodology and philosophy by middle management
- TPM is not a quick fix approach; it involves cultural change to the way we do things
- Departmental barriers existing within Business Unit
- Many people considered TPM activities as additional work/threat

### Our Expectation from TPM

- A mindset change—fostering greater ownership and a higher confidence level among all the employees
- Doing things, better, faster and cheaper – increase in productivity and Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE)
- Transformation from 'I' to 'We' - achieve goals by working as a team
- From following others to

leading colleagues- sharing knowledge and experience

- From control to empowerment, from operator to innovator
- Continuously improving and beating our targets

# World Environment Day



Units of Synthite celebrated World Environment Day on June 5 with activities highlighting the message of the occasion. At Kadayiruppu, Chairman Mr C V Jacob launched the programmes by hoisting the flag



Works of Mr M M Nadesan of the Finance Department and Mr Renjith Lakshmanan, Information Systems Department bagged the first and second prizes, respectively, in the painting competition



Mr M M Nadesan (Finance) bagged the first prize for the best photograph with the theme 'Nature at its best'



The Marudur unit organised a meeting on environment protection, and launched a tree-planting programme



Synthite Calicut sponsored trophies for the local Anganwadi fest

## Synthite star

Mr Unni M. Jacob of the Production Department receives the Synthite Star-May 2012 award from Chairman Mr C V Jacob. He was selected for the award for an initiative in production process improvement.



Synthite Calicut distributed saplings to students in the local school