

Moving *monozukuri* forward one step at a time

Kodama Kagaku Kogyo integrates *hitozukuri* and *genbazukuri* into their processing technologies, resulting in the highest quality products that go beyond mere plastics.



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"I would like to be a part of the company's pursuit of potential new materials, especially as we live in a multi-material world.."

Junichi Tsubota,
President, Kodama Chemical Industry Co., Ltd.

Established in the aftermath of the Second World War, Kodama Chemical Industry has been producing molded plastic products for over three-quarters of a century.

At the heart of the company's philosophy are the concepts of *monozukuri* and *hitozukuri*.

As president Junichi Tsubota is quick to explain, at Kodama, *monozukuri* is defined as two separate words: *mono*, meaning "thing", or "object", and *zukuri*, meaning "making" or "producing."

The words are separated, Mr. Tsubota goes on, "to highlight the importance of the product itself."

The making of people, meanwhile, or *hitozukuri*, is equally crucial. Mr. Tsubota again: "Building human capital and establishing a good relationship between every single individual that works for the company is important, and vital for establishing a good working environment."

It is an approach that has stood the firm in good stead as it continues to expand beyond Japanese borders.

Thai Kodama Chemical (TKC) is already an established presence

in Thailand, and with a second subsidiary, Echo Autoparts Thailand (EAT), looking to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the fast-moving automotive industry, it is clear that Southeast Asia holds the

key to the company's current international strategy.

Mr. Tsubota takes up the thread: "We are not only thinking of Thailand as a production site. We are considering it as a strategic base, almost like a local hub, that will open the gates to other countries in Southeast Asia."

Among them, of course, India and China, countries Mr. Tsubota views as potential target markets for the sale of carbon fiber-reinforced polymers (CFRP),



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which are of increasing significance in the burgeoning electric vehicle industry.

Not that he will be losing sight of what's really important: "You can spend all the time in the world strategizing and making plans, but at the end of the day people are the ones that make a company great."



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