

## Garware Motors Launches its dealership in Ahmedabad

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# Garware mulls manufacturing superbikes through Korean JV

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PUNE-BASED Garware Motors is looking to forge a joint venture to manufacture the Hyosung range of bikes here in India with Korean S&T Motors Corporation within the next two years. At present the company is importing two Hyosung bike models, GT650R and ST7, from Korea and selling them in the country. It aims to increase its portfolio to eight bikes within the third year of operation.

Garware Motors Ltd, a subsidiary of Garware Bestretch Ltd, entered into a partnership with S&T in October last year.

Through the partnership, the company is currently importing the bikes as completely knocked down (CKD) units and assembling them at its plant at Wai near Satara in Maharashtra.

Garware started taking bookings for the bikes around 40 days back, and has already received 125 bookings operating from four showrooms. The company is now in the process of scaling up its network from a current six to 15 showrooms within October this year. It opened an outlet in Ahmedabad on Wednesday after starting the Chennai showroom earlier this week.

"We aim to sell around 2,000 bikes in the first year with all the 15 showrooms operational. By the end of the third year, we expect to touch a sales figure of 5,000 bikes. As we are planning to bring in six more Hyosung bikes by the end of the third year,



Diya Garware, managing director, Garware Motors at the launch in Ahmedabad. PHOTO: YASIN D

### ...Now, Garware eyes to import cars

After bikes, Garware is planning to import high-end cars to India as well. It is in talks with some multinational companies already. Refusing to share further details, Diya Garware, managing director, Garware Motors confirmed that the company is in talks with some of the multinational majors. Garware Motors has been the pioneer in the country in importing premium cars.

Way back in 1930s, the company under BD Garware used to import cars like Jaguars and Lagondas into India which it would sell to the then royalty. It moved out of the car business after 1955, when only two Indian companies got the license to manufacture cars in India, Premier Automobiles Limited, erstwhile flagship company of Walchand Hirachand Group, assembled Italian auto giant Fiat's cars in the 1950s, and CK Birla Group company Hindustan Motors that made the Ambassador cars.

which would also include the 250 cc range, we are currently working on increasing localisation percentage of the bikes," Diya Garware, managing director, Garware Motors said.

The 250 cc bikes would have to be priced competitively and hence the company has to increase local con-

tent. "We are also looking at forging a joint venture for manufacturing the Hyosung range here in India with S&T within the next two years. Already a team comprising engineers from S&T and Garware are working on identifying the parts that can be localised. Then we would have to work on creating a vendor

base," she explained. The Wai plant can assemble eight bikes per shift, and the plant can operate in three shifts if required.

At present the only local component used in the bikes is the horn, as the Korean horn did not get approval during the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) homologation process.

The company is selling the GT650R, a 650 cc sports bike priced at between ₹ 4.85 lakh to ₹ 5 lakh, and the ST7, a 700 cc cruiser bike that sells for ₹ 5.82 lakh.

Garware Motors has lined up a promotions budget of ₹ eight crore for the year, and is also focussing on internet marketing through social networking sites.

Talking about the focus markets where the company aims to sell the most number of bikes, Garware said, "We had initially estimated the metros to contribute the most to our sales numbers, including cities like Delhi and Mumbai. However, to our surprise, cities like Pune and places like Goa are doing extremely well. We are getting buyers from small districts like Nandurbar in Maharashtra and Morbi in Saurashtra region of Gujarat."

The first booking that the company received at its Mumbai outlet was from an Ahmedabad resident named Mahesh Mewara. Arjun Rampal is among the first celebrities who have bought a Hyosung in India.

The company targets to sell close to 20 bikes per month in Gujarat.