

Arvind Balaji, vice-president, business planning, Lucas-TVS, in an exclusive interview to *Autocar Professional*.

The majority of the company's products go into the OE market. In the Iranian joint venture company, Iranian Automotive Systems, Lucas-TVS is the majority shareholder. The company was initially importing products from India but after the joint venture was formed, Lucas-TVS group supplies CKDs from India, which are later assembled there. "As the market develops and as we supply more parts, we could start manufacturing. Currently, we supply around 100,000 starter motors. But we will introduce wipers and alternators soon," remarked Balaji.

Meanwhile, the company has invested around \$4 million in Indonesia to supply starter motors to the TVS two-wheelers being manufactured there. It will also be supplying components to Tata Motors' small car project at Singur.

"We have a joint venture with Koito in Indo Japan Lighting, which is a leading lamps supplier in the country. And in association with Delphi, we have a joint venture for diesel fuel injection. We shall be setting up a unit in Uttarakhand for supplying automotive electricals to Tata products. The plant is ready and can start any moment. It really depends on what the customer needs. We can set up plants in South Africa and Thailand also, if required," said Balaji.

Earlier this year, Lucas-TVS bought over Indrad, a small Chennai-based fan motor company which makes engine cooling fan motors. "We are always looking at acquisitions abroad. As of now, automotive electricals will constitute the major chunk of our business. We already have several contracts tied up and the automotive industry takes at least two to three years to see the light of the day. We hope to double our turnover in the next three to four years. We have got a number of new customers from abroad. That will add to our business," he added.

Promising prospects

Meanwhile, the company's plans to enter international markets have been yielding fruitful results through robust new product development. Iveco of Italy has selected Lucas-TVS as its partner for development and supply of wipers for commercial vehicle applications. Artic Cat, a snowmobile and ATV vehicle manufacturer in the US, has selected it to



Excellence is a mission at Lucas-TVS. TK Balaji, chief executive and managing director (holding the ACMA award) flanked by Arvind Balaji, VP, business planning, on his right and members of his core team to his left.

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- Lucas-TVS' product range includes starter motors, blower motors, alternators, dynamos/regulators, fan motors, mechanical and electronic distributors, wiper motors, window lift motors, ignition coils, and cam sensors



develop starter motors for its new engine and vehicle programmes. CVG, another major manufacturer and supplier of wiping systems based in North America, has chosen Lucas-TVS as its supplier for high-powered wiper motors.

And in India, the company is the preferred supply partner for most vehicle manufacturers for their new engine and vehicle introduction programmes. These include Mahindra-Renault for its Logan and Tata Motors for the Ace LCV range and its Rs-1 lakh car that will be launched in 2008. The company also supplies components to Force Motors for the MAN range of heavy vehicles and to Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India for its Activa. It will be part of the company's new scooter programmes as well.

Satvinder Singh, vice-president, marketing, noted that as part of the company's Vision 2010 plan, it wants to be a recognised OE supplier in the Asia-Pacific and Middle East markets. "By 2010, we need to sell Rs 2,000 crore of auto electrical products and solutions with one-third of customers outside India," he said.

In the meantime, awards come the company's way regularly. Its innovation and new product development capability was recognised — for the third time — by the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association in 2007 with a gold trophy for technical excellence. Proof enough that Lucas-TVS is headed for good times. ■



Be it heavy vehicles like MAN trucks from Force Motors or TVS Motor Co's Neo two-wheeler made in Indonesia, Lucas-TVS components play a key role.