



Asahi India Glass Ltd. (AIS) is one of the biggest brands in the Indian Glass market. With more than 70% market share in the car glass segment, it may lead one to believe that AIS is an automotive glass specialist. While it is, but according to the company, AIS is also the country's largest integrated glass company with expert offerings spanning the entire spectrum of applications: from architectural to energy conservation, solar glass to value-added products, ably backed by a robust manufacturing & service module. In a special rendezvous with SURFACES REPORTER®, Vikram Khanna, COO- Architectural Institutional Business & Consumer Glass, CMO, CIO, AIS tracks down the journey from being the single product Asahi Glass Co. Ltd. (AGC) to become the current AIS spanning almost 13 plants/ subassembly units with a slew of products catering varied niches.

How has been the journey of AIS?

Tracing back to the origins, it is quite evident that AIS had the bigger picture in mind since the time of its inception in 1984. The JV agreement between Asahi Glass Co. Ltd. (AGC), the Labroo family and Maruti Suzuki India Ltd., led to the formal setting up of AIS as a corporate entity in India. It was a seminal moment; one that set the tone for future expansions and further consolidation.

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From being a 'single product, single customer' company, AIS has grown to become a world-class company with 13 plants / subassembly units and an impressive clientele featuring a host of leading international companies. With a firm focus on developing a multitude of offerings seamlessly integrated on the downstream for consistent quality across levels and verticals, AIS has successfully established a model of integration that will not only cater to the demands of a constantly evolving market but also open up new avenues for innovation in construction and design.

Currently many international and Indian players are working in the Glass industry. What makes AIS unique among them?

Established in 1986, AIS' footprint today spans the entire spectrum of the automotive and architectural glass value chains. It is a sandto-solutions organization with products & services for institutional buyers as well as retail customers, including:

Automotive glass products: Laminated windshields, tempered back and door glass and value-added glass.

Architectural glass products: Clear & tinted glass and a range of value added solar control & heat-reflective glass, mirrors, frosted & lacquered glass.

Windshield Experts: India's first and largest automotive repair & replacement network with 51 specialist centres located in 28 cities across the country.

Glas xperts: India's only provider of lifestyle solutions in glass whose offerings span Privacy, Aesthetic, Window, Security, Acoustic and Energyefficiency solutions.

AIS VUE: A range of uPVC window solutions that includes Silent VUE - Noise cancelling windows, Guard VUE - Burglar-resistant windows, EcoVUE - Energy saving windows, Safe VUE - Safety glass windows and Custom VUE - Customised benefit windows.

Simplifying the glass experience, 4G Solutions from AIS stand for:-

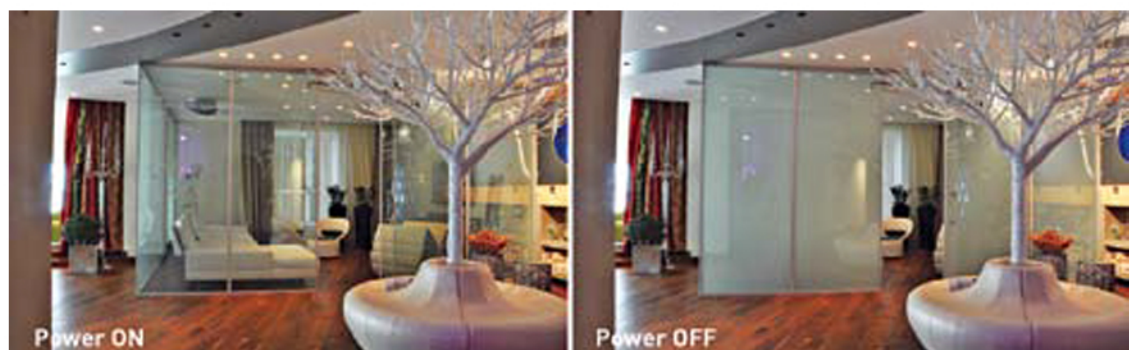
- *Glass Selection – AIS helps in the selection of the right product depending on your requirements.*
- *Glass Products – AIS, with its wide range of products, offers solutions to fulfil all requirements, exteriors as well as interiors, performing well on parameters.*
- *Glass Processing – AIS provides all kind of processing of glass as per your requirements.*
- *Glass Integration – AIS fulfils all your needs related to glass as it is present in every part of the value chain, be it glass manufacturing, processing, consultation, interior installation, window solutions and much more.*

AIS has recently forayed into uPVC windows. How much is the acceptance of the product in Indian market?

AIS VUE is a range of high performance uPVC doors and windows by Asahi India Glass Limited. With this unique collection, AIS forayed into the uPVC doors and windows segment in the year 2011. The fact that the Indian market was rapidly moving towards uPVC windows presented AIS with a unique opportunity to add to its already vast portfolio of glass products, so that a customer gets truly end-to-end solutions from AIS.

uPVC doors/windows are made using a compound PVC (or Polyvinyl chloride) which is a common plastic used in construction. In its pure state, PVC lacks the properties required to satisfy durability and weatherability parameters necessary to fabricate a vinyl window/ door system. To increase the performance of the final product, microingredients (like heat stabilizers, impact modifiers, UV stabilizers, lubricants, etc.) are added to the PVC. These ingredients minimize the effect of solar radiation on vinyl frame and sash, prevent color fading and degradation from UV light making the profile more durable. These windows require minimum maintenance efforts. Made up of multi chambered profiles which are fusion welded and sealed tightly with gaskets which prevents noise, dust and wind coming in, uPVC windows are also poor conductors of heat.

They do not absorb water and have a unique water drainage system with gradient slope which ensures that the rain water is drained out. All these strengths make uPVC windows ideal for all types of weather conditions that prevail across the country.



AIS SWYTGHLAS IS THE LATEST PRODUCT FROM AIS. MADE USING POLYMER DISPERSED LIQUID CRYSTAL(PDLC) FILM, AND OPERABLE WITH BOTH REMOTE AND MANUAL CONTROL, IT ENSURES INSTANT PRIVACY . IT IS A SPECIAL GLASS THAT TURNS FROM BEING TRANSPARENT TO OPAQUE, AND VIC E-VERSA, WITH THE PRESS OF A BUTTON

What are the latest products and concepts developed by AIS?

AIS has expanded its existing portfolio in the architectural segment with a new product - AIS Swytchglas. It is a special glass that turns from being transparent to opaque, and vice-versa, with the press of a button. Made using Polymer Dispersed Liquid Crystal (PD LC) film, and operable with both remote and manual control, it ensures instant privacy in contemporary form.

It can be used as a stunning and practical design feature in homes, residences, corporate offices, hotels, retail outlets and salons. This intelligent glass can be used in a variety of applications. It acts as an ideal privacy solution in health & beauty salons, conference rooms, personal cabins and changing room cabins in retail outlets.

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The government has laid much emphasis on harnessing solar energy with a higher annual target. What potential do you think the Solar Glass market holds?

AIS had established Solar Glass SBU considering the current situation of diminishing fossil fuels and increasing dependence on renewable power generation. It caters to renewable energy markets with its solar glass offerings. As AIS has always been committed to the philosophy of sustainable development, this SBU not only represents a promising business avenue but also an opportunity to pursue sustainability measures.

With a National Solar Mission (NSM) in place and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) pushing for widespread adoption of solar power plants by incentivizing private investments, the solar energy segment is projected to grow at an accelerated pace in the next few years. With several states, including Rajasthan and Gujarat, having announced plans to pursue solar power representing a strong pipeline of projects for AIS' Solar Glass SBU.

With more focus on sustainable designs and traditional Indian architecture, do you think the glass structures will see a decline?

The consumers of urban India today are a whole lot different from those over a decade ago. Smart, well informed, and with a new-age outlook, they demand a contemporary lifestyle that's in tune with global tastes and trends – one that their predecessors only dreamt of.

The desire for a well-designed home, office or commercial space is a reflection of this transformation. And glass has emerged as one of the favoured materials in architecture and interior design, which can fulfill these aspirations beautifully.

Glass is that aesthetic, adaptable, versatile, economically viable and eco-friendly material which actualizes possibilities in architecture and design that few materials can. State-of-the-art technologies for lamination and processing have made possible new types and varieties of glasses that enable the perfect blending of function and aesthetics – for