



Birla Shakti Concrete to set up two greenfield plants in Maharashtra

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India has an impending need for infrastructure to build and sustain a robust economy, what are your views on the same?

Without infrastructure everything else will remain just a dream. A good infrastructure can only transform economy to reality.

From a distributor of established brands to a RMC manufacturer what prompted you to engage in this segment, how has the journey been so far?

I began my career with cement trading 20 years ago and expanded my business by venturing into civil contracting. Our civil contracting business began to grow. We got lot of project works in 2009. We thought of having captive plants on each site around Pune because transporting them to each site for mixing operations was very tedious and cumbersome. We, then, installed six plants of 30 cubic meter per hour on each site. We received more projects and the numbers of sites started increasing. It was very difficult to maintain them so we decided to have one large central plant of 120 cubic meter per hour of international standards instead of 10 multi-location plants from which we could service all the sites. That is how this RMC plant came into existence. Before starting this plant, I visited similar plants abroad where they cater to very large scale volumes. I decided to import this plant from Liebherr, Germany. After doing that we thought since this is one of the best plants in the country why not sell concrete to others also. That is how we ventured into commercial concrete.

What is your outlook on the RMC market in India, how is it poised, what will be the major growth drivers?

Though the readymix concrete (RMC) business in India is still in its nascent stage, we expect the market to grow by 20 percent. With the real estate sector evolving, the use of new age construction techniques, conformity to BS norms and the trend of third party audits is pushing the demand for consistent and superior quality concrete which only RMC can cater to. Today, there is greater awareness regarding the advantages of going in for RMC vs site mix concrete. Plus with time, concrete mix designs are going to become more complex and engineered to suit specialized applications. And this is going to further spur the demand for RMC.

What is the advantage of using RMC over the conventional materials? What are your various offerings in RMC?

RMC gives consistent and excellent quality. It is environment-friendly and economical than conventional methods. RMC can address to concrete demand on call thus keeping with the pace of site.

What are the procedures in place to ensure proper raw material is utilised in manufacturing the end product and the quality of the end product manufactured is as per defined specifications?

Our plant is India's largest and most advanced ready mix concrete production facility. It can produce the complete range of market-leading, high performance concrete mixes from M7.5 to M110 grades (including M10 pumpable concrete), designed to meet stringent IS Code specifications and new-age construction applications. Our plant is equipped with Hi-Tech laboratory for testing of raw material, SAP and other sophisticated software to prevent tampering by plant operators. We use only Birla Shakti Cement 43 Grade for its consistent quality and strength of concrete. The mixed designs are thoroughly tested to yield optimum performance of the concrete and the concrete achieves more strength than what IS Code prescribes. Better finishing of construction is achievable due to pumpable mix. The end product is better quality concrete due to plant mix as compared to site mix. We use only processed fly ash. We have availability of well trained lab staff to monitor concrete mixes round the clock. We have installed a fully-fledged PLC controlled Liebherr plant with twin shaft mixer imported from Germany. Moisture probes are fixed in inline bins to control quantity of water intake. Organised plant layout and raw material storage facilities ensure optimum raw material usage.

In real estate which are some of the major projects/clients where Birla Shakti ReadyMix Concrete was utilised?

We have around 300 big ticket clients around Pune like Sobha Developers, Rahejas Kumar properties, Kolte Patil Real Estate, NCC Ltd., Goel Ganga, Karia Realty and Suyogdham Infrastructures LLP. We cater to clients from real estate conglomerates, design-build firms, construction professionals, road contractors, small bungalow people and many more.

In a market where established names operate in the RMC segment, what is the USP of Birla Shakti Ready Mix Concrete?

It is also the most technically advanced state-of-the-art digital plant. The global technology we have here is testament to our commitment to meet the country's growing demand for high performance, cost-effective and environmental-friendly building solutions. We have a fully automated and computer-aided design manufacturing facility which includes Putzmeister truck mounted Moli Pumps, Putzmeister Boom Placer, a state-of-the-art concrete testing lab, and water recycling plant. In our plant we use only BASF admixture for manufacturing different brands of concrete. We have the single largest fleet of Liebherr transit mixers mounted on AMW vehicles, with GPS tracking systems which ensure prompt and timely delivery.

The plant operates under most stringent, self-imposed quality control regime in the industry. That is what leads us to be acknowledged as the market leader for on-time delivery and commitment to excellence, strength and durability. We have many firsts to our credit. We are the first plant in India to offer customers a mobile application for placing orders. Our onsite research and testing laboratory and demonstration facility not only develops concrete, meeting specific type of application and jobsite requirements, but also schedules regular training workshops to educate customers, contractors, distributors and all other industry partners on the developments in the concrete production.

What kind of capacity addition are you looking at in the coming years? Where will the additional manufacturing units be set up?

Birla Shakti Concrete, a franchise of Vasavadatta Cement and Kesoram Industries, the flagship company of BK Birla Group of Companies is embarking on an expansion drive with two green field plants in Maharashtra. The first plant is expected to be set up by 2018 and the second plant will come up by 2020. The plants, one in Chakan and the second in Navi Mumbai are expected to be commissioned with a total investment of ` 600 million by 2020. The company started operations in 2013 with an annual production capacity of 4.5 lac cubic meters and today has a total installed capacity of producing 6.5 lac cubic metres of ready-mix concrete. The new manufacturing units will add nearly 13 lac cubic meters of concrete capacity summing up the aggregate capacity of the company to 20 lac cubic meters annually.