



# Grovemark

staying ahead despite setbacks

BY MICHAEL FISHER | B&C

If you fail to achieve a goal, will you resort to finding an excuse for failure or strive to continue finding ways to succeed and tell your success story? Even a handicap cannot be used as an excuse.

Incidentally, this is the true story of Dr Raj Grover, chairman of Grovemark Methods Pvt Ltd, who was in Sri Lanka to open an office in December 2011, when his wife met with a tragic accident on the Chicalim-Vasco road and succumbed on the spot.

The Grovemark business turnover then was ₹ 7 crore. For at least a year after the death of his wife he suspended all the company's operations, saying "I couldn't take this hurt, she was everything to me and our seven-year-old son."

Now Mr Grover has 50 new products to hit the market. Pasted on the company's gate is 'Vacancies exists for managers, marketing, administration, reception and more.'

"My aim is to touch over ₹10 crore in 2012-13," he said. Although he claims to be the decedent of a royal family of Amritsar, Mr Grover successes follow mishaps and sadness since 1800. In the year 2005, Dr Grover met with an accident in a

car crash.

The fatal result of the accident smashed his hip bone, now totally replaced. His right shoulder was damaged which has made him a handicap. Both his knees were damaged and are now bolted and screwed within. But he walks with a limp and a tilt on one side. In spite of all these shortcomings, Dr Grover continues to build his company.

The trauma of the accident did not deter him. During the bed-phase (bed-ridden) for five years, he developed 70 product formulae, out of which he plans to launch 50 products this year. One of the products he conceived was a cream for the cure of bed sores. The anti-bed sore cream is in the process of registration.

Dr Grover is among the many handicaps with the determination to become an achiever. "Instead of using the handicap as an excuse, I tried to turn it into an asset," he said.

His career began in the mid 1980s retailing his mother's homemade beauty products by knocking at doors of beauty parlours in Mumbai with a bag of products on his shoulders. In 1992, the family moved to Goa and set shop at Old Goa. He would travel on a bicycle to the beaches up to Leela in Cavellissim, marketing and selling sun



protection creams.

In 1993, his mother started a manufacturing plant. He then purchased a scooter and travelled up to Ratnagiri and towards Gokarn in Karnataka. Just when he thought his hardships were coming to an end, he met with the accident. But life goes on for Dr Grover. The company's products are already in demand in the European markets.

Under his leadership, the company grossed a revenue from ₹ 70 lakh to ₹ 85 lakh annually. It is now investing ₹ 1 crore to expand his factory from 130 sqm to 1,400 sqm. He said the positive side may be the difficult, but it is the one worth looking into. It is the side that is going to lead us to excel in life.



Dr Raj Grover and his son

## 'Our products are aimed at foreign markets'

The Grovemark rise to fortune is among the most remarkable stories to have emerged from Verna Industrial Estate. It started in the late 80s in Mumbai when Ms Urmila Grover with her three kids blended home-made cosmetics and sold the products to beauty parlours. Realising the booming European clientele in the Goa coastal belt, Dr Grover moved lock, stock and barrel to Old Goa, and then to Verna Industrial Estate. He spoke to MICHAEL FISHER about the future plans for his company.

**Q: How old and big is your company?**

**A:** About 20 years old and our assets may exceed ₹ 10 crore.

**Q: What made you venture into the field of cosmetics?**

**A:** When we were small, my mother would make traditional herbal creams which were acceptable. In 1981, I studied cosmetology in Germany and on my return to India in 1984 I developed my expertise and continued extensive research in some of the best companies in the business.

**Q: Why did your family choose Goa to start a company?**

**A:** Our skin care creams come from the products of skinocuticals and cosmeceuticals and are made from 100 per cent natural ingredients. The products are aimed at the European and American markets.

**Q: Why are the products not available in the domestic market?**

**A:** I don't have the capacity to cater to the domestic market, although cosmetic retailers from Goa and all over India are ordering our products.

**Q: There been a lull after your wife's death?**

**A:** Yes that was too disheartening. I had to suspend operations for nearly a year. Like my mother, my wife was the pulse of the company. Me and my son found it hard to cope with this trauma. My son managed to get over it, and became too mischievous, so I put him in a boarding school.

**Q: What are the new products?**

**A:** Demands are more for our sunscreens. And all the new products being manufactured shortly are free of chemicals.

# Former MLA 'sludging' it out in Canacona

Exiting from the sludgy world of politics, former Canacona MLA, Mr Vijay Pai Khot set up Canacona Hydrocarbons in March this year to recycle sludge from ships, writes ALBERT FERNANDES



Machinery along with different containers that are used for recycling sludge.

Canacona Hydrocarbons is a first of its kind oil recycling company in the state. The unit was set up 3 months ago at Canacona Industrial Estate, Shrishtal. The company is engaged in recycling sludge from ships and from any other major industries, which runs on furnace oil. In simple terms, it is a distillation project.

The hydrocarbon waste (sludge) from ships is often found discharged in deep seas which later washes ashore in the form of tar balls.

Former Canacona MLA, Mr Vijay Pai Khot started the project along with another co-partner. He said that during a trip to Maharashtra he chanced upon a friend (now a co-partner) who mentioned about this industry during their course of interaction. Mr Pai Khot got interested in the idea.

He discovered that this project has a great demand as the raw material - sludge, that is readily available at all leading ports like Karwar and Mangalore which are not too far from Goa. Earlier, the sludge used to be recycled at industries located in Maharashtra or Karnataka. The required raw material is now sourced and transported from Mormugao Port Trust.

The entire process starts with unloading of the sludge in material tanks set up at the plant which is then released in reactor vessels. A boiler is attached to this vessel which provides heat as the sludge enters. The boiler can heat up the vessel upto a maximum of 110 degree Celsius. Upon intense heating, the reactor vessel converts the sludge into vapour. Once evaporation takes place, the heated sludge is released from this vessel into a condenser which is cooled down using water. The residue then settles at the base of the vessel which is then released into another container vessel being taken out for supply.

Mr Pai Khot informed that one tanker of sludge results in about 50 per cent of the finished product while the remaining half gets converted into water. The finished



Material tanks where the sludge (raw material) is stored for recycling.

Pics by Albert Fernandes | B&C

product is used as a fuel substitute for furnace oil which most factories use.

The total project was set up at a cost of around ₹ 2 crore. Around 5-6 workers are needed to carry out operations of the unit, he informed.

The only problem encountered is availability of sludge during monsoons. Apart from a few formalities, there is no hindrance while taking a tanker of sludge out of the port.

The factory is now closed during the monsoons but will shortly commence operations by the end of this month or the beginning of the following month, depending upon the availability of raw material. The unit was started in April and worked for two months as the monsoon season soon approached. When queried about the profits, Mr Pai Khot replied that it will depend on the turnover reports which would be calculated soon.