

INDIAN COMPANIES ARE ON PAR WITH MNCs REGARDING QUALITY PARAMETERS

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- **Reji Varghese**, Managing Director, Forms and Gears

Established in 1972, Forms & Gears is a manufacturer and supplier of machining centre fixtures to leading machine tool and automobile manufacturers in India and abroad.

What are the current trends in the jigs and fixtures industry?

The trends that we are currently witnessing is a move towards greater automation, less dependence on human operators (intervention) and maximising the cutting parameters and capabilities of a machine by using high rigidity fixtures.

How big is the jigs and fixtures market in India?

It is a bit difficult to quantify, but I can say that for every machining centre sold on an average two fixtures are required.

What made you to venture into this line of business?

My father R T Varghese started this business in the year 1972. He studied to be an engineer at IIT Kharagpur. We have been in the business for 42 years now. We are one of the oldest and largest fixture builders in the country. We manufacture and supply machining centre fixtures to the world's leading machine tool and automobile manufacturers.

Could you name a few automotive clients of your company?

We cater to the needs of various automotive OEMs. These include Tata Motors, Hyundai India, Mahindra, Caterpillar, John Deere, Maruti, Cummins, Eaton, Eicher, Ashok Leyland, TAFE and others.

Could you elaborate about your production capacity?

We have hundred people working for us at three factories at the Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai. We have an experienced design team and have complete in house manufacturing and inspection facilities housing a whole range of imported machine tools. We are a leading choice of the world's leading machine tool and automobile manufacturers.

What advantages Chennai offers you in terms of infrastructure and other needs?

Being located at Guindy (Chennai), we do not suffer from power outages. Since the nature of our business is capital intensive (we offer capital equipment) involving machining, we do not derive any outstanding benefits as such from being located in the Chennai region. Our business originates out of various automotive manufacturing facilities located in other regions like Pune and Pantnagar.

What are the special features of your products?

Each fixture that we offer is custom designed to suit the machine and the client's process.

What has been the latest in your product series?

We have come out with dual pressure offline fixtures that can machine fragile components.

What is your area of specialisation?

At Forms & Gears, we specialise in the manufacture of hydraulic machining centre fixtures.

You supply to both domestic and foreign OEMs. Is there a difference in the needs of Indian customers from MNCs?

At present, most of the Indian companies are on par with the MNCs regarding their requirements of quality.

What's the future investment and growth strategy?

We plan to invest in more machining centres and precision machinery like surface and cylindrical grinders, etc, which constantly need to be upgraded to keep up our level of accuracies.