

Media Release  
Kolkata, 3 October 2001

## BOC India's Growth Plans

BOC India Limited has charted out a well laid growth plan which is focused towards transforming the company into a service organisation - beyond products to solutions.

The new initiative is spearheaded by Mr Sanjiv Lamba, who assumed charge as the Managing Director of the company effective 01 October, 2001. Mr Lamba joined BOC India in 1989 and has rich and varied experience in the company's business - both in India and abroad, which includes four years in the BOC Group headquarters in the UK.

The restructuring process initiated by the company in 1998 will continue. This exercise enabled the company to come out of the red, achieving a net profit of Rs.18 million in the last fiscal year. A reduction in surplus workforce, replacing high cost debts to ensure substantial interest reduction, and SAP implementation enabled the company to streamline its operations, resulting in lower net working capital requirements and reduction in debtors, in spite of a 14% increase in turnover.

In one of his first actions Mr.Lamba has rejuvenated the senior management team at the top, appointing Mr. SK Menon as Head - Finance and inducting new members into the Executive Management Committee. Mr. Lamba said 'This is only a start. The new EMC has to lead from the front and demonstrate that it can make a difference'.

In view of the current economic slowdown, this new management team will continue to pursue cost reduction targets by reducing key input costs and overheads. They will also focus on redeploying or liquidating under performing assets. In fact the company has recently relocated its Mumbai office to CBD-Belapur and will also look at renting or leasing out vacant spaces in its head office at Kolkata.

In terms of its products and services, there will be a significant focus on value added product lines such as medical gases, speciality gases and argon mixtures. BOC also plans to diversify its product portfolio and will be launching internationally acclaimed BOC shielding gases used for high quality welding, food freezing solutions and gas recovery processes. Its plan to enter LPG distribution business is in the final stage and arrangement with an oil major will soon be signed.

BOC India's unique strength is its Contracts division and their ability to provide world class cost competitive cryogenic and non-cryogenic equipments. BOC is also planning to leverage the capability of BOC Group's strength to capture a number of potential opportunities in various refineries, which will consume large volumes of oxygen to burn bottom ends to generate power. There is a growing concern for a cleaner environment and the requirement for such units will soon be imperative in view of stricter pollution control norms.

In its homecare businesses, BOC will continue to focus on developing a larger and more diverse market penetration of its Oxygen Concentrators and its Mystic Nebulizers for asthmatics. The Nebulizers have already been launched in Delhi and plans are afoot to launch them in other locations in November.

Mr. Lamba is confident that with the unflinching resolve and commitment of its people and a focused business strategy outlined above, BOC is poised to meet the challenges of growth.

