

INSIGHT

AFCONS

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The challenges are enormous, writes Managing Director S Paramasivan

PG 5

New Project in Zanzibar

PG 6

RESOLVE
RESILIENCE
RETURN

QUALITIES THAT REINFORCE THE VALUES AFCONS STANDS FOR, AND HOW THEY WERE DEMONSTRATED IN THE COMPANY'S RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC **PG 2-5**

from **EVC'S** desk

Resolve, Resilience, Return

Dear Afconians,

I appreciate your resolve, resilience, and, patience to live through the Covid-19 crisis and make a comeback. Even though some of our projects resumed operations early, the pandemic conditions, in Mumbai, forced us to extend the shutdown of our headquarters. After three months of uncomfortable passivity, it is almost certain that we have to coexist with the virus. Returning business to operational health after lockdowns is never easy. However, we have started operations, and, I am hopeful that we'll be able to catch up quickly.

Tough times often leave permanent imprints on an organisation's identity. How we adapt, innovate, and, navigate this crisis will determine how we lay the foundations of our post-Covid growth. And this will not be possible without our collective effort. We must bring intense focus, speed, and, agility to deliver value. Innovation will be more critical than ever, and, it will be one of the key drivers in maintaining our business continuity.

Two qualities that will be vital for future which all of you have displayed adequately are empathy and optimism. It is inspiring to see how our teams, not trained before to handle a crisis of this scale, have responded to the pandemic. Their dynamic crisis management have protected lives of thousands of workers and engineers at our sites. Their actions have galvanised the workforce and have motivated the entire organisation. I am delighted by the proactive response by each of our site teams to voluntarily engage in community service. The voluntary contribution of employees and contribution by the organisation towards Covid-19 fund are some steps to help the nation during the pandemic.

We have developed and shared detailed Covid-prevention SOPs for our employees, workers, and, work sites. I will expect everyone to follow them meticulously. So, as we adapt to the new realities, let us embrace empathy, focus on innovation, and, remain optimistic.

Take Care & Stay Safe

K Subramanian



making headlines Recognition for Covid-19 warriors

As a recognition of Afcons' sustained community service initiatives during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, local governments and authorities across geographies have issued appreciation certificates as a mark of respect for our Covid Warriors. Here are select few.



Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation Ltd



Terminal Industriel Polyvalent de San Pedro



Royal Government of Bhutan



Kishwar District Police, J&K



IRCON International



Ministry of Railways, Ghana

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EDITORIAL

Bhakti Prasad, Krishnakumari C, Bivabasu Kumar, Chandrika Sen

FIGHTING WITH COURAGE AND HUMILITY

COVER STORY



Ration and sanitation products being distributed among differently-abled in Lusaka, Zambia

The Covid-19 pandemic has reached over 200 countries, has affected over 16.3 million people, has claimed over six lakh lives, has reached 21 Indian states, afflicted over 14 lakh Indians,

and, the numbers are still rising. After months of lockdowns, several countries have begun reopening, and, India, too, has exited an unprecedented 98-day shutdown. The outbreak, however, continues to strain our resources compelling organisations to recalibrate. While it may take time for the new realities to sink in, the magnanimity displayed by Afconians during the pandemic has been reassuring. Stories of

courage and sacrifice have been instrumental in shaking off fears of the virus and encouraging us to look beyond ourselves.

Over the past months, Afconians have selflessly worked for local communities in the fight against Covid-19. As is the culture of the organisation, employees have displayed an “inclusive” approach and haven’t hesitated to jump into the frontline. Notwithstanding the perils of the virus, they have volunteered to help frontline workers, people in Covid-affected zones, poor families, stranded migrants, villagers in the interiors etc. This solidarity has earned respect from government bodies, district administrations across geographies.

“The Covid-19 pandemic is unprecedented, and, how it quickly affected the entire world is just unbelievable. In times such as these, human courage, and, willingness to face the odds stand out before anything else. I am

Plucky Afconians risk lives to help communities during Covid-19 pandemic; Earn respect for selfless service towards society



Pandoh tunnel team shared food items with locals during lockdown



Ration distribution to locals in Ghana



1. Providing support to build rehabilitation centres in Bhutan
2. Monthly ration provided to a local orphanage in Bangladesh
3. Grocery kits were given to workers of water department of Tirupati Municipal Corporation

happy and overwhelmed by the support from Afcons during this terrible health crisis. The team has proactively come forward in support. They have assisted us with Covid-19 relief items which we have passed on to different sections of the society. They have individually helped over 5,000 families with food and sanitation items. I appreciate their kind gesture and urge them to continue this benevolence,” said Zambian Minister of Local Government, Hon Charles Romel Banda.

Afcons has received similar appreciation from the Royal Government of Bhutan, Ministry of Railways Development, Ghana, and various district administration authorities, in India, as a mark of respect to our Covid Warriors.

Sharing is Caring

The pandemic unleashed unforeseen human miseries. To alleviate their suffering, Afconians hit the roads with supplies of ration, food, sanitation material, and, face masks for local communities and Covid warriors. Aid was extended to communities across Asia and Africa to help them in these trying times. Besides providing a month's ration to over 5,000 villagers, the Nagpur-Mumbai Super Communication Expressway Project (Package

2) team supported temporary shelters at Wardha by providing meals to those stranded due to lockdown, provided drinking water to villagers etc. Similarly, Package 14 team from the same project donated 700 litres of cooking oil to residents of Igatpuri. Along with sanitation products, grocery items and non-contact thermometers, the USBRL Bridges project team, in J&K, arranged a six-bed quarantine facility in Reasi.

Similar efforts were carried out by project sites across Africa and other parts of Asia.

Beyond Borders

In neighbouring Bangladesh, Afcons-KPTL DTJ project team stood by Bangladesh Railway by providing face masks, gloves and sanitation items. As soon as they were notified about a local orphanage struggling to arrange food for children, the team arranged groceries for a month.

In Ghana, Afconians came to the aid of 500 underprivileged families in the region by sharing grocery and personal hygiene kits. Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) kits were also donated amongst health officials.

In Zambia, our project team executed a significant donation drive by sharing essentials among 5,000 local communities. The

team has, so far, donated ration and sanitation products across several constituencies in Lusaka. They have also extended support to local schools and organisations that help the needy. The team has also distributed handwash, face masks and gloves in various ministries.

In Mauritania, the project team donated grocery items and sanitisers to the Mayor's Office for distribution among locals in Covid-19-affected areas.

In Ivory Coast, grocery items were provided to over 200 families to help them in the pandemic.

Afcons is changing the landscape of Lusaka and Zambia with its engineering capabilities that bring value for money. Afcons is not only delivering quality infrastructure to Zambia but has also responded effectively to the Government's response against the Covid-19 pandemic through workplace-based interventions and community support in the fight against Covid-19

Hon Vincent Mwale, Zambian Minister of Housing and Infrastructure Development

Frontline Warriors

The Ahmedabad Metro team set an example in empathy by helping two Covid positive students from IIT, who were stranded in their housing society. The team arranged food and essentials for an entire month to make sure they faced no difficulty and could recover soon.

In recognition of their selfless efforts, Afcons identified Covid warriors and made several contributions across locations to support them. At Tirupati, our project team distributed grocery kits among 200 workers of the



We have stepped into a 'new' world where distancing dominates lives, and, rebalancing of priorities is the way of life. As we finally step out of our homes, we must always be careful and alert not to come into contact with the virus. While governments, organisations, and, various institutions are formulating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as they lift lockdowns, I cannot stress enough how personal discipline and safety counts above anything else. Follow the safety guidelines (SOPs), practice social distancing, and, let's un-press the pause button to bring momentum back into our lives.

Giridhar Rajagopalan,
Executive Director (Technical)



The Covid-19 pandemic has engulfed the entire world and has unsettled the way we used to think, live, and work. It is a crisis of unprecedented nature and magnitude, and, our lifestyle might continue to remain impacted for some time to come. Every difficult time also offers an opportunity to introspect and find newer ways to overcome its effect. This is the time to revisit the way we work, how our operations can be made more efficient and economical, use technology to bring normalcy back into our work and lives.

Akhil Gupta,
Executive Director (Operations)

IN MUMBAI, AFCONS MADE CONTRIBUTIONS THROUGH DONATION OF PPE KITS, ROBES AND BASIC MEDICINES TO MAJOR CITY HOSPITALS



Meals provided to those stranded in temporary homeless shelters in Wardha

AFCONS PROVIDED A MONTH'S RATION TO OVER 5,000 VILLAGERS IN WARDHA

Tirupati Municipal Corporation Water department.

The police personnel who were on the frontline, too, were provided with necessary support. In Kolkata, apart from providing food to the needy during lockdown, the team arranged for sanitation of local police booths, offices and barracks. The Chhara Breakwater team distributed ration kits to local police personnel. The Nagpur Metro team made sure the on-duty police personnel received lunch boxes and water for majority of the lockdown period.

Supporting Families

The pandemic resulted in several families of daily wage earners losing their livelihood. The Nagpur-Mumbai Super Communication Expressway Project (Package 2) team supported a local women's group by placing order for face

masks and then purchasing them for distribution among locals. The Nagpur Metro team, too, provided support to local women tailors by ordering 2,000 face masks and subsequently distributing them among the underprivileged. The team also identified over 100 poor families with elderly people and distributed grocery items.

Infrastructure Support

Bhutan has shone in its efforts to contain the pandemic. Afcons is executing the Phuentsholing Township Development Project in the country. Even before the virus could start spreading in the border towns, the team stepped into action. At the India-Bhutan border along Amo Chhu river, wired fencing of 120m was erected to prevent the entry of unauthorised persons. Afconians worked along with the Royal Bhutan Army to build emergency housing shelters for those evacuated from the borders.

Always Together

As a token of support, Afconians made voluntary salary contributions, and, an equal amount was contributed by the organisation towards donation to the Covid-19 Fund. The war against Covid-19 is real and all-encompassing. The only way we can win is by standing together and supporting each other. Afcons is determined to overcome this crisis with courage and humility.

The challenges we face are enormous

Few things have intrigued mankind and have caused widespread devastation like the Covid-19 pandemic. It is phenomenal how swiftly the virus triggered panic and destruction inflicting pain on humans globally. Millions have died, and, healthcare systems are explicitly on a war footing, even now after almost seven months of official announcement of the virus on the world stage. Public health, economic boost, business continuity — all things have been escalated, and, yet it is baffling how a health crisis quickly turned into a financial crisis with an abnormal uncertainty about its size, duration, and shape till date.

But as we are forced by necessity to come out of the safety of lockdowns, we must quickly adapt to the realities, bank on our coping mechanisms, and, plan to survive the pandemic. The crisis has united the world, but has distanced those who were closer, at least, physically. It has triggered a tectonic shift in the way businesses were previously conducted and has increased the rate of adoption of technology. Work from home, which was typically an IT industry practice, is now a global phenomenon because of the need of social distancing. Almost every aspect of our lives has taken the digital route — online education for children, doctor consultations etc. The judiciary, too, is now dependent on videoconferencing.

But difficult times not just reveal vulnerabilities but also opportunities to improve business performance. A crisis of this scale will test the true strength of organisations and their business models, thereby separating great companies from good companies. As the cliché goes, "never waste a good crisis", we should see this challenge as an opportunity to bring necessary changes in the way we would need to conduct our business. We should find ways and means to achieve the targets we have set for ourselves and our organisation. We should think of newer unorthodox ways of finding solutions, focus on building relationships, and, continue to deliver excellence. In short, it is time to demonstrate leadership of the highest order and we are sure that our team is capable of providing the necessary leadership in these challenging times.

The challenges we face today are enormous, and, we can collectively overcome them by working together in a collaborative manner. So, let's take care of each other and move on with life.



S Paramasivan,
Managing Director



The Covid-19 pandemic has been the biggest challenge that the HR, P&A, and, HSE teams have faced so far. No one ever anticipated a health crisis of this scale. No one trained our HSE and P&A teams to handle the crisis as it unfolded. Keeping thousands of workers safe, looking after their health, hygiene, special medical needs, and, making sure of their Covid-19 safety has been an onerous exercise. But our teams have proactively supported each site and responded swiftly and decisively. I am happy that our HSE and P&A teams have risen to the occasion in true Afcons' spirit.

Bhakti Prasad,
Director, HR

THE ART OF LEARNING

Hard times teach us valuable lessons and so has Covid-19. During the nationwide lockdown, Afconians were encouraged to express their "Covid Lockdown" learnings/realisations in the form of drawings, paintings, doodles and sketches. The contest received overwhelming response. The jury chose not three, but five winners. Here they are:



Dipankar Roy,
Bangladesh
Railway Project



Palash Bhaduri,
Chenab Rail
Bridge Project



Debchandan Guha Ray,
Jaffrabad Port
Project



Saahil Baliram Pawar,
Ahmedabad
Metro Project



Sravan Kumar Polepalli,
Mozambique
Road Project



Darpan Chandalia,
Nagpur Mumbai
Supercommunication
Expressway project



COVID-19 QUIZ WINNERS

A three-day online quiz programme was held for the employees as part of raising awareness about Covid-19. The event garnered an overwhelming response, with hundreds of Afconians performing exceptionally well. As many as 42 participants got perfect scores, 95% scored over 50/100 and 68% scored over 80/100. Meet the winners:

QUIZ 1

Shailendra Kumar Singh,
Gopalpur Port Project

Rajeev Kumar Sharma,
Rohtang Tunnel Project

Ashok Kumar Kata,
Gopalpur Port Project

QUIZ 2

Agam Singh,
Chenab Rail Bridge Project

Sravan Kumar Polepalli,
Mozambique Project

Sahil Bhutani,
MG Setu Project

QUIZ 3

Chiranjib Goswami,
Kolkata Metro Project

Amit Kole,
Kolkata Metro Project

Rohit Ghosh,
Kolkata Metro Project



SPREAD THE WORD

Afconians from Nagpur (left) and Bangalore Metro projects created Covid-19 awareness messages in unique ways.

NEW JOB IN ZANZIBAR

Zanzibar Water Authority has awarded Afcons a project that involves rehabilitation and improvement of water supply system in the region. Afcons is also on the last leg of completing the Extension of Lake Victoria Water Supply Project in Tanzania, which aims at building a robust water supply system for Tabora, Nzega And Igunga towns.

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HEALTH FIRST

Afconians celebrated International Day of Yoga, on June 21, 2020, by devoting time to special yoga and meditation sessions organised to mark the day. Since the outbreak of Covid-19, sites have heightened health awareness, encouraging daily yoga sessions following all necessary hygiene and social-distancing protocols.



EYE ON ENVIRONMENT

World Environment Day was celebrated across Afcons' sites on June 5, 2020. The celebrations began with a pledge to save and protect our environment. Afconians planted saplings at residential camps to mark the occasion.



in conversation DHAVAL SONI

Afcons, a change agent in Tanzania

Afcons has been a change agent in partially transforming Tanzania's water woes by executing the Extension of Lake Victoria Water Supply Project. With the commissioning of this project, over 600 km area comprising towns of Tabora, Nzega and Iguanga now receive enough water from Lake Victoria.

Afconians, in the project, experienced how lack of access to clean water can set a region back in unimaginable ways. The miseries they witnessed were unthinkable. People, desperate to meet their daily needs, would collect water from ditches, potholes, and springs. Little children, too, would be seen carrying huge water cans and going from place to place to fill water. "This used to be their lives. Half of their time would be spent just trying to gather some potable water," recounted Dhaval Soni, Project Manager of Extension

of Lake Victoria Water Supply Project.

The project involved laying a complex network of water pipelines spread across 603 kms, including, five Ground Water Reservoirs (GSR), five Elevated Service Reservoirs (ESR) and 303 water kiosks. Each kiosk is located between clusters of 10 to 20 houses, catering to 100 to 200 villagers. At present, around 60,000 locals are benefitting from the project, with the numbers expected to rise to around 3 lakh by 2035.

"Today, people from several villages are getting clean water right at their doorstep. They are now being able to focus on the basics such as improving personal hygiene and taking up gainful employment,



something that seemed impossible two years ago," said Soni.

Since this was Afcons' first overseas water project, all the experiences that came with it were entirely new for the team. Working in a remote location, and on a project with a strong developmental element, had its own challenges.

"Procurement was our biggest challenge," said Soni, adding, "The remote location made it even tougher. Every day was a new experience throughout the project life cycle. We learnt and unlearned a lot of things, which will make a huge difference in the way we execute upcoming projects in this region."

Dhaval Soni is the Project Manager of Extension of Lake Victoria Water Supply Project in Tanzania

Awards

INTERNATIONAL SAFETY AWARD FOR 9 PROJECTS

British Safety Council has awarded International Safety Award to nine projects of Afcons for demonstrating a strong commitment to good health and safety management in 2019.

British Safety Council has awarded International Safety Award to nine projects of Afcons for demonstrating a strong commitment to health and safety management in 2019. The awardees include:

Al Awir Road Project, Dubai; Phuentsholing Township Development Project, Bhutan; JOC Project, Dubai; Gopalpur Port Project, Odisha; Katra-Dharam Bridge Project, J&K; LEWPP-T2; Lusaka City Roads Decongestion Project, Zambia; Road and Bridge Project, Kuwait; Vizhinjam International Port Project, Kerala.

HONOUR FOR NAGPUR METRO

Afcons has received the award of Safe Civil Contractors 2019 from General Consultants. Project Manager, Nagpur Metro Reach-2, Mr Amar Raut received the award from Mr R Ramanathan, Project Director, General Consultants, on May 30, 2020, after resumption of project activities, post the Covid-19 lockdown.

SAFETY AWARD FOR GOPALPUR PORT

Afcons is the winner of the State Level Safety Award in EPC construction sector - Odisha at the Global Safety Summit 2020. The safety practices followed at the Gopalpur Port Project in the state enabled the company to clinch this award among 3,028 applicants across India.



New Joinee

Mr Ravi Prakash, Director-Operations

Mr Ravi Prakash has joined Afcons as Director-Operations with effect from July 2, 2020, at our Corporate Office. He has an experience of over 30 years and has worked with companies like L&T and Ramky Infrastructure Ltd. His last assignment was with JMC Projects at the level of President.

Mr R Ramkumar, Vice President-Contracts

Mr R Ramkumar has joined Afcons as Vice President-Contracts with effect from July 2, 2020, at our Corporate Office. He has an experience of over 21 years and has worked with Hindustan Construction Company at project sites from 1997 to 2007 in the field of Contracts Management. His last assignment with HCC at their Corporate Office was at the level of Vice President (Contracts).

HR Corner

Whole Wellness Training

Health Talk on Covid-19 and Heart Attack.

A health talk on Covid-19 and Heart Attack was conducted by Dr Prafulla Thorat for Mozambique site on virtual platform on June 11, 2020. Dr Thorat also briefed on the pandemic and addressed a Q&A session.

