India’s Leap into Interplanetary Space Technology
Ravi Raghavan, BFW, Bangalore

AS I WRITE THESE LINES, India’s first rocket to Mars, Mangalyan, has left Earth’s orbit and entered into the second phase of its journey. Mangalyan completed six revolutions around Earth before taking the path to Mars. It is scheduled to orbit Mars in September 2014. The success of the mission would ensconce India into a select club of nations including the United States, Europe, and Russia, whose probes have orbited or landed on Mars.

The remarkable feat underscores two facts. Firstly, not many spacecrafts of first-time missions are able to leave Earth’s orbit. Secondly, India’s Mars mission operates on one-tenth of NASA’s similar mission. The secret lies in top class technology and execution, and at least two-third of the Mangalyan parts being economical. These parts are manufactured in India by Indian companies.

This establishes the capability of the public and the private sector in India to produce space age products in an economical manner. It remains a surprise that while India rubs shoulders with the most developed nations at the highest rung of technology, it continues to look at others when it boils down to addressing its machining requirements. India’s consumption of machine tools at US $85-87 billion places it at the sixth place in the world, but the production of machine tools domestically remains US $800 million, or the 13th in the world. The gap is bewildering.

India has to move faster to bridge this gap and SHE CAN. To jump the first few notches we have to reorganise and reengineer ourselves with dedication and focus. Connoisseurs of machining should find BFW offerings more interesting as the year 2014 unfolds.

I am sure 2014 will bring happiness and prosperity to all – Happy New Year!
YOU HAVE BEEN READING ABOUT changes at BFW in the recent issues of the BFW Update. Directed at all inclusive progress, these changes augur well.

Let me update you on two more developments.

Mr Ravi Raghavan has been inducted as the Chief Executive Officer of BFW. An engineer with a management qualification, Ravi has already started working on plans to take the company to the next level of customer delight and value proposition. Before joining BFW in September 2013, Ravi was the Managing Director for the India Region of the HVAC multinational, Tecumseh. He has also been associated with Kelvinator of India, Crompton Greaves, and Aishthom India. Ravi has twenty-five years’ operational and strategic experience in engineering and manufacturing.

The second development is the joining of the BFW Board of Directors by Mr T Parabrahman. He joined the Board in November 2013. Parab does not need an introduction to India’s machine tool and manufacturing circles. He is credited with several innovative initiatives as the Chairman of the Karnataka State Council of the Confederation of Indian Industry. He is also credited with building Kirloskar Toyota Textile Machinery Limited into a vibrant organisation as its Managing Director. He started his career with BFW in 1974, and later also worked with Mysore Kirloskar Limited.

We are committed to ensure that BFW sets new milestones in enhancing your experience. All developments in the direction will continue.

My best wishes on the New Year 2014!

Mail

HOW ABOUT BFW STARTING ITS own institute of technology exclusively training its engineers and administrators moulding to the BFW Vision 2020 needs and policies as Next Gen soldiers!

A Suryanarayana Murty, Secunderabad

BRITANNIA ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT IS HAPPY with the performance of the H650HE horizontal machining center and the tremendous technical support received from BFW.

Ashis Kumar Ghosh, Britannia Engineering Limited, Kolkata

THE MACHINES SUPPLIED BY BFW including the double column machining center DMC 2000 are good in quality with optimum uptime, meeting process requirements of critical parameters to the specification. BFW’s service support is excellent.

Samik Sett, Hans Machineries Pvt Ltd, Howrah

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Meet Ravi, the BFW CEO
Amitabhb Varma, BFW, Bangalore

AV: AFTER 25 YEARS’ SUCCESSFUL track record in HVAC and other popular segments, what drew you to the machine tool segment?

RR: Like Yogis, engineers too exercise a continuous quest. Both seek knowledge and salvation. To an engineer, perfection is salvation. Achieving 50 ppm at the line could mean maintaining a much higher, 5 ppm level at the initial point. How to achieve such a high level consistently? It was this quest that caught my interest in machine tools which serve the manufacturing activity as mother machines.

All Indians, and especially all engineers, must work towards rejuvenating India’s economy. One way of doing that is by increasing the share of the manufacturing industry in GDP from the present 15% to 25%. Boosting up manufacturing calls for improving the capability and the capacity of machine tools produced in our country. What would be a better way of doing that than joining the largest machine tool company in the country? Having dabbled with end products for so many years, engaging with the mission critical – the machine tools – imparts a well rounded finish to my experience.

AV: Which personalities have influenced you the most?

RR: My father was a firm believer in fairness. Education must result in creation of greater opportunities and betterment in the quality of life across the board, he felt. His views often guide and help me in taking balanced decisions.

A meeting with Mr Ratan Tata left an indelible impression on me. The way Mr Tata conducts himself, his courtesy, simplicity and truthfulness just bowl you over. He is so humble in spite of being one of the largest business icons in the world.

Talking of humbleness, Sachin Tendulkar is perhaps the ultimate. Considering his young age and glamorous profession, his down-to-earth manner is amazing. I am not aware of a single instance in the illustrious career of this cricketer when he was less than dignified.

AV: What is your favourite pastime?

RR: Photography and reading management books keep me occupied. I find books by Dr Devdutt Patanaik specially interesting. I am presently reading his book, ‘A Very Indian Approach to Management – Business Sutra’. I am also trying to improve my golf, and on the sidelines, am trying to pick up Mandarin. Perhaps very soon I should also start learning German.

AV: Please tell us something about your family.

RR: I have a small family. I have already talked about my father. My wife is a bio-technology professional. We have a school-going daughter who is very much interested in painting.

AV: Now that you are at the helm of affairs at BFW, what should the stakeholders (employees, vendors, share holders, customers, society, and government) expect?

RR: All the stakeholders mentioned by you are critical for the success of BFW. I aim at inclusive growth for all with teamwork, mutual trust, and greater transparency,
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Glimpses

Kerala Minister for Industries and Information Technology Mr PK Kunhalikutty awards the ‘Silver Shield for Star Performer - Large Enterprise’ to BFW’s Mr R Keerthi in a ceremony at Thiruvananthapuram on September 24, 2013. The Government of India recognition is towards BFW’s outstanding export performance in 2011-12. BFW’s exports that year largely consisted of special and regular machining centers and general purpose conventional milling machines.

Ms Preeti Saran, Ambassador of India in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has a word with BFW’s Mr Ramesh Babu (back to camera) and Mr Keerthi (partially visible) at the Metalex exhibition held in October 2013 in Vietnam.

BFW CNC high speed vertical machining center Dhruva is demonstrated at the Metalex 2013 exhibition in Bangkok in November 2013. The BFW machine was displayed on the Toyota Tsusho M&E Thailand stand.

Mr Abdur Rajjak, President, Bangladesh Engineering Owners’ Association (extreme right) with (L-R) BFW’s Mr Rajib Ghosh, Mr Aolad Hossain, proprietor, Mitali Engineering Works and Mr Saiful Islam, proprietor, Progoti Engineering Works at the Bangladesh International Industrial & Engineering Technology Trade Show in Bangladesh in October, 2013.
SHRIYUT GIRIDHAR DASJI KOTHARI, THE founder of the Kothari Group, lived with an insatiable ambition to serve the nation in myriad ways. One of these ways was to bring top quality medical care within the reach of the common man. The Kothari Medical Centre (KMC) in Kolkata stands as a testimony to Shriyut Kothari’s ambition.

Founded in 1971, KMC has already witnessed about 25,000 laparoscopic cholecystectomy surgeries, many falling under the ‘complicated and high risk’ category. Credit for performing the first laparoscopic surgery in eastern India goes to the Centre. The procedure was performed in the year 1992.

KMC also holds the unique experiences of successfully performing laparoscopic surgery on a four-year old child, a 102 years old patient, and on a 120-kg woman.

The Centre is the first one in India to use fibroscan non-invasive transient elastography for assessing liver fibrosis in chronic liver diseases, hepatitis B and C, and cirrhosis of liver. The department of gastroenterology at the Centre is the first one in Eastern India to have the state-of-the-art endoscopic ultrasound (EUS).

KMC has many more firsts to its credit. For example, KMC is the first facility in the Eastern Zone to perform double balloon enteroscopy, opening a new vista in the treatment of complicated gastro-intestinal diseases.

KMC operation theatres are one of the best in Eastern India. All operations are performed under cardiac monitoring and pulse oxymetry. Seven operation theatres here can run simultaneously with the help of C-arm, enabling operative X-rays whenever necessary.

Dermatology, one of the busiest KMC OPDs, is fully equipped for skin punch biopsies, electro-cautery, and mini punch skin grafts for vitiligo.

The gastro-medicine department is regarded as a proud heritage of KMC, a pioneer in different endoscopic techniques. The newer endoscopic procedures adopted here set milestones in treating various ailments where no alternative mode of management is available.

KMC specialties include spinal surgery, oncology and onco surgery, surgical gastro-enterology, obstetrics and gynaecology, orthopaedics, urology, haematology and medical oncology, plastic and cosmetic surgery, ophthalmology, nephrology, neuro-medicine, neuro-surgery, respiratory medicine, critical care unit, cardiology with non-invasive back up, and general surgery.
THE LAST ISSUE OF THE Gray Matter Corner raised the challenge of saving a delicate bird. The bird was in a vertical hole in a tree on a beach. A snake slithered nearby. The narrowness of the hole made it impossible to catch the bird by hand. No stick or any other material of that length was available nearby. Abandoning the place would have meant leaving the bird to the mercy of the snake.

"Pour some water in the hole. The bird will come out and escape," wrote Mr Roy Abraham, Guardian Controls, Kerala. Mr MP Manjunatha, L&T Construction Equipment, Bangalore, suggested filling sand slowly into the vertical hole till the bird came out of the hole. Mr T Vasu of Force Motors also offered pouring sand to rescue the bird. A response was also received from Mr A Suryanarayana Murty, Secunderabad.

As you read these lines, Republic Day will be around. The Indian tricolour will be proudly displayed at every conceivable location. No matter from which side you look at it, the flag of India looks the same. But then, don't all present national flags look the same on both sides? Or is there a national flag with distinctly different obverse and reverse sides?

Please send your response to amitabh@bfw.co.in.
I WAS GROGGY. AND I was confused. My shirt had acquired a dark uneven pattern. So had the trousers. The rear seat of the car had become very uncomfortable. The car did not even appear to be moving.

“What is your residential phone number,” asked someone, perhaps not for the first time. I was not sure whether I knew him. I blurted out the number mechanically, realising that I was no longer in the car, or to be precise, in the taxi I had engaged at 3.30 in the morning to reach home – I was sitting on a hospital bench in blood soaked clothes.

The watch read 5 am. I should have been home half-an-hour ago. After all, my home is only about an hour’s drive from the Kempegowda International Airport.

I had a splitting headache. My forehead was bleeding. The taxi had obviously been involved in a mishap.

It took me a couple of surgeries over a fortnight to resume office and ignore the doctors’ protests. Alarmed reactions from colleagues indicated that my bloodshot eyes and the deep gash on my face did not go down too well with them. But they were happy that I had survived. The driver, too, had survived, albeit with a broken leg. He said that the headlights of the oncoming vehicle had momentarily blinded him, causing the car to ride over the median and end up as wreck. For about half an hour he remained caught between the seat and the steering wheel, while I lay unconscious. The passersby were indifferent. Finally a group of youngsters recognised me and brought us to the hospital.

Happy to be back and working again, I thank each one of you for your good wishes. Many of you have asked about my post-accident resolution.

It is simple: If you must travel in a taxi in the dead of night, please keep the driver engaged in conversation. As they say – alert today, alive tomorrow!

(Senior Vice President Global Marketing Syed Amjed met with a serious accident on September 23, 2013. He recounts the experience for many BFW well-wishers who expressed their deep concern and prayed for his speedy recovery.)