



Confederation of Indian Industry



CII-AVANTHA
Centre for Competitiveness
for SMEs

SME MIRROR

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From The Chairman's Desk



CII AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness for SMEs has taken a new initiative in bringing out an e-newsletter, SME Mirror, which would provide to its readers all information pertaining to the varied activities of the Centre. I am sure it will further spread the message of MSME development that has so steadfastly been carried out by this centre of excellence.

So far, 207 clusters of SMEs have been formed by Confederation of Indian Industries and its strategic partners, impacting 2225 companies. At present, 30 clusters of Centre are ongoing in the country, covering 252 companies.

CII-AVANTHA Centre works with government, especially Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) on improving competitiveness of Micro, Small & Medium units in Indian industry by advocating setting up of Lean cluster Scheme for MSMEs.

This Centre of Excellence, which is a torchbearer to SME development in India, has forayed into the dynamic realm of e-learning. This is a natural progression for us being a leader in Instructor Led Training (ILT). Concept of e-learning is in tandem with a world where geographical constraints are not a barrier in quest for learning, demand for which is increasingly being felt anywhere and anytime. Knowledge is to be shared.

At CII -AVANTHA Centre, we have acknowledged potential of knowledge sharing. Using Cluster Approach, we share knowledge of globally competitive SMEs. Today, we are at a juncture where we have to compete on a global platform and such knowledge sharing is invaluable. This will help us emerge stronger and gain a wider knowledge pool in collaboration with each other to evolve as true leaders.

I strongly believe that if country's economy is to be strengthened, it is imperative that MSMEs receive continuous tactical support from all quarters to remain globally competitive. Together, we can and we will take Indian MSMEs to greater heights.

Gautam Thapar
Chairman & CEO,
Avantha Group & Chairman,
CII - AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness for SMEs



Confederation of Indian Industry



CII-AVANTHA
Centre for Competitiveness
for SMEs

From Director General, CII



CII-AVANTHA Centre hand holds SMEs for making them globally competitive through our own very unique cluster approach. It is our dream to reach out through our regions, states, districts and zones to support the SME members in a way that they are benefited. The centre connects with government, especially

Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) on improving competitiveness of Micro, Small & Medium units in Indian industry by advocating setting up of Lean cluster Scheme for MSMEs.

We have recently demonstrated the first e-learning module on 3M and Kaizen, as a first step to be followed by a series of modules. The objective is to reach out world class training to every employee of SMEs in the country. The 4th CII National Cluster Summit, held at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi from 30 September-1 October,

2011 was a great opportunity for industry to share and learn best practices in cluster approach. Such a unique knowledge sharing enables Indian SMEs to take its rightful place in the league of the best SMEs of the world.

Over the coming one year, this centre hopes to introduce many more new services that would further strengthen the Indian SME brand in India and overseas. I am very happy to see that the Centre is launching "SME Mirror" which will further keep our SME members connected to each other and with us.

Chandrajit Banerjee
Director General
Confederation of Indian Industry

From Chief Advisor , CII Cluster Programme



The 'Cluster Approach' is built on the principle of 'learning by sharing.' The approach is to form a cluster of ten to twelve SMEs - sectoral, locational or OEM-vendor - and help them grow together by learning through sharing. The approach aims at improving competitiveness in an associated group rather than in discrete

companies. CII-AVANTHA Centre has pioneered the pan India cluster movement and is a one-stop shop providing consultancy on critical issues such as Manufacturing Excellence, Energy Management, Cost Management and HR Management etc. Through clusters, we are able to reach out to a cross section of sectors of the Indian industry. SMEs from the world over have visited the CII-AVANTHA Centre to learn the Cluster Approach.

Improvement is a never ending task and innovation is the magic mantra for civilization to carry its onward journey. I am happy to learn about the newsletter being launched by the Centre. I am sure, it can be a forum for thoughts and actions pertaining to clusters as well as SME development in its myriad dimension and a mirror for the activities of the centre for the SME world.

C Narsimhan
Chief Advisor
CII Cluster Programme &
Chief MentorACT.





Cluster Success Story CII - JCB Cluster

CII-AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness for SMEs, covered one more milestone on January 13, with successful completion of JCB Cluster. It was the day of the formal closing ceremony of the JCB cluster at Ballabgarh in Haryana and at the same time the kick off of the advance JCB Cluster, in which all the 12 companies of the erstwhile JCB Cluster are again participating. JCB cluster was the first cluster from the Earth Moving and construction equipment industry. It started in May 2010 and ended in November 2011, lasting around 18 months. In JCB Cluster, financial saving was Rs 3.14 crores. In terms of space saved, it was an impressive quantum of 38, 891 square feet. There were a host of other tangible and intangible benefits from the cluster.

"I am happy at the progress of this cluster which resulted in monetary benefit to the suppliers as well as reduction in rejection to the suppliers' product supplied to JCB", said S. Bagavathy Appan, VP Procurement, JCB India Limited.

"I am filling my heart with joy at the success of the JCB Cluster. JCB is a very special company as they are one of the first to have started ISO activity and they can offer a lot of learning to suppliers and to industry at large", said Dr Sarita Nagpal, Deputy Director General, CII. "Always produce against customer demand and never overproduce", was the message Dr Nagpal gave to suppliers and manufacturers.

The 12 companies in the JCB Cluster includes JBM Industries Ltd, Jay Cee Autofab P Ltd, Pranjal Projects (P) Ltd, Vishal Engineers, Shivai Enterprises Pvt Ltd, Saket Metal Technocraft P Ltd, Bird Machines Pvt. Ltd, Rakheja Engineers P Ltd, Arkay Industries, Trikuta Metals, Panchal Manufacturing Co Pvt Ltd.



Success Story of A Womentrepreneur

It would be a good idea to share with our readers nuggets of success stories from participants in our clusters. One such success story is of Faridabad based Rakheja Engineers Limited, part of recently concluded JCB Cluster and new Advanced JCB Cluster that started on Jan 13, 2102. Story of Rakheja Engineers is story of a SME, which built a below Rs one crore company to a Rs 87 crore company in a decade and a half. Equally it is story of a woman SME entrepreneur's determination and hard work to catapult her company into a position of strength. Rakheja has received acclaim not only from construction equipment major JCB which has awarded this vendor of theirs four times but also from CII-AVANTHA Centre which awarded it second prize in Total Employment Involvement (TEI) category in SME category at 4th National Cluster



Summit in October 2011. Rakheja Engineers was one of the highly satisfied participant of the recently concluded JCB Cluster. Speaking about her experience of participating in JCB cluster, Ms Chitra Rakheja, MD – Rakheja Engineers (P) Ltd said, "Through cluster we could get a lot of benefits. In addition to direct saving in terms of space and money we could also get cultural changes. Now people are more involved in waste elimination, Kaizens , 5S and quality improvement. People are now aware about Increasing customers expectations and ready to adopt changes". With great enthusiasm, Rakheja Engineers has now joined the JCB Advance Cluster.



Indo - German Manager Training Program

A 22 member delegation of managers and CEOs from SME companies was taken on a four weeks training tour to Germany from November 5 to December 3 under 3rd Indo German International Manager Training Programme organized by CII AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness for SMEs. A Senior Counselor from the Centre who acted as a facilitator came back with the feedback that the visit was an eye opener in terms of business potential between India and Germany, in MSME realm. As many as 72 business to business (B2B) meetings were held by participants. There were 96 new business contacts generated and most significantly 11 new joint ventures were initiated within this period. One Indian MSME was delighted for having bagged an order of 50,000 Euros!

Speaking about his German training experience, one participant, Rajat Bajaj, Partner, Jamuna Udyog, Delhi said, "It was a Mini MBA for me, learnt excellent business skills, factory visits and group meetings at various forums has helped me in widening my horizon. Stupendous experience of staying for a month in Germany, learning about German Culture and people will surely help me in increasing my business with Germany and Europe as a whole". In the 1st and 2nd programme (taken together) more than 45 senior manager/SME owners were taken to

Germany. The programmes are organized jointly by CII and GIZ (Formerly InWENT) Germany. In 2008, a joint declaration was held between India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Federal Republic of Germany to foster economic co-operation through a bilateral training programme for Indian Executives and Managers.

Indo German Manager Training Awareness Programme at Chandigarh

An awareness programme, to further spread the potential of this fabulous opportunity to the MSMEs, was organized on February 20, 2012 at CII Chandigarh. The programme was very well attended, with more than 60 participants, from companies



across sectors. Participants in the awareness programme were given details pertaining to 4th Indo German Manager Training programme, the process of which got off the ground. After the due process of selection, the 4th batch of managers are expected to visit Germany in September-October 2012.



Business Development Vertical

CII AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness for SMEs, after blazing many trails of success, has launched a new vertical –

Business Development, to take this centre of excellence to its next level of achievement and attainment. While the existing verticals of the centre- Manufacturing Excellence, Cost Management, Energy Efficiency and Total Employee Involvement are well established and extending expertise and hands-on assistance to the SMEs, across the length and breadth of the

country, the Business Development vertical will ensure that new business across these verticals add to the scope and significance of the CII AVANTHA Centre.



The new vertical will also add its might to ensure that the flagship service of the Centre- 'Cluster Approach' built on the

principle of 'learning by sharing grows further and adds to the bottom-line of the Centre, which always seeks to be a self sustaining unit and abode of expertise.

So far, 207 clusters of SMEs have been formed by CII and its strategic partners, impacting 2225 companies. Around Rs 1000 million has been reported in tangible savings by serviced companies.

E-Learning, a new service, with immense potential which has been added to the offerings of CII AVANTHA Centre, as well as the Corporate Communication vertical, will

support and work along with Business Development Unit to reach out to a widespread clientele and to attain effective visibility respectively.

CII - Godrej Cluster 6th MRM at Shirwal

The CII-Godrej Cluster 6th MRM (Monthly Review Meeting) was held at the venue of Lawkim Motors Group Shirwal in Maharashtra. Godrej-Lawkim M.D, Mr. Vijay M. Crishna along with all Cluster- Business Heads attended the MRM with total participants being 40. The cluster companies in this Cluster of Godrej Companies comprise of Appliance Division-Mohali, Mercury Manufacturing Company Ltd.-Chennai, Storage Solution Group-Chennai and Lawkim Motors Group-Shirwal.



The monthly review meeting was happy to note that in the six month period in which this cluster has been started, savings

achieved by the cluster stands at an impressive Rs 3.5 crores. Another prime dynamic of clusters is to help cluster companies realize optimization of available space. On this account, this cluster has released 12226 sq.feet of space so far.





e-Learning Launched

CII-AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness for SMEs, the torchbearer to the SME development in the country **launched itself into the dynamic realm of e-learning** on 20th December 2012. The launch was done by S.C. Agrawal, chief secretary, government of Punjab at a programme in the Centre at Chandigarh. This is a natural progression for the Centre, which is well known for its Instructor Led Training (ILT). The first CD in the series of e-learning module is on 3M and Kaizen. This course has been developed keeping in mind the capability levels of Managers, Assistant



Managers, Supervisors and blue collar workforce specially in Indian manufacturing companies. The e-learning modules includes an element of self assessment whereby the learner gets certified on the particular subject. Other popular topics like 5 S are under preparation. **The biggest USP of the e-learning modules from CII-AVANTHA Centre are their competitive pricing point and expertise of preparation.** The course at present is being launched in Hindi & English voice-over but would later be released in other regional languages as well.

Workshops on Goal Setting

CII - AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness for SMEs held a series of four in-house training programmes for Ranbaxy, interspersed throughout the month of February, 2012. These were on the topic of Organizing and Goal Setting for Success. The first of the two day workshop was held at Ranbaxy premises at Gurgaon on February 9 and 10. This was followed by a programme at Mohali on February 16 and 17. The third workshop was held at the Paonta Saheb plant in Himachal Pradesh on February 23 and 24. The final



programme was at Ranbaxy's plant at Dewas in Madhya Pradesh on February 28 and 29. The workshops focused on the importance of goal setting for organizations as also the various strategies for such goal setting. It dwelt on the hierarchy of goals in an organisation, where the higher level of goals percolate down to lower level goals. For example, the vision of an organization is further broken down to organization plans, Business Unit goals, functional goals, departmental goals, sectional goals and finally individual goals.





Interactive Workshop on Advance HR Practices

Considering the Challenges confronting Economy, it is imperative that the domain of HR quickly transformed itself from being a mere support function to become strategic business partner. The imminent need development and execution of a Human Resources strategy that is aligned with organizational goals with matching competencies to deliver tangible outcomes for an organization's people, customers, and shareholders. Such a transformation requires in-depth knowledge of advanced and emerging HR topics.



To dwell on these CII - AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness for SMEs organized an interactive workshop on Advanced HR Practices- Moving Ahead: Aligning with Organizational Strategy on Monday, 23 January '2012 at India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi.

The workshop focused on drivers for transforming HR into a world-class function: the HR leader's influence on strategy and organizational leaders, alignment of HR strategy and using

diversity and inclusion to achieve bottom-line results. It sought to develop a talent management culture, strategies for employee engagement, and using metrics to measure impact on business outcomes. The participants from various

locations of the country attended the workshop and acquired vital knowledge in advanced HR topics of high-performance work practices, employee relations, alternative dispute resolution, and managing organizational conflict to broaden their understanding of key HR practices and strategies.

The programme was well attended, with participants coming across industry

segments to reap the benefits of advanced HR practices. Companies that sent their employees for participation included Asian Paints Ltd, Mahindra Defence Systems, Sandhar Technologies Ltd, Tata Chemicals, Wheels India Ltd. (TVS Group).

Advance Training Program on Energy Management

CII – AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness, organized a two-day advance training programme on “Energy Management at

Rudrapur in Uttarakhand. A total of 26 delegates attended this training Program from companies that included Badve Engineering Limited, Bajaj Auto Limited, Bajaj Motors Limited, Eden Motors Ltd, Pantnagar, Heinz India Pvt. Ltd,



Imperial Auto Industries Ltd, INSILCO Limited, Gajraula, Minda Industry, Pricol Limited, SPICER INDIA Pvt. Ltd. Taco Composites Limited, Tata Motors, Rudrapur, Yash Papers Ltd, Minda Corporation Ltd. Objective of this training was to create awareness about techniques for effective Energy management

that facilitate reduction in both thermal and electrical Energy consumption. Energy experts from CII – AVANTHA Centre

for Competitiveness introduced the participants to the latest developments in the field of Energy Management.

CII – AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness offers advisory services in the field on Energy Management through audits, trainings & energy conservation

missions. In pursuit of its commitment to enhance global competitiveness of SMEs, the centre has lent advisory services to more than 300 companies, with Energy Savings amounting to over Rs 150 Crore through Energy audits.





7 QC Tools - A Way to Problem Solving

CII - AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness organized a one day training programme on **7 QC Tools- A Way to Problem Solving** on January 16 in Chandigarh. It was very well received by industries with participation from companies like CLAAS India Pvt. Ltd, Ranbaxy Laboratories Ltd, Eastman Cast & Forge Ltd, Jew Engineering Ltd, National Engineering Industries Ltd, etc.



Participants were apprised of the fact that the seven QC tools are the most popular tools, which are being used by quality conscious companies throughout the world for improvement of quality of products and processes. They form

the fundamental foundation for all problem solving and quality control activities and are also an important element of Lean Manufacturing. They are used to analyze the production process, identify the major problems, control fluctuations of product quality, and provide solutions to avoid future defects.

Statistical literacy is necessary to effectively use the seven QC tools. These tools use statistical techniques and knowledge to accumulate data and analyze them. The knowledge of these tools has become essential to improve the internal competitiveness of organizations, the programme pointed out in myriad ways.

Energy Efficiency In Limestone Industry

A seminar on 'Energy Efficiency in Indian Limestone Industry' was organised by CII - AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness for SMEs at Jodhpur on December 15, 2011 as part of a scheme under Bureau of Energy Efficiency, to enhance energy efficiency of limestone industry across Jodhpur region. It focused on challenges of cost competitiveness, International quality standards, high



energy cost, strict pollution norms and issues related to technological intervention.

Major participants were industrialist from Jodhpur, International and National technology providers, bankers and other stake holders. It was appreciated for being the first step in this field in Jodhpur region.

Advertise with CII

Interested companies can advertise in the subsequent issues of monthly e-newsletter - SME Mirror which will reach to CII Member companies, Select Non-Members companies, Government officials, Embassies, Indian Missions overseas and others.

Members' Articles / Issues of Concern

To share your thoughts, knowledge, issues of concern or any information, please do send in your write ups / articles (500 - 700 words) along with passport size photograph (soft copy) and your complete contact details. We'll be happy to share the same through our subsequent issues of monthly e-newsletter - SME Mirror

For details, please contact Raja Ghoshal
Mobile: +91-8146315123 or Email: raja.ghoshal@cii.in





JAPAN International SME Exhibition 2012

CII AVANTHA for Competitiveness for SMEs, Chandigarh organizes National and International Missions of SMEs to chosen companies in India for showcasing their best practices to the participants. Similarly, SME Delegations are taken for international level fairs, exhibitions or overseas training programme to giving maximum exposure to such SMEs in areas of operations which can catapult them into the league of the best SMEs globally. Such events and programmes also serve as an *avant garde* platforms for networking and business development.

One such prestigious Fair is the **Small & Medium Enterprise Fair 2012 to be held in Kansai, Japan on May 30 and June 1**. This is one of those rare opportunity for SMEs around the world to have the privilege of accessing the latest technologies, systems and processes, which have the potential to catapult their businesses into the league of the best and the brightest SMEs in the world. Indeed, this whole business fair is a unique platform to promote and create market opportunities and prudent business partnerships for innovative SMEs, who are yearning for growth and have a discerning eye for technology.

Upcoming Training Programmes

Programmes	Date	Location	Contact Detail
Awareness Programme on e-Learning	13 March 2012	CII - Chandigarh	gaurav.mann@cii.in
Autonomous Maintenance - How to achieve zero Break down	19 March 2012	Ludhiana	vishal.sharma@cii.in
One Day National Training Programme on Total Cost Management	20 March 2012	New Delhi	surya.dhawan@cii.in
One Day Workshop on Employee Training & Development - Strategy to Address Skill Crisis	22 March 2012	CII - Gurgaon	ved.prakash@cii.in
Enhancing Competitiveness through Energy Management - Learn from Best Case Studies from Industry	29 - 30 March 2012	CII - Gurgaon	arun.joshi@cii.in





CII - CLUSTERS FOR COMPETITIVENESS A Unique Opportunity for SMEs



207 Clusters formed,
by CII and its Strategic Partners
...impacting 2225 Companies



Ongoing 30 Clusters, covering 252 companies...

As on: 25th February, 2012





12 SME WORLD
 THE SPECIAL SECTION OF THE BEST MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

'Clusters help make SMEs aware of the best practices'

The Global Cluster has been working with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) since 2004 to improve the competitive edge of small companies, especially SMEs in order to meet challenges in the global market. According to CII, the Chairman and CEO of the organization and the Chairman of the Cluster Group are responsible for SMEs. The Chairman of the Cluster Group has been elected as the Chairman of the Cluster Group.

Q&A
Question: The Chairman of the Cluster Group has been elected as the Chairman of the Cluster Group. How does the Cluster Group help SMEs?

Answer: The Cluster Group helps SMEs by providing them with the best practices and the latest information on the market. It also helps them to improve their competitive edge and to meet the challenges in the global market.

When the CII Cluster Group was set up in 2004, it was the first of its kind in India. It was set up to help SMEs improve their competitive edge and to meet the challenges in the global market. The Cluster Group has been working with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) since 2004 to improve the competitive edge of small companies, especially SMEs in order to meet challenges in the global market.

CII welcomes FDI in retail, lays roadmap for cluster approach to development

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH | INVESTMENT

The move will open up enormous opportunities in the region for expansion of organised retail, and allow substantial investment in backend infrastructure.

Confederates of CII and Godrej Cluster organizers have agreed to lay out a roadmap for manufacturing clusters in India.

Experts mull growth in manufacturing sector

HT Live Correspondent
CHANDIGARH

Confederates of Indian Industry (CII) organized a seminar on 'Manufacturing Today and Tomorrow' here on Tuesday.

Speakers at the seminar said that the growth of the manufacturing sector is essential for the growth of the Indian economy. They also said that the government should take steps to improve the infrastructure and to attract FDI in the manufacturing sector.

'CII sets up 205 clusters of SMEs, benefits 2,000 firms'

HT Live Correspondent
CHANDIGARH

The CII cluster movement aims at improving competitiveness in an associated group rather than in discrete companies.

CII organises workshop on good manufacturing practices

HT Live Correspondent
CHANDIGARH

Confederates of Indian Industry (CII) organized a workshop on 'Good Manufacturing Practices' here on Tuesday.

The workshop was attended by a large number of SMEs and was aimed at improving their manufacturing practices. The speakers emphasized the importance of quality control and standardization in manufacturing.

Large companies give small units a helping hand

HT Live Correspondent
CHANDIGARH

Large companies are giving small units a helping hand by providing them with the latest technology and infrastructure. This is being done through the Cluster Approach to Development.

The Cluster Approach to Development is a new initiative by CII to help SMEs improve their competitive edge and to meet the challenges in the global market.

10 SME WORLD
 CHANDIGARH | INVESTMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS STRATEGIES

Indian SMEs benefit from German training scheme

Local companies have established 11 joint ventures with their German counterparts, and will now gain expertise to be formed in the next six months.

German firms are providing training to Indian SMEs through a joint venture scheme. This scheme is aimed at improving the skills of Indian SMEs and helping them to improve their competitive edge.

The scheme is being implemented by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IHK).

Under the scheme, Indian SMEs will receive training in various areas such as quality control, standardization, and infrastructure development.

कंपीटिवनेस विषय पर सेमिनार

सोसायटी फर द इंडियन क्लस्टर मूवमेंट ने सीआरआई चण्डीगढ़ में कंपीटिवनेस विषय पर सेमिनार का आयोजन किया था। इसमें विदेश के बड़े क्लस्टर पर

Move to promote cluster movement

CHANDIGARH - The Centre of Excellence of CII and Godrej Cluster companies have joined forces to unleash a roadmap for manufacturing excellence in India.

C. Narasimhan, Chief Adviser, CII National Cluster Programme and Advisor, Auto Components





Confederation of Indian Industry

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the growth of industry in India, partnering industry and government alike through advisory and consultative processes.

CII is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry led and industry managed organisation, playing a proactive role in India's development process. Founded over 117 years ago, it is India's premier business association, with a direct membership of over 7000 organisations from the private as well as public sectors, including SMEs and MNCs, and an indirect membership of over 90,000 companies from around 250 national and regional sectoral associations.

CII catalyses change by working closely with government on policy issues, enhancing efficiency, competitiveness and expanding business opportunities for industry through a range of specialised services and global linkages. It also provides a platform for sectoral consensus building and networking. Major emphasis is laid on projecting a positive image of business, assisting industry to identify and execute corporate citizenship programmes. Partnerships with over 120 NGOs across the country carry forward our initiatives in integrated and inclusive development, which include health, education, livelihood, diversity management, skill development and water, to name a few.

CII has taken up the agenda of "Business for Livelihood" for the year 2011-12. This converges the fundamental themes of spreading growth to disadvantaged sections of society, building skills for meeting emerging economic compulsions, and fostering a climate of good governance. In line with this, CII is placing increased focus on Affirmative Action, Skills Development and Governance during the year.

With 63 offices including 10 Centres of Excellence in India, and 7 overseas offices in Australia, China, France, Singapore, South Africa, UK, and USA, as well as institutional partnerships with 223 counterpart organisations in 90 countries, CII serves as a reference point for Indian industry and the international business community.



CII-AVANTHA
Centre for Competitiveness
for SMEs

Business enterprises worldwide are increasingly focusing on enhancing production and improving quality, while reducing costs. In such a scenario, it is important for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to remain competitive.

The CII- AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness for SMEs was established in 2004, with a view to providing SMEs in India with a one-stop consultancy service. There are more than 11.86 million SMEs in India, which contribute nearly 40 per cent of the country's total industrial output. If the country's economy is to be strengthened, it is imperative that these SMEs receive tactical support to remain competitive.

The Chandigarh-based CII - AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness for SMEs aims to build competitive and visionary SMEs. The Centre offers consultancy services on a wide range of critical issues such as manufacturing excellence, energy management, cost management, human resource development, etc. Although the Centre does provide services to individual companies, it encourages the formation of groups or clusters of SMEs. A number of companies, which share the same location, sector or even OEM vendor, are allocated to these clusters. This approach encourages SMEs to form, share and draw from a common knowledge pool.

The CII - AVANTHA Centre for Competitiveness for SMEs has successfully established such clusters at Mohali, Gurgaon and Jalandhar and is running parallel clusters across the country at Jaipur, Faridabad, Lucknow, Pune, Kolkata, Chennai and various other locations. Apart from offering consultancy services, the Centre is also committed to helping SMEs remain abreast of contemporary issues through seminars, conferences and training programmes.

The Centre offers the following services

- Clusters for Competitiveness
- Energy Audit and Management
- Manufacturing Excellence
- Total Cost Management
- Human Resource Management
- Corrosion Management
- e-Learning

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