

T. S. Saravanan,
Chairman, an innovative
and ambitious
entrepreneur and
founder of Arkie Atelier
Design India (P) Ltd
spoke to CIA WORLD.
An exclusive interview.



“Opportunities for architects are abundant in an emerging economy as India”

An inspiring leader, a role model in setting standards by leading from the front, constantly raising the bar on quality, sustainability, cost effectiveness adding value to the customer.

As an equal opportunity player, Saravanan has constantly committed himself in propagating corporate ethics and values among co-employees with respect to their welfare, safety and hygiene.

Saravanan, an eminent industry expert with over three decades of in-depth experience is a dreamer, visionary, goal driven, meticulous in execution and a constant focus on achieving perfection. Having attained a criti-

cal mass in business, Saravanan has set the vision to evangelise “Brand AAD” Pan India with a select foot print in Global markets.

Saravanan graduated in Architecture from NIT Trichy, an avid traveller, passion for organic farming and sketching, also is fond of retro western music.

T S Saravanan spoke to the Editor after winning “CIA World Construction Awards” for Professional Excellence in Architecture & Interiors 2016. Excerpts:

Is this the first award you have won in your professional career?

Yes, in terms of professional achievement, this is my first award! My company, however, has won key projects awarded for technical

CREATIVITY IS INVOLVED
IN TERMS OF EXPRESSING
THE CONCEPT;
TECHNOLOGY IS INVOLVED
IN CONVEYING THE
PERCEPTION; SUCCESS
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GOES HAND IN HAND
WITH ALL ALLIED
ENGINEERING AND
TECHNOLOGY ASPECTS.”

excellence by niche clients from Government vertical such as Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, National Institute of Technology – Surathkal, Karnataka Housing Board, Indian Institute of Technology Madras, among others.

You are known as a leading entrepreneur in the city – please tell us when and how you began your career?

In 1988, I completed my under graduation in Architecture from REC Trichy; now known as NIT Trichy. In order to fulfil my childhood ambition of setting up a business, I migrated to Chennai in 1989 and founded my architect firm AAD to practise architecture. This is our Silver Jubilee Year.

Are you a first generation entrepreneur? What drove the passion in you? Any lessons you can impart to budding aspirants?

Yes, I grew up in a conservative family – the first in the family



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to set up business outside of my home town. The fundamentals of my vision in architecture is to bring to our society, various aspects of modern architecture from the rest of the world - with a strong undertone of blending the social connect with the locality to create perfect harmony.

Your firm, Arkie Artelier Designs

(AAD) is quite well-known among industry circles - could you trace the growth of the company, the expertise and team you developed and the plans you have for its future?

Arkie Artelier Designs (AAD) grew from humble beginnings in 1993. With an incredible commitment and an infinite passion for designing, AAD has grown to

become a reputed architecture firm among business and industry circles in India. Our focus and emphasis has always been in minimalistic architecture. Simplistic and practical designs for good living - both in the workplace and living space. In the formative years, we specialized in HNI homes and as the years rolled by, we have been delivering winning concepts in design and architecture



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for education institutions, IT parks, industrial establishments, corporate houses, condominiums among others.

Can you define the basics to deliver effective architecture?

One must understand the script of a project with relevance to its geographical and cultural importance. Creativity is involved in terms of expressing the concept; technology is involved in conveying the perception; success comes only when adorable architecture goes hand in hand with all allied engineering and technology aspects.

What is your mantra for growth and how do you manage your resources?

'Good design is good business' is the preamble of our enterprise. To achieve this, it is imperative to realise the dreams and vision of team members through a collaborative approach and sensitise them at every stage and to become passionate about the work they deliver. AAD strongly believes in an "intellectual and emotional" connect with its employees, stake holders and customers – so as to nurture a healthy, professional relationship that is sustainable in the long term.

What is your future growth plans for AAD?

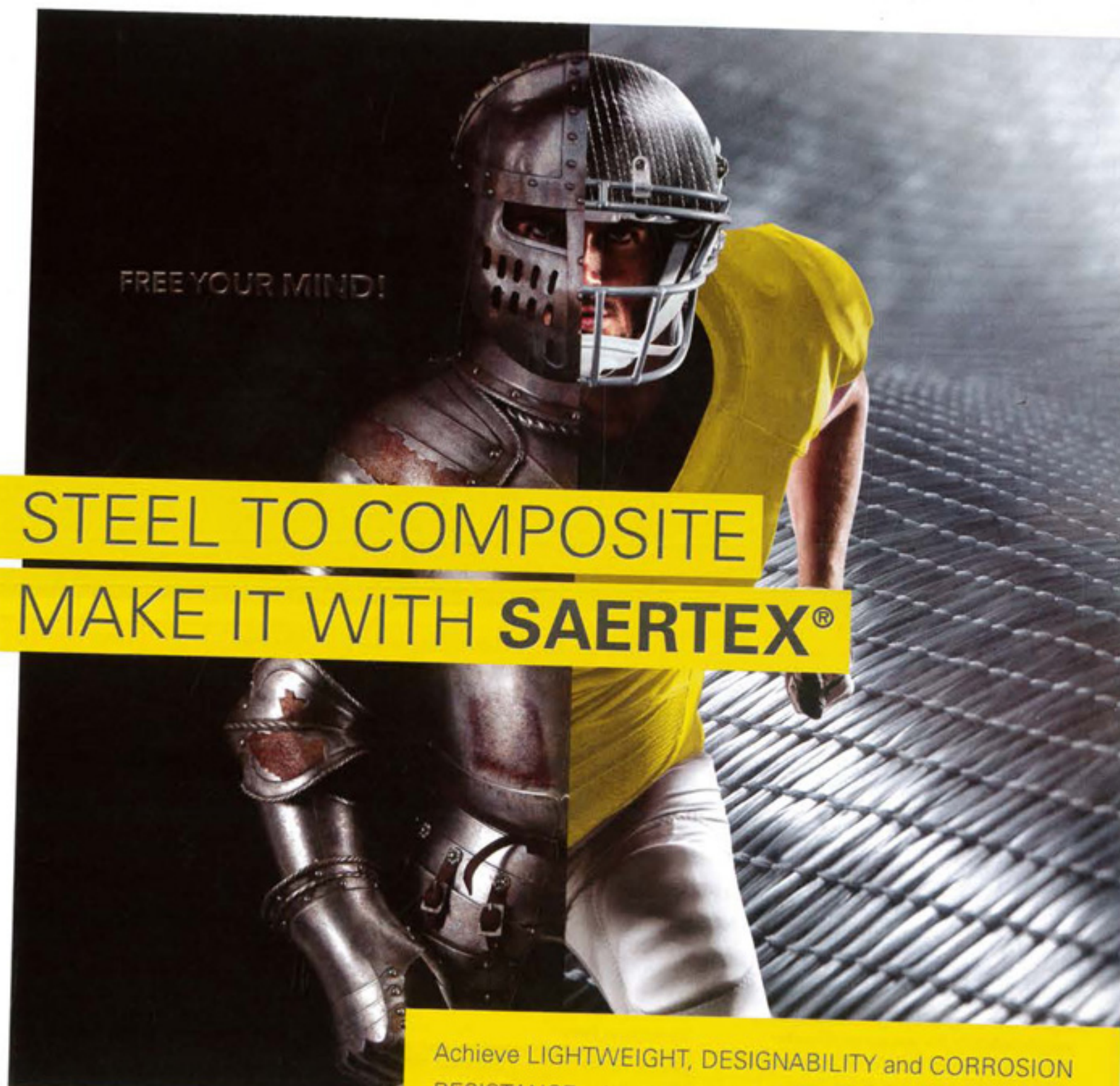


To participate in the national and international arena in architecture and design projects with a strong bias on creativity and innovation, coupled with well-engineered concepts so as to produce lasting and timeless landmarks for society.

As part of the growth plan, how do you propose to develop the skills of your

manpower, especially at the entry level?

Every individual has been bestowed with latent talent that needs to be identified and nurtured to grow the individual and thereby the organization. Irrespective of time and other business constraints, it is imperative that management spends time with the employees, regardless of hierarchy. This ensures knowledge sharing, empowerment



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REINFORCING YOUR IDEAS



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of team members at all levels to exercise their ideas, prompt and continual guidance through evaluation - to scale quality in deliverables that are key to team success. At AAD, this has been our mantra for success.

What employment opportunities you foresee for jobseekers and aspiring architects?

Opportunities for architects are abundant in an emerging economy as India. The positive forecast for the construction and interiors industry over the next few decades should make the aspirants feel confident and put their best foot forward.

A few words of advice for sustainable employability for young aspirants:

Soon after academics, every aspirant takes time to settle down and adapt from campus to the work environment culture. The transformation process has to be handled in a natural and mature manner. Notwithstanding this, here are some food-for-thought for the job seeker:

- The aspirant in the first place should not be a job hopper and use every job opportunity to learn and contribute as well to the organisation.
- The aspirant should understand the purpose of employment - with an accent

to deliver as deemed fit by the organization without fear and fervour.

- Apart from functional skills, one should garner life skills and managerial skills to mature in the workplace.
- The aspirant should build traits to think out-of-the-box with ideas and winning solutions and be expressive about it.
- Last but not the least, the aspirant should be task and deadline oriented - at any given point of time!

Could you give us a list of some of your leading projects?

Please find a photo gallery of our completed and ongoing projects across industry verticals:

To name a few:

Name of the Project	Business Vertical
National Institute of Technology - Surathkal	Govt - Education
Oracle India Private Ltd	Corporate - IT
Vellammal Group of institutions	Private sector - Education

Isha Mia	Large Housing residential - Realty development
Maggie Cold Storage	Industrial - Cold Storage

What is the sector wise growth strategy for your company?

The Indian economy is poised for growth and opportunities for business is in abundance. We want AAD to become a percentile player both in market share and in design excellence. As a multi-disciplinary organization, we have built expertise in each of the business verticals spanning HNI homes, Education, Hospitality, Industrial houses, IT parks and so forth and we are clear about the desired focus for our growth.

What are your quality control standards in AAD and how have you developed your reputation as a stringent process driven company?

As you are aware, we are a ISO:9001 company. We constantly endeavour to usher in and implement best industry practices in process and quality control for optimal results. We do have periodic internal reviews and external quality

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audits to evaluate ourselves and improve constantly. This we do with a singular passion to excel and deliver world class quality for our customers.

How do you define architecture?

Architecture is a language that is used to express the creativity of the protagonist to translate the aspirations of the client to winning design solutions.

Do you have any personal hobbies? How do you devote time to balance between work and family?

I must confess that my personal interest and hobbies are varied - ranging from listening to retro western

music, playing the keyboard, candid and still photography during my travel, organic farming when home bound - not to forget the pursuit of excellence through reading books and journals related to business. To get an equilibrium of time sharing with work and family, I practise these hobbies on activities based involving my family to get a fair share of their time and mind share.

Who would you like to dedicate this award?

I sincerely dedicate this award to one and every member of our organization who believed in my vision and helped in achieving the goals. **CIA**