

*The logistics and supply chain sector, nurtured by the Economic Development Board, is a key contributor to Singapore's economy. It offers a rich variety of career prospects, too. **Arti Mulchand** profiles some of the people working in the sector.*

He stays cool to ensure the ice cream stays cool

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Creating A Future-Ready Singapore

HIS title might be a mouthful, but Unilever's Nirav Shah has one cool gig – to ensure that the world's largest ice-cream maker delivers the goods.

It is a job that offers little room for meltdowns – of any kind.

Mr Shah is his company's product group supply chain planning

manager in refreshments (South-east Asia and Australia).

His average workday could involve anything from ensuring that ice cream being made stays bacteria-free, to monitoring the temperature on transportation trucks.

Further down the supply chain, he ensures that the ice cream on store shelves complies with Unilever's standards.

The chocolate shell of a Magnum, for example, should stay intact until it is eaten.

"Making ice cream is both an art and a science," explains the 30-year-old, who joined Unilever in 2009 and also oversees its tea products.



One of Mr Nirav Shah's tasks at Unilever, where he is a supply chain planning manager in refreshments, is ensuring that the world's largest ice-cream maker delivers the goods. PHOTOS: DESMOND LUI FOR THE STRAITS TIMES

"Each market has its own challenges and no two days are the same."

Mr Shah deals mostly with

Unilever's four factories in South-east Asia and Australia, but also coordinates with factories in Europe and the United

States, from where most of the ice cream in Singapore originates.

There is a lot of potential for messiness, if things go wrong in his workday. Millions of litres of ice cream are produced for Unilever's eight regional markets each month. The company makes two billion Magnums a year.

However, there is an upside to all this, including the welcome his bounty of treats gets from his wife Roohi, their 20-month-old daughter Jiya, his parents and his younger brother.

"I also get invited to lots of children's parties," he says.

Ice cream is a long way from Mr Shah's childhood ambition – to break into Bollywood or investment banking, where he expected to end up after graduating from the Singapore Management University in 2009 with a degree in quantitative finance.

Then he was invited to an event by the Anglo-Dutch multinational consumer goods company, which owns over 400 brands.

The Unilever Future Leaders Programme and the prospect of being exposed to various geographies, business units and supply chain roles had his interest piqued. When both Unilever and a bank he had applied to came back with offers, he said bye-bye to banking.

However, he has not completely abandoned his Bollywood dream. Until his daughter was born, he taught Bollywood dance at YMCA Singapore, and he still does the moves for friends and family sometimes.

He insists that his passion for the job is deeper than the endless supply of frozen treats it allows.

"I do it because I really love it."