



NEWS

# Carborundum Universal sees opportunities in defence and aerospace business

Company working on prototypes for advanced aerospace applications



By Sindhu Hariharan

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*Subbu Venkatachalam, Head of Defence and Aerospace, Carborundum Universal Limited (CUMI)*

## Carborundum Universal Limited

(CUMI), a material sciences company that is part of the Murugappa Group, is bullish about the prospects of its defence and aerospace business as demand for lighter-weight and high-grade armour increases for Armed forces.

With warfare going electronic and taking to the skies, the company is also working on prototypes for advanced aerospace applications such as materials for drones protection.

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CUMI's Aerospace and Defence division makes advanced ceramics used across personal and vehicle armour for civil security, VVIP protection, paramilitary and military vehicles. CUMI works with integrators and OEMs to fulfil their requirements for protective materials. They also make fasteners and other smaller components for aerospace customers including ISRO.

“Demand is coming up right now for military vehicles and bullet proof jackets. A lot of tenders have gone out [for these] now and we are looking to work with the defence manufacturers for that,” Subbu Venkatachalam, Head of Aerospace and Defence, Carborundum Universal, told *businessline*. “Our materials have been supplied for these in the past and we also foresee it to be a big business in the coming years since India's fleet is growing old and armed forces network is growing,” he adds.

## **Working on prototypes**

The division is also currently working on material prototypes for drones protection. “Lot of drone manufacturers are looking at making their drones light-weight so the market holds potential,” he said. The ability to engage better with DRDO and other agencies and work with them to develop new solutions has been a huge boost to R&D, he notes.

Earlier this week, CUMI also became one of the first Indian companies whose ceramic composite panels were certified by Germany's Industrieanlagen-Betriebsgesellschaft MBH (IABG) with STANAG 4569

Level 2 and Level 3 standards. Venkatachalam says that this gives them a chance to provide lighter-weight and higher protection grade materials to large OEMs like Tata, Mahindra, L&T, Bharat Forge and others who make armoured vehicles.

While not disclosing the exact uptick in business post Operation Sindoor, Venkatachalam says that they expect the volumes of existing equipment to increase and a lot more new-age material usage by our Forces. “Making protection light-weight is one of the key concerns of the Forces today as a soldier carries almost 40 kg on his back. We partner with them to offer protection while making it lighter,” he adds.

“The ceramic business of CUMI is around ₹500 crore. CUMI provides solutions across industrial ceramics, composites, abrasives, super refractories and other energy storage materials. The size of its 2.5-year-old Defence and Aerospace segment alone was not disclosed. CUMI has a separate unit in Hosur to manufacture ceramic armour and plans are on to expand this operation.

COMMENTS