

Triveni Engineering and Industries Limited

Conference Call Transcript November 09, 2017

Moderator

Ladies and gentlemen, good day and welcome to the Triveni Engineering and Industries Limited Q2 and H1 FY 18 Earnings Conference Call. As a reminder, all participant lines will be in the listen-only mode. There will be an opportunity for you to ask questions after the presentation concludes. Should you need assistance during the conference call, please signal an operator by pressing '*' and then '0' on your touchtone telephone. Please note that this conference is being recorded.

I now hand the conference over to Mr. Rabindra Basu from CDR India. Thank you, and over to you, sir.

Rabindra Basu

Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone and a warm welcome to all of you participating in Triveni Engineering & Industries Q2 and H1 FY 18 Earnings Call. We have with us on call today, Mr. Tarun Sawhney – Vice Chairman and Managing Director; Mr. Suresh Taneja – Group CFO; Mr. Sameer Sinha – President (Sugar), as well as other members of the management team.

Before we begin, I would like to mention that some statements made in today's discussion may be forward-looking in nature and a statement to this effect has been included in the invite, which was sent to you earlier. We would now like to emphasize that while this call is open to all invitees, it may not be broadcast live or reproduced in any manner. We will start this call with opening remarks from the management followed by an interactive Q&A session.

I would now like to invite Mr. Tarun Sawhney to open the call. Over to you, Mr. Sawhney.

Tarun Sawhney

Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to the H1 FY 18 consolidated earnings conference call for Triveni Engineering and Industries Limited. The company had a gross revenue for the half year at ₹ 1,905 crore, which was a 46% growth for this H1 FY 18 versus the preceding H1 FY 17. Our profit after tax for the same period stood at ₹ 161.1 crore, a growth of 39%. This was broadly due to the higher sales volume, stable sugar prices and lower finance costs in our Sugar business, and of course, that looking forward it's taking into account there has been a modest cane increase for the season 2017-18, which I will speak about a little bit later in the call.

On the Engineering business, the market has shown good visibility this quarter as far as the gear business was concerned. However, the Water business had a muted performance due to the overall macroeconomic environment, which resulted in lower turnover and profitability. An evaluation of the quarter, Q2 FY 18 had a gross revenue of ₹1,060.8 crore, which was a change of 57%, y-o-y. The EBITDA



stood at ₹ 170.3 crore, profit before tax was ₹140.7 crore and the profit after tax was a record ₹100.6 crore. The significant improvement was primarily attributable to the Sugar business and its healthy contribution towards our P&L.

While there was no co-generation operation in the quarter, the distillery operations during this period were affected due to the closure that we had in H1 FY 18. The distillery, , has resumed operations. The Gears business in the quarter also performed well and this primarily had two impacts; one was, of course, higher order booking and in terms of dispatches we resumed to a period of normalcy, which resulted in better profitability as well.

Performance in Water was muted; a provision has been made for additional losses in the Water business, which were a direct consequence and result of delayed projects and the consequent cost overrun. A notable highlight for the Company was that the total debt of the Company on the 30th of September 2017 stood at ₹ 486 crore, which was 72% lower than 31st March 2017 and 55% lower than the same date a year ago.

The term loans as on the 30th of September were ₹ 255.6 crore, which included approximately ₹ 62.9 crore of concessional loans, where there was interest subvention and the cash credit utilization has also reduced to ₹ 230.4 crore.

In a nutshell, during the quarter the Company repaid debts of ₹ 120.4 crore and prepaid ₹ 71.5 crore, it's quite substantial. In my last earnings call, I had broadly mentioned that we had some year-end targets in mind and I had spoken about that at length and I am happy to report that over the first half we have already achieved the objectives that we had for the year end.

Talking about the specific businesses, during the quarter we dispatched 2.5 lakh tonnes of sugar, which was again a record for the Company at a realization price of ₹ 37,777 per metric tonne and the PBIT for the Sugar business was ₹ 155.5 crore. The Company achieved record sales in the Q2 & H1 FY 18, the high dispatches coupled with better sugar realizations led to a substantial increase of the profitability. The sugar realization has showed an improvement of 2.4% q-o-q, which is quite substantial, if one looks at how sugar prices have really gone up over the past six or so odd quarters.

Having said that, the scenario today is also quite robust and I will be to addressing that in just a few minutes. The sugar inventory as on the 30th of September 2017 was 7.86 lakh quintals valued at ₹ 30.2 per kilo. As per industry estimates, the opening sugar inventories were approximately 3.9 million tonnes and for 2017-2018, the country's production in our perspective is going to be around 25.1 million tonnes to 25.2 million tonnes, which means that we have a very healthy closing balance for the Sugar Season 2017-18, which will also include 0.3 million tonnes of imports of the previous Government scheme. Consequently, it is our opinion that no more imports are required for the country during the course of this sugar year. And of course, the next sugar season is looking by all estimates, as a bumper crop. So I can say with some degree of confidence that we believe that no import will take place over the next 12 months.

The FRP for 2017-18, while of no direct relevance to us at this point in time and I do believe that it will be of greater relevance in subsequent years, has been increased to ₹ 255 per quintal, an increase of 11%. It has closed the gap between FRP and SAP and that is extremely vital, because we believe that this gap between FRP and SAP once it diminishes, there is greater possibility and flexibility for the State Government to embrace an FRP base price, and implement some kind of revenue formula.



At the state level, the Uttar Pradesh government increased SAP by ₹ 10 per quintal. In our estimation, it was not an increase that was really required. Nevertheless, it has happened and the mills have started already paying SAP at that price within the prescribed period of time.

The other notable development, of course, is the increase of 5% in ethanol price for the upcoming tender, which is due on the 10th November 2017, of course, higher quantity of ethanol as well. I do believe that the country as a whole, this quantity will not be oversubscribed. We will fall short, simply because we don't have enough distillation capacity, but there are two important points to note. With this 5% increase, I believe that it will give a clear sign to the industry to engage in further investment in the distillation space.

And the second, of course, is that with the advent of GST and other changes in the IDR Act etc., the flexibility and in movement of ethanol interstate will be something that we will benefit from in this upcoming tender.

On a stocking note, the Government had extended its stock limit up to the 31st December 2017 to contain prices, in our opinion. Again, I think that once this goes away, there will be greater robustness in the market. The pipeline is pretty much hand to mouth at this point in time. I do believe that when this stock limit goes away there will be greater funds that would be brought into the system and we will certainly be able to have a good pricing going forward.

In light of the sugar scenario currently, first the Company believes that the sugar prices going forward will be range bound until the end of this sugar season with a slight downward bias. And then post the end of the crushing season, at the end of April, until the end of the sugar year, we anticipate a small increase in prices. So broadly speaking for the year, prices will certainly be range bound. The current prices that we are selling at are approximately ₹ 3,675 to ₹ 3,700 for plantation white sugar with a premium of about ₹ 60 to ₹ 75 for refined sugar, and as you know about 45% of the sugar that Triveni Group produces is refined.

The only notable point on the international scene is the fact that we have a large global surplus for 2017-18. And this of course, over the last few months has tempered prices; we've seen raw sugar is trading range bound around the 14% mark plus/minus 1%. Going forward, with better estimates coming in from Thailand and from the Eastern hemisphere, I believe that there's no real increase that can be predicted for global prices. And I do believe that all the worst news has been digested by the broader market. So I don't see any new loss coming about over the next few months in the international markets.

A quick review of the Co-generation business over the preceding quarter, there were no operations. As far as the Distillery business was concerned, yes, we didn't have a quarter that went according to forecast and this was primarily due to the fact that the distillery was closed for certain checks, which we have passed with flying colors. The Distillery has been operating since the end of August, and we have returned to a sense of normalcy in that business. Over the course of this year, it will play a very important role because given the type of crush estimates that we have in mind, we certainly will need to produce the maximum from our distillery.

On the Engineering businesses, the quarter for the Gears business was a good one. Our revenues were just shy of ₹ 28 crore, with the PBT of ₹ 6 crore. The order booking went up to about ₹ 40 crore. While the turnover for the quarter was higher and PBT was higher, this was definitely a sign of certain sectors in the market rebounding, doing very well and we believe that even specific sectors returned to normalcy both for the refurbishment and for regional equipment that have not taken



place, we see the signs of light. And over the next few quarters, there should be some promising orders from those sectors as well.

Looking at the Water business, the gross revenues for the quarter were about ₹ 38.5 crore with the PBIT loss of ₹ 8.4 crore. There was slow progress and delay in the completion of certain projects that resulted in cost escalations. In terms of offering a more detailed explanation, due to GST implementation, the revenues on most of the Government jobs were adversely impacted as there was no clarity at the customer's end of how GST implications will be paid by them as clients. And as clients, it was unclear to ask about the precise implications. This resulted in a lower turnover, which led to under absorption of overheads versus our own internal budget and figures.

Cost of completion on some of the jobs has been restated based on this realistic situation including the impact of negative escalation on various jobs in the current climate conditions. And this has what resulted in the loss for Q2 FY 18. We've taken a very conservative approach in terms of provisioning for this business. And over the coming quarters, we do see a return to normalcy. However, this needs to be coupled with projects being closed out from the governments end. And over there, there is still a little bit of murkiness in terms of the time schedules for certain projects to be closed out.

I will take just a few minutes talking about the future and then open it up for questions and answers. I have spoken about the Water business; as far as the Gears business is concerned, we do anticipate robust order booking over the next couple of quarters, especially as we see some of the sectors, where we have not received any orders for the last few quarters rebound and this is primarily due to a necessity for industries and companies in those sectors to rebuild, to refurbish their gearboxes.

As far as the Sugar business is concerned, for the Sugar Season 2017-18, we are anticipating about 15% higher crush with a good increase in recovery, which will lead to, broadly speaking, 15% to 20% higher sugar production. The state as a whole will increase its sugar produce from about 8.75 million tonnes last year to approximately 10.1 million tonnes, which is about 15% increase for this sugar season over the last one.

Returning to Triveni, we believe that the high sugared varieties and the work that we have done in cane development is what we will reap returns for both in terms of quantity of cane that we will crush and also with respect to the recovery. And for this coming season, we have approximately 90% high sugared variety cane, which is substantially higher than the approximately 77% that we had in last year and we intend to be beneficiaries of that.

The caveat is the weather, as we all know, North India, we've been plagued with high levels of pollution, high levels of fog. And this is happening at the very start of the season, and we hope that it will go away, but we are assuming that the weather in January remains clear and bright. So that there is a good degree of photosynthesis and sugar buildup in the cane. We've anticipated a good weather for this crushing season and that is of course, something that we can only estimate at this point in time.

As I mentioned, our pharmaceutical grade sugar plant will start operating from the beginning of December 2017 at our unit at Sabitgarh. And that sugar itself will get substantially higher realization in the market and will open up a brand-new segment of customers for us from across the country.



With that, I'd like to open up the floor for questions.

Moderator Thank you very much, sir. Ladies and gentlemen, we will now begin the question

and answer session. We have the first question from the line of Praveen Motwani

of NMV Securities. Please go ahead.

Praveen Motwani Sir, first question is on the sugar side, sir, what was the gain in the Sugar business,

which is your realization gain?

Tarun Sawhney The realization gain?

Praveen Motwani Yes, so that is means realization minus cost, so what was the difference during this

quarter?

Tarun Sawhney Very roughly speaking, it is in the region of about ₹ 6 per kg.

Praveen Motwani Okay. Sir, my second question is on the Gears business; which are the sectors that

contributed to the growth during this quarter?

Tarun Sawhney So broadly speaking, we had a good amount of business coming from sugar and

metals. We did see some good business in the cement sector and most importantly, the growth was from our refurbishment and spares business, which

was a very important contributing factor.

Praveen Motwani Okay. And can you just elaborate on your Water business, sir? What is going on? I

can see the loss of ₹ 8 crore in PAT, PBIT level. So if you can just elaborate on

this, sir?

Tarun Sawhney Again, I am going to, of course, repeat what I have just said in the opening

remarks, which is important. We've had two things that have happened. Firstly, the difference between last quarter and this quarter. The last time that I spoke with all of you, the full impact of GST implementation for that business, we had not realized that. The challenge in effect is the perception of Government authorities in terms of interpreting GST. And their unwillingness in terms of implementing what we believe is the interpretation of GST. That has led to some kind of inordinate delays, which of course impacts our cash flows, it impacts our working capital and it also doesn't allow us to absorb our overheads, which simply exist on a day-to-day basis at fixed costs, so that's point one. The second job of course is that there have been project delays because of clients not willing to accept projects on time, which has led to overruns, and so when the moment we've actually seen that happening, it is a sad state especially in the municipal industry, but when we've seen that happening, what the company has done is, it has made provisions for these cost overruns and taken it right upfront so that we don't have to incur it in the future and have any surprises in the future. Of course, if these overruns are less, then we will certainly

be able to write this back in form of profit.

Praveen Motwani Okay. And so last question, any plan of demerging the Engineering and Sugar

business?

Tarun Sawhney No, there isn't.

Moderator Our next question is from the line of Santosh Yellapu of IndiaNivesh Securities.

Santosh Yellapu I would like to understand what are big ticket tenders where we have participated

as of now in the water space? And can you just give some color on, from what all



verticals or areas from where we could this awarding activity are getting accentuated? That's the first question.

Tarun Sawhney Sorry, just repeat the second part.

Santosh Yellapu Like which all verticals, like from chemicals, refinery, etc

Tarun Sawhney Yes, of course, okay.

Santosh Yellapu From a client's point of view, the municipal side or from industrial side that way, if you could just give some insight or some color that would be very much helpful.

sir?

Tarun Sawhney Sure, I can't tell you exactly which tenders we are participating in,

Santosh Yellapu Right, I understand.

Tarun SawhneyThat's business intelligence. It's challenging for us to give, but let me say that the bulk of the tenders that we're participating, the bulk are in the municipal space. It's very easy to know that because you know what tenders are out there, what have

been quoted on what, and what are pending closing. And that also pretty much answers the second part of your question. So we are not really looking too much on the industrial side, the industrial activity has been crawling along at a very small pace. And so we're seeing very little activity actually be it any form of industrial equipment or industrial business as far as our Water business is concerned, the real activity is on the municipal side. The challenge, of course, with the municipal

side is that there is this lumpiness, which is unavoidable.

Santosh Yellapu Okay. And if my understanding is right, almost a third of our order book is from the

O&M area. So at what scale usually the O&M projects are considered to be, if my understanding is right, to be high margin. So at what scale or what type of level we would be seeing a better margin scenario in the water space, Water segment, I

mean?

Tarun Sawhney So, I think it's important to understand the journey that we've been through where

we've moved away from just providing products to providing solutions and this is a journey that has taken a few years. Now in the provision of solutions in our Water business, we also take on the complete projects, which include a long term O&M portion of that business. So for the viability of that, yes, it has to be of a particular size. I can't give you a particular number because it varies from job to job; it varies from location to locations. And we have to cost it out to be able to answer that question from a job to job basis. So it would be wrong of me to give you an overall

generalization, okay. That's point one.

The point two, of course, is that, yes, we look forward to projects and participating aggressively on projects, which have a long-term O&M and so our commitment, then to the customer, to the municipality, to the state, whoever the customer is, is

therefore much longer.

Santosh Yellapu Sir, and lastly, if you please permit, what type of technologies do you see that are

being currently pursued in the market and how well equipped are we on the

technology front?

Tarun SawhneySo I'm delighted that you have asked this question actually. Honestly speaking, we have a real problem here as a country. The cost tenders are made on an L1 basis

without a proper selection and evaluation of technologies. What eventually ends up



happening is to win a tender, you end up quoting the cheapest possible technology, which could be two, three, four decades old, almost certainly conventional and that's what happen. So all of these large projects that we're hearing about are only going to be bid with outdated and unconventional technology. Triveni as a firm, is agnostic to technology. We have made investments, we have a minority investment in the stake in the Company in Israel, for example and we have other technologies we have under our umbrella. So we are agnostic, we can fight equally on very high spec tenders and as well as compete with the most conventional of technologies as well. So for us, it doesn't really matter. But what one would like to see is a level of sophistication that has come about in other infrastructure sectors. Be it roads, be it power, be it in other sectors that needs to come into water and when that does, we are, as I've been mentioning for several quarters, we are uniquely positioned to be able to provide solutions.

Santosh Yellapu

Sir, the reason why I asked the question was in the recent few large ticket projects, we've seen that over 30 players participated in the pre-bidding scenarios, where there was lot of interest being seen. Now, if the awarding is going to be driven by L1, won't there be some irrationality in the initial phases because in the last two to three years, there has been a lot of new players who entered by tying up with other international players or who have got funding,

Tarun Sawhney

I disagree with you. I think there are very little tie-ups that have happened with any international players and the consequence of that is that the business which has been given out by the government has been very low. Even if this was a very large business growing at 15%, 20%, 30% like it was in 2010, 2011, 2012, the scenario would be different. The last few years have not been good. There haven't been tenders, there haven't been tie-ups, and it's a consequence of very, very limited orders being closed out. So that's the first point. The second point, of course, is that the interest in terms of pre-bid stage has got nothing to do with the number of people that actually fill out the bid document and given the BGs and actually completes the entire first stage of the bidding process. So while you may see massive pre-bid interest, the real question is to see what percentage of people actually filled out those documents. And you'd be surprised with how that number declines and it declines only because the selection of technology becomes conventional, margins get squeezed and therefore the interest levels also wane.

Moderator

Our next question is from the line of Vijay Gupta, an Individual Investor.

Vijay Gupta

First of all congratulations for the good results. My question is first on Gears business. We have done in the first quarter around ₹ 42 crore worth of business and one of your statement, somewhere down in the brief says, out of the ₹ 132 crore, ₹ 50 crore are not executable within FY 18. So can we safely assume in that case that the turnover for this year in Gears business could be around ₹ 140 crore?

Tarun Sawhney

Thank you for the kind words for our results. But let me talk specifically about the order booking, I want to delineate the ₹ 50.8 crore as one single order that we've got in terms of a new subset of our Gears business, where that entire order is for the future. It will be spread over a few years, three years or so. As far as the balance ₹ 80-odd crore of order booking, yes, a large portion of it is executable this quarter, which is Q3 FY 18 and in Q4 FY 18. Some of it will be in Q1 FY 19 of the following year. Our order booking typically ranges between a five to seven month, 7.5 month window.

Vijay Gupta

Okay. Well, can you give me an overall outlook upon the Gears business given ahead may be probably in quantifiable terms if it is possible?



Tarun Sawhney

So, I can't give you any forward-looking numbers because we typically don't do that, but I had mentioned even in the last call that we do see a return to normalcy of this business. I do believe that our results last year were an anomaly. We were caught right at the very bottom of the investment cycle where not only did we not see original equipment manufacturers buying Gears and Gearboxes, but we also saw an impact on the spares and retro side of our business. We believe we have been able to realign our business within the existing geographies of our participation to allow us to revert back to a sense of normalcy. So let's assume that last year was an abnormal year for the business, and this year will be a return to normalcy.

Vijay Gupta

Okay, sir. So in the Water business, would you like to give any ballpark as to what the order value right now with orders in Gears business?

Tarun Sawhney

It is in front of you

Vijay Gupta

I am saying as on date, not at the end of September 30th?

Tarun Sawhney

No. I wouldn't like to do that. Thank you.

Vijay Gupta

Okay. So sir, my next question will be in Water business. So while one of my colleagues have already asked, the businesses where we have participated in, while that is difficult to answer and maybe the value of crore of which we have tendered in, can you please elaborate on what are the orders where we are already L1 and if we are L1, whether they have been closed or are they still in the progress?

Tarun Sawhney

From that operating perspective, the ones that we have, we don't typically make press releases whenever we win any orders. But if you want detailed information, I would encourage you to call into us and we can take this conversation offline.

Vijay Gupta

Sure. I will do that. So Sir, is there any plan for us to monetize the TTL stake and maybe further augment the TEIL business?

Tarun Sawhney

No.

Moderator

Our next guestion is from the line of NK Arora, an Individual Investor.

NK Arora

Sir, in the Gears business group, we have orders of ₹ 132 crore. Sir, is it possible to disclose what is the percentage of export orders and what are domestic orders?

Tarun Sawhney

I don't have those numbers with me, but the majority is domestic.

NK Arora

And any fresh defense orders we have got in this quarter?

Tarun Sawhney

Yes. We've got one, very small order for some fin stabilizers, but a small order.

NK Arora

Any new geographies which have been added recently?

Tarun Sawhney

No. There is no new geography. So we are operating, as I mentioned, to the last caller had asked specifically about that. And I've said that our return to normalcy has been within the same geographical boundaries that we operate in.

Moderator

Our next question is from the line of Yahspal Madan, an Individual Investor.



Yahspal Madan I would like to know, has crushing started in all of your factories?

Tarun Sawhney Crushing has started in six out of seven. The seventh mill will start crushing

tomorrow.

Yahspal Madan I see. And for how many days it has started in other factories?

Tarun Sawhney So, it varies, the first mill started its crushing operations on the 26th - 27th of last

month.

Yahspal Madan So approximately average 1012 days crushing has happened already?

Tarun Sawhney For those units, but all of them started between the 26th, 27th and the 31st.

Yahspal Madan And what's the early yield you are getting?

Tarun Sawhney The recovery, I assume that your question is on recovery. So it varies from unit to

unit. In the highest recovery, that we are getting on date is 10.4% and the lowest

that we are getting in one of our units is about 9.5%.

Yahspal Madan So if this kind of recovery you're getting in the early phase, so any estimation, on

what do you see overall recovery in this sugar season, will it go up from last year?

Tarun Sawhney I believe that you see there is a caveat over here, and I mentioned in my opening

remarks that we have a significant increase in high sugared varieties for the Company as a whole. As a consequence of that, we believe that all things equal, there will be a recovery increase and that is why we estimate a 15% to 20% increase in our sugar production as well for the Group. This is contingent on the fact that we do not have too much inclement weather and especially fog over the

winter period.

Yahspal Madan And likely this would be around 10% additional crushing and 5% to 10% coming

from the additional recovery, would it be like this?

Tarun Sawhney We don't really offer a split line on that.

Yahspal Madan But how much extra crushing you are expecting this year or you're targeting?

Tarun Sawhney 15%.

Deven Doshi

Yahspal Madan 15%. Okay, great. And how much is the closing stock as of now, end of

September?

Tarun Sawhney It's about 7.86 lakh quintals,

Moderator Our next question is from the line of Deven Doshi, an Individual Investor.

Sir, we keep hearing updates in terms of our annual sugar production and sugar demand to be around 25 million tonnes, but that on a gross basis, right. But then within the different geographies like, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, can you give us some flavor of how production is sort of expected to be that? My question is essentially leading to the fact that last year government allowed imports in those affected states, right and we believe that imports won't be allowed. So do you believe that production is improving in those states and therefore imports won't be

allowed?



Tarun Sawhney

No. The Government has allowed imports twice. The second round, which will come into this year's production, was for 300,000 tonnes of imports, which are directly into the southernmost part of our country. Bearing that in mind and the shortfall in production numbers coming from, especially Tamil Nadu and Southern Karnataka, we believe that there is sufficient sugar to meet consumers' demand. You will also remember that that you have Maharashtra and you have other states, which have excess sugar production close by and there will be sugar from that that will feed those Southern most markets. So bearing that account, in my opening remarks, I mentioned that we anticipate that the Government will not be importing any additional sugar anywhere in the country. That analysis has been done by us looking at regional consumption and regional production for Sugar Season 2017-18.

Deven Doshi

Okay. do you have a view of how the Southern part of the country and Maharashtra's production is looking up for the next upcoming season?

Tarun Sawhney

Yes, well, as I mentioned, we believe the country will produce between 25.1 million tonnes and 25.2 million tonnes of sugar. These are the early estimates at this point in time. Maharashtra should have a reasonable return and produce approximately 7.7 million tonnes of sugar.

Deven Doshi

Okay. The other question was on the new plant that's coming up on the pharma grade sugar, what's the kind of revenue that we're expecting from that?

Tarun Sawhney

I don't have those numbers with me at this point in time. We have to wait and see until the plant starts and gets its approval from the various agencies.

Deven Doshi

Do you have a view of what the capacity that's expected?

Tarun Sawhney

Yes, the capacity of course is about 150 tonnes a day.

Moderator

Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, that was the last question. I now hand the floor back to the management for closing comments. Over to you, sir.

Tarun Sawhney

Thank you very much for joining us for the H1 FY 18 earnings conference call for Triveni Engineering and Industries Limited. I enjoyed the participation today and hopefully we can come back to you with a good set of numbers three months from now. Thank you for participation.

Moderator

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of Triveni Engineering and Industries Limited that concludes this conference. Thank you for joining us. And you may now disconnect your lines.