



Cargo Shop 2024 – Shippers and LSP Forum confers on pertinent topics in a wide-ranging, insightful deliberation with industry leaders and interactive delegates

VADODARA:

EXIM India's Cargo Shop 2024 – Shippers and LSP Forum, on Thursday, October 17, 2024 at Hotel Hyatt Place in Vadodara, set a new benchmark for industry gatherings in this leading cargo, logistics and transportation hub, leaving attendees thoroughly captivated by its engaging content and dynamic speakers & panelists. The conference brought together top experts, professionals and entrepreneurs from the entire spectrum of cargo handling and logistics, as well as supply chain specialists from eminent shippers/cargo owners, to delve into the multifaceted world of hazardous cargo, project cargo, containers, and more.

The theme of the event was: Vadodara



Mr Niraj Bansal



Mr Rajat Gupta



Mr Shashi Kallada

★ Mr Rajan Nair, Partner, All-time Shipping

★ Mr Rajat Gupta, Chief Manager, Container Corporation of India Limited (Guest of Honour)

★ Mr Niraj Bansal, Ex-IRS, CEO, Adani Hazira Port Ltd (Chief Guest)

Broadly, this session touched upon the opportunities in Vadodara given its rapid growth as a manufacturing and transportation hub, the immense scope for collaboration in logistics, the rail connectivity from Vadodara to the gateway ports, the salient features of ICD Varnama, the advantages of using Hazira Port and its major plans to expand multi-cargo infrastructure as well as services.



The Inaugural Session was graced by (from left) Mr Gurusharan Brahmbhatt, Mr Rajat Gupta, Mr Niraj Bansal, Mr Rajen Shah and Mr Rajan Nair

- The fast-growing Ex-Im Cargo & Logistics Hub.

It was an impressive line-up of distinguished speakers and panelists (see boxes), all leaders in their respective fields, who were complemented by a knowledgeable audience/delegates representing logistics and manufacturing. They enlivened each of the four sessions, that were well-formulated to provide deep insights and practical solutions to the prevailing challenges in the cargo and logistics sector.

Importance of training in haz cargo movement emphasised

The event began with a **Training Session** by Mr Shashi Kallada, Consultant & Trainer – Dangerous Goods By Rail, Road, River and Sea – on **New Developments & Safety Standards in HAZCHEM cargo movement**. He stressed on the importance of the IMDG Code and keeping abreast of its latest iterations, strictly adhering to international and domestic rules and regulations regarding dangerous goods, the responsibility of the shipper in compliance/classifying such cargo, the criticality of well-trained personnel across the board etc.

INAUGURAL SESSION

The Inaugural Session was graced by:

- ★ Mr Rajen Shah, Chairman & Managing Director, S J Logistics India Limited
- ★ Mr Gurusharan Brahmbhatt, President, Exim Club

FIRST TECHNICAL SESSION – BEST GLOBAL PRACTICES IN SAFE HANDLING OF DG & HAZCHEM CARGO

Moderated by Mr Shashi Kallada, it had as panelists:

★ Mr Pradeep Nair, Vice President – Chemical Logistics & Supply Chain Solutions, Goodrich Maritime Pvt. Ltd

★ Mr Anshuman Baruah, Additional General Manager, MSC Agency (India) Private Limited

★ Mr Sidhanth Lalwani, Director, Sun Logistics

★ Mr Eapen Varghese, Sr. Manager – Exports, Silox India Private Limited

★ Mr Vinod Rajpurohit, AGM - Logistics, Gulbrandsen Private Limited

This session highlighted the importance of following the global best practices in handling dangerous and hazchem cargo, adherence to the IMDG Code, the need for continuous training among all stakeholders without cutting corners, the primary responsibility of the shipper in ensuring compliance, enshrining a culture of safety, the need for sustainability in operations, avoiding mis-declaration and more.

SECOND TECHNICAL SESSION – STEADY GROWTH AND SEAMLESS HANDLING OF PROJECT CARGO IN GUJARAT & EXTENDED HINTERLAND

This session was moderated by Dr Sharmila Amin, Chairperson & Member Board, Globe Forwarding

Agencies Pvt. Ltd, with the panelists being:

- ★ Mr H. S. Acharya, Executive Director, Prism Logistics Pvt. Ltd
- ★ Mr Christopher Phillips, Director, Seatech Shipping & Projects (India) Pvt. Ltd
- ★ Mr Rahul Agrawal, CEO – Projects, Express Global Logistics Pvt. Ltd
- ★ Mr Gopinath Phargade, Head - Logistics, Prodair Air Products India Pvt. Ltd
- ★ Mr Vinod Kumar Vyas, Regional Logistics & Customs Leader – India & APAC, GE Power India Limited
- ★ Mr Pragnesh R. Patel, Manager – Logistics Cell,

- ★ Mr Nikhil Verdia, Director, Globestar Logistics LLP
- ★ Mr Shyamal Kumar Bakuli, General Manager - Exports, Grasim Industries Limited (MBDD)
- ★ Mr Ankur Dekivadia, Sr. Manager - Logistics & EXIM, Best Value Chem Pvt. Ltd

The current geopolitical situation and resultant disruptions to the supply chain were a topic of discussion in this session, where it was pointed out that the Cape rotation has increased shipping costs for the lines but the freight rates are going down. On technology and digitisation, it was said that they have boosted visibility but not really reduced the logistics costs. LSPs



There was enthusiastic delegate engagement

HEIC, L&T Heavy Engineering, Larsen and Toubro Limited

Some of the focus areas in this session were the challenges in handling project cargo in India such as the difficulties in getting permissions, the equipment and transportation infrastructure constraints etc., coastal as a preferred mode, multimodal solutions in project movement, need for ports to give priority to coastal project

continuously evolving, keeping updated with the changing norms and living up to the expectations of customers were emphasised. Changes in policies/regulations do impact exporters, with lack of awareness being a problem. The government was also lauded for facilitating ease of doing business. There was a preference expressed for MNC forwarders, with a call for Indian forwarders to have better clarity. While digital freight forwarding is coming to the fore, Indians generally prefer personalised service, it was pointed out. People, processes and technology should go together, it was stressed.

A highlight of the event was the audience engagement, demonstrated through the incisive and thought-provoking queries posed to the speakers and panelists, which prompted insightful responses. Questions ranged from the regulatory frameworks governing hazardous cargo, the prospects for further all-round infrastructure development to the latest advancements in project cargo logistics and the future of container shipping.

There was also a **Lucky Draw**, which saw four winners take home a wonderful prize:

- ★ Mr Parth Prajapati, Marketing Manager, Kalash Global Logistics Pvt. Ltd
- ★ Mr Paresh Mevani, Assistant Manager - Business Development, Softlink Global Private Limited
- ★ Mr Umangkumar Singh, Manager, DCM Shriram Limited
- ★ Ms Rakshata Poojary, Manager – Pricing, Kalash Global Logistics Pvt. Ltd

Cargo Shop 2024 was thus a high-quality deliberation that saw the best of speakers and panelists, as well as delegates, expressing substantial opinions on the challenges in navigating the complexities of the varied segments in cargo and logistics. An occasion to listen, learn, interact and network, it was appreciated by all.



cargo, taking risk management and compliance seriously, assembling at site versus moving the complete cargo, robust planning and innovative solutions from LSPs, their operational and technical expertise, and the importance of manufacturers and LSPs working together as partners throughout the process.

THIRD TECHNICAL SESSION – PARADIGM SHIFT IN CARGO & LOGISTICS – THEN & NOW

The focus of this session was on the technological trends, government initiatives and new developments in containerised and other cargo. The panelists were:

- ★ Mr Surjit Zaveri, Deputy General Manager, MSC Agency (India) Private Limited
- ★ Mr Prashant Popat, Director, Velji Dosabhai & Sons Pvt. Ltd
- ★ Mr Hiranmay Joshi, Secretary, Vadodara Customs House Agents' Association
- ★ Mr Sagar Thaker, General Manager, Seabird Marine Services Pvt. Ltd

THE SESSIONS COMPREHENSIVELY COVERED THE BROAD SPECTRUM OF CARGO AND LOGISTICS

Training Session by Shashi Kallada, Consultant & Trainer – Dangerous Goods by Rail, Road, River and Sea – New Developments & Safety Standards in HAZCHEM Cargo Movement

Mr Shashi Kallada began by saying that accidents do happen, not only on board vessels but also at ports. Dangerous goods are those listed by name in the IMDG Code, not listed by name but meeting the classification criteria of the Code, as well as those determined as dangerous by the competent authorities. It is the shipper's responsibility to classify what is dangerous, he said. He called for adhering to the latest amendments to the IMDG Code from next year itself and not wait for the mandatory date of January 2026. Also stressed were the importance of training, proper packing and placarding of the dangerous goods, the proper placement of the container on vessels and, importantly, strictly adhering to all the domestic and international regulations. In addition, he touched upon the importance of Safety Data Sheet, the CTU Code, creating a safety culture in handling such cargo, and refraining from mis-declaration.



Mr Shashi Kallada held an instructive training session on dangerous goods logistics

Inaugural Session



Participants in the Inaugural Session were (from left) Mr Gurusharan Brahmbhatt, Mr Rajat Gupta, Mr Niraj Bansal, Mr Rajen Shah and Mr Rajan Nair

Rajen Shah, Chairman & Managing Director, S J Logistics India Limited

Mr Rajen Shah, in his welcome address, described Vadodara as one of the fastest growing areas with regard to ex-im cargo, with its strong manufacturing base, a place where a lot of change has happened in recent years. He emphasised that LSPs are focused on giving services to shippers on a global scale and the need for collaboration.





Gurusharan Brahmbhatt, President, Exim Club

Mr Gurusharan Brahmbhatt, in his opening remarks, said the event has been organised at an appropriate time to bring together all stakeholders in cargo and logistics. Vadodara is an apt location, he added, being a significant industrial hub, strategic location with connectivity to major gateways, part of DMIC, DFC etc. As a representative of a leading association of exporters and importers, he highlighted some of their issues, including the geopolitical situation and the resultant supply chain disruptions, high tariffs and frequent duty changes, complex procedures, limited access to finance, regulatory variations, compliance requirements etc. Exim Club regularly interacts with the authorities and also organises seminars, training programmes etc. to highlight issues and find mutually agreeable solutions, he added. The opportunities for collaboration in logistics are immense, he said.

Rajan Nair, Partner, Alltime Shipping

Mr Rajan Nair, in the theme presentation, highlighted the importance of Gujarat as an important state for investment and business and exports & imports, facilitated by its ease of doing business policies and reforms. There is a wide array of industries across segments in Gujarat and especially the Vadodara region. Vadodara has proximity to gateway ports such as Hazira (the nearest), Pipavav, Mundra, Kandla, Nhava Sheva, and therefore the exporter here has multiple choices. Besides, Vadodara is a major rail hub, the DMIC and DFC pass through it, its key ICD Varnama is to be connected to the DFC, and it is also on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed rail route, he pointed out. What is lacking is cargo movement at Vadodara airport, which he hoped would change.



Rajat Gupta, Chief Manager, Container Corporation of India Limited (Guest of Honour)

Mr Rajat Gupta pointed out that the Railways has specific guidelines for handling dangerous goods, in tune with the IMDG Code, as well as project cargo. He emphasised the importance of CONCOR's GatiShakti Multimodal Logistics Park at Varnama, a single window facility which is a boon to the Vadodara trade. It handles significant volumes, which are increasing, and has helped reduce transit time and cost. The facility will soon be connected to the DFC, he said, with double-stack movement to Mundra, though double-stack to Nhava Sheva could take some time.



Niraj Bansal, Ex-IRS, CEO, Adani Hazira Port Ltd (Chief Guest)

Mr Niraj Bansal began by emphasising that more ports and enhanced port facilities are required to meet the challenges of India's growing exports. The Adani Group, which handles a significant quantity of the country's ex-im and containerised cargo, is geared up to develop more world class ports and believes they will generate cargo. The last 15-20 years have seen a lot of growth in Major as well as non-major ports, which will continue, he said. Hazira Port, which handles all types of cargo, is constantly looking at augmenting its facilities (more berths, chemical storage etc.) and seeks feedback from the trade on what more is needed for seamless cargo handling and movement, he emphasised. It aims for better facilitation, reducing pre-berthing delays and turnaround times, and more. Hazira will have rail connectivity going ahead and will be linked to the DFC, he highlighted. Also, it is enhancing the use of technology, with new terminal software being one of the initiatives. Today, 98% of the vehicles coming to the port obtain remote Port Entry Permit.

First Technical Session – Best Global practices in safe handling of DG & HAZCHEM cargo



The First Technical Session had as participants (from left) Mr Eapen Varghese, Mr Sidhanth Lalwani, Mr Pradeep Nair, Mr Shashi Kallada, Mr Anshuman Baruah and Mr Vinod Rajpurohit



Shashi Kallada, Consultant & Trainer - Dangerous Goods By Rail, Road, River and Sea (Moderator)

Mr Shashi Kallada, in brief remarks during the session, said there are some CHAs/LSPs who advise shippers to cut corners, even manipulate the Safety Data Sheet. This is mostly due to ignorance because they do not know what the actual hazard is during transport. He also touched upon the importance of the Code of Safe Practice for Cargo Stowage and Securing (CSS Code).

Anshuman Baruah, Additional General Manager, MSC Agency (India) Private Limited

Mr Anshuman Baruah pointed out that certain cargoes are extremely sensitive and therefore need separate acceptance criteria. The focus is on safety, packaging to eliminate the risks. He touched upon the importance of the CTU Code, which has a lot of recommendations for shippers. He said one is comfortable with shippers who do due diligence, but there are some who try to cut corners with regard to safety. Which is why there is need for acceptance criteria and exclusion as one cannot risk incidents onboard ships, which can happen ashore on rail and road as well. It was emphasised that the flow of information is very important, right from the shipper. It is the shipper's responsibility to classify and properly declare the dangerous cargo. There is mandatory storage and segregation also to be complied with. If one is lax with regard to safety and compliance, the losses resulting from an incident could be hundreds/thousands of times the value of the cargo, he cautioned. If shippers comply, the number of incidents will come down. MSC has its own planning, survey and inspection process, he added.





Eapen Varghese, Sr. Manager – Exports, Silox India Private Limited

Mr Eapen Varghese listed what he called the 10 commandments his company follows in dangerous goods manufacturing and handling: classification and identification; proper packaging; labelling and marking; documentation; training and certification; compatibility of materials; choosing the right mode of transport; emergency response planning; compliance with international regulations; continuous monitoring and improvement. If these are adhered to, 99% of the problems in the transportation of dangerous cargo can be removed, he stressed. He also emphasised on the importance of truthful declaration and the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).



Vinod Rajpurohit, AGM - Logistics, Gulbrandsen Private Limited

Mr Vinod Rajpurohit said shippers have to take a lot of precautions while moving dangerous cargo. The shipper is responsible for classification and is also accountable if something goes wrong. He stressed on the importance of training for shippers - in IMDG Code, for example - and also made the point that it is the shipper who is responsible for the documentation. Never mis-declare cargo; if not sure, engage a consultant to help you out. Take your time, because this is very important. He highlighted that the culture of safety is ingrained in his company. Safety first is the philosophy. They don't work with ill-informed LSPs, and prefer to load at the nearest port. Journey route analysis is done frequently and even drivers are trained. He also highlighted the assistance of Nicer Globe, the initiative of Indian Chemical Council for transportation safety.

Sidhanth Lalwani, Director, Sun Logistics

Mr Sidhanth Lalwani lamented the fact that some shippers don't take training and keeping oneself updated seriously. Some are very proactive about training, but there are some who say that I have been doing this for many years and know everything. That's like saying that I have been doing accounts for many years and therefore don't need to learn about GST. Experience is important but being updated about the new norms is critical, he stressed. The IMDG Code is amended every two years and hence upgradation and training are a must. He also talked about training of drivers being inadequate and how his company is focusing on animation-based training that is easier for drivers to understand. Showing a video rings more of a bell, he said.



Pradeep Nair, Vice President – Chemical Logistics & Supply Chain Solutions, Goodrich Maritime Pvt. Ltd

Mr Pradeep Nair pointed out that while there is a lot more awareness today about safety and training, many do it only to comply for certification purposes. But the key question is whether things are being practiced, being implemented on the ground? That is more important. There are 3 types of shippers, he said: those who monitor throughout the supply chain right from manufacture to delivery (few in number); those who adhere to compliances only in their factory; and finally those who are just not bothered about anything and only want to save a few dollars. He called for a culture and ecosystem of safety to be embedded in the entire supply chain. If this does not happen, all the training is of no use. He emphasised that Goodrich gives top priority to safety, and also highlighted the importance of sustainability and caring for the environment in dangerous goods handling.

Second Technical Session – Steady growth and seamless handling of project Cargo in Gujarat & Extended Hinterland



The Second Technical Session saw (from left) Mr Vinod Kumar Vyas, Mr H. S. Acharya, Mr Gopinath Phargade, Dr Sharmila Amin, Mr Rahul Agrawal, Mr Christopher Phillips and Mr Pragnesh R. Patel express their views



Dr Sharmila Amin, Chairperson & Member Board, Globe Forwarding Agencies Pvt. Ltd (Moderator)

Dr Sharmila Amin set the tone for the session by pointing out that project cargo is not as simple as one might think. It is not just about moving from point A to point B. It could involve a journey from point A to point A.1, a detour, another pit stop, before eventually getting to point B. Project cargo logistics is tough in a country like India, she stressed, and lauded Indian LSPs for their handling of this challenging job despite the constraints.

H. S. Acharya, Executive Director, Prism Logistics Pvt. Ltd

Mr H. S. Acharya highlighted some of the project cargo logistics assignments that his company has proficiently handled, involving consignments of massive dimensions across vast distances through multiple modes of transport. Gujarat manufactures a lot of such equipment, he pointed out, in sectors like refinery, fertiliser, power sector etc. It also has the advantage of a huge coastline, with numerous ports that facilitate smooth roll-off, roll-on among other assistance. He, however, lamented that it takes too much time getting clearances from the various authorities. Rules regarding road movement are tough. The cost of transportation is high, which is beyond the control of LSPs. For example, it is very expensive to charter self-propelled barges from abroad to move cargo during foul weather. He urged all stakeholders to work together and put in their best efforts to bring down the cost. Coastal movement should be given priority and the cabotage law should be relaxed, he added.



Christopher Phillips, Director, Seatech Shipping & Projects (India) Pvt. Ltd

Mr Christopher Phillips highlighted that his company does specialised chartering of project cargo ships, and also pointed out that Deendayal, Hazira, Mundra and Dahej are some of the key ports from where project cargo is moved. He made special mention of Deendayal, having 4 dedicated berths for project cargo handling, besides giving priority to project/coastal cargo, which helps keep costs under control. It is also cost-effective. He also appreciated the facilities and facilitations at the other ports. Technical factors should be taken into account while fixing ships from specific ports, he said, adding that one should try to get some grace period, waiver for swell, tide issues etc. Coastal cabotage norms have to change, he added.

Rahul Agrawal, CEO - Projects, Express Global Logistics Pvt. Ltd

Mr Rahul Agrawal talked about risk management in project cargo logistics, encompassing route planning, transportation plan, check lists, risk identification and mitigation plans. Surface transport, heavy lift shipping and multimodal transport in project cargo movement all have their risks and challenges that have to be taken into account. He also highlighted the importance his company gives to surveys, the use of IT (software), stowage plan on vessel, compliances and permissions be it MoRTH, PWD etc. We take compliances very seriously, he stressed.

**Gopinath Phargade, Head - Logistics, Prodair Air Products India Pvt. Ltd**

Mr Gopinath Phargade began by pointing out that there are different types of projects – small, medium, large – which may variously require building at factory and moving to project site, building at project site, assembling at project site etc.; the challenge is complex supply chain management solutions at different locations around the country and globe. This entails cost control and risk. Some risk we convert into cost, some risk we mitigate, some risk we tally alongside the project, he said. Some of the challenges are insufficient infrastructure, market volatility, geopolitical issues, all of which have to be managed. When LSPs understand these difficulties faced by shippers, they will come up with innovative solutions, he emphasised. What is required is robust planning, good relations with LSPs and the statutory authorities, focus on compliance. The plan has to be discussed in detail with the LSPs and clients. One has to identify the right partner, right resources, right transport equipment. Technology integration is also important, he added. LSP and shipper tech integration is challenging.

**Vinod Kumar Vyas, Regional Logistics & Customs Leader – India & APAC, GE Power India Limited**

Mr Vinod Kumar Vyas dwelt on the importance of technology and how tech/software integration between manufacturers and LSPs can be challenging. This integration is essential to ensure that the overall process is smooth and there is no repetition. Recent developments in AI, machine learning etc. have helped in better integration and facilitation, he said. There are also many 3rd party apps available. However, there are companies that are sceptical because of the fear of cyber security. But one can do the due diligence. Technology brings huge benefits; it can be used for logistics cost estimation, in the bidding process and more. One should know how to implement it properly, he emphasised.

**Pragnesh R. Patel, Manager – Logistics Cell, HEIC, L&T Heavy Engineering, Larsen and Toubro Limited**

Mr Pragnesh R. Patel pointed out that as his company's logistics involves end-to-end movement of super ODCs and heavy cargo, the input of LSPs is critical for any project. We consider LSPs as our business partner and for us it is important that we work together, he emphasised. There are multiple stages, starting from estimation, to delivery, in which LSPs can be involved. In the manufacturing stage, LSPs are needed to bring in raw materials from across the world on time. They also facilitate movement of materials and equipment. If necessary, they can represent the company at customer site. So LSPs are required at every stage for the safe and on-time delivery of the project. He said the company also supports LSPs to develop their capabilities. To encourage them we have started Best LSP Awards, he highlighted. On cost versus quality in choosing LSPs, he stressed that his company strongly believes in quality – detailed planning, transparency, on-time delivery and safe delivery. But cost is also important to remain competitive in the market. So it works with LSPs to minimise the cost of transportation as is possible.



Third Technical Session – Paradigm Shift in Cargo & Logistics – Then & now (Focus on technological trends, Govt initiatives, new developments in containerised & other cargo)



The Third Technical Session saw participation from (from left) Mr Ankur Dekivadia, Mr Nikhil Verdia, Mr Surjit Zaveri, Mr Prashant Popat, Mr Sagar Thaker, Mr Hiranmay Joshi and Mr Shyamal Kumar Bakuli

Surjit Zaveri, Deputy General Manager, MSC Agency (India) Private Limited

Mr Surjit Zaveri made the point that due to the impact of the current geopolitical situation, there is hard negotiation happening between shippers and lines. Shippers are faced with the challenge of inventory management and are looking to minimise their risks. There is delay in orders but cancellations are rare, he said. On freight rates, he said that the rates are, in fact, going down, but the cost to the shipping industry has increased due to the extended rotation via the Cape of Good Hope. Digitisation and technology have currently not resulted in reduced costs but have helped to plan better and increase the visibility, he said. Hence one doesn't have to keep large inventories, which facilitates some cost saving because it will be just-in-time cargo. All stakeholders need to be better connected for cost saving to happen. He also highlighted his line's mainline and adhoc feeder services connecting Hazira. On digital forwarding versus traditional forwarding, he said Indian customers largely prefer the personalised touch. Digitally, the rates are more AI-based, but one generally moves with the trend in the market.



Hiranmay Joshi, Secretary, Vadodara Customs House Agents' Association

Mr Hiranmay Joshi said that frequent changes in policies/regulations/procedures do affect the trade, impacting refunds, necessitating corrections in shipping bill etc. GST was something that brought in its challenges. When new schemes are declared, shippers face problems due to lack of knowledge. The ITC HS Codes change every two years but many exporters-importers are unaware, which results in issues. So awareness of the changes effected by the government is important to plan accordingly, he emphasised. Many stakeholders have opted for AEO certification, he added.



Prashant Popat, Director, Velji Dosabhai & Sons Pvt. Ltd

Mr Prashant Popat said that as long as one provides good service with visibility, it makes no difference whether the forwarder is a multinational or a domestic player. He also made the point that having AEO certification hasn't given much of an advantage.

**Sagar Thaker, General Manager, Seabird Marine Services Pvt. Ltd**

Mr Sagar Thaker stressed that CFS operators have to keep themselves updated of the changing norms and processes and provide services accordingly, highlighting the value of CFSs as a single point of contact offering services to multiple stakeholders. LCL at Hazira is an untapped market which the stakeholders need to explore, he said.

**Nikhil Verdia, Director, Globestar Logistics LLP**

Mr Nikhil Verdia highlighted the high expectations of exporters and importers, who want good visibility of their cargo, transparency, on-time tracking and speedy delivery. LSPs have increasingly moved towards digitisation and are using various software, thereby facilitating end-to-end tracking of shipments. Automation is also a key area of focus, especially in warehousing where there is use of robotics which minimises human error and reduces pilferage. Sustainability is also becoming important for LSPs, who are trying to provide electric vehicle solutions as a last mile delivery option in order to reduce their carbon footprint, he said. The ultimate aim is customer satisfaction.

Shyamal Kumar Bakuli, General Manager - Exports, Grasim Industries Limited (MBDD)

Mr Shyamal Kumar Bakuli pointed out that there is a gap in service level between MNC forwarders and Indian forwarders and expressed his general preference for the former. He added that he seeks better clarity from Indian forwarders and also said it would be helpful if Indian forwarders have presence overseas. On digital freight forwarding, he said that while it simplifies certain processes, the level of service needs improvement. Ultimately, exporters have to support it. He also made the point that though a lot of policy and regulatory changes are happening, there is lag in implementation. It is not easy because everyone is not ready to accept the change. That is the main challenge for the government.

**Ankur Dekivadia, Sr. Manager - Logistics & EXIM, Best Value Chem Pvt. Ltd**

Mr Ankur Dekivadia complimented the government for facilitating ease of doing business, doing away with many unnecessary compliances, which has seen India's ranking in this area significantly improve in the last decade. However, infrastructure could be better, he said. For example, the road condition in many places is not good enough. This affects cost. He stressed on the importance of people, process and technology – the benefits of technological advances, the importance of people knowing how to use technology, the acceptance by all stakeholders. Things are moving but should happen faster and should be taken to the next level, he added.



LSPs, shippers & consignees and more were all there





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