

# The Power Connection

KEI has created a spot for itself among the elite cable makers of the country on the back of its alliance with Swiss specialist Brugg Kabel, AG



**FLEXING TECH MUSCLE:** CMD Anil Gupta is eyeing the EHV space to take KEI to the next level of growth

**T**HE FORTY-YEAR-OLD CABLE manufacturing company KEI Industries Ltd feels that it has truly arrived. While the past decade has seen the company's sales zoom (see Skyrocketing Performance), its recent alliance with Swiss major Brugg Kabel, AG has enabled it to muscle into the exclusive club of extra high voltage cable manufacturers. KEI has shored up its retail portfolio by launching a range of house wires and obtained the prestigious NABL certification for its research facilities. No wonder the company

is expecting to breach the ₹2,000 crore turnover mark within a couple of years.

Anil Gupta ([anilgupta@kei-ind.com](mailto:anilgupta@kei-ind.com)), the company's chairman and managing director, is unable to conceal his excitement about the way KEI has grown, and the new opportunities it is faced with. Pointing to the unparalleled growth in the country's industrial and infrastructure scene, he says, "We want to utilise this opportunity by building a strong presence in our EPC (engineering, procurement and construction) division, by getting more

project orders, and by spreading our wings in the national and international markets through our extensive dealer network."

KEI's alliance with Brugg Kabel is probably the most significant chapter in its yet unfolding growth story. Brugg is among Switzerland's leading cable producers, with sales of around CHF 270 million (₹1,475 crore). Gupta says, "This alliance has helped KEI secure its name in the elite group of cable manufacturers worldwide who are equipped to produce cables beyond 66kV capacity." This association, he informs, has involved the transfer of complete know-how including designing, manufacturing, testing techniques, and training of personnel in the manufacturing and jointing techniques. "This strategic technical collaboration involves manufacturing of extra high voltage (EHV) cables, which has enabled us to diversify into the EPC business. It has also facilitated an in-depth understanding of EHV system design, which encompasses installation, testing and commissioning of the cables."

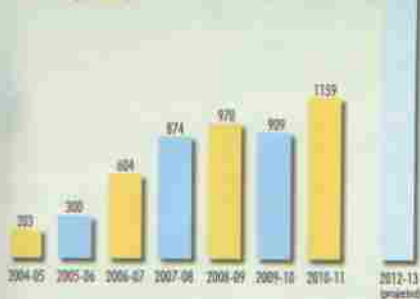
Given the robust surge in demand for energy, and the consequent investment planned for power generation, transmission and distribution, the Indian cable industry is slated for really good times. Cables account for 3-3.5% of total power generation project costs, 1.5-2% of power transmission project costs, and approximately 10% of power distribution project costs. "We aim to use this optimism in the favour of the company," Gupta quips.

According to him, KEI gradually emerging as a key player in the high and medium voltage cables market, where significant shares are held by Universal Cables and Polycab. KEI has managed to build up a formidable portfolio, consisting of EHV cables (up to 220kV), MV (medium voltage)/ HT (high tension) cables, control and instrumentation cables, rubber cables, thermocouple cables, zero halogen cables, braided cables, single and multi-core flexible cables, house wires and stainless steel wires. Its alliance with Brugg has enabled it to fill the gap, of EHV cables of up to 220kV.

Not to ignore the domestic market segment which has been its key breadwinner over the past decades, and where Finolex and Havells dominate, KEI recently launched three house wire brands, namely Homecab, Banfire and Conflame. While Homecab has fire resistant

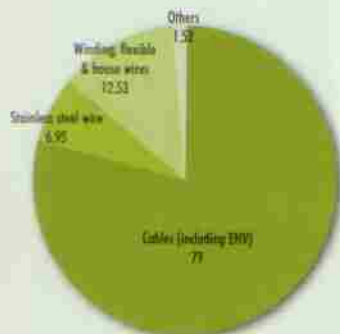
**Skyrocketing Performance**

Net sales (in Crores)



**What Brings in the Cash?**

Segment-wise revenue 2010-11 (in %)



properties and is equipped with specially formulated insulation which enables the wire to withstand overloads preventing electric mishaps; Banfire is a zero halogen flame retardant (ZHFR) superior quality wire which is 100% free from PVC; and Conflame is a flame retardant low smoke (FRLS) wire which restricts the spread of fire. "Due to their inherent qualities, Banfire and Conflame are best suited for wiring in hospitals, hotels, commercial and high rise buildings where fire can be detrimental."

Gupta asserts that the technology that goes into manufacturing of cables ensures that they have high accuracy and consistency in performance. "Our products undergo rigorous quality checks in our world-class, technologically advanced labs, ensuring high quality and superior performance. The range is designed keeping in mind our customer's safety and security." He also informs that the company has recently been recognised as a Business Superbrand in the third edition of the Superbrands programme.

The certification received from National Accreditation Board for Testing & Calibration Laboratories (NABL), which indicates that a company's research facilities

are of high calibre, is another feather in the cap that Gupta likes to show. NABL is an autonomous body under the aegis of Department of Science & Technology, Government of India, which is the sole accreditation body to assess the quality and technical competence of testing and calibration laboratories. "Some of the tests conducted in our EHV lab include the Partial Discharge Test, TAM Delta Test and Impulse Voltage Test. In our physical laboratory, we also conduct the silicon water bar test and others."

Faced with sharply rising demand for its products and a fast growing market, KEI is running full capacity at its two units in Rajasthan (Bhiwadi and Chopanki) and one in Dadar & Nagar Haveli (Silvassa). The units collectively have a capacity of 65,600 km of cables, 2,70,000 km of house wire and winding wire, and 480 crore tonnes of stainless steel wire. Its distribution network too is set to grow, as the company is on the lookout for dealers who are aggressive and passionate about quality products. And with so much going for the company, Gupta's optimism is justified. ●

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