

“We aim to provide ‘Best of the World’ to our customers”



Ish Mohan Garg, Chairman Imerys India & Vice President - South West Asia (HTS)

The refractory industry is posed with several challenges. At this point, reorganisation of and synergies among different businesses is one of the key priorities, believes Ish Mohan Garg, Chairman of Imerys India & Vice President - South West Asia (HTS). In an interview with Iron & Steel Review Magazine, Ish Mohan Garg elaborates on this particular aspect and shares with us his growth strategy for Imerys India, as its Chairman. We also get to know his outlook for the Indian and Southeast Asian market in this interview.

Now you have taken over as Chairman of Imerys India which is an executive role. So, what are your plans to take all the brands to a new level of success?

With the market-focussed reorganisation of various businesses at Imerys, we firmly believe to see new and innovative product developments and service, addressing customers' pain-areas, a more customer-centric approach and provide complete solution package to serve our customers most efficiently. With various businesses coming closer with unified approach of Imerys India, we aim to provide 'Best of the World' to our customers and become the most preferred employer in the industry. Imerys and Calderys have always been a front runner when it comes to giving back to society with doing sustainable business and continuously driving them for the benefit of industry and society at large.

How can the prevailing issue of raw materials for the Indian refractory industry be handled? How can the challenges be overcome?

The refractory industry has always provided undying support to the entire core industries in India, however, its efforts mostly go unacknowledged and unappreciated. The major pain-areas of the refractory industry are fluctuating raw-material costs in the international market, over-dependence on China for raw-materials and low encouragement to mineral exploration quests in India.

Calderys has always been a trend-setter in the market. To overcome the raw material challenges in the refractory industry, Calderys has made sustainable efforts to offer GREEN REFRACTORY. To overcome the scarcity of raw materials, Calderys has started initiatives in *Recycling* and *Reusing* existing or worn-out refractory. Recycling and Reuse of existing refractory require a high level of skills, use of cutting-edge technology and years of expertise. After successfully clearing all quality checks and achieving quality certification, the recycled material is ready for consumption.

How to encourage the young talent to train and retrain them to join your industry?

With our journey of 100+ years of excellence, Imerys and Calderys have managed to attract and train talents from top institutes to absorb in the mineral and refractory industry. Our industry frequently faces the challenge of talent crunch, hence we have partnered with various institutes to create a centre of excellence. We have partnered with top institutes in India to create centre of excellence programmes like IGP & GET, where we work in nurturing fresh young talents from college and make them industry ready.

We are training youth to provide the skills and expertise in refractory application and installation through our S2S programme (Skill-ability to Sustain-ability). Through this effort, we aim to create a skilled workforce for the entire refractory industry. Imerys and Calderys is sponsoring and providing technical support to a third party training institute to provide classroom training and onsite experience to youth and train them to provide skilled supervisors and masons for the refractory industry.

What is your outlook for the Indian & Southeast Asian refractory industry?

There is a thin line between Demand and Supply which needs to be carefully balanced to do sustainable business. From a demand perspective, India's per capita consumption of steel, cement, aluminium, automobile and oil & gas products is between 1/4th to 1/6th of World average consumption, which itself ensures that our end markets would continue to grow at a healthy rate. With a similar analogy, the refractory industry would also continue to grow at a healthy pace.

From supply perspective, we continue to see an exponential growth in the demand for premium products and high-quality services, which would result in faster growth of world-class refractory producers as compared to commodity players.

At Calderys we always believe in providing customer delight with our wide range of innovative and differential solutions.

As the Chairman of Imerys India, what would be your growth strategy?

With a new set of challenges comes great responsibility. Today, with market-focussed reorganisation of different businesses at Imerys, there arises a subtle need of bringing more synergy among

businesses, which is one of my key priorities. We are going through a crucial time where we need to leverage the strengths of each business and reduce redundancies.

South-West Asia has emerged as one of the fastest-growing markets, hence we would continue to concentrate our resources and energies here. There are multiple promising Greenfield and promising Brownfield initiatives in the pipeline which would definitely help us to grow our presence in the region.

Imerys, a Material Science company, aims at creating an amalgamation of core industry with the latest technologies by embracing innovations like Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, 3D Printing and Laser Technology. At Imerys and Calderys, we have started to leverage these technologies to provide our customers with best-in-class experience and provide better value for their spend.

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