

EXPORTS EXFiles

Exporting Success Stories

Minaean International Corporation *Vancouver, B.C.*

BY TOBY HERSCOVITCH

We all notice the price of gas, but not always the service station buildings where we pay for it. For Vancouver's Minaean International Corporation (MIC), these quick-build modular structures are their business. The company's light gauge steel technology allows not only new gas station units, but also cost-effective housing and retail buildings, to construct within five days of delivery – faster than most cars need a new fill-up. The company is paying particular attention to expanding these units in emerging markets such as India.

Recently, MIC's wholly-owned subsidiary Minaean Habitat (India) Private Ltd. (MHI) was awarded a \$5.5 million contract from Shell India for the delivery and installation of 50 complete modular service station buildings. "We beat our buyer's expectations and the original order was extended by 15 units. Now we're looking at delivering another 50," says Mervyn Pinto, Minaean's President and CEO.

India's massive road network, which measures more than 3 million kilometers, is considered the second largest in the world. As India modernizes this network and as automotive sales grow, India foresees demand for more than 15,000 gas stations throughout the country, an opportunity MHI is taking into account in its own expansion plans.

For the latest deal, EDC provided a Financial Security Guarantee to the State Bank of India (Canada). They in turn supplied the required collateral for the State



▲ Vancouver-based MIC is expanding its quick-build modular structures, such as gas station units, in India.

Bank of India to establish a \$2 million line of credit to fund Minaean's working capital needs for the Shell contract.

"EDC's assistance has been instrumental in enabling Minaean to really launch itself in the Indian building industry. With EDC's support, Minaean has taken its business to the next level and we look forward to capitalizing on even larger opportunities in 2007," said Hari Varshney, Chairman of Minaean.

EDC's earlier financing, a guarantee facility of \$300,000, initially allowed the company to invest in capital expenditures and the refurbishing of its Bangalore-based production unit. The recent release of \$2 million by EDC helped Minaean lease and set up a 30,000-square-foot facility in Mumbai and get into full scale production within 10 weeks. This had a direct impact on Shell's decision to award the contract to Minaean.

Minaean's structures don't stop at the corner gas station. The company

also makes cost-effective and environmentally-friendly buildings for retail shops, multi-story housing and other facilities, and is expanding to produce porta-cabins, office blocks, toilet block and canopies.

Since 2002, Minaean has been developing new building technologies for under-developed regions, for housing rehabilitation and disaster relief projects, with many prototypes and modular buildings already in place in numerous states in India.

Headquartered in Vancouver, MIC achieved sales of \$3.5 million in its 2006 fiscal year and Pinto expects this figure to at least double in the year ahead. Some \$2 million of the total sales represents activities in India and the United States, where it operates two subsidiaries with offices in Mumbai, New Delhi and Bangalore (India), and Portland, Oregon. www.minaean.com ■