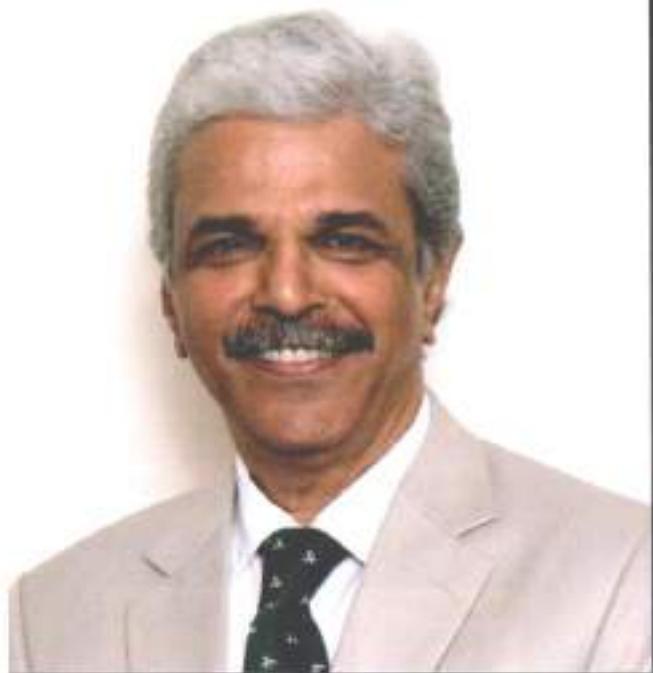


THE ALL-ROUND EFFORTS CONTINUE



ACAAI as an association has always been upfront in taking up industry issues for the betterment of its members and the entire domestic freight forwarding community. Currently, ACAAI is gearing up for its 47th Annual Convention scheduled to be held from November 23–26 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and had appointed industry veteran **Samir J Shah, Chairman, JBS Group of Companies** as **Vice-President** at its 53rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) held recently. During an interview with **UPAMANYU BORAH**, spotlighting the evolving role of ACAAI, Shah reiterated how they are committed to shaping the future of air cargo in India and buckling up for new chapters of inclusive development.

As Vice-President, what is your immediate outlook for ACAAI as an association? How are you planning to lead and steer the association's objectives? ACAAI is a five-decade-old association looking after the interests of its members. The journey has seen many changes in legislation, regulation, working systems, etc. The association has continuously adapted itself to ensure that its members do not suffer, and the efforts would continue.

At present, the challenges are different and therefore, efforts are being curtailed to the current requirements.

New locations are being added in India. The requirements of the carriers are changing,

Customs being the main regulator in movement across borders is undergoing some fundamental changes. We intend to address each of these concerns specifically and differently.

How are the policies and programmes being devised and mandated by the board for its members in the coming year? We propose to use the present communication models more effectively to reach out to our members. Information flow and communication with our members would be given a priority.

We also propose to work on designing good induction training for our members and work on certified trainings with DGCA, IATA and FIATA.

Besides, we are in continuous

dialogue with DGCA, Customs, GST Council, MSME Council and other regulatory bodies and trade associations. We are also receiving communication from our members on their expectations and will work hard to ensure their needs are fulfilled.

ACAAI has a strong commitment towards innovation and marketing approach. How do you see the management board continuing to embody this in the various projects that are likely to be taken up? We are working to increase our membership base. A broad-based membership will augur well for our members. It would provide a good platform for interactions. ACAAI has different types of memberships possible and efforts are on to increase every

type of membership. All related professionals are being encouraged to take ACAAI membership.

We are part of many GoI initiatives and we will continue our participation and contributions there. We have also offered to undertake leadership at some of the new initiatives and discussions are on.

Do you think the capabilities of domestic air cargo agents have transcended and accommodated the demands of the sector?

Every agent in India whether domestic or international has shown their commitment to servicing the Indian community. The all-round efforts continue and the agents are very agile and adaptable on their approach.

We work 24x7, and also fund the freight amounts. However, the corresponding respect and vendor loyalty is often an issue. A little effort in this direction by the actual shippers and consignees will go a long way in benefitting mutually.

Reciprocally, do you see infrastructure at Indian airports ready to cater to the exponential growth and throughput? Will ACAAI's role be more than pivotal now in clearing out the impediments?

Infrastructure and volumes grow together. The main question is the readiness of the infrastructure providers to be agile and current in their offerings. Since infrastructure is big in CAPEX, expectations on creation without a surety on usage is illogical. It's great to see infrastructure providers showing their ability to invest and scale up as volumes grow.

ACAAI comes in when operations are not smooth, when there is any improper implementation of regulations. We continuously work to resolve all issues as well as flag probable concerns before they become a deterrent. **TC**