paperASIA Interviews
ABB Group Vice President and Head of ABB Global Pulp & Paper Business, Boon Kiat Sim (BK Sim)

BK Sim has been with ABB for more than 31 years. He has previously held various senior roles in ABB such as Country Manager (Singapore), Region Manager (Middle East Africa and South Asia) and is currently the Group Vice President and Head of ABB Global Pulp & Paper Business. Based in Singapore, Sim is responsible for ABB Pulp and Paper business globally.

paperASIA: As the Group Vice President and Head of ABB Global Pulp & Paper Business, what role do you play in the company?
ABB Group VP: Simply put, I am responsible for the development and execution of the global strategy for Pulp & Paper business with the ABB Group. Some of my overriding task includes driving the development of products and solutions as well as the development and deployment of competent resources to deliver these solutions around the world, adding values to customers and at the same time creating value for the ABB Group.

paperASIA: Having had more than 31 years of experience in the industry, what are your most challenging and most memorable moments in your career?
ABB Group VP: The most challenging times of my professional career are when I was given responsibilities to develop and grow new businesses, and in a new environment. Some of my most memorable moments would include my role as Region Manager for the Middle East and Africa continent as well as driving the growth in emerging markets such as Indonesia and Vietnam.

paperASIA: You were the Region Manager in Middle East Africa and South Asia. What differences do you see between the paper industry of the two regions?
ABB Group VP: Some of the key drivers (for demand/consumption) of the paper industry include a flourishing manufacturing sector (packaging) as well as growing population affluence and urbanisation (tissue, newsprint), particularly in emerging countries. In all these aspects, the South Asia region is clearly ahead of the Middle East region. The availability of forest resources for pulp production within South East Asia (Indonesia, East Malaysia) is another reason for the much higher level of activities within the South Asia region.

paperASIA: The global focus of pulp and paper industry has gone through observable shift from established economies of Northern Europe and North America to the emerging economies in Southern Europe, South America, and Asia. How has ABB taken advantage of this situation?
ABB Group VP: Since many decades, ABB has been a key player in the global Pulp & Paper industry through its various regional Pulp & Paper Competent Centres as well as its global presence in most countries in the world. ABB has been able to exploit this strength to serve many of the multi-national paper producers.
and machine manufacturers (with HQs mostly in developed countries), our huge installed base and clients all over the world as well as support new pulp & paper players from emerging regions.

**paperASIA**: How does ABB aid its clients in ensuring high level of efficiency and productivity, at the same time, minimising the cost of production?

**ABB Group VP**: ABB has been able to deliver cost effective solution and maintain its strong market presence through the presence of its regional competent centres supported by local offices wherever the projects are being engineered and located.

**paperASIA**: Electronic technology is undergoing rapid growth globally. What is your view on this matter? How will it affect the progress of the global paper industry generally and ABB specifically?

**ABB Group VP**: Today, ABB is able to take advantage of its position as the largest automation supplier in the world to help the global pulp & paper industry enhance their level of automation, control and optimisation of their plant processes and assets, thereby, drastically improving their level of reliability, availability as well as productivity of their assets and ultimately improve competitiveness and profitability of their businesses.

**paperASIA**: Development of electronic technology is one of the many challenges faced by players in the paper industry. What are other challenges faced by ABB and how does the company plan to tackle these challenges?

**ABB Group VP**: As with most organisation, people are our most important assets. To ensure a sustainable and competent organisation, ABB embarks on a systematic process and practise to identify, develop and retain our talent pool.

**paperASIA**: The global paper industry has been under scrutiny regarding its role in environmental protection. What do you think about this issue and how active is ABB in its environmental protection efforts?

**ABB Group VP**: I am convinced that most players within the pulp & paper industry place great importance and sensitivity on environmental protection and sustainability. This can be seen from the closure of many older and smaller production plants in favour of large modern and environmentally well-equipped plants both in developed and emerging countries. One of the key values ABB's equipment and solutions brings to our customers helping them to be much more energy and resource (raw material) efficient.

**paperASIA**: Last but not least, what are your hopes for the industry?

**ABB Group VP**: ABB's most important objective in the Pulp & Paper industry is to ensure the sustainability and profitability of our customers. PA