



Mr. P.S. Rao, RBL President

RBL 'braking' barriers with innovative approach

Exclusive Feature

The Deming Grand Prize 2013 recently conferred on Rane Brake Lining Ltd. (RBL) fully reflects the company's manufacturing excellence through Total Quality Management (TQM) practices. RBL has joined an elite group of 26 other companies worldwide and seven other companies from India that have previously won this most prestigious award in TQM. This is indeed an important milestone in Rane's march towards becoming a world-class company with strong technical know-how in asbestos-free brake linings, disc pads and clutch facings, ably supported by its JV partner Nisshinbo Brakes Inc., Japan. RBL also gets

the distinction of being the first friction material company in the world to have won the award.

In a one-to-one interaction with MOTORINDIA, the RBL President, Mr. P.S. Rao, talks about the coveted award, the top management's commitment towards achieving the goal and its focus on asbestos-free products. He says: "Our management concentrated on technical, operational and HR excellence in order to achieve high productivity at global quality levels. We have state-of-the-art R&D facilities in all our plants, and to further show our commitment towards quality for our customers, we conducted monthly audits in all our plants."

RBL has been actively engaging in developing new friction materials

to meet emerging OEM customer requirements related to quality and NVH (noise, vibration and harshness) and at the same time ensuring cost effectiveness. The company has been focusing on cost-effective asbestos-free grades of material for its brake linings and disc pads for passenger cars and CVs, thus improving its market share in both the OE and aftermarket segments. Apart from reduced cost, the asbestos-free nature of the material contributes to environment protection as well, a feature likely to extend to all of RBL's products in the near future.

"Our joint development with Nisshinbo, Japan is an important initiative for serving OEMs and also ensuring maximum localisation of raw materi-

als. We are planning to be 100 per cent asbestos-free within the next few years and have been conducting several technical discussions with our Tier I and OE customers", adds Mr. Rao.

RBL's own efforts for the development of low-cost formulations is also continuing at a fast

pace. In order to combat stiff competition, the company, in collaboration with global suppliers, has been focusing on developing alternative and green materials for improved performance and cost efficiency. It has its very strong presence in the domestic market for its products with a share of 48 per cent in OEs and 20 per cent in the aftermarket. Around 60 per cent of its total sales comes from the passenger car segment, while nearly 25 per cent is accounted for by the CV space.

RBL which has also started working on copper-free products with its JV partners may turn out to be the first manufacturer of such products to be made available to customers by 2015.