



# A distinguished visitor !



The beginning of November witnessed the arrival of a distinguished guest in the form of **Claus Zoellner**, Chairman of the Board of Directors of **Accumulatorenwerke HOPPECKE Carl Zoellner & Sohn GmbH**, Germany.

He took over the helm of the company from his father in 1967, and, after an extremely successful stint of 36 years during which the **Hoppecke**

**Group** grew manifold, passed the reigns to his son, **Marc Zoellner**, in 2003.

It was indeed a pleasure and a privilege to have Claus with us; we picked up invaluable advice through listening to anecdotes from his vast and varied experience in the battery world.



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## Relationship, Rapport, Respect and Trust.....

During Mr. Saleem Ahmed's last visit to Doha in mid-September, we were invited for lunch by the Plant Manager and Procurement-in-charge of a leading road contractor in Qatar. Over the years, this company has evolved into one of our best customers. Seldom does it happen that customers take their suppliers out for lunch; it is usually the other way round. Anyway, there we were in this restaurant with both our hosts in an expansive mood and during the starters, the Plant Manager related an incident which is worth sharing.

But before we get to that, it may be advisable to lay a little foundation.

This goes back to a few years before when the Procurement Head was in his first year with the company. He had been handpicked by the MD and given a free hand to make his department more efficient. After the usual introductory emails and a couple of meetings, he started haggling over every major quote. This haggling had to be nipped in its bud as the other members of his team, who had been buying from us prior to his arrival, would definitely feel slighted if we gave in to his repeated demands for price revisions.

An ideal opportunity presented itself when we quoted for a couple of chisels for their Montabert Rock Breaker at a very competitive price. However, it so happened that a desperate competitor, trying to gain an entry, made a ridiculously low offer. Sure enough, the Procurement Head was on the phone in a flash asking us to match the price ! I thought the best way of dealing with this situation was "to make an offer he couldn't refuse" (the reference to Don Corleone's dialogue in the Godfather is purely coincidental !). Instead of matching the price (which I couldn't, in any case) I offered the two chisels for free ! He was totally taken aback and, thinking I would find ways to wriggle out of it, he took me up on that offer. But when we supplied the chisels as promised, his whole attitude towards us changed. His respect and trust in us grew manifold, the requests for discounts diminished drastically and the orders started flowing on a regular basis. To earn some brownie points for himself, he made sure that the bosses were informed, inadvertently bringing us into the limelight and pushing us into their core supplier category, saving us from unfair competition and even facilitating preferential treatment where month-end payments were concerned !

Around the same time, the Plant Manager had climbed up

a notch or two from logistics to plant and had taken a strategic decision to try our engine parts. This was contrary to his predecessor's dictum that all engine and transmission parts must be OEM - a safe but expensive route taken by many a plant manager.

As I got to know him better, I realized that his knowledge of aftermarket industry was indeed formidable. He grew up in a family that owned a thriving heavy equipment sales business and had their own work shop. Earlier in his career, his business was importing aftermarket parts for the Lebanese market.

Given his background, it was only natural that he would not be averse to using aftermarket engine parts. But for his first overhaul (a 3306 DI engine), he put up a condition that we should supply the parts free ! No one could fault his reasoning : it would help him persuade his management to buy aftermarket engine parts and also test our 'claimed' commitment to quality by trying a set for free. Once satisfied, he reassured me by saying that the orders that follow would more than compensate the free supply. Knowing the large number of machines in their fleet and the huge potential it presented, I consulted HO and accepted his condition.

Coming back to the conversation at lunch, the Plant Manager casually asked, "Remember the first set of engine parts you supplied for the 3306 DI engine" ?

"Of course", we said in unison, "how is it doing" ?

"Well, the parts were delivered to our yard, the engine assembled and the loader was sent to one of the sites. Not even a month had passed, when we received a frantic call from the site saying that the engine had seized ! I distinctly remember that we were in a meeting with the HR Manager at that time; our jaws dropped and we gave each other that knowing look while thinking that your tall claims about quality were just that and there was basically no comparison between after-market and genuine !"

As the terrible news sank in, the Plant Manager went on to add, the Procurement-in-charge was reaching for his phone to give me a piece of his mind but he restrained him, asking him to wait until he investigated the matter. The senior technician who had assembled the engine was promptly sent to the site to investigate the failure.



"It's a good thing I did restrain him," continued the Plant Manager. "As it turned out, a novice operator, had this god-forsaken notion that sugar improved the performance of the engine and had poured a bagful into the fuel tank !"

They could have easily glossed this over and claimed warranty on the parts. With so much at stake, we would have gladly given them a commercial warranty too; it is to their credit they did not do that. I suppose we had built up a certain rapport and won their respect and trust over the years. They re-ordered the parts from us; they were delivered, this time against an invoice.

This happened in April 2013; the Plant Manager has had this engine monitored closely ever since. It's been working well, doing a regular 12-hour shift per day and the operations-cum-

maintenance teams are satisfied with its performance.

Emboldened by this experience, five more engine sets have been ordered in quick succession and all are running well. The Plant Manager feels vindicated in buying aftermarket engine parts and saving a substantial amount of money for his company.

This company has turned out to be a model customer. During the course of our relationship, this is their third Plant Manager till now. Whenever a new one arrives, we approach him with some trepidation as to what his inclination towards aftermarket parts will be since most prefer to play it safe by opting to go with OEM parts. But with each one we have been able to strike an enduring relationship leading to increase in business each time. The ones that have moved on to other companies have readily brought their business to

us.

Most end-users who are conditioned by the equipment manufacturers' and dealers' hype into using only genuine parts for critical components, need to be worked upon patiently to make them appreciate the savings that good quality aftermarket parts can deliver to the maintenance budget. A good gambit is to get them to try our parts for machines which are out of warranty and whose value has been written down in their books. As our engine parts prove their worth, it's only a matter of time before we start getting orders for newer models.

But to able to do that, we need to develop a relationship with the customer, gain his trust and respect.

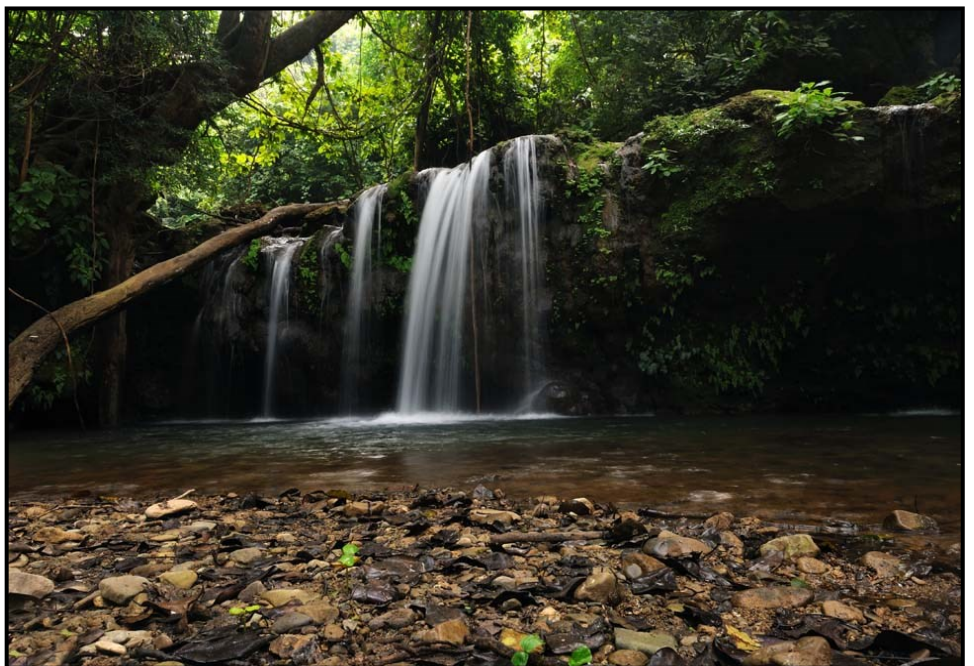
**Abdul Bari**  
Branch Manager, ALCAT-HEPS,  
Doha, Qatar

## ICPS (Delhi) at Corbett National Park !

The name of Edward James (Jim) Corbett immediately takes you down memory lane to the early 20<sup>th</sup>. century and his numerous escapades tracking and hunting down 33 man-eating tigers and leopards who were, it is said, collectively responsible for killing more than 1200 men, women and children living in the nearby villages of the Kumaon and Garhwal regions.

As a rule, Corbett only killed man-eaters; he was in fact a conservationist and naturalist who was largely responsible for the establishment of a national park to preserve wild animals and guarantee their security. It started out as Hailey National Park in 1936 but was ultimately re-named as **Jim Corbett National Park** in 1957 in his honour.

Situated in the Uttarachal region between the Himalayas and the Terai



region, the Park annually attracts over 70,000 visitors and has captured the

imagination of all with its diverse wildlife and breathtaking landscapes.





feet) above sea level, with an eye-shaped lake dividing it into 2 equal halves. The 3 hour long bus journey was made even more enjoyable as we were presented with one breathtaking view after another, at each turn of the road.

The clouds were hanging so low it seemed that the sky, lake and the hills had merged into one homogeneous mixture of riotous colour ! One of the main attractions of Nainital is boating around in the lake, surrounded by the temples, zoo, hills and the gorgeous greenery. At times, the fishes came so close to the boats that we could almost grab them !

It was to this National Park that the ICPS Delhi team headed this year for its annual "pilgrimage" (to indulge in serious introspection and brainstorming sessions on how to tackle the difficult challenges posed by the dreary economy).

#### DAY ONE

It took us 6 hours by bus to reach our destination. We stopped en route to

have breakfast at Meritton. As soon as we reached the Samsara Hotel near the Corbett National Park, we breathed in clean / cool mountain air and immediately felt rejuvenated and inspired. The natural greenery all around us had a soothing and calming effect.

After a sumptuous lunch, we left for Nainital, a small hill station situated at an altitude of 2,084 metres (6,837

#### DAY TWO

We started the second day early, playing cricket for a couple of hours before adjourning for breakfast.

Once everyone was well-fed, we moved over to the conference hall to make our presentations; express our thoughts; share our experiences, achievements and failures and discuss the future plans.







**Mr. Grover** presented the sales performance details for the April-August 2013 period along with corresponding data for the same period last year as well as the financial year ending March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013. He also shared with us the operating expenses.

**Mr. Kumar (Mukesh)** gave a run-down on the ICPS growth over the last decade along with an account of his own fascinating journey with the company since 2004. It has been an enriching experience full of knowledge and varying degrees of exposure to different situations.

**Raj** presented and explained the details emerging from the Quote Analysis from the period January to March 2013 against April to July 2013. He also highlighted the current outstanding amounts, ageing receivables, average daily credit sales etc.

Lunch was followed by an intriguing session in which **Nikhil** and **Savita** emphasized the need to work as a

close-knit unit, the company's current plans as well as the future territory development in the West Zone.

**Arpit** spoke about the inventory and delineated the complete cycle from the time the order is placed on **DAHBASHI** till the time it reaches Delhi and ultimately the end-user. A group discussion then ensued on improving the current processes.

**Naim Bux** dwelt on the current service set-up. He drew attention to the achievements / improvements in the past six months and the nature of the hurdles / difficulties encountered. He dwelt at length on how the department has dealt with them till now and how it plans to deal with them in future. With that the session came to a close.

The evening saw some dazzling dance steps by a highly energized ICPS group around a bonfire.

### DAY THREE

A trip to the river in the early hours of

the morning was both exhilarating and invigorating. The breakfast was followed by a Managers' Meeting.

Last but not least, **Mr. Ray** took over and shared his optimism that despite the difficulties faced by the entire industry, our efforts and approach were beginning to show encouraging results. He was extremely confident that the group was perfectly capable of surmounting the economic downturn provided we chose to work efficiently, professionally and as a close-knit unit. Bonding together and working as a team would help achieve our common goals.

It was finally time to say good bye to Jim Corbett National Park and prepare ourselves to take on the challenges of the real world in the coming months. Having recharged our batteries, we were ready to meet them head-on.

**Snehlata Rai**  
HR & Administrative Executive  
ICPS ENGINEERING PRIVATE LIMITED

# December birthdays 2013! January birthdays 2014!

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Mudar Hussain<br>EQT 02/12         | Man Kumar Sunar<br>DXBSTORES 25/12         |
| Palaniappan Sekar<br>SERVICE 06/12 | Richard Lasrado<br>SERVICE 22/12           |
| Akhil Balachandran<br>EQT 13/12    | Deepu Divakar<br>SERVICE 24/12             |
| Vaisakh Mohanan<br>SERVICE 14/12   | Habib Carim Abedin<br>MIS 25/12            |
| Laxman Panth<br>ADHBRH 16/12       | Hozaiifa Shabbir Moochhala<br>AWRBRH 27/12 |
| Arun Kumar Sunar<br>ADMIN 17/12    | Lenin Thomas<br>AWRBRH 30/12               |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| V. Shree Kumar<br>ADHBRH 02/01           | Praveena Lasrado<br>SERVICE 12/01       |
| Arshad Khan<br>DXBSTORES 03/01           | Sandeep M. Vaishnav<br>ADHBRH 14/01     |
| Meraj Hasan<br>MIS 04/01                 | Kripa Dhawja Giri<br>SHJBRH 17/01       |
| Anish Joseph P.<br>ALNBRH 04/01          | Ravi Kumar Sonar<br>SERVICE 19/01       |
| Aravindakshan Korothe P.<br>ADHBRH 05/01 | Deepak Kumar Chhetri<br>DXBSTORES 20/01 |
| Dil Bahadur Sunar<br>DXBSTORES 09/01     | Lakhen Lama<br>SERVICE 23/01            |
| Syed Nasr Ullah Abidi<br>ADHBRH 10/01    | Jose Vargheese<br>SERVICE 26/01         |
| Somayyeh Ali Mansouri<br>HR 12/01        | Thaneshwar Adhikari<br>ADHBRH 27/01     |

## A NEW ARRIVAL !

**Ann Reena Robert** and **Joseph Sunil** (Service Department) were blessed with a baby daughter, **Mary Ann Joseph** on October 3rd. 2013. She weighed in at 3.40 kgs.



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## EVERY HUSBAND's DREAM !

(with due apologies to all the married members of the fairer sex !)



Seriously though, a priceless shot ! One in a million !! A photographer will die of old age waiting to get another shot like this one.....