



L&T Valves quality management system has stood the test of time

L&T Valves to start local production

The plant, which is to commence production from October, will manufacture the entire product range of L&T Valves as well as automation and digital solutions

L&T Valves Arabia, a wholly-owned subsidiary of L&T Valves, is setting up a new manufacturing facility in Saudi Arabia, making a key addition to the company's global manufacturing network that comprises facilities in Houston (US), and Coimbatore and Kancheepuram (India).

Being set up as part of its commitment to Saudi Aramco's In-Kingdom Total Value Add (IKTVA) Programme, the strategic move will boost local capabilities and open new opportunities for local businesses, says the company.

"For over five decades, L&T Valves has consistently manufactured high-performance products leveraging state-of-the-art equipment, robust quality processes, and trained talent. The company focuses on 100 per cent compliance to stand-

ards and sustainable manufacture. L&T Valves Arabia builds on this heritage of excellence to offer a reliable portfolio that proudly carries the 'Made in Saudi Arabia' tag," said Mahesh Joshi, chief executive and director, L&T Valves.

The plant, located in the Eastern Province, close to Al Jubail, off the Dhahran-Jubail Highway, is positioned strategically close to Saudi Aramco's nerve centre at Dhahran.

"Proximity to King Abdulaziz Seaport and Dammam Airport facilitates fast and reliable movement of raw materials and finished goods. Eastern Province is the most industrially developed area in Saudi Arabia, and provides a rich pool of engineering talent, and a network of manufacturers who provide support services," Joshi commented.

The upcoming plant, which is scheduled to commence production from October, will manufacture the entire product range of L&T Valves. These would include: gate, globe and check valves; trunnion-mounted ball valves; triple-offset butterfly valves; double block and bleed plug valves; automation solutions; and digital solutions. The internet of things (IoT)-ready smart valves that integrate various sensing and communication technologies is a key product offering.

L&T Valves Arabia is equipped with state-of-the-art equipment for manufacture and quality assurance. These include CNC machines and custom-engineered machines for welding, assembly, testing and painting.

"L&T Valves Arabia will be an innovation and technology hub to cater to the entire Middle East and Africa markets, and the expansion plans are ambitious," Joshi proclaimed.

According to him, digital technologies provide L&T Valves Arabia a huge differentiation. In the shop-floor, RFID technologies enhance traceability and ensure error-free on-time manufacture. Further, smart glasses that use Augmented Reality (AR) enable customers to view the plant in real-time from remote locations.

"The future is digital, and L&T Valves Arabia provides the customer an opportunity to experience the future," he added.

LOCALISATION BOOST

Reiterating the company's IKTVA resolve, Joshi said that L&T Valves has been proactively working to meet its requirements. Recently, Saudi Aramco signed a Corporate Procurement Agreement (CPA) with L&T Valves for supply of ball, gate and check valves under the IKTVA programme.

To enhance the in-kingdom value addition, L&T Valves Arabia, proposes to recreate the supply chain for key components in the country. "These network of relationships, built over decades, guarantee quality of components and reduces unpredictability," Joshi said.

At L&T Valves Arabia, the local content will be gradually increased leveraging the vendor ecosystem in the country. The plant will create both direct and indirect employment in the region. Further, L&T Valves Arabia will be developed as an exports hub addressing requirements of major National Oil Companies (NOCs) and International Oil Companies (IOCs) in the region, he added.

"L&T Valves believes in continuous development of employees," Joshi said. According to him, Saudi nationals recruited for the plant would undergo skill development programmes at L&T Valves facilities in India as well as on-the-job training in Saudi Arabia, supported by experienced operations personnel. Management and behavioural training would be imparted at L&T's state-of-the-art Leadership Development Academy in India.

The facility will also run a valve training school to provide regular training



Mohammad Al Shammary, VP (right), Supply Chain Management and Executive Sponsor, CPA, Saudi Aramco and Joshi sign the Corporate Procurement Agreement

courses for customers.

ENSURING QUALITY

"The L&T Valves quality management system that has stood the test of time will be replicated at L&T Valves Arabia and managed by experienced quality assurance and quality control personnel," said Joshi.

L&T Valves quality management system is certified to comply with ISO 9001:2015 and API Spec Q1. The company is licensed to offer valves with CE and ATEX marking, API monograms and SIL3 certifications. Further, the quality management system has been audited and approved by major customers from around the world, Joshi informed.

For over five decades, L&T Valves has been providing reliable flow-control so-

lutions to oil and gas, power and process industries across the globe. The product portfolio includes a wide variety of pre-configured valves and custom-engineered solutions for mission-critical applications. L&T Valves has also forged strategic relationships with major valve distributors in key markets. Service, spare and technical support for the supply base that exceeds 20 million is provided by the Global Aftermarket team.

L&T Valves Arabia, leveraging this legacy of technology and trust, has built a future-ready facility. From a customer point of view, this would provide cost effective solutions, shorter lead-times, quality products and services at the customer's doorsteps and training to operators, users and others.

Handling charges cut at Yanbu Industrial Port

SAUDI Ports Authority's (Mawani) board of directors approved reducing its handling charges and marine service fees for container vessels at King Fahd Industrial Port in Yanbu by 32 per cent to 57.5 per cent, *Saudi Press Agency (SPA)* reported.

This step came as part of Mawani's efforts to facilitate the movement of national exports and provide the appropriate infrastructure to support the Saudi economy.

Handling charges for containers at King Fahd Industrial Port in Yanbu were slashed by 57.5 per cent, while storage periods and charges for empty containers were also amended.

King Fahd Industrial Port in Yanbu



Islamic Port to King Fahd Industrial Port in Yanbu were cut by 50 per cent per container.

Furthermore, the decision includes a reduction in the tariff for marine services for container ships at Yanbu Industrial Port. These measures are expected to increase the level of connectivity and integration between King Fahad Industrial Port in Yanbu, Jeddah Islamic Port and King Abdullah Port.

The free-of-charge storage period was increased to 30 days, according to the Saudi news agency.

In addition, handling charges for empty containers coming from Jeddah

King Fahd Industrial Port in Yanbu, the largest port on the Red Sea for exporting crude oil and refined petroleum products, has the capacity to handle about 460,000 containers per year.