Investment / Expansion / Product

Meritor adds to Indian drive axle portfolio

Mysore - **Meritor (HVS) India Ltd**[1] of Mysore has announced a number of key initiatives to upgrade its existing heavy-duty axle portfolio and to expand its product portfolio further to diversify further into other market segments – namely, the growing light commercial vehicle segment, off-highway and military segments.

The company's major focus is currently on new product development to increase its business with existing customers as well as target new customers. Meritor says there are a large number of new products under development, which it plans to launch in the coming years for both the LCV and MHCV segments.

During the last quarter of 2013, Meritor started commercial production of its first light-duty axle called MS10X for **Nissan Ashok Leyland**'s 'Partner' vehicle. The MS10X, says Meritor, is its first axle to have been developed by Meritor India that meets not only the commercial vehicle requirements of vehicles in India, but those in many other global markets. Claiming that it meets global benchmarks for reliability and performance at Indian price levels, the MS10X axle has a cold formed housing and an integrated carrier design. It can be applied as a conventional drive axle for a standard 4x2 light-duty truck or bus, but it can also be configured for use as a front drive steer axle. Both hydraulic and pneumatic braking can be offered with the MS10X.

The MS10X is being manufactured at Mysore. The axle itself was launched as the MS04 at Auto Expo in Delhi at the start of 2012, but later in order to launch and sell the axle in India and other International markets, it was decided to rename it the MS10X. It is a single reduction hypoid solo drive axle with load rating of up to 5 tons and axles supporting vehicles of GVW up to 7 tons. It is available in wide range of ratios from 3.7 to 5.86 with ring gear pressure diaphragm compressors (PCD) of 267mm. The axle has a design life exceeding 500,000km.

Meritor also announced that a new design of heavy-duty hub reduction drive axle, HR MT610, for mining and construction (tipper) applications, recently completed its validation tests and is now on trial with a number of key customers. The company expects to see an increase in market penetration with this axle with both existing and new customers over the next 12 months. Meritor added it has been working with a number of new entrants in the heavy duty tipper segment and has fitted a number of its new HR MT610 axles for trial in their vehicles; this was in addition to supplying established manufacturers in the off-highway and defense segments. It in the supply of axles for all-wheeled drive heavy duty vehicles that axle is supplied in the following configurations: 4x4, 6x6, 8x8, 10x10 and 12x12 applications.

Meritor is also pushing for increased use of its twin-speed drive axle, MS13-245 drive axle. The MS13 245 is a single reduction hypoid solo drive axle is designed for on-highway operation for haulage and vocation truck applications. With a load rating of up to 13 tonnes, the axle supports vehicles with gross weight and gross combination weights of up to 19.2/35 tonnes, respectively. It is available in wide number of ratios varying from 4.1 to 7.17 & with a ring gear PCD of 431.8mm. The axle offers unique benefits by the virtue of having two available ratios in one axle which the driver can choose between on the move depending on the load and terrain requirements. The benefit of the twin or two speed axle is that fuel consumption can be improved by between seven and 10% as well as increase overall operation speed decreasing turnaround time by up to 15%.

Meritor plans to increase sales of this axle by directly conducting public demonstrations of this product at leading transportation hubs and indirectly, by providing the truck manufacturer with product tutorial videos which they can use for driver training.

Meritor says it is also in the process of upgrading some of its existing axles, they include: the MS120 – single reduction hypoid solo drive axle for vehicles with gross weights of up to 16 tons; MS160- supports vehicles with gross weights of up to 21 tons and the MT160 – single reduction hypoid tandem drive axle supports vehicle with gvws up to 34 tons.

As well as investing in upgrading and diversifying its product portfolio, Meritor has also been expanding its aftersales and service network throughout India to support its OEM partners. The company currently has more than fifty distribution networks in the country, which contributes to nearly 8% of the company's annual revenue. In the second half of 2013, it added seven distribution outlets to improve its coverage in several states such as Gujarat, Utter Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh. This year it plans to expand its coverage in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

[1]*For many years now (since 1981),* ***Meritor (HVS) India Ltd****, a wholly-owned subsidiary of* ***Meritor Heavy Vehicle System LLC*** *of Troy, Michigan, USA has worked with its manufacturing partner,* ***Automotive Axles Limited*** *(AAL) also in Mysore to make drive axles for the Indian market and drive axle components for the Meritor in North America and Western Europe. AAL is a joint venture between Meritor Heavy Vehicle System LLC, USA and* ***Kalyani Group*** *of Pune, India and for the past three decades AAL has been the largest independent axle manufacturer in India.*

Product

Wipro launches 3-way tipping system

Bangalore - **Wipro Infrastructure Engineering Ltd** of Bangalore has launched a new 3-way tipping system for trucks up to 12 tonnes gvw under its Truck Hydraulic Solution range, called the DUT-129. The 3-way tipping system, which was launched officially last November (20 to 24) at Excon 2013 in Bangalore, can be used to unload material in one of any three directions, either side of the body or to the rear.

DUT 129, is an under body tipping solution, which Wipro says, features a unique hardened Ball-Cup arrangement for top mounting and flexible trunnion and cradle mounting at the base, making the cylinder flexible for a variety of loads. The design focus of the product has been on a lower centre of gravity compared with alternative designs in the market, to give it a high tipping angle when tipping rearwards. This is a pneumatically operated hydraulic system, whereby the lever which the driver operates pneumatically actuates a valve that hydraulically lifts the body. This operating system has special profile metal piston bearings and high strength spring steel stopper rings for durability.

Wipro adds it is in the final stages of development of specially designed body hinges, which can then be offered along with the DUT 129 3-way tipper to enable the OEMs and body builders to integrate the tipping cylinder more easily. Wipro also points out there are significant fuel benefits associated with the DUT 129, as it houses a single acting cylinder instead of a double acting cylinder. (This is because the Wipro's DUT 129 3-way tipping solution has been developed mainly for tipper operations in the mountainous or hilly terrains of India such as Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand or Jammu and Kashmir, where regular rear tippers would face difficulty in manoeuvring.

Wipro says it is currently working on the development of the next version of its 3-way tipping solution, which is to be capable of supporting tipper trucks up to 18t gvw.

Award

RSB Transmission wins prestigious Deming prize

Pune / Japan - **RSB Transmissions Ltd** of Wagholi, Pune, a manufacturer of driveline components (eg propeller shafts, axles, transmission systems) for commercial vehicle manufacturers, has been awarded with the Deming Prize, one of the world's highest awards for quality.

The award for total quality management (TQM) and control is awarded by the Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers, a juridical body of the Science and Technology Agency of Japan. RSB was the only Indian company to win the Deming Prize in 2013. RSB joins a select band of other past Indian winners in the commercial vehicle sector such as **Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd** and **Rane (Madras) Ltd**.

M Sankaranarayanan, president – Auto Vertical at RSB Transmission, remarked: "Our successful TQM practice has helped us streamline and improve the processes across the entire business process, and this has resulted in winning the confidence of leading vehicle OEMs as customers of RSB in the last five years. We have also added new customers like Daimler India CV, Renault Nissan, Honda India, and Volvo India. We are confident of entering the global market by acquiring many more customers in the years to come and to become truly global."

Product

Daimler India adds more models to heavy-duty range

Chennai - **Daimler India Commercial Vehicles** (DICV) of Oragadam, near Chennai last month in Mumbai four new truck models of its BharatBenz brand three tractor units - two forty tonnes and one forty nine tonne gross combination weight ie the BharatBenz 4023TT, 4028TT and 4928TT respectively, and a 31t gvw tipper truck (BharatBenz 3128CM).

Dr Wolfgang Bernhard, member of the Daimler Board of Management responsible for trucks and buses speaking at the launch said: "Despite a strongly declining market, we have managed to establish a completely new truck brand in the country within one and a half years. The brand has met our expectations and has won a great deal of recognition in the industry already."

It was 18 months ago, in September 2012, BharatBenz started its product offensive with the market launch of the first heavy-duty truck models. The product offensive grew by several variants and medium-duty trucks in the months that followed. The truck range now enables customers to choose vehicles from nine to 49t gvw.

In a separate article in the main issue of ***Truck & Bus Builder***, an article summarises the company's plan investments and strategic direction for the Asian region. It includes the strengthening of the BharatBenz sales and aftersales across India, increasing the network of 75 dealership outlets to more than 100 sales and service points in the next few months.