

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR. BIPLAB DUTTA, PRESIDENT, EASTERN INDIA CORRUGATED BOX MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION ON THE OCCASION OF THE SEMINAR ON "KRAFT PAPER – EMERGING TRENDS FOR OPTIMUM PERFORMANCE" ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2006 AT 1715 HOURS AT OCIO, BELVEDERE ROAD, ALIPORE, KOLKATA 700027**

Once again I cordially welcome all of you this evening, now to the seminar on "Kraft Paper – Emerging Trends for Optimum Performance", organized by the Eastern India Corrugated Box Manufacturers' Association.

As we all know, Kraft paper constitutes the most important ingredient of the conversion industry. However, over the years since inception of the industry, the industry as well as the paper, have undergone sea change.

The conversion industry started producing packaging, initially, using only Virgin Kraft paper. This was followed by the use of semi-virgin kraft paper, and finally Waste-based Kraft. Presently our conversion industry uses high-bursting factor paper in much higher grammages than before.

Globalisation has ushered in the availability of several international brands of Kraft paper (albeit indigenously manufactured), and this has raised expectations of our end-users for superior quality packaging, often of internationally comparable standards – especially since Kraft paper of superior strength is being produced in the country. At the same time, availability of imported Kraft paper has also increased.

It would only be wise on our part to fully exploit this Kraft paper supply situation and design and produce more innovative and "performance oriented boxes" that can come at the reduced costs for converters by reduction in plies. I am sure, this would help increase the profit margins of fellow converters to a considerable extent. Thus, both converters and their end-users would be benefited.

I would also like to add that keeping the corrugated box manufacturing industry competitive requires affordable Kraft paper of good quality. And here we have a serious problem: the conversion industry is addicted to Kraft paper, which is often found to be of poor quality and not adhering to acceptable quality parameters. Now that the technology for manufacturing superior grade Kraft paper in the country is available, we should actually be on the threshold of incredible advances in our industry. The push for breakthroughs requires change in our perception of Kraft paper as the most important raw material for our perception of what constitutes appropriate packaging.

I invite you all to join me in this endeavour to enable our industry to take great strides.

May I now request Shri Bharath Kedia, Hony. Secretary of our Association to take over with the proceedings of today's seminar.

Thank you