

Accent on vital factors for growth of companies

Special Correspondent

CHENNAI: The quality of employees and a culture of continuous improvement within the organisation are the key to the long-term growth of companies, B. Muthuraman, Vice Chairman, Tata Steel Ltd, said on Sunday.

Addressing the platinum jubilee of Rane Holdings, Mr. Muthuraman said the quality of the people in a company was the one thing that could not be copied by a rival and provided it the competitive edge over long periods.

He pointed out that while companies in trouble typically developed a range of scenarios, revisited plans, stress-tested investment and M&A proposals, squeezed much more from existing assets, reviewed business processes and re-focused on customer delight, at the core of all these efforts was the quality of its employees.

"All long-living companies have this fantastic ability to keep the people together, keep them motivated and energised all the time," Mr. Muthuraman said. The way to do this is to allow people the freedom to work, allow them the freedom of failure, set challenges that stretch their capabilities, encourage them to ask questions, develop an aspirational mindset and create opportunities to improve, he said.

Citing a study on the factors that drove the suc-



(From left) L. Ganesh, chairman of Rane Group; Suresh Krishna, chairman and managing director, Sundram Fasteners Limited; B. Muthuraman, vice-chairman, Tata Steel Limited; L. Lakshman, chairman, Rane Holdings Limited and Harish Lakshman, managing director, Rane TRW at its Platinum Jubilee celebrations in Chennai on Sunday. — PHOTO: S.R. RAGHUNATHAN

cess of a long-living company, Mr. Muthuraman said the basic attributes listed in the findings were the organisation's oneness with society — which was different from earmarking a share of profits for society — adaptability, empowered people and financial prudence.

While making investments, expansion projects and mergers and acquisitions were important to drive the growth of a company, what was much more important and far more powerful was the adoption of a culture of continuous learning within an organisation, Mr. Muthuraman said.

Unlike a company's expansion that required

capital and only involved a few key decision-makers, the continuous improvement journey engaged all the employees and aligned them to the business purpose of the organisation, he said.

Suresh Khanna, CMD, Sundram Fasteners Ltd, who launched the book, 'The Rane Story: A Journey of Excellence' by V. Sriram, said the 'dharma' of a company should be to raise the living standards of its people and provide opportunities that help realise their dreams; everything else amounted to mere managerial tools — "a million Toyotas manufactured impeccably to the utmost standards is not equal to raising of ten families from abject pov-

erty to a level of sustainable social acceptance".

R. Seshasayee, executive vice chairman, Ashok Leyland, said the platinum jubilee of Rane Holdings marked a celebration of an unwavering commitment to customers and strong business values and integrity.

Among captains of industry who could not make it in person but sent across their felicitations via video-messages were Ratan Tata, chairman, Tata Group and R. C. Bhargava, chairman, Maruti Suzuki Ltd. L. Lakshman, chairman, Rane Holdings, L. Ganesh, chairman, Rane Group and Harish Lakshman, managing director, Rane TRW, also participated.