

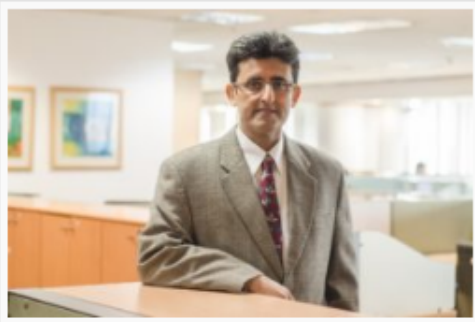
GLASS INDUSTRY WILL GROW EXPONENTIALLY BY THE LAST QUARTER – VIKRAM KHANNA, AIS

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Interviews

259 Views

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Vikram Khanna, COO – Consumer Glass, CIO & CMO at AIS, is a man of many facets. An army man, having served Indian Army for 8 years, Vikram brought with him considerable professional and disciplinary acumen which helped strengthen AIS's market positioning. Having worked with ITC Group of Hotels in his previous stint, Vikram joined AIS in the year 1996 as Material Head. It's been 20 years that he has been shaping the company and guiding it to various milestones. In a candid conversation with Team RealtyMyths, Vikram shared his vision, challenges and the way forward. Here are the excerpts of the conversation.

How has the glass industry evolved in India? Are these new-age glasses environment friendly?

Due to its fragile nature, the use of glass to bring natural light into buildings was earlier restricted only to windows and other small installations. With the development of new construction techniques, value additions and processing being done on glass, this material is now more strong and durable and hence considered a viable choice for more complex structural requirements. Glass is now being used for facades on an unprecedented scale to create remarkable designs and yield eco-savings. Use of glass in façades gives a dramatic effect to the building. Glass Panel Façade systems offer versatile, high-performance coverage, with a wide range of stylish design possibilities. It is one material that is aesthetically sound, eco- friendly and economically viable. It is a smart, adaptable and versatile material, lending itself to endless possibilities both in terms of design and functionality, across exterior and interior applications. All in all, glass stands in a league of its own. The reason for this is simple to understand – glass enhances the visual appeal of buildings, adds a touch of modernity and elegance, and helps the building gain recognition for its stylish and luxurious environment friendly 'green' architecture.

Real Estate market has been sluggish since last 2-3-years. What, in your opinion, is actually pulling the sector down?

Activities in India's construction industry have slowed down owing to shortage of skilled labour, scarcity of construction materials and political disturbances. The prolonged slowdown in real estate market led to pile-up of unsold inventory. Despite this, the glass industry in India is expected to grow at a good pace in the coming years as positive economic scenario is likely to boost growth in the construction sectors in India.

The demand drivers for the glass industry in India are:

India's climatic condition, being hot and sunny, would drive demand for insulated and reflective glasses in automobiles and buildings to save energy.

Smart Cities and 'Housing for all by 2022' projects by the Government of India are likely to boost up growth in the construction sector. Also, there is a rising demand for LEED certified and energy efficient buildings.

Stabilization in the prices of real estate, technological advancements and strong macro-economic scenario would enhance sale of real estate properties.

Environmental concerns, limited availability of fossil fuels and rising government thrust on renewable energy is likely to boost demand for solar glasses.

What is your current product portfolio? Please highlight on new product range.

The product range of AIS' Architectural SBU includes heat reflective glass, energy efficient reflective glass, solar control glass, uPVC windows, tempered burglar proof glass, lacquered glass, frosted glass, sound resistant glass, impact resistant glass and many more products, in varied thickness, colours and other specifications. AIS continues its value added journey focusing on increased proportion of value added products that are eco-friendly, have excellent quality, better features and great aesthetics. The Company is well positioned to cater to increasing demand of architectural glass segment. Many new products and offerings are in the pipeline which have been researched, designed and specifically "Made for India" without any sacrifice on global standards of performance, quality and aesthetics.