



NEW TRACK

Maruti in pact with rural banks

New Delhi, July 1 (PTI): Maruti Udyog Ltd is entering into alliances with regional rural banks to fund car purchases in villages.

"We have sold 2,700 cars and generated about 20,000 enquiries through the rural scheme that started in April," Maruti managing director Jagdish Khattar said.

Under the scheme, 50 per cent of the cars sold were the Alto and about 23 per cent were the Maruti 800, he added.

Khattar said the company was confident of doing well in villages because of the partnership. Maruti is also taking help from its car financiers, including Mahindra Finance and Magnum.

"We wrote to 95 regional rural banks, which have about 14,000 branches all over the country to finance purchases," he said. The company is also asking dealers to appoint rural sales executives to build relationships with potential customers.

"Since January, our dealers have started appointing sales executives in villages who belong to the place and are stationed there. The idea is to strengthen the interaction with potential customers and convert them to buyers," he said.

Khattar said the dealers have appointed about 1,500 sales executives and many more would be added.

The sales executives talk to customers such as teachers and farmers who already own other vehicles such as tractors, he said. The company is also involving village panchayats to boost sales by taking part in rural events.

"We have been taking part in rural sports such as kabaddi and other school events to increase our visibility," he added.

Moreover, the company holds roadshows with about 45 floats (vans on which cars are displayed) across the country.

Khattar said Maruti's rural scheme had also thrown up employment opportunities for villagers.