

Benelli wants major share of mid-segment luxury pie

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BENGALURU: Superbike major DSK Motowheels, which recently introduced high-end motorcycles of Italian giant Benelli in the Indian market, has said that it aims to capture a major share of the luxury bike market's mid-segment.

DSK Benelli has rolled out a range of motorcycles in India — Tornado Naked Tre or TNT superbikes — that range from TNT 300, TNT 600i, TNT 600 GT, TNT 899 to TNT R, priced between Rs 2,88,000 and Rs 9,65,000 (ex-showroom Bengaluru). The TNT-300, 600i, and 600 GT (in engine capacities of 300 cc to 600 cc) constitute the mid-segment, according to the company, based on the price point.

“We are certain that the 300-600 cc motorcycle segment will continue to grow and we expect to see our business grow there too. We aim to occupy a majority share of the mid-segment, even as we move on to develop more high-end products,” Benelli Board Director George Wang told *Deccan Herald* on Friday.

In fiscal 2015-16, the high-end motorcycle segment (250



Shirish Kulkarni (left) and George Wang. DH PHOTO

cc and above), involving imported CKDs, is expected to register sales to the tune of 9,000 units (barring India-manufactured models of KTM and Honda), which by next fiscal would reach 11,000 units. DSK Benelli is aiming at selling 3,000 units during the period, a majority 70 per cent of which will be in the volume-centric mid-segment.

According to DSK Motowheels Chairman Shirish Kulkarni, “In the next 3-4 months, we will roll out three or four new models. By the end

of this year, we would have launched over 12 models. We are looking at all categories to unveil new bikes, including less-than-250 cc mass volume models. At the moment, the company is looking at launching bikes in the 300 cc to 1,000 cc categories by the next year.”

DSK Benelli boasts of offering a luxury biking experience across a wide range of models. “Existing players service only niche, top-end segments. We bring a whole range from affordable machines to higher-end biking steeds,” Wang claimed.

Depending on the company's growth in the first three years going forward, it will chart further investments. “We have invested Rs 200 crore to push our automotive business plans (including Hyosung), which includes our facility at Wai, Maharashtra, which comprises an assembly capacity of 15 (CKD) bikes a day,” Kulkarni said.

Currently, the company has nine dealerships in the country. In the next 4-5 months, 11 more outlets would be added, with an aim to have 20 dealerships opened by the year-end. Meanwhile, DSK Benelli has opened a new facility in Bengaluru.

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