

Sheela Woodbridge kicks off seat facility



Sheela Woodbridge officials at the launch of the new plant.

Sahibabad-based seat foam manufacturer, **Sheela Woodbridge Urethanes**, has recently launched its automobile seat moulding plant, and has started supplying seat foams, although indirectly through tier-I seat supplier TS-Tech, to Honda Siel Cars India (HSCI) for the automaker's premium hatchback, Jazz.

'We have started supplying seat foams for Honda Jazz through our new plant in Sahibabad, in which we have invested around Rs 12 crore till now,' CEO, Sheela Woodbridge Urethanes, Sunil Minocha said at the inauguration ceremony of the new plant recently.

The company, a 50:50 joint venture (JV) between **Sheela Foam and Canada-based Woodbridge Group**, was formed in 2006 to manufacture seat foams. The new plant is an extension of Sheela Foam's existing plant, where non-automotive foams for mattresses and pillows, under the brand name Sleepwell and manufactured.

India is becoming a major automotive hub with 24 global vehicle platforms out of which, 17 will be manufactured in India by 2013. Therefore, we envisage our business to grow in the near future. We want to be a major tier-II company and, so, would set up more seat foam plants in the next five years once we cross 200,000 sets (per car) of seat foams per annum, Vice President and Managing Director (Asia Pacific), Woodbridge Group, Chris Wennas said. Declining to divulge the current production capacity, he said the company would soon cross the 200,000-set capacity.

Sheela Foam is one of the largest processor of polyurethane (PU) foam in the Asia-Pacific region, processing around 29,000 tonne per annum, supplying to both industrial and commercial markets, Minocha said. The company has six manufacturing units consisting state-of-the art technologies and has a network of over 70 distributors and 3,000 dealers across the country. It has over 40 percent marketshare in the domestic PU foam market.

The company also has five manufacturing facilities in Australia located at Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney, serving the Australian market.

The Woodbridge Group is an independent supplier of automotive polyurethane products, with 60 facilities in 20 countries. The Group provides tooling and machinery technologies to Sheela Foam to manufacturer seat foams.

