

# 'We are expanding to fully exploit industry's projected growth'



**Rajesh Agarwal,**  
President,  
Supreme & Co.

*Rajesh Agarwal, President, Supreme & Co, says the challenges for his company are big and is gearing up to meet them. Excerpts:*

**You are one of the major suppliers in T&D segment. How has been the government initiative in the past? Has it been given a boost since the 11th Five-Year Plan talks about major power overhaul?**

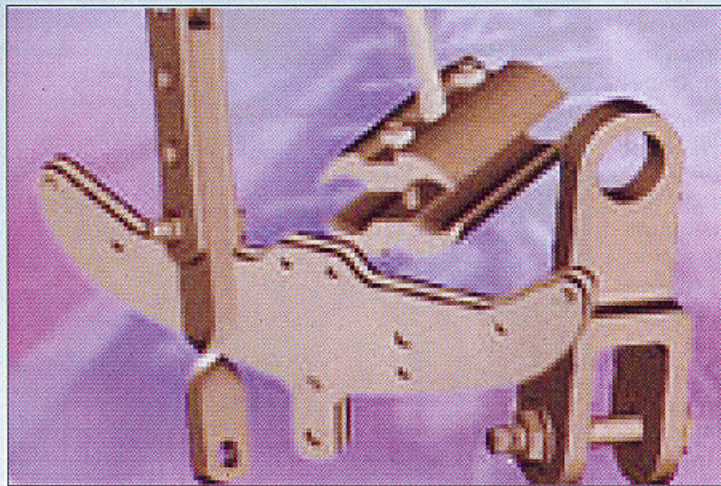
The Indian economy is growing at a blistering pace. Electricity is one of the key infrastructure for sustaining such a growth. Estimates made by ADB in a report published in July 2004 say that the economy will need an installed capacity of 200 billion KWH to meet the demand of almost

100 billion KWH. This capacity at the time of the report submission was 80 billion KWH. The challenges in front of us are big. The ambitious 11th plan target for generation is bound to generate matching demand in T&D sector.

**How are you preparing to deal with this explosion of power shake-up with activity?**

Supreme is expanding vertically and horizontally to fully exploit this projected growth. We

are adding product lines continuously to position us as one-stop solution for transmission and distribution. We have added production of transformers and stranded r plating of steel rods, etc. The list is long and we can keep going on. On the distribution side, after offering world-class products for mechanical supports to LV and MV system and producing connectors for LV ABC system, we have now developed MV ABC voltage stress relief type terminations and joints. We have also added fibre glass reinforced thermoplastic body fuse-switch-disconnector for protecting the insulation of aerial cables from fault current. On transmission, we are actively working on accessories and connectors for composite conductors. We are also in the look out for co-operation with manufacturers of high temperature super conductor so that we may develop and test accessories for dead ending, supporting and joining them. We have a definite plan for completing



prototype for 800 KV insulator hardware string in this month. We expect to complete type testing in three months thereafter. This is very important for us as countries with growing populations and high economic growth, such as Brazil, China and India, UHV systems will deliver power to urban centres from generating stations thousand of kilometers away. This would enable much more power to be delivered for higher needs without adding to the corridor. Information technology, telecom and switching have become the backbone for control and supervision of infrastructure of core sectors, including power from remote locations. Aerial fibre optics is one of

the alternatives for providing optical fibre backbone for SCADA systems required for such supervision, control and data-network management. We are now India's premier manufacturer for ADSS and OPGW accessories normally used for aerial fibre optics. We are one of the three manufacturers on PGCIL approval list for ADSS Accessories. Besides, telcos are also using existing poles and tow-

ers of power and communication network to install ADSS fibre optic cable or integrating the optical fibre with ground wire on transmission network by using OPGW.

**A lot of foreign players are revisiting the Indian T&D segment. How has this affected competition?**

We are game for competition, which we may witness as a result of foreign players revisiting our shores. We have met them head-on at different parts of the world - including their home turf. Our exports and markets continue to expand. We shall take them in our stride in our own territory.

**What can be done to give real boost to the segment as there are huge gaps and losses that still dog this segment?**

While transmission utilities in general and PGCIL in particular have very high awareness level of the price to be for Grid failures. Utilities and EPC contractors in the distribution segment - a few notable exceptions apart - show very poor level of awareness of losses arising from line

outages and consequent interruption in power supply. Many accessories, fittings and equipments in use are extremely hazardous to the safety of linemen and consumers. T&D losses, apart from unviable tariff, unpaid bills and subsidies, have been the main reason why utilities could not generate funds internally to be ploughed back for augmenting generation, transmission and distribution capacities.

**Your take on the 11th Five-Year Plan that dreams of an addition of 61GW power generation?**

It is a big dream. But then, we are in need of big dreams and we are in dire need to transform these big dreams into one of the best reality shows ever. Even this dream will not take us to 200 billion UWH projected requirement by ADB study. Government, utilities, contractors, manufacturers, consultants and investing community all need to work cohesively and synergistically to achieve this.

**What are future growth plans for Supreme?**

On future plans, our CEO has already set a challenging target to achieve US\$200 million in annual sales by 2012. We are all committed to achieve this. We are setting measurable targets for marketing initiative, augmentation of production capacity, investments in development and type testing of products, and augment management and engineering capability. We also need to safeguard us from relegating bottomline and qualitative growth to peripheral vision, while being too much focused on topline growth. Setting of measurable goals and continuous monitoring for these areas will be considered just as important. ●