



Implementation of infrastructure projects would help automobile sector to deliver better

...avers **R K Behera**, Founder and Chairman, RSB Group. The company presently has 12 manufacturing plants spread over six locations in India and manufactures a diverse range of automotive components and systems. In conversation with **Swapnil Pillai**, he illustrates the need of the hour for rapidly growing Indian automobile market.

**Q What are your views on the current scenario of the Indian automobile sector?**

Presently, the Indian automobile industry seems to be taking a marginal dip. But, we believe this is a short-term phenomena because of the high domestic inflation, rising interest cost and weak global demand. However, in our view, the medium and long term scenario is optimistic because India is one of the emerging economies and also has the critical mass to support and sustain recovery and growth.

**Q What is the need of the hour to optimise the quality and efficiency of the product offerings?**

Globally, India including, the expectations of the customers on quality front have risen significantly and continues to rise. Therefore, embracing quality on product offerings has become vital and absolutely necessary for survival and to stay ahead in global competition. We also believe that when we take care of quality across the breadth of our business in all operations,

wastages get eliminated and efficiency improves. Towards this, we are in the process of institutionalising Total Quality Management (TQM) process in our plants.

**Q What are the various R&D and quality assurance initiatives undertaken by your company?**

We believe that by integrating design and manufacturing, we can provide our customers with cohesive engineering solutions. Thus, R&D is of immense

importance to us. With this in view, our subsidiary i-Design Engineering Solutions Ltd provides our customers, whenever required, with design and testing functions for some of their products. i-Design provides services, including conceptualisation, design, prototyping, testing and eventually validating products. i-Design offers designing and engineering services internally as well as to third party customers, thereby enabling us to develop stronger relationships with our customers on multiple fronts.

**Q Brief us on the initiatives to be undertaken to meet the requirement of qualified workforce for the industry.**

There is a great need to increase the number and quality of manufacturing / shop floor manpower. There is huge shortage of workforce which also leads to high attrition. The government in cooperation and collaboration with the private industry players should embark on a programme to have more

industrial technical institutes to churn out well qualified production personnel in different manufacturing disciplines.

**Q Are the policies of government facilitating sustainable development for automobile companies?**

All-round infrastructure development is the key to achieve sustainable development, particularly in the automobile sector. In this aspect, it is our view that, while the government's policies on infrastructure development are laudable, the translation of these into implementation is not quick enough to reap the desired benefits. Greater acceleration in implementation of the various infrastructure projects would help the automobile sector to deliver better.

The government is certainly working towards controlling and softening the macroeconomic environment of high inflation and high interest regime. Once this is achieved, we hope the industry will bounce back from its temporary slowdown.

**Q How can the Indian machine tool industry cater to this fast evolving sector?**

Indian machine tool industry is known for producing quality products and has the required knowledge, both technical and managerial, to produce and deliver. The industry needs to align with the emerging global trends in terms of complexity, automation and high level of performance. The machine tool industry needs to absorb the fast changing technology quickly and offer these products in the Indian market almost simultaneously as they are unveiled in the developed countries. It needs to enter into technical collaboration with the leading machine tool companies of the world so that machines of global standards are available in India at lower and competitive price. If this happens, the automotive industry may not have to import such machines with high cost and lead time. Service facility may also become available at lower cost and quicker time. ●