

ElectroMech's 60MT castellated outdoor double gantry cranes are helping build the Signature Bridge in Delhi.



INDUSTRIAL, CRAWLER AND TELESCOPIC CRANES

HIGH HOISTING

The Indian crane industry is capitalising on growth opportunities provided by the fresh spurt in infrastructure development

BY MITALEE KURDEKAR

A good measure of the health of any budding economy is often the velocity of growth witnessed by industries that support the major sectors. The industrial, crawler and telescopic cranes industry is no exception. So far as investments in the

industrial and infrastructure sector continue to be made, the requirements for capital goods are bound to grow. A fine example of this is the recent spurt in demand for industrial, crawler and telescopic cranes in our country, riding on the back of the government's infrastructure development plans,

and steady growth of the automotive and power sectors.

After a rather slack economic development phase in the earlier part of the 12th Plan, positive steps through new pan-India initiatives are taking the country forward. This has resulted in fresh and significant investment plans for various infrastructure projects. As a result, the cranes industry stands to gain heavily, as its key driver has always been the infrastructure sector. In addition, industrial cranes' sales have also been impacted by demand from other industries like automotive and power. Despite the automotive industry being on a slow growth track, there is still steady demand for industrial cranes, in addition to sales from the power sector, which is currently surging ahead. This is definitely good news for cranes' manufacturers. In fact, changing economic conditions have spurred growth prospects for this industry so much, that the Indian cranes industry is said to have a potential to reach Rs 25 billion in market revenues in the coming years.

PUSHING FOR GROWTH

Many international manufacturers of repute are represented in the Indian market and they are already providing high quality products from their stable, through their Indian entities and collaborators. Simultaneously, Indian crane manufacturers have not stayed behind. These local companies have im-



“WE SUPPLY VARIOUS CUSTOMISED CRANE SOLUTIONS FOR WIND POWER, HYDRO POWER, THERMAL POWER AS WELL AS NUCLEAR POWER PROJECTS.”

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proved their products to achieve world-class standards.

“Backed by government's push to infrastructure projects, the industry is witnessing a demand for cranes for several infrastructure projects. ElectroMech has recently supplied 60MT castellated outdoor double gantry cranes for prestigious projects like the Signature Bridge, Delhi, and Ganga Path, Patna. Our unique Tunnel Mucking System is the perfect solution for underground water supply pipeline projects.

ElectroMech's unique Tunnel Mucking System provides a solution for underground water supply pipeline projects.



ElectroMech also has a strong presence in the automotive sector, having its installations at several leading automotive companies. We are able to supply various customised crane solutions for wind power, hydro power, thermal power as well as nuclear power projects," states Tushar Mehendale, MD, ElectroMech.

One common feature that is noticed in this industry is the focus around customer satisfaction. Therefore one sees most innovations and developments inclined towards customisation of products to emerging user requirements so has to ensure highest customer satisfaction. Given high capital outlays in these products, an eye for customer needs is not only highly commendable but necessary to stay ahead of competition in a fierce marketplace.

Manitowoc is one such manufacturer. With manufacturing, distribution, and service facilities in 20 countries, Manitowoc has become one of the premier innovators and providers of crawler and mobile cranes for the heavy construction industry. These are complemented by a slate of aftermarket product support services. At bauma 2016, the company proudly displayed a number of models with its Crane Control System (CCS), which it had launched in 2014, thus becoming the first manufacturer to introduce a common operating platform across multiple product lines. For example, the two new grove rough-terrain cranes, GRT8100 and GRT880, both use CCS. Seven major components make up CCS, in turn simplifying service and maintenance and delivering better reliability. These components include crane controller, safety controller, small IO (input/output), large IO, joysticks, jog-dial and display.

The new Grove all-terrain cranes comprise features such as the pioneering use of a single-engine design with a Fuel Saver function; the Megadrive Hydrostatic Drive; and the self-rigging, capacity-enhancing MegaWingLift. Jens Ennen, senior vice president, all-terrain and truck-mounted cranes, Manitowoc, said, "The company constantly strives to design cranes that will improve return on investment for customers." He added that they have focused strongly on bringing more reliability, ease of transportation, user friendliness and capacity to their cranes. "The mobile crane industry continues to evolve, and we want to lead the way in showing our



Manitowoc's Grove GMK4100L-1.



Manitowoc's Crane Control System (CCS) is a common operating platform that works across multiple product lines.

customers what more they can achieve and how our innovative designs can deliver better financial returns for them. We want to bring new features to our cranes and also bring greater versatility to the features that are already there."

Echoing similar sentiments regarding customer focus, Saesh Nevrekar, director, sales and service, Terex India, points out, "Our engineering teams are using customer feedback to design cranes that meet the needs of the markets. Capacity is one aspect, but fuel efficiency and other benefits that help lower the Total Cost of Ownership have become a focal point for our customers. Our IC 1-Plus control system contributes to this, by enabling customers to do jobs with less counterweight or to take on jobs of a larger crane."

Terex also provides a Boom Booster kit to help save on transport costs and on-site handling. Their new 5-axle family cranes have common parts: counterweights, jibs, auxiliary winch, and share the one-engine concept. It makes engine maintenance easier and less frequent, which increases the uptime of the crane. The axle weight monitoring helps the operators drive safe and also contributes to reducing brake and tyre wear.

ENABLED BY THE ENVIRONMENT

Explaining the rationale for the industry's growth prospects, Devendra Kumar Vyas, CEO, SREI Equipment Finance Ltd, says, "The pace of infrastructure execution in the



Demag's AC 220-5.

country has picked up with the government's focus on timely execution. The present government has created an enabling environment for infrastructure in the country, with policy reforms and higher budgetary support for the infrastructure sector. Hence builders and contractors, especially the larger ones, are now opting for high quality equipment, which would result in faster project completion, which in-turn would help in generating revenues earlier than expected. There is also an increasing preference for versatile and modern cranes for better reliability and uptime, which would drive the market."

Mehendale is positive that the government's push to infrastructure development should create demand for steel for infrastructure projects, thus leading to growth for the steel



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industry. "The Smart Cities initiative of the government is expected to create many industrial corridors and boost manufacturing growth. Also, the Make in India initiative is truly helping to attract FDI in India and motivating the entire spectrum of the manufacturing industry."

Elaborating on the government's push for infrastructure-related projects and the consequential influence on the industrial cranes industry, Vyas suggests, "Industrial cranes have diverse applications and serve as an essential mode of material movement in many industries. With the focus of the present government on ease of doing business, along with falling interest rates & inflation, there has been an upswing in the manufacturing activity in the country."

The Demag CC3800 crawler crane at work.



Similarly, he says, "Crawler cranes are one of the best when it comes to high load applications as they are used in three of the fastest growing spaces in the infrastructure sector i.e. roads, power, and mining. The Government has taken many steps to boost these sectors, and these initiatives are expected to bring positive news for crawler cranes. Telescopic cranes, on the other hand, are versatile equipment due to their mobility and height adjustment feasibility. These cranes are used in day-to-day hauling operations and also for specialised applications in various industries for e.g. power transmission, wind power, oil & gas and ports. The transport & logistics sector in India is gaining traction as the government is planning to turn more than 100 rivers into waterways, which should give a boost to the construction and throughput of ports. This step of the government should benefit telescopic cranes, as telescopic cranes are one of the best equipment used in ports owing to their high manoeuvrability. The wind power industry, which also uses telescopic cranes extensively, looks upbeat as the government is planning to increase the output of renewable energy."

SECURE PATH TO SUCCESS

Safe working methods in crane equipment is an important issue for all manufacturers, especially given the heavy loads and risks arising from human involvement in operations at work sites. Most manufacturers therefore adopt a failsafe approach in design and operative conditions in which their equipment are put to work.

Explaining this, Nevrekar says, "Safety is paramount at Terex and we strive to provide cranes that not only comply with all applicable regulations, but also use these regulations to provide tangible customer benefits (IC-1 Plus). We introduced our fall protection system for lattice boom sections. The riggers are always connected to a lifeline; the system can always remain on the crane, and is easy to set-up."

A big challenge in this industry is financing for customer requirements, given that these products cost a lot and therefore the ability to own them – even for large customers – can at times become a major issue. It is in this arena that financing companies like SREI provide an invaluable service. Commenting on their role, Vyas says, "We provide financing solutions for a large spectrum of construction and mining equipment, which includes earth moving, material handling, road construction, concreting and material processing. Cranes are an integral part of our material handling equipment portfolio and complement our other equipment bouquet. It also enhances our ability to be a complete



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equipment solution provider to our customers. In the past, cranes have also helped us take strategic exposure to large customers in the real estate, power, ports and urban infrastructure space."

Explaining their process of financing such equipment, he says, "As projects are also currently executed at a faster pace, companies now have a year round requirement of equipment. Our key strengths revolve around a relationship-cum-partnership model with original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) on the one hand, and customers on the other."

With everything from technology to finance taken into consideration by industry stalwarts, clearly sunny days lie ahead for the Indian cranes industry. **EW**