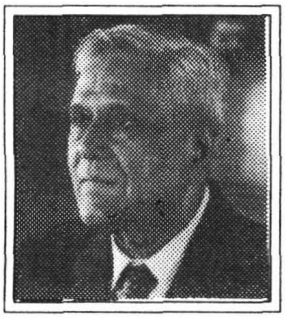
SHRI BABURAO GOVINDRAO SHIRKE

B.E., F.I.E.

- An Industrialist



BACKGROUND

Born on 1-8-1918, in a small village, Pasarni of Satara District of Maharashtra. Graduated in Civil Engineer in 1943 from College of Engineering Pune, where he earned while he learnt.

INDUSTRIAL ENDEAVOURS

Started in a humble way by establishing his own construction company, B. G. Shirke & Co., about 50 years ago. The firm executed a large number of specialised constructions covering residential, industrial, institutional and commercial structures, Strategic Defence Installations mostly using conventional methods and materials.

He observed various lacunae in traditional 'Casting-in-situ' methods and subjective quality control systems that lead to inordinate delays, rampant corruption and malpractices. Therefore, through sustained R & D, he introduced failproof, innovative construction methods with new multiquality and worthwhile, proven, preformed building materials and by adopting industrialised technology effectively ensured objective quality control and substantial savings of scarce and costly non-replenishable natural, national resources.

Despite very adverse situations and stiff resistance from vested interests, he carried on his crusade with the prime objective of solving India's nagging problem of housing shortage and eradication of slums, simultaneously helping to arrest deforestation and depletion of good agricultural land through the application of modern developments of science and technology. To implement this, Shri Shirke started 'Building Centres' in rural areas and executed large construction projects.

With the above objectives in mind, in 1969, Shri Shirke established an industrial complex comprising Siporex India Ltd. (manufacturing the wonder building material of the world "SIPOREX") in collaboration with Inter-

nationella Siporex AB of Sweden - the very inventors of "SIPOREX", B.G. SHIRKE & Co. Pvt. Ltd.(to provide technical know-how and engineering services); Shirke Consruction Equipments Pvt. Ltd. (to manufacture construction equipment such as Tower Cranes and EOT Cranes); Minato Shirke Concrete Machines Pvt. Ltd. (to manufacture hollow and closed cavity concrete block making machines, concrete mixers, concrete weighbatching and mixing plants, etc.) and developed production units covering the full spectrum of preformed structural components from A to Z, with which structures of any size, shape and dimensions for the poorest of the poor and richest of the wealthiest can be modularly planned and speedily erected, ensuring high standard of quality and aesthetics.

Then, in 1974, he formed the Shirke-Siporex multi-disciplinary Consortium and supplemented the production units by an engineering, planning, designing, estimating and turnkey, lumpsum, tendering division, an in-house R & D wing and a well stocked library. This Consortium was progressively enlarged to include associate companies of the West Asian countries for export and to execute large projects in various countries. The Consortium also succeeded in securing export orders for non-traditional, multiquality materials like Siporex to a most developed country like Japan, earning valuable foreign exchange for our country. In fact, the Shirke-Siporex Consortium, Pune, was the only Consortium to export almost all these new multi-quality building materials to the Middle East and help speedy construction of houses through local agencies.

Shri Shirke was also highly distressed to note the colossal wastage of foodgrains occurring each year, due to use of traditional godowns and jute bags for storage of foodgrains. He, therefore, set up an Agro Division for production of galvanised, corrugated, steel sheet silos and auxiliary equipment for the bulk storage, mechanical handling and scientific preservation of foodgrains etc., with modern technology.

As part of further diversification, Shri Shirke began a production unit for Transmission Towers and Galvanising Plant to cater to the needs of power projects. He has also set up a paper mill in a backward area of Maharashtra State, that uses non-conventional raw material and provides employment to the rural folk. It also helps solve the acute paper shortage and to reduce paper imports.

HIS AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

(i) Service to society and country.

(ii) To harness the modern developments and progress of science and technology as a tool to serve society.

(iii) To develop efficient, mass manufacturing techniques to produce the complete range of preformed, multi-quality building materials under one roof using modern machines and methods as in any industry, to put on the right path of solution the acute social and national problems of housing and slums - both in urban and rural areas.

(iv) To Industrialise civil engineering in general and building construction in particular, by mass manufacturing proven, tried, tested, worthwhile, multi-quality, multi-benefit, standardised, preformed structural components and new building materials that save costly and scarce materials and valuable national natural resources like cement, steel, timber, coal, energy, good agricultural soil etc., all over the country through establishing of "Building Centres", at least one at each Tehsil, in small and medium scale sectors - which is Shri Shirke's life Mission.

(v) To facilitate education and training

(vi) Rural development

(vii) To conserve our scarce, costly, non-replenishable national natural resources like iron ore, coal, fuel, forest produce and good agricultural earth.

(viii) Effectively fulfilling the needs of India in shelter.

AN ENGINEERING PERSONALITY

In recognition of Shri B.G. Shirke's eminence and contribution to the profession of engineering, the Institution of Engineers (India) bestowed upon Shri B. G. Shirke the "Engineering Personality of the Year" award at the Seventh Indian Engineering Congress held at Bangalore in February, 1993.

SPORTS CITY - AN ENGINEERING FEAT.

Under Shri B. G. Shirke's dynamic guidance, a vast sports complex, the Shri Shiv Chhatrapati Sports City - a paradise for sports persons - at Mhalunge-Balewadi near Pune, was constructed in a world record time of just 300 days. It was here that the IVth National Games were played in Jan. 1994.

AN ENGINEER OF EMINENCE

By dint of hard work, devotion to the civil Engineering profesion and dedication to the welfre of the Society, Shri B. G. Shirke made his mark in the Civil Engg. Construction field not only by in his home state and in the country but in Gulf and in S. E. Asian Counties. His life and work stands today as a light house illuminatiing the path of young Civil Engineers helping them to dream and develop visions which will enable them to serve the profession and the country in a better and better way.

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