

DSK Motowheels, Benelli announce partnership for Indian market

By [Ketan Thakkar](#), ET Bureau | 18 Oct, 2014, 08.00AM IST



Pune-based DSK Motowheels has entered into an agreement with Italian motorcycle brand Benelli to bring its superbikes into the Indian market.

MUMBAI: Pune based DSK Motowheels a part of Rs 5,000 crore DSK Group is exploring a 51:49 joint venture with QJ group from China to bring in one of the oldest Italian two wheeler brand Benelli super bikes into India.

DSK Motowheels announced on Friday that it has entered into a technical collaboration with Benelli, wherein DSK will assemble and sell the Italian auto major's brands here through exclusive dealerships. DSK plans to bring in at least 5 motorcycles (one 300-cc two 600-cc models, one 899-cc and one 1,130-cc models) in the next two months.

Benelli Motorcycles are expected to be priced between Rs 2.75 lakh to Rs 12 lakh and will compete with the likes of Triumph, Harley Davidson and premium super bikes from the likes of Kawasaki, Honda and Yamaha.

Within a short span of time, DSK intends to have dealerships across 8 cities in country, before it is expanded to 20 locations by the end of 2015.

Shirish Kulkarni, Chairman, DSK Motowheels told ET, "The technical collaboration is just the first step, as we expand our portfolio, we may look at a deeper collaboration and a joint venture is being explored. We have had talks on 51:49 JV, they are comfortable with us having a majority stake"

This is DSK Motowheels' second tie-up with a superbike maker, after sewing up collaboration with the South Korean firm S&T Motors to sell Hyosung brand in the country. The Hyosung brand has seen an ownership change, with S&T Motors selling the stake to KR Motors, but the

tie-up with DSK Motowheels in India remains.

Benelli will have a separate set up including dealership, service network with different operating team operating out of Pune, from DSK Benelli team. Benelli has already committed 15 executives on the project in India

Stating that this is the right time to enter this market, Benelli director of Board, Frank Zhuang said in the company's endeavour to globalise the operation, Indian market was a key pillar for the future.

"India is expected to be a big super power of the future and the two-wheeler is expected to grow in strong double digits, we at Benelli want to participate in this growth. In DSK, we have found a right partner who has understanding of the Indian super-bike market and we are committed for a long term partnership with them," said Zhuang.

For Benelli, which sells 30,000 units annually, Zhuang says, the aim is to look at half a million sales mark in the long term and "if we take the right steps, India could become the largest market for Benelli globally," he added.

Kulkarni says though the start in two wheeler business hasn't been as good as he expected, but he is satisfied with 100% growth Hyosung brand posted over the last one year. He is expecting to sell about 4,500 units in FY16 with 3000 motorcycles from Hyosung brand and about 1,000 to 1,500 units from Benelli.