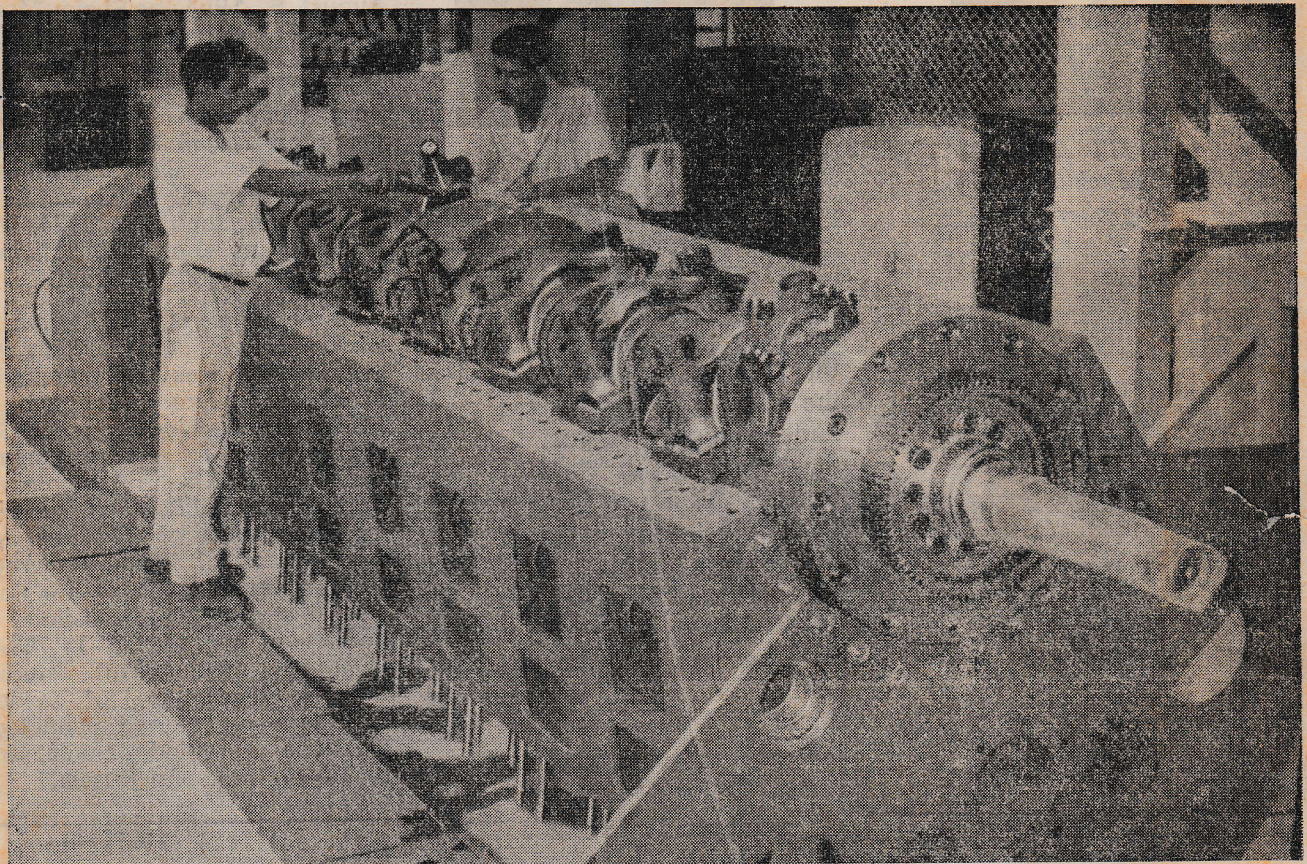


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A 16-cylinder VEE Engine, under assembly, at Diesel Locomotive Works Varanasi. Picture shows main bearing studs being tightened and their "stretch" measured. (See Pp. 2-9 for DLW Supplement)

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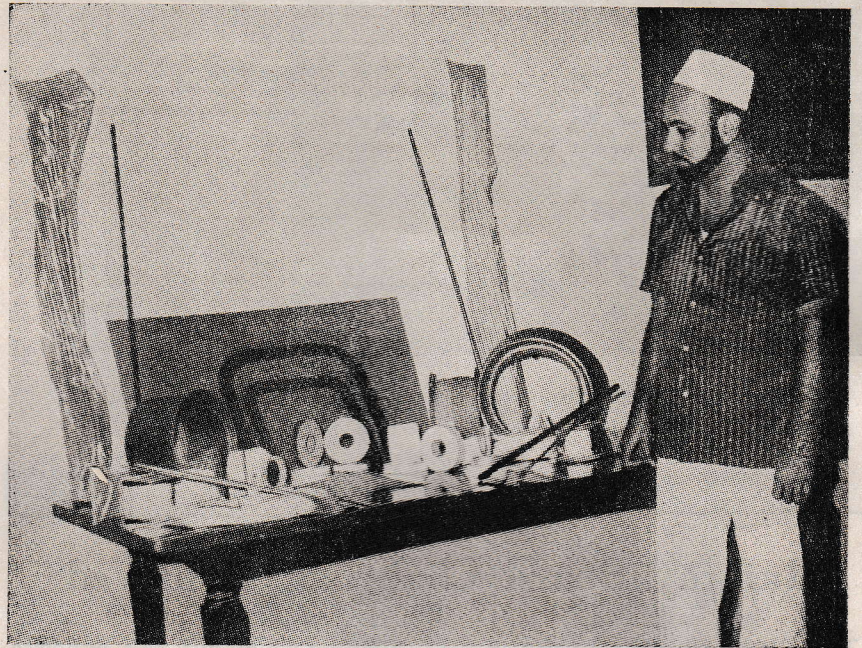
HATIM GROUP ON THE MARCH

L. K. PADMANABHAN

THE HATIM GROUP of Companies—Hatim Dielectrics Co. Ltd., Hatim Carbon Pvt. Ltd., Inland Rubber Industries Pvt. Ltd., and Hatim & Co.—is, today, well-known in the country, having carved for itself a niche as a leading supplier of sophisticated items to Indian Railways. Thanks to the far-sightedness, innovation and inventive approach of its founders from the very beginning, the Hatim Group is now a name to contend with, for its range of manufacture encompasses some of the most sophisticated items that go into the making of locomotives. Little wonder, Indian Railways and railway engineers have taken, and continue to take, a lot of interest in the commendable role played by the Group in indigenising several items with the help and co-operation extended by the Railways in achieving high levels of quality of such items.

The story of Hatim Group is one full of trials and tribulations. It is a story of sweat and tears, particularly from 1952, when the partnership of the firm, Hatim and Co. broke up, after having been in existence since 1943. The partnership firm was started at the initiative of the present Chairman of the Group, Mr. Mohsin A. Mogul, with some of his friends.

When the partnership broke up in 1952, Mr. Mogul got four annas and just the name of "Hatim & Co.", with no assets of any consequence. A heart-rending situation, by any



Range of products, manufactured at the Dum Dum Works of Hatim Dielectrics Pvt. Ltd.



The Dum Dum Works of Hatim Dielectrics Pvt. Ltd.

standards. All that Mr. Mogul, in other words, had was merely the goodwill his name carried and the respect and admiration he commanded as one who could be depended upon. The floodgates of understanding opened, and people came forward with money and encouragement. Mr. Mogul, who became proprietor of Hatim & Co., and carried on import business of various sundry items, never had occasion to look back and the progress was steady since then, interspersed, of course, with agonies and anxieties that go with any business in any democratic country.

In 1958-59, it became apparent from the import policy of the Government of India that import business for established importers would not continue in the face of canalisation of imports of a number of items through official agencies.

Mr. M. A. Mogul now devoted his energy and time in finding out suitable and proper manufacturing lines to which

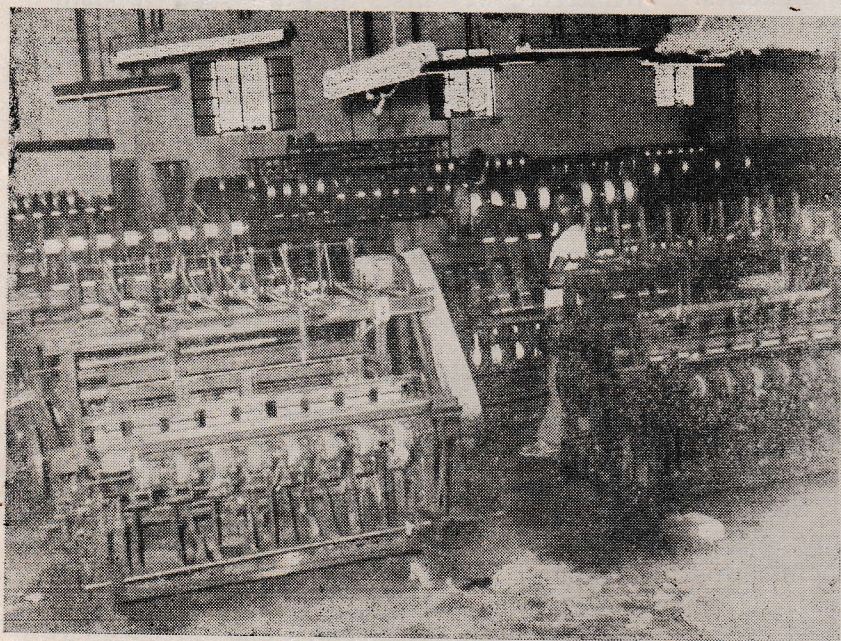
he could turn to. He had to struggle hard for long, and the results amply indicated that the trouble was worth the time, money and efforts.

In 1964, Mr. Mogul established Insuglass Industries Pvt. Ltd. (now Hatim Dielectrics Pvt. Ltd.), with his elder son, Mr. Shabbir M. Mogul as Managing Director of the new firm. The father and the son worked hard, and the first production achievement came in 1966. At first, it was only unvarnished fibreglass sleeveings, and then came fibreglass tape. Soon, the father and his three sons (Mr. Abdul Husein M. Mogul and Mr. Khozema M. Mogul, B. Sc. both Directors of the Group with Mr. S. M. Mogul) went full hog with dauntless spirit and determination, and kept on developing new items, with the result that they could say with some amount of pride that the Hatim Group had developed most electrical insulating items mainly for Chittaranjan Locomotive Works and

zonal railways and workshops, with no foreign collaboration and just with the disinterested assistance rendered by seasoned railway engineers known for their objectivity and critical assessment of items, with always an eye on quality particularly with regard to items like Nomex Mica, Glass Mica Silicon Tapes, Glass Mica Sheet, Slot Wedges, Silirite items, and cones and shells which are used in traction motors of all types, including TAO-659 and MG-1580.

After setting up the insulating factory in 1964, Cumberland & Martin Pvt. Ltd. was set up in 1968-69 for manufacture of carbon brushes, using imported carbon blocks from National Carbon, Rekofa, and Hitachi, together with up-to-date testing facilities. In 1970, carbon brushes manufactured by the Hatim Group were approved by the Research, Designs and Standards Organisation for supply of carbon brushes for various applications, including train lighting dynamos. In 1975, RDSO approved these for more critical application in carbon brushes which are used in traction motors. Since then, the Group has supplied the requisite quantity of carbon brushes to zonal railways, Chittaranjan Locomotive Works and Diesel Locomotive Works. The Group also supplies carbon brushes to steel mills, thermal power plants, Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd., and other important parties.

The Hatim Group derived much benefit from Mr. A. M. Mogul's visit to Japan for three weeks in 1977 at the invitation of Hitachi, for further training, which enabled him to learn the finer arts of carbon brush manufacture at their plant.



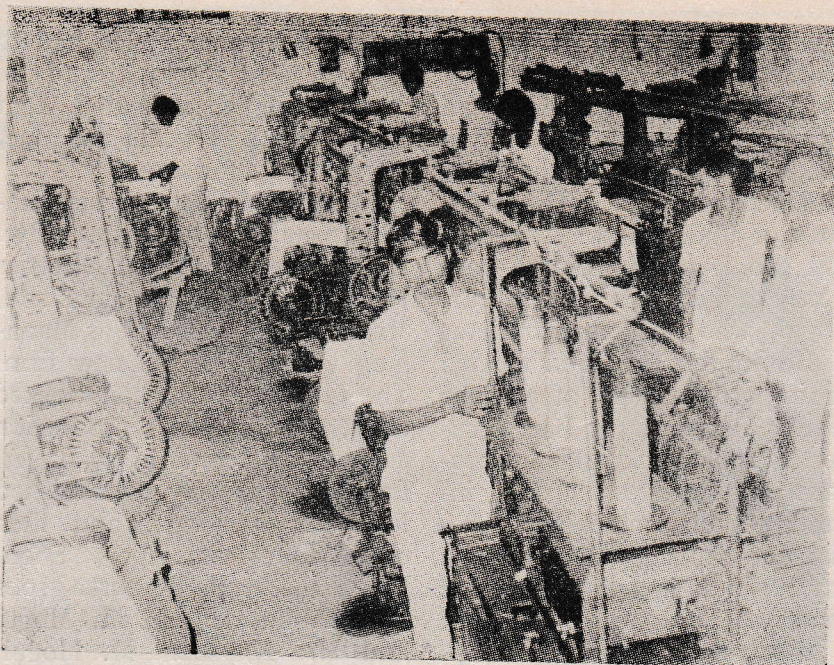
A section of the Tape Weaving Department of Hatim Dielectrics Pvt. Ltd.

After Mr. Mogul's return, there was marked improvement in the quality of the carbon brushes manufactured by the Group. The name of Cumberland & Martin Pvt. Ltd., was changed into Hatim Carbon Co. Pvt. Ltd. early this year, as indeed was the case with Insuglass Industries Pvt. Ltd., the name of which was changed into Hatim Dielectrics Pvt. Ltd., early this year.

The Hatim Group has a well-equipped rubber factory, Inland Rubber Industries Pvt. Ltd., set up in 1972. The company manufactures critical items, such as Viton and Silicone. The company is on the approved list of Diesel Locomotive Works and Chittaranjan Locomotive Works.

The manufacturing range of Hatim Dielectrics Pvt. Ltd., includes, among other things, Glass Mica Glass and Glass Mica Silicone Tapes for Class H application, Glass Mica Glass and Glass Mica Silicone Sheets for Class H application, Nomex Mica Silicon Wrapper, Asbestos Mica Silicone Board, Polyester Mica Polyester and Polyester Mica Sheets and Tapes, Flexible Micanite (without reinforcements) for Class H application, Silicon coated Asbestos Paper for Class H application, Glass Epoxy Laminates, Glass Silicon Laminate, Glass Epoxy Tubes and Rods, Glass Silicon Tubes and Rod, Glass Covered Copper/Aluminium Wire and Fibreglass Sleeveings, both unvarnished and varnished.

According to Mr. S. M. Mogul, Managing Director of the Hatim Group, "The testing facilities that we have and the other manufacturing facilities we have were added by us mainly on the basis of ideas we have



A section of the Cloth Weaving Department of Hatim Dielectrics Pvt. Ltd.

collected from several railway engineers, who have visited our factories and have spent several hours with us. In the field in which we specialise, no other company in the country has that much manufacturing and testing facilities as we have in our factories. Whatever we have offered in the market are all import substitution items. We make the entire range of micanite tapes, sleeveings, glass tapes and complete range of insulation. In carbon brushes, we are competing with all the large houses manufacturing carbon brushes."

Dwelling on the prices of items manufactured by the Hatim Group, Mogul said that all the items we had import substituted had been supplied by us at 50% of the imported cost, because of the availability of mica within the country and economic working of our companies. Nomex mica, which we had developed for Chittaranjan Locomotive Works, offered an example, in that we started

supplying that item at the rate of Rs. 20 a piece "because we could streamline production in a result-oriented way and innovative management", while the price for the imported one was Rs. 50 to Rs.60 a piece. In fact, it was Rs. 22 a piece at first, and we soon brought it down to Rs. 20. Any saving effected in the cost of production was passed on to the customer.

The Managing Director said that annual turnover of the Hatim Group was in the range of Rs. 175 lakhs, with a total workforce and other staff strength of about 220, and that he visualised the turnover to jump three to four times during the next 10 years. In terms of the turnover value, 60% of the value of production went by way of supplies to Indian Railways. Of this 60%, 50% to 60% of the value of production went to Chittaranjan Locomotive Works.

He added that as far as rubber was concerned, "Diesel

Locomotive Works is a good customer of ours", which was a big achievement. As for our company, Inland Rubber Industries, we mostly concentrated on high-valued items like viton rubber and silicone rubber, the manufacture of which called for a high level of sophistication.

On the struggles that went behind import substitution of the several items they had taken up, Mr. A. M. Mogul, who is a graduate in mechanical engineering from Jadaipur University, said that their modus operandi for import substitution was to see the samples of imported items that had been used by the Railways and attempt development of these, strictly according to specifications and without foreign help or take up manufacture of these on a full scale after getting the necessary feed-back information

from the Railways on the items developed.

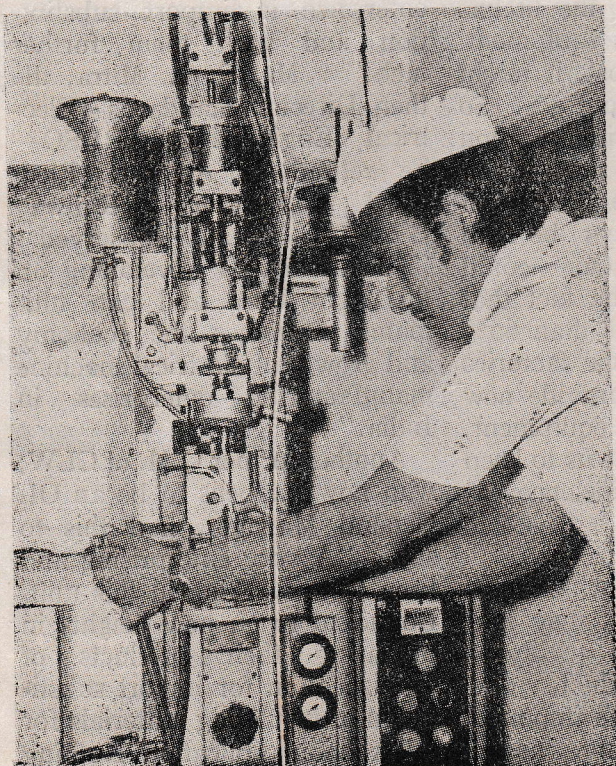
"We often spend as long as six months to one year," Mr. Mogul said, "for development of a single item, and we seek development orders only after these are accepted by the Railways".

He said, we had never asked our customers to bear any portion of the development cost, although the cost of development of each item was prohibitively high oftentimes, not to speak of the anxieties and time that went in developing such items.

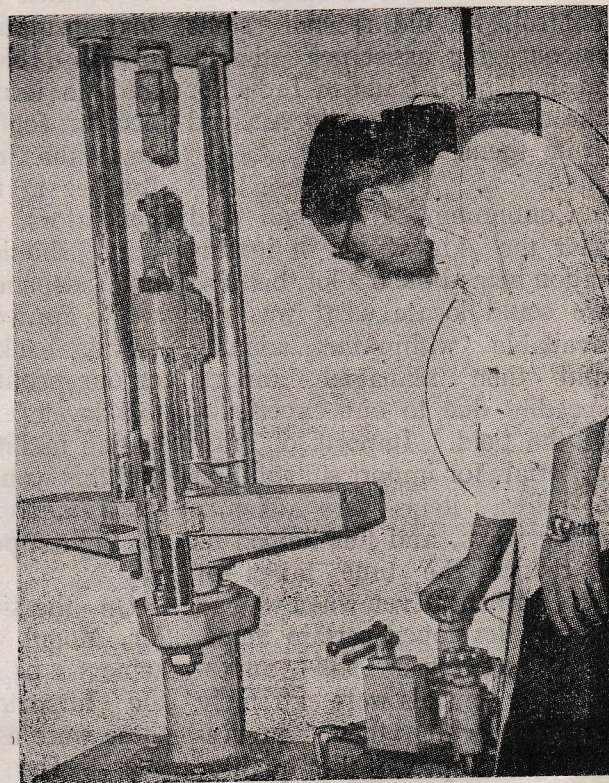
"Production and development to me," Mr. Mogul said, "are one and the same and are inseparable for development and progress. There is the inner satisfaction, the inner strength one gets with the development of every new item of consequence that one takes

up for development. There was satisfaction for us, when I tried to make fibreglass sleeves with my brother and when we got a metre of it."

He observed that this should be natural, since the switch-over in their case from business to new lines of manufacture that were sophisticated created a lot of mental and other problems, because we had to get ourselves attuned to the tortuous course that remained ahead for all those attempting sophisticated areas of production. We had already acquired business acumen. Now we had to acquire the acumen of an industrialist. With unflinching faith in the rightness of what we were doing and with determination, we had managed to put our shoulders onto a new line of sophisticated production activity, together with our team, with



Automatic Ramming Machine for Automatic carbon brushes.



Universal Testing Machine in the laboratory of Hatim Group



A section of the Laboratory of Hatim Group showing testing of Glass Mica Glass Tapes

formidable problems facing us all over. We had financial problems in plenty, but, with bank nationalisation and social control, we did receive some encouraging assistance thanks to the United Bank of India for the understanding help received from them.

Continuing, Mr. Mogul said that the knowledge of importation helped them a lot, because we could locate what was not available within the country and then managed imports speedily due to our experience in the field. Imports of raw materials for import substitution of railway items were easier in many ways, and this helped us to reduce the time taken for development. Even when we had almost developed certain items, something was still amiss. Railway officials were extremely helpful with their suggestions to improve the quality, and they were willing to work with us for hours, sometimes days in getting items developed

strictly according to specifications.

Highlighting the importance of Nomex Mica, he explained that insulation was the lifeline of any electrical equipment, and, in terms of cost, it might account for only about 5%. So was the case with carbon brushes in traction motors or generators. Yet the quality of these should always be high and dependable. One could well appreciate the fact that we put back more than 60% of our profits into the factories to develop and provide new testing facilities and equipment, and this would enable us to keep our technical competence at the highest peak.

On the side of slot wedges, Mr. Mogul said that they had achieved 95% of the quality of the imported product, and these were as good as imported ones. The company hoped that these would be cleared by Chittaranjan Locomotive Works very shortly, although the

Railways had already placed a number of short-term orders for slot wedges on the Hatim Group. Slot wedges had been supplied to Kanchrapara during the last two years for use in Hitachi EMUs and WAM-1 and WAG-4, and such other locos. The Group had received several repeat orders for the Silirite items.

Perhaps, the best indicator of the standing that a manufacturing company commands will be what others have to say on its performance. In the case of the Hatim Group of Companies, railway officials and others have praised the Group for the good job it had done.

Mr. S. C. Misra, the then General Manager of Chittaranjan Locomotive Works—he retired as Member (Mechanical) in June 1979—said: “I congratulate M/s. Hatim on their enterprise in import substitution and wish them further luck.” Mr. R. L. Mitra, the then Director Standards (Electrical Engineering), RDSO—he retired as Adviser (Electrical Engineering), Railway Board, recently—observed: “The factory is developing on the right lines and can ultimately influence the economy and growth of electrical machine manufacturing enterprises in India.”

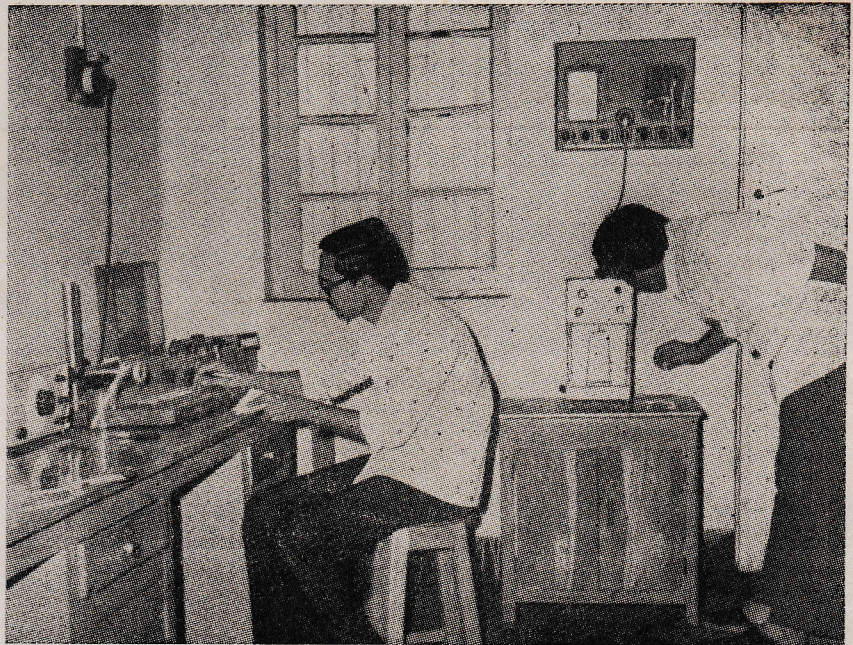
Another former G.M. of CLW, who now happens to be an OL General Manager, had this to say: “A very enterprising and keen team working in this unit. Bound to reach new heights in preparing their products of sophistication for import substitution of insulating materials for rail traction application. Nothing succeeds without effort and toil the attitude of ‘Never-say-Die’.” This I found in abundant mea-

sure at the works during my visit."

A Chief Elec. Engineer observed : "Only after visiting the factory one realised how many sophisticated things are being made entirely on the initiative of our enterprising business community. These efforts only will make our country self-reliant."

Another Chief Electrical Engineer said : "I could foresee during the inception, as early as 1963, a philosophy to orient enthusiasm and effort for a growth towards perfection. This in essence has helped in rapid import substitution for developing the most sophisticated foundation materials for the electrical industry in India."

All this is encouraging, creating in one a happy impression, as indeed this writer gained after a visit to their factories, that the Hatim Group, backed, as it is, by a well-trained workforce and sophisticated machinery and equipment as well as modern, up-to-date testing facilities, is on a solid wicket with a range of production that is at once impressive as well as breath-taking. All this again is indicative of the enterprise, imagination, inventiveness, grit and determination that the Chairman, the Managing Director and other Directors have in plenty. Today, the Hatim Group has the necessary technical knowledge and finances to undertake development and production of many complicated items for the Railways, having already done an impressive array of things, thanks to the rare qualities such as indomitable courage and the will not to give up in the middle what has been taken up for development that the Moguls have in plenty. Having now

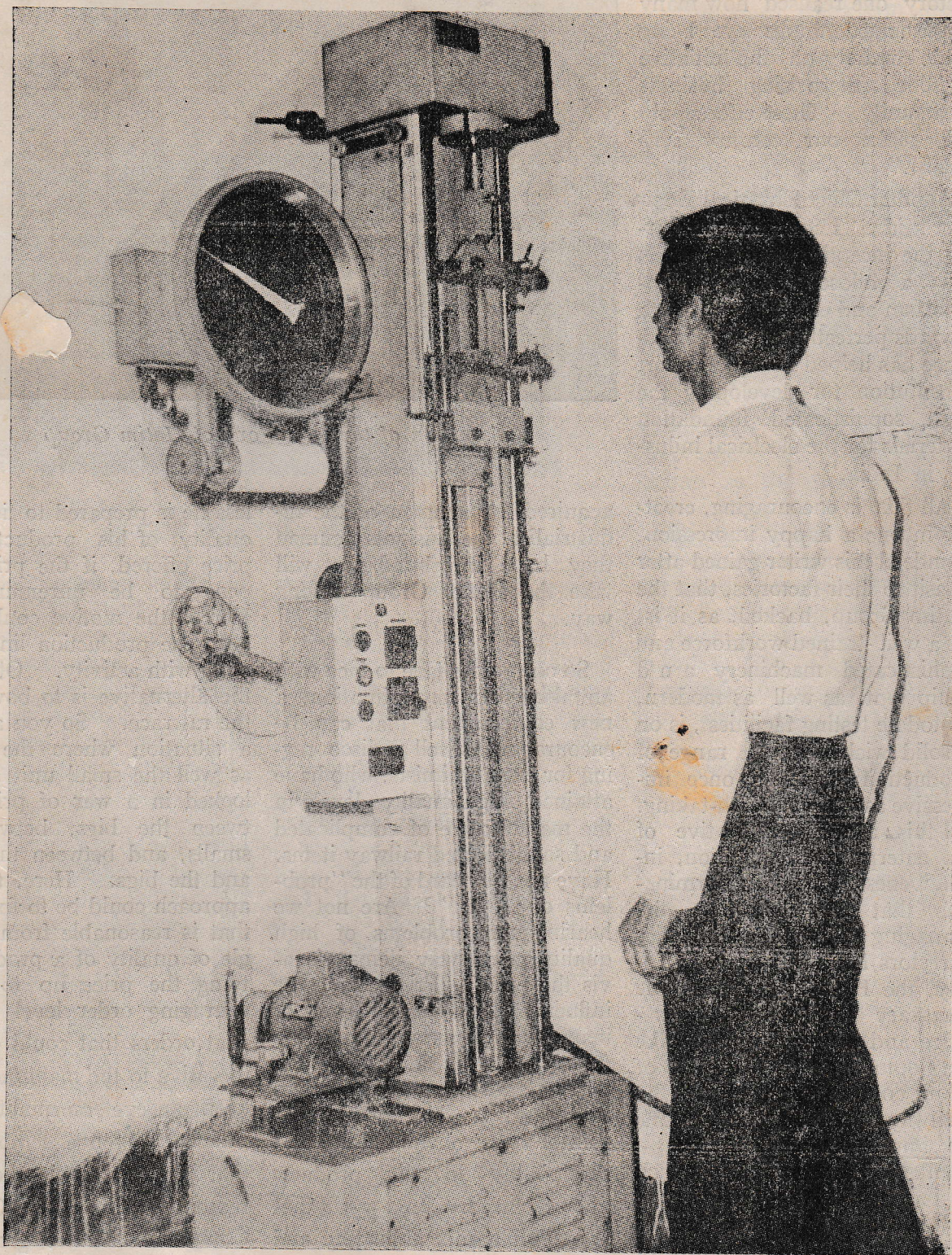


A section of the laboratory of Hatim Group

acquired the acumen of the industrialist, the business acumen they have in abundance will take the Hatim Group a long way.

So one comes face to face with an altogether new situation, a new environment that can be encouraging as well as discouraging for even optimists, who have attained high quality levels in the manufacture of complicated and sophisticated railway items. Have not we heard of the "problems of plenty"? Are not we hearing the problems of high quality of railway items vis a vis the price? Prices have the influence to lift quality levels of items as well as stultifying the desire to lift quality levels. On this, or rather in the way prices are decided, depend a great deal of what we call quality and profitability in the products manufactured. In a world that is predominantly unhealthy and unscrupulous, a quality manufacturer may have to sink, un-

less he is prepared to tie up the quality of his product to the price offered, if the price happens to be unremunerative. Here, the motive could be to keep the production lines humming with activity. Otherwise, the alternative is to bow out of the rat race. So you arrive at a situation where the mighty as well as the small unit are ever locked in a war of prices, between the bigs, between the smalls, and between the smalls and the bigs. Here, the ideal approach could be to fix a price that is reasonable from the angle of quality of a product and tying the price up to an encouraging order level with repeat orders that could offer the incentive to the manufacturer to keep an eye on quality at all times. Given a semblance of that ideal approach, there is no reason why the Hatim Group of Companies cannot grow from strength to strength in pursuit of their service to Indian Railways.



Tensile testing of Glass Mica Tapes in progress in the laboratory at the Dum Dum Works. of Hatim Dielectrics Pvt. Ltd.

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