

# India Seatrade

Digital Magazine

Delivering India as a Leading Maritime Nation

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## LADIES IN LOGISTICS

**Aakanksha Bhargava**

CEO, PM Relocations Pvt. Ltd.

## POINTBLANK

**Nimish Phadke**

Managing Director,  
Federation of Kutch Industries Association

## COMPANY OF THE MONTH

**Jeena & Company**

Towards success with perfection.

## GUEST COLUMN

**Capt. Ajay Kaura**

Executive Director,  
Federation of Ship Agents Association

## SPOTLIGHT

**JM Baxi Group**

## FACE OF THE MONTH

**Jakob Friis Sorensen**

Managing Director APM Terminals Pipavav



all cargo |  **ECU**  
WORLDWIDE



## This is an opportune time to make India a dominant logistics player

**Vaishnav Shetty**  
Executive Director, ECU Worldwide.

all cargo  
Ingenuity in Motion

 **ECU**  
WORLDWIDE  
Ingenuity in Motion

**ECU360**  
SHIP WITH A CLICK

Coming from the promoter family, this Young Turk and scion of **Awashya Group** has already made waves in leading the Group company **ECU Line** through successful digital transformation process and towards business growth. He feels that there is a strong need for logistics players to invest in technology to make their supply chains resilient to external shocks.

*Read on to know more...*





**As the next generation of the promoter group, how were you groomed into the business?**

Growing up, I've had an immediate vantage point of both the business and the industry. I've been fortunate to witness the way in which both have evolved over the years. I've always known that if I wanted to play a key role in the business, my education and subsequent work experience would be primary factors that would shape me into becoming a valuable addition. Therefore, after graduating from Emory University with a degree in Economics, I wanted to further equip myself foundationally with advanced analytical and business skills. This was achieved with stints at key global corporations such as The Blackstone Group, OOCL and EY. This exposure provided me with deep industry knowledge across varied operational domains.

Initially when I joined the Avvashya group as part of Allcargo, I worked with diverse teams across different geographies and I found this crucial to developing an understanding of our global business. I received crucial business lessons and a hands-on understanding of the global logistics industry via close interactions with core operating teams. I had to work my way through by building projects which would make sense to the business and carve out my role through dedication and commitment.

Today, as an Executive Director of ECU Worldwide - a global leader in LCL consolidation and one of the largest NVOCCs in the ocean freight transportation industry - I am responsible for driving digitalization and overseeing the development of proprietary tech-tools like ECU360. I work closely with a talented team of industry experts to implement new technologies globally to drive customer experience.



**How do you see the industry in the next few years? What are the changes that you want to see in the industry for the benefit of the customer?**

Disruption has become the new normal in the wake of the global Covid-19 pandemic and leveraging the potential of technology and digitalization will be central to driving growth within the logistics sector. Supply chains will need to upscale their functionalities with the integration of digital tools. Implementation of new-age technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT) will play a key role in forming technologically advanced business models.

B2C logistics companies will need to adapt to contactless order fulfilment and place onus on implementation of touchless delivery processes for ensuring safety of customers. Indigenously developed tech tools like ECU360 are proving highly effective for a global clientele in offering them end-to-end cargo visibility at every stage of the shipping cycle.

ECU360, a technologically superior interface equipped with an interactive dashboard has offered customers the convenience of uninterrupted business continuity and hassle-free operations. The track and trace technology of ECU360 enables customers to plan their supply chains and book, transact and track their shipments from point of origin to destination in real time. To sum it up, leveraging the untapped potential of advanced digital tools and solutions will be pivotal to providing value-added services to customers, penetrating untapped markets and improving freight deliveries through a streamlined distribution model.



**How do you describe yourself as a person?**

If I were to describe myself in a nutshell, I think the first word that comes to mind is curiosity. As far back as I can remember, it's been the attribute that has driven me the most to its subsequent natural progression - learning. I've always been an open format learner, I try to spend as much time reading as possible or perusing new media publications such as Vox, The Print or The Ken. And, of course, I love exchanging ideas with others who care to share their curiosities. I'm very passionate about finding ways in which new learnings and concepts can be carried over to my work. Besides that, I'm most definitely an automobile and technology enthusiast. It's fascinating to me how these two fields are intersecting around the world right now especially in the form of new age tech-enabled vehicles from the likes of Tesla and Lucid Motors.



**You are involved in the operations of ECU Line which contributes as much as 80 per cent to the revenue of Allcargo? How are you going about it and what has been the experience so far?**

All cargo has always been a customer-centric and tech-focused organization. In large part thanks to a highly dedicated and dynamic team, I have been proactively involved in rolling out some of our niche customer-centric initiatives for customers of ECU Worldwide. An example of this would be the development of proprietary digital tools, such as our flagship end-to-end digital logistics platform ECU360. It's widespread adoption across key global markets such as the USA, Europe and India has been one of our stellar achievements in the recent past. About 30% of our export volume globally is now transacted via ECU360. In India, we are at around 25%, the only company to achieve such significant digital adoption.

Launched globally in 2019, ECU360 enables small and mid-level freight forwarders to attain speed and business growth through the instant quotation and real-time pricing feature of the platform. We set out to build a logistics control tower in which customers can avail of facilities like invoice generation, e-bills of lading, e-delivery orders and e-payment



## YOUTH ICON IN LOGISTICS

facilities through a robust implementation of Hyper-Converged Infrastructure (HCI) technology.

Customers are assured of comprehensive cargo visibility from point of origin to destination with the platform's multimodal operational mechanism making shipment transportation seamless across various operational touch points. We intend to transform customer service paradigms by introducing digitally advanced tech offerings to provide hassle-free cargo mobility for customers.



### How did Allcargo adapt to the pandemic?

Logistics was categorized as an essential service by the government and we were fully operational when the nationwide lockdown was announced back in March 2020. Our teams were mobilized into action by continuously monitoring and adapting to on-ground situations in order to tackle emerging contingencies. We were prepared to swiftly implement business continuity plans and core teams were engaged in daily calls to discuss critical issues. Teams were split into a hybrid protocol consisting of work-from-home as well as on-site deployment due to offices functioning with limited capacity constraints. There was an emphasis on adhering to government protocols and directives while ensuring that all our on-site personnel adhered to prescribed precautions and practiced COVID appropriate behaviour. We made sure that we were constantly communicating with our stakeholders and leveraging the use of technology through regular communication interfaces as well as through our advanced digital platform - ECU360.



### What are the lessons logistics as an industry should learn from the pandemic? What role do you foresee for India in the post-pandemic phase?

I believe that as participants in the Indian logistics industry, we have to understand the way in which the pandemic has pushed the world out of its comfort zone and disrupted the conventional practices of different businesses, logistics being no exception. On a global level and within India, logistics players will need to operate in a collaborative spirit, working alongside a greater competitive framework.

Covid-19 has also elucidated the need for logistics players to invest in making their supply chains resilient to the frequencies and magnitudes of exogenous shocks; those who invested heavily in digitalization were able to significantly insulate themselves from these aforesaid shocks. In India, fast-tracking the roll-out of the National Logistics Policy (NLP) to promote seamless movement of goods across the country will also help to a large extent. We need to make logistics costs competitive globally, as well as focus on the job creation and skill development aspect in this sector.

India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world and given that today Covid-19 has disrupted the entire thought process around value chains, this is a very opportune time to reinforce our position towards becoming dominant players in the Global Value Chain (GVC). We need to establish our country as a logistics and manufacturing hub for the globe - fuelled by tech innovation and best-trade practices with government-led pro-industry interventions. 🇮🇳