

CITI Solutions opens new office to focus on international freight forwarding

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Wagle Estate (on the outskirts of Mumbai) on March 26, 2017. The premises was inaugurated by Mr Eknathji Shinde, Maharashtra's PWD and Guardian Minister, in the presence of key invited dignitaries.

With this, the company is expected to boost its international freight forwarding operations. In less than two years since its inception in 2015, CITI Solutions has grown exponentially, enhancing its warehousing space from 1 lakh sq. ft to 1 million sq. ft covering 9 warehouses in Bhiwandi



Seen here are (from left) Mr Monzy Vargese (Director IT), Mr Pranesh Shetty (Director and Co-Founder), Mr Milind Adhikari (Deputy Director) Mr Pravin Shimpi (Managing Director and Founder), Mr Prashant Baliga (CFO), Mr Omair Khan (Co-Founder) and Mr Avinash Bakshi (National Sales Head)

(near Mumbai). It also offers 3PL, Customs clearance and transportation solutions, all under the leadership of Mr Pravin Shimpi (see interview below), Managing Director, and his experienced team. Mr Shimpi has vast experience in shipping and logistics, with specialisation in the warehousing business.

Going forward, the company aims at having pan-India presence in 3-4 years and is also in the process of identifying strategic alliances overseas. Among the targets is adding 5 lakh sq. ft of warehousing space by the end of this year and reaching 3 million sq. ft by 2020. On the international freight forwarding front, the intention is to achieve a turnover of Rs 100 crore in 3-4 years. "We want to make our presence felt in the shipping and logistics industry through our services," emphasises Mr Shimpi.



Team CITI Solutions

'CITI Solutions is gradually heading towards its well-defined goals'

Pravin Shimpi, Managing Director

Can you give us a brief about the activities of Citi Solutions?

Established in 2015, CITI Solutions offers a range of logistics solutions, from freight forwarding, 3PL, Customs clearance and transportation to warehousing. The name CITI stands for **C**argo handling with **I**ntegrity, **T**echnology and **I**nnovation; this is our DNA or you can say the four pillars based on which we have formed the company. At the time of inception, CITI had 1 lakh sq. ft of warehousing space and now we have 1 million sq. ft, comprising 9 warehouses, fully occupied in Bhiwandi (Thane), Maharashtra with 350-400 employees working dedicatedly round the clock. CITI Solutions is an ISO 9001:2015 company having MTO licence registration with DG Shipping, which allows us to release our own MTD (Bills of Lading) for all the shipments we carry.

Among other highlights, we have more than 25 key corporate and MNC clients, with many more in the pipeline, and a dedicated team to handle Customs clearance activity. CITI Solutions is registered with Customs as a shipping agent, to handle all kinds of shipping and logistics activities in India. We have excellent rapport with airlines and shipping lines, allowing us sharp freight rates negotiations, and an in-house transport vertical that controls a pool of vehicles.

What prompted the company to open this new office and also foray into the international freight forwarding business?

The new office is located strategically at the Wagle Estate in Thane, Maharashtra, which is an industrial zone. It allows



Mr Pravin Shimpi
(Managing Director
and Founder, CITI
Solutions Warehousing &
Distribution Pvt. Ltd)

CITI Solutions easy accessibility to control the warehousing activity at Bhiwandi (Maharashtra), sea freight activity at Nhava Sheva (JNPT) Port and air freight activity at Andheri Air Cargo complex. The thought process behind starting the new international freight forwarding business vertical is to complement and integrate the existing warehousing business. We can now offer all our existing corporate clients one-window logistics solutions i.e. from EXW to DOOR. It makes us a complete Supply Chain Company.

In 2015, CITI Solutions started the business with a team of 5 people and 50,000 sq. ft of warehousing space at Bhiwandi. We started the company with the most difficult part of the domestic logistics business i.e. 3PL/WAREHOUSING which is more capital intensive, plus the gestation time to convert business is comparatively more, which in Indian conditions makes it more challenging. International freight forwarding business was always on the cards but we wanted to start once we were settled in the 3PL/WAREHOUSING business.

CITI Solutions currently has a 350-400 strong team (both skilled and unskilled) working across all verticals and 1 million sq. ft of warehousing space in Bhiwandi. With this anchor business and a strong and dynamic team, we are very confident that the new international freight forwarding business will reach new heights. Our goal is to make the F&F business a Rs 1 billion company in the next 3 years.

Given the general trade and shipping scenario, with reduced volumes and low Turn to page 18