

BIEC CELEBRATING THE FIRST STEPS IN A MILESTONE JOURNEY

V.Anbu, CEO, Bangalore International Exhibition Centre, talks about BIEC's journey over the years leading to the 10th Anniversary Celebrations and how it has carved a prestigious standing for itself.

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BIEC's institution and growth over the past 10 years

The first 10 years of Bangalore International Exhibition Centre's (BIEC) journey is just a baby step towards realizing larger goals. Forty-eight years ago, 1969 to be precise, a movement took place on India's manufacturing horizon which would change its destiny forever. Having witnessed first-hand how large-scale exhibitions propelled economy in Europe and USA, the think-tanks of India's machine tool industry decided to follow suit. Indian Machine Tool Manufacturers' Association (IMTMA) began organizing its flagship exhibition IMTEX in Bombay.

Europeans and Americans were able to organize exhibitions with elan as they had the necessary infrastructure to host grand-scale shows. This happened to be a deterrent factor for the industry in India since we didn't have a world-class infrastructure conducive enough to showcase innovations and technologies and develop Indian manufacturing. IMTMA began rolling the wheel for developing one after the shows kept shuttling between Mumbai and New Delhi. Bengaluru was shortlisted for the many advantages it offered for the manufacturing industry. A good number of machine tool manufacturers had their base in South Indian cities such as Bengaluru, Coimbatore and Chennai. The city was also gifted in terms of good infrastructure such as road, rail and airport connectivity. IMTMA created a state-of-the-art facility and named it after Naval Pirojsha Godrej who was instrumental in shaping IMTEX. The exhibition centre was thus named - The IMTMA Naoroji Pirojsha Godrej International Exhibition & Conference Complex is popularly known as BIEC.

Facilities and Certifications

IMTMA opened BIEC by organizing its flagship exhibition IMTEX in 2007. The following year in 2008, BIEC got LEED certification from the US Green Building Council. Back then India was at the cusp of a green building revolution and many infrastructure projects were opting for green standards. IMTMA too felt that an exhibition centre will be considered world class when it is built as a green building inculcating global best practices without making any adverse impact on environment. LEED certification gave BIEC its own unique position as a venue. It demonstrates the venue's green aspects such as usage of fly ash bricks in construction, maintaining the topography of the land, waste water management, efficient energy management, CFC free air conditioning, and maintaining 30% of the land under green cover.

Exhibition centres need to keep up quality, standards and process to sustain in the market. In that endeavour BIEC felt a need to have a certification which could make it more process driven to manage its quality standards. Six years after it got LEED certified, BIEC obtained IMS certification in 2014. BIEC was accredited with all the 3 critical management systems ISO 9001 (Quality Management System), ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System) and OHSAS 18001 (Occupational Health and Safety Management System). IMS certification affirms BIEC's commitment to environment and health and safety aspects in the exhibition industry and exhibition infrastructure.

In its first year in 2007 when it was newly built, BIEC hosted 8 shows. Today on an average it hosts close to 30 shows in a year. In its first 10 years BIEC has hosted more than 220 shows occupying over 1500 days. The exhibitions organized at BIEC have in many ways positively impacted Indian as well as international exhibition industry. BIEC's international quality infrastructure and service have attracted organizers from wide spectrum of industries. Leading exhibition organizers from



India such as Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), Indian Electrical & Electronics Manufacturers' Association (IEEMA), Tool and Gauge Manufacturers Association (TAGMA), Federation of Indian Mineral Industries (FIMI), Federation of Indian Granite & Stone Industry (FIGSI), Indian Society of Heating Refrigerating and Air Conditioning (ISHRAC), and Electronic Industries Association of India (EIAI) have been organizing their shows here. Leading international organizers such as Hannover Messe, Messe Munich India, Koelnmesse, UBM Asia, Nürnberg Messe, Pacific Asia Travel Association, Taiwan External Development Council, etc. also hold many of their exhibitions at BIEC.

Notable Events

The Government of India and the Government of Karnataka have patronized BIEC by holding several of their events such as PATA, Mobile One e-Governance, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, etc. and in the process bringing delegates and participants from a wide range of countries. The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2017 organized by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Government of Karnataka was a historic occasion as both the President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee who gave the valedictory address and the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi who delivered the keynote address and the Chief Minister of Karnataka, Shri Siddaramaiah who also addressed the gathering, came together for an event at BIEC.

Accolades

BIEC has been taking a lead to promote brand India and Bangalore at a global level. BIEC's participation

in international forums like UFI Congress, ICCA, IAEE, AFECA, etc. have lifted up India's image significantly. This has led to several international organizers putting BIEC in their priority list of venues in South East Asia and when it comes to organizing events in India.

BIEC has been recognized by the exhibition industry for its work. It got the Excellence in Services award in the Exhibition Excellence Awards 2016. The key factors that contributed to our success included: (a) a quality infrastructure to suit every need of the exhibition organizer; (b) process driven approach; (c) customer friendly skilled service providers and manpower to execute tasks; (d) understanding the customer requirement; (e) providing safety and security to organizers, exhibitors and visitors; (f) experienced and proactive staff to handle the challenges of organizing exhibitions of any scale right from set-up to dismantling.

Expansion Plans

With the Indian exhibition industry slated to grow by around 12 to 15% annually show organizers were looking for increased space for showcasing their machinery and equipments during exhibitions. Keeping this in view BIEC charted out its expansion plan. It created a new state-of-the-art exhibition hall of 17,500 square metres, an add-on to the existing facility the hall is the largest pillar-less exhibition hall in India. This hall was recently inaugurated. IMTEX was the first exhibition to be held in this hall. BIEC will be constructing another hall of similar size in future and in the process increase the gross area for exhibitions upto 1,00,000 square metres. Show organizers can look forward for additional exhibit space at BIEC.