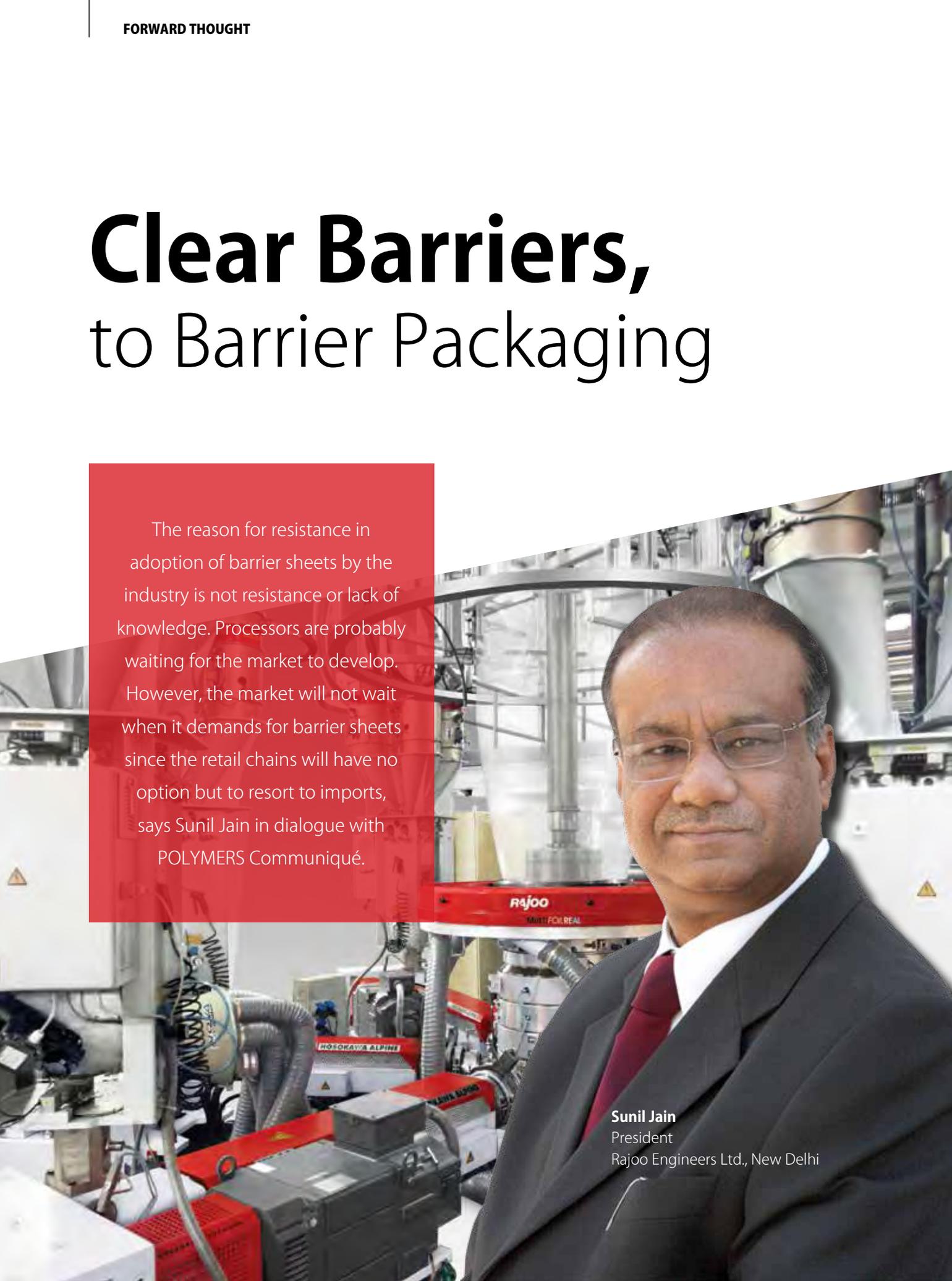


# Clear Barriers, to Barrier Packaging

The reason for resistance in adoption of barrier sheets by the industry is not resistance or lack of knowledge. Processors are probably waiting for the market to develop. However, the market will not wait when it demands for barrier sheets since the retail chains will have no option but to resort to imports, says Sunil Jain in dialogue with POLYMERS Communiqué.



**Sunil Jain**  
President  
Rajoo Engineers Ltd., New Delhi

**Q. How can the global packaging trends impact the Indian barrier packaging?**

Global packaging trends will impact Indian barrier packaging as the polymers used for this application are well established globally and also available in India. The Indian processors are familiar with such materials since it is used for packing of long shelf-life edible oil and milk. Packaging formats in UK and USA for Indian cuisine are well established and will need to be appropriately adapted here to suit the severe Indian conditions – from the perspective of long distances, extreme temperatures and high humidity.

**Q. Impact of retail growth on barrier packaging. Please comment.**

The real impact of growth in organised retail on barrier packaging has not yet been experienced, as such. It has still to be implemented in India in totality, especially for packing of food and groceries. What we are seeing right now is just a tip of the iceberg. With the Government committed to FDI in organised retail, this sector is bound to grow at an exponential rate. It is also a fact that if barrier packaging is not offered by local processors, the retail chains will not hesitate to import the materials since they will not wait to introduce their products.

**Q. What myths need to be overcome in order to create opportunities for barrier packaging in India?**

A myth prevails that barrier packaging is suitable for meat and other non-vegetarian food. While it is a fact that barrier packaging developed in the Western world primarily for meat packaging; it did not develop in India, largely being a vegetarian country coupled with the preference for freshly cooked food. It is also a fact that many retail chains in UK and USA have been successful in packing Indian cuisine, laced with spices and oil,

mainly catering to the Indian diaspora. It is thus true, that packing Indian food while being a challenge, has been overcome successfully. With increasing number of DINK (Double Income No Kids) couples in India, the demand for RTE (ready-to-eat) or RTC (ready-to-cook) food in India is increasing which necessitates use of barrier packaging materials. This sector is bound to grow exponentially and will be focused by the organised retail chains.

**Q. In India, do we need to adopt a more serious approach to green materials and innovations? How is barrier packaging positioned in this regard?**

Green materials and innovations to protect the environment surely need a conscious approach. A myth prevails that only mono-polymer / substrate materials are eco-friendly which has been busted as even laminates are now being used for various non-critical applications. While laminates offer a barrier, even non-laminates with specific polymers offer effective barrier. Producing non-laminates involves less number of production processes and low wastage. Barrier packaging films and sheets using non-laminates

are efficient formats and are more environment friendly.

**Q. According to you, what are the reasons for resistance in adoption of barrier sheets by the industry here?**

I do not think it is a question of resistance or lack of knowledge. Processors are probably waiting for the market to develop. However, the market will not wait when it demands for barrier sheets since the retail chains will have no option but to resort to imports.

**Q. Share with us your position of delivering 'technology firsts', in barrier film and sheet packaging?**

Rajoo is one of the few companies in the world offering a complete solution for barrier packaging. It was also the first Indian company to successfully commission 5- and 7-layer blown film lines in addition to 5-layer barrier sheet extrusion lines. A barrier pack ideally needs a barrier bottom container in addition to barrier lidding films. Rajoo offers both, blown film lines and sheet extrusion lines for producing barrier packaging whether based on pre-formed containers or FFS.

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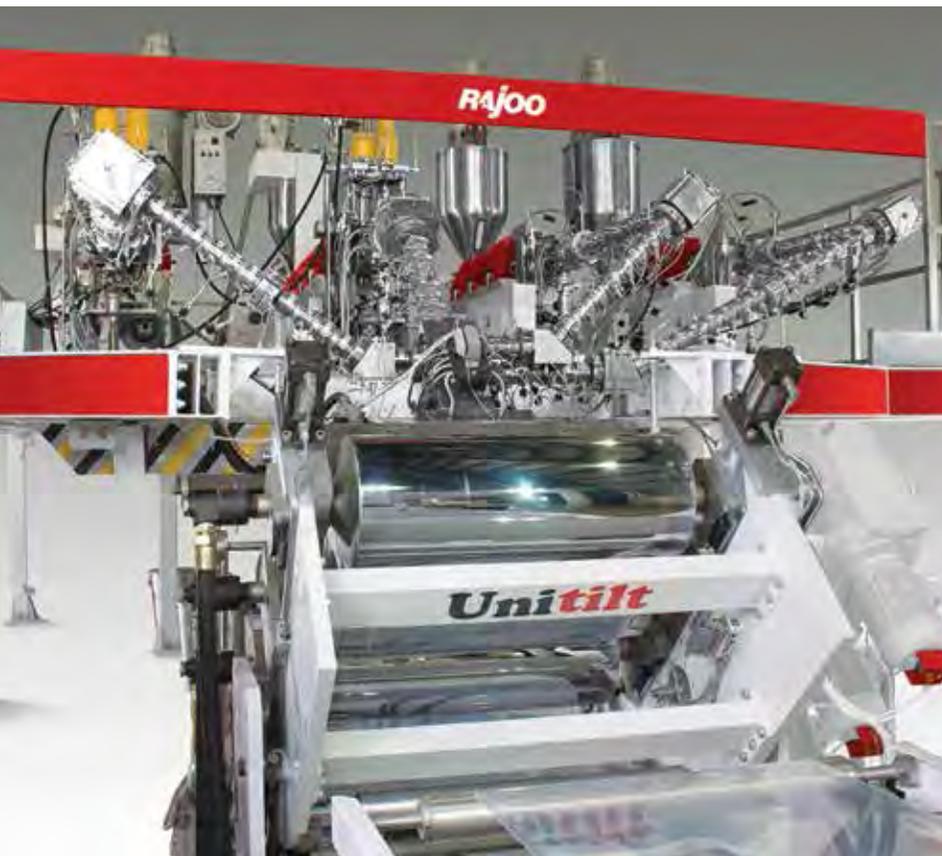
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**industry align with Government's policy and objective of skill development?**

There is indeed a severe shortage of skilled manpower for our industry. The Government has well recognised the Indian plastics processing machinery as an important sector and an engine for growth and also for reducing wastage of agro-products. Rajoo is a founder member of Plastics Machinery Manufacturers Association of India (PMMAI). PMMAI has partnered with FICCI in the Capital Goods Skill Council with the objective of increasing the availability of skilled manpower. Job roles and deficient skill sets have been submitted to be adopted by the model skill centres across the industry.

**Q. What is going to be Rajoo's focus in the year 2016!**

2016 is the year of K in Düsseldorf. While Rajoo will reveal yet another development in multilayer blown film extrusion,

**Q. How challenging has it been to create the right combination of a diversified product mix to position Rajoo as a solution provider for barrier packaging?**

Blown film and sheet extrusion has always been a forte of Rajoo Engineers. Scaling it up for barrier materials has not been much of a challenge. It did involve knowledge of barrier polymers in addition to developing the necessary flexible feed-blocks and dies which was acquired and developed by Rajoo from within.

**Q. What have been your business strategies to maintain a strong foothold overseas?**

Our business strategy has been to offer technology at affordable price levels, whether in India or in emerging economies. Rajoo was the first Indian company to export CE marked machines. When we started exporting way back in 1986, we targeted the Indian diaspora

overseas which was a successful strategy and still holds good. Later, we diversified in other markets and today, are present in 58 countries around the world. While the inputs used in our machines are serviceable locally anywhere in the world, our efficient after-sales-support through a network of partners and own engineers has also helped us to retain our existing customers, in addition to charting in new waters.

**Q. How can introduction of advanced technology in this**

**With the Government committed to FDI in organised Retail, this sector is bound to grow at an exponential rate.**

we will continue to promote the concept of barrier film and barrier sheet extrusion which is expected to grow exponentially. Towards this objective, Rajoo is setting up a development centre for barrier packaging in Rajkot, which will be up and running in the second quarter of 2016. It will be equipped with state-of-the-art 7-layer blown film line and a 5-layer barrier sheet line with all laboratory testing facilities. Benefits are multifold – development of new barrier packaging material, trials with new polymers, skill development and capacity support to existing customers.