

# Royal Enfield revs up for the twists ahead

putting in place much-needed marketing and servicing muscles

CHENNAI

Siddhartha Lal, managing director and chief executive, Eicher Motors, RE's parent company, stands next to a Royal Enfield motorcycle. The background features a wall with the Royal Enfield logo repeated.

...the addition of a new showroom in 2013, showroom till warn of an...ing period of six

...and outstripping according to data society of Indian Manufacturers, y 64 per cent in January, 2015 to s, even as the two- s grew by a mere 4 10 million units. way demand is not sks and concerns"

...outlines for the ss of customer sat- brand image due ues and new play- RE's domain are.

## at the door

...r was busy ramp- y and service took wners' complaints e heating, ineffi- kes, rust and paint kackages and clutch mounting.

...bit under-invested n the last couple of though we have g tremendously, tional effort has ate teams, create eate capacity...it e have not been O assets but the ...has been to cre- le capacity, sales

## THE RE NICH

RE does not have competition in its — a leisure bike w not an all-out cru While in India, it i premium bike bra (pricing and engir capacity), in worl rankings, it is kno mid-sized brand, engines from 350 850cc.

The iconic Briti brand Triumph t closest competitor with a bigger cult following, has no to bring down its price-point in In

The US-based Davidson launche budget cruiser las priced more than of the RE Classic 5 top-seller.

motorcycles" acco will mentor the design team at RE "The brand nee who don't just hav petencies but the r working if we are a global leader in motorcycles. Our and American con our Classic and C GT. With vete Terblanche, we ca design preference motorcycling ent

To spruce up its Eicher has sh an RE enthusiast a marketer, forme vice-president of Rudratej Singh as RE, even though automobile exper wanted someone gressive mindset ketting which is rare mobile fraternity."

Next up would engines. These r will be mid-sized 250cc, but below have one single e three variants — 3 and 535cc. We pla least two more plat next two to three ye analysts earlier.

Siddhartha Lal, managing director and chief executive, Eicher Motors, RE's parent company

capacity, supplier processes, RE will increasing- ly switch to automation, reducing errors. The UK tech centre will be ready by the end of this year, while the Indian centre will be ready by the second quarter of 2016.

## Competition gets ready

RE has made the most of a lack of direct competition so far. But the Pune-based Bajaj Auto is injecting new life into its sole cruiser, Avenger, to take on RE. Born of a technical wedlock between Bajaj Auto and Japan's Kawasaki (known as the Eliminator, then), the Avenger will be seen in a new avatar in the coming weeks. It would compete with RE bikes in terms of make and pricing.

In the cruiser/tourer cate-

gory, most two-wheeler companies don't have bikes to rival RE with similar pricing (see box). To hang on to its first-mover advantage, RE now has new retail formats like concept stores in New Delhi, London Bogota and Medellin in Colombia. These would also take its global market expansion forward.

## People skills

With Eicher nursing global ambitions for RE in mid-sized motorcycles (see box), it has infused fresh talent to rev things up. It recently roped in the former head of design at Ducati, the Italian bike brand (now under Volkswagen). Pierre Terblanche, who has created some "extraordinary