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# POLYMERS

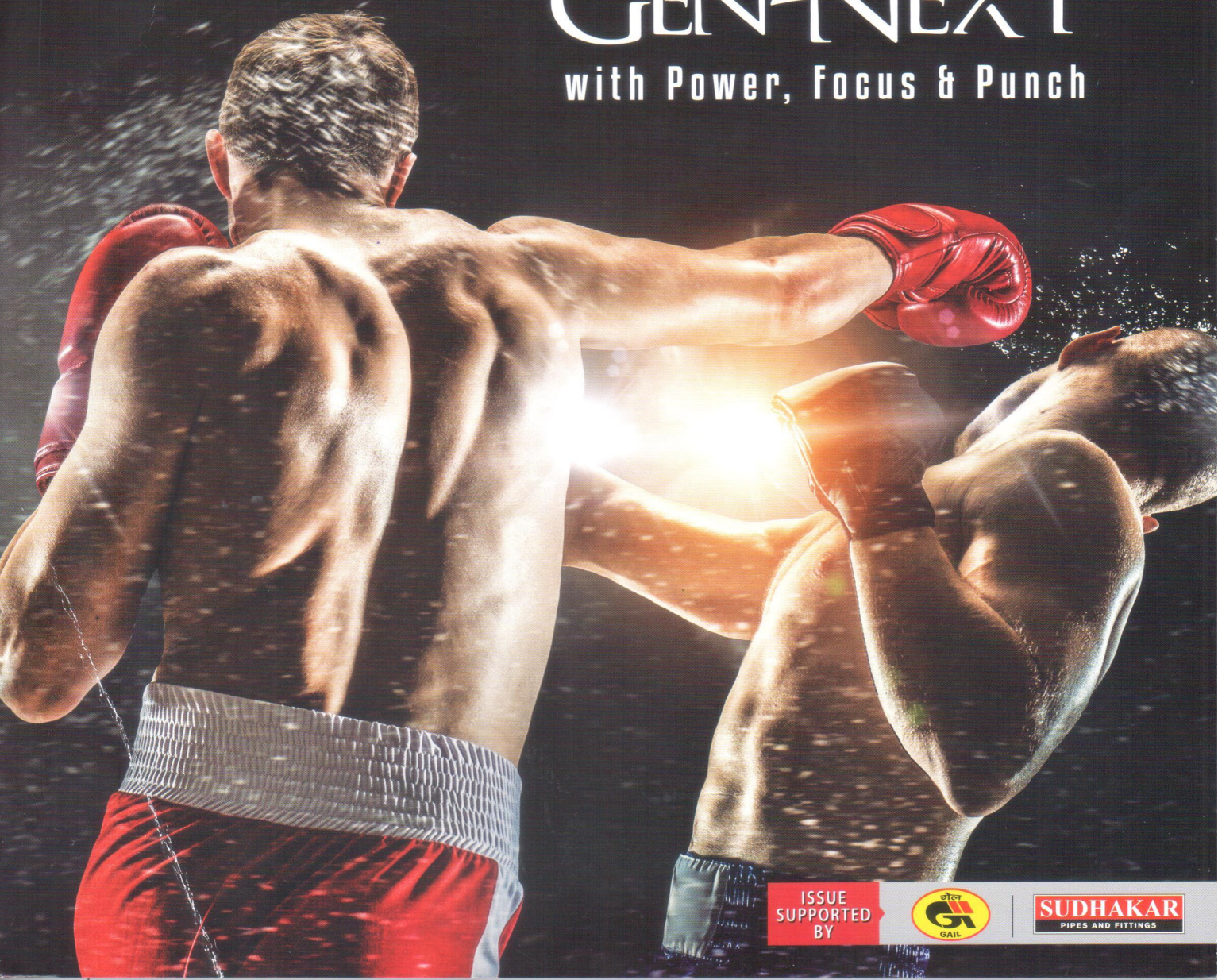
## *Communique*

ANNIVERSARY

EDITION

## GEN-NEXT

with Power, Focus & Punch



ISSUE  
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BY



**SUDHAKAR**  
PIPES AND FITTINGS



“Our generation has been inspired to take risks in a calculated manner and explore different ideas within our company,” details Athang Jain in a candid chat with POLYMERS Communiqué.

**Q. What motivated you to move from the traditional B2B model of Jain Farm Fresh to the B2C model?**

Jain Farm Fresh started in 1995 as a division of Jain Irrigation Systems with the aim of helping farmers get a better value for their produce. We processed many fruits and vegetables and started exporting in the B2B market. Today, Jain Farm Fresh is the largest mango pulp producer and the second largest onion dehydrator in the world. We decided to venture into making consumer products so that we could help consumers also get the benefit of having natural products as well as improving the value that the farmers get. Creating a consumer brand will also unlock the value of Jain Farm Fresh before we take the company public, an option that we are exploring.

**Q. The FMCG space is very crowded. Share with us your direction on how do you wish to create a niche for Jain?**

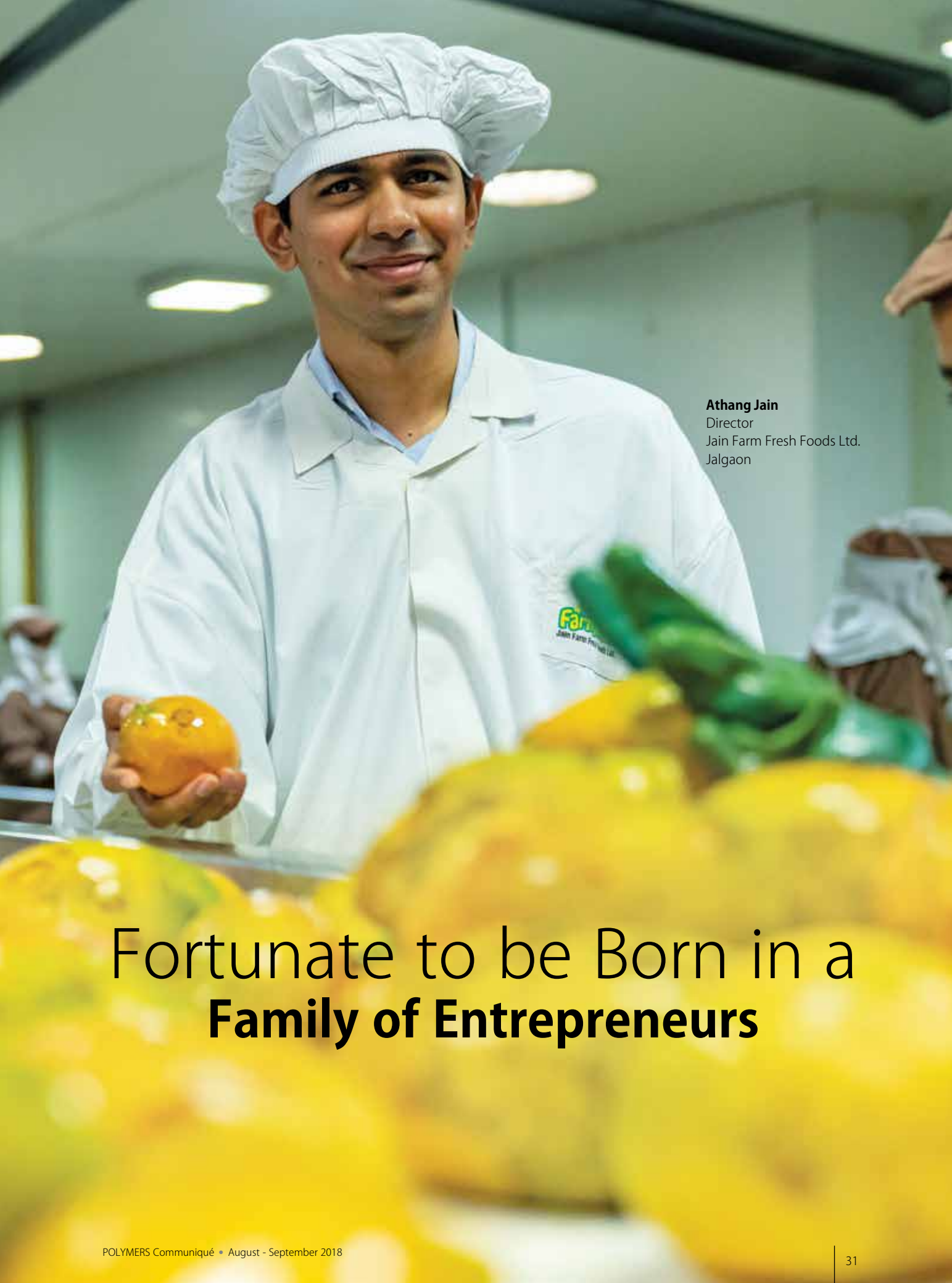
Jain Farm Fresh strives for sustainability in everything we do. It's rare these days to have a

company with complete backward linkage all the way to the farmer. As an agri-focused company, with an in-depth knowledge of sourcing of quality raw materials, we aim to provide consumers with products that are healthy, tasty and natural. We want to eliminate the use of artificial ingredients like preservatives to match the changing consumer demand for food which is nutritious. We also want to focus on alternative packaging which is environment-friendly and offers convenience to the consumer. In line with this thinking, we have already launched a range of preservative free 100% fruit snacks called 'FRU2GO' and a range of frozen fruit purees including 'AamRus'.

**Q. What does leadership mean to you and how do you implement it at Jain?**

I believe leadership means motivating a team to work together for a common goal. It's important to always reach out for feedback from everyone in the team and improvise on our way of working. Our philosophy at Jain has always been to consider our associates as part of a large family and we

“**Retail**  
is my next  
goal”



**Athang Jain**  
Director  
Jain Farm Fresh Foods Ltd.  
Jalgaon

# Fortunate to be Born in a **Family of Entrepreneurs**



My grandfather, Shri Bhavarlal Jain (Bhau), was a strong believer in the Gandhian philosophy of trusteeship which said that we are the trustees of the wealth we create and eventually this must go back to the society. And, we must live accordingly.

implement this in many ways. My grandfather used to believe in bringing out the best potential of every person, and as such we don't have a hire and fire policy. Once we have an associate, we try to allocate them to where it is possible for him / her to deliver the best results according to their abilities. We also encourage everyone to be the owner of their task / work and expect them to act as if they are owners of the company.

#### **Q. What strategies are you adopting to fast-track growth of your irrigation-based business?**

The irrigation business has large opportunities for growth. Majority of farms in India are still not irrigated and depend on rainfall for farming. Those which are irrigated, are done so through traditional flood irrigation, which is wasteful and harmful to the environment. The scope for micro-irrigation in India and all across the world is quite large.

To fast-track the growth, we have invested in technologies and companies which will completely automate irrigation in the future. We are also focusing on providing complete solutions called 'Resource to Root' where water management starts from the source and is brought all the way to the root of the plant through closed conduit piping using our HDPE pipes and micro-irrigation in the fields. Besides this, we have developed the largest

range of micro-irrigation solutions which can work for any geography and any plant - including rice and wheat.

#### **Q. A business idea or easy availability of money, what is of more importance to today's business and why?**

I'm going to go with the clichéd answer and say both! Each business needs to adapt itself to a changing world. It's clear that the pace of change has increased in the recent decades with breakthroughs in technology. New business ideas need not only be for growth, but also for staying relevant. While ideas are important, recent financial crises and current problems in the banking system shows that prudent handling of capital and cheaper availability of money impacts businesses as well.

#### **Q. An entrepreneur from across the world that impresses you?**

I've been fortunate to be born in a family of entrepreneurs - starting with my grandfather, Shri Bhavarlal Jain (Bhau) who is the Founder - and all other members who are now part of either the commercial or charitable parts of the company. They have all, in their own way, inspired our generation to take risks in a calculated manner and explore different ideas within our company. But, if I had to choose from an entrepreneur from across the world, I'd say Steve Jobs for his revolutionary design thinking and Elon Musk for the audacity of bringing crazy ideas to life.

#### **Q. Highlight key goals in your professional and personal life.**

A key 3- to 5-year goal for me in my professional life is of course to successfully launch our various retail brands and products. This is the project I've personally been involved in from the start and would love to see it reach consumers and delight them. A longer-term goal for me is to develop my abilities and contribute in a meaningful way to the future strategy of the entire company - including its various related, but different businesses which have their own challenges. Another goal is to work with new members of the family and other young associates joining the business and come up with exciting projects for future growth. From the family, Amoli and Abhedya have just completed their education and are undergoing training in the business. Ambika, my wife, has started working in the Gandhi Research Foundation, which is part of the company's philosophy of 'giving back' and doing business with a social conscience.

In my personal life, it's not very different from what most people would say. One of my key goals is to keep learning through reading books and picking up a new language. Another is to spend more time on exercising, specially running, as I've found it helps me in various walks of my life.

#### **Q. It is said, 'child is the father of man'; what does this quote mean to you?**

For me, this means that the world is a full circle. It's a thought that my grandfather maintained that would always be followed in the company and family. It is the Gandhian philosophy of trusteeship - that we are the trustees of the wealth we create and eventually this must go back to the society. And, we must live accordingly. ■