

Opportunities plenty, but will to tap lacking: GV Aras



In India, technical textiles is a subject more talked about than actually acted upon on the ground level. For this, "both industry and Government need to work together to explore emerging opportunities in this field," says **Gurudas Aras, Director, A.T.E. Enterprises Pvt Ltd**, during an interaction with the ITJ.

He adds, "Today, unfortunately the required investments in technical textile field are not forthcoming for various reasons in spite of opportunities. Consumption of technical textiles is much lower in

India compared to other countries. Per capita consumption in India is only 1.7 kg vis-a-vis 12 kg in developed countries.

GV Aras speaks on the various technical textile end-products offered by the A.T.E. Group.

Excerpts...

What are the various technical textile end-products for which A. T. E. group offers technologies? Give us some details.

A.T.E. operates across most of the segments of technical textile products as far as machinery is concerned. We offer technology for woven, knitted, warp knitted and non-woven technical textiles. We also offer complete coating and lamination solutions as well. Within nonwovens we can offer technologies for most of the variants like spun lace, thermo-bonded, needle punch nonwovens. As far as product applications are concerned we cover geotextiles, automotive textiles, composites, agro-textiles (shade-nets, crop-covers), fishnets, interlinings, narrow fabrics filtration products, protective textiles, active-wear and sportswear.

What is the scope of the offers?

We represent many world leaders who manufacture equipment for producing technical textile products. Some of them are Truetzschler Nonwovens, Karl Mayer, Monforts and Fongs group. The offerings would cover practically majority of the range of technical textile products covering Agrotech, Buildtech, Clothtech, Mobiltech, Indutech, Sporttech, Meditech and Protech. The coating and lamination technologies are the key to give required functional properties to the technical textile substrates and in this area some of our principals have domain expertise.

Can you give us cases briefly where A.T.E. has successfully implemented key projects?

A.T. E. has handled many technical textile projects successfully. To name a few.....Welspun (wipes and other products), DKTE Centre of Excellence for Nonwovens (Insulation and geotextiles), Arvind PD (glass fibre fabrics and Pultrusion products), Kush Synthetics (Wind mill fabrics), Strata India (Geogrids), Maruti Rubplast (Geogrids), Techfab (Geogrids and geo-composites), Pioneer (Flex fabrics), Navratan Specialties (Flex fabrics), Jasmine Knitting (sportswear and shoe fabrics), SITRA (spacer fabrics for medical textiles).

What according to you are the segments which hold immense scope in India?

In my opinion, geotextiles, agrotech, packtech and automotive textiles hold good potential in India. Also one segment which has immense growth potential is active-wear and sports-wear. In view of

the government's thrust on infrastructure as well as agriculture/rural economy, the consumption of technical textiles in these sectors is expected to increase gradually. Also India is one of the top most automobile manufacturing countries with growing market. This would augur well for growth of automotive textiles in the coming years. With growing industrialization there will be more and more requirement of specialised packaging. With growing health consciousness, promotion of sports and yoga, more and more people are expected to consume sports related clothings. In certain products like baby diapers, India is the fastest growing market with 20 per cent CAGR. The baby and adult diapers, sanitary napkins and surgical disposable industry is likely to grow at a healthy rate in future in view of increasing income and growing awareness about hygiene.

The ball is in whose court – Industry or Government or both? What is the need of the hour to give a boost to technical textiles?

In India, technical textiles is a subject more talked about than actually acted upon on the ground level. Both industry and Government need to work together to explore emerging opportunities in this field. Government's job is to create favourable infrastructure and devise suitable policies to encourage investments. On the Industry part, it should show entrepreneurial spirit and venture in manufacturing with long-term view.

Today, unfortunately the required investments in technical textile

field are not forthcoming for various reasons in spite of opportunities. Consumption of technical textiles is much lower in India compared to other countries. Per capita consumption in India is only 1.7 kg vis-a-vis 12 kg in developed countries. There is large scope for domestic manufacturing of technical textile as import substitutes especially in the field automotive and medical textiles. Government and the industry should closely look at the imports and develop import substitutes. Lot of items like diapers, wipes, protective clothing, seat belts are still imported in large quantities. Import substitution can be a big opportunity for the Indian investors. Geotextiles consumption can grow considerably if its use in road construction is made mandatory. China has built large capacities in technical textiles which gives them advantage while India needs to catch up soon as consumption is on rise.

What is ATE group's blueprint for the future in this field?

We, at A.T.E., are today in a unique position as a technology supplier whereby we are able to cater to most of the segments of technical textiles. Our team has strong domain knowledge as well as process knowledge which helps in guiding customers in adopting right technology based on specific applications. We are also fully equipped to help customers in putting up complete projects in carpets, active wear and sportswear. Our portfolio in technical textiles is nearly complete and we do not contemplate adding any new agencies at this juncture