

## Low-cost certification plan for small-scale firms

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The NQA Quality Systems, a leading certification agency for the ISO-9000 series, has announced a low cost programme for certification for small scale companies. The special package, aimed at helping more units in this sector to go for quality certification, will be available to any company which has an employee strength up to 70.

According to NQA chief executive, S. M. Bhola, besides the small units, his company has undertaken a special programme to promote quality awareness among the firms in the services sector. While some of the companies in the financial sector, including two leading banks are currently preparing for quality certificates, the response from the non-financial service sector is still not very encouraging.

He, however, expects that since the competition is increasing day-by-day with the entry of

multinationals, a large number of companies in the financial and service sectors would soon go for quality certification. Since the quality certificates are issued based on a company meeting certain operational standards in all its departments and systems, the domestic companies which go for the ISO certification would be able to provide the same quality of service as provided by their foreign competitors.

According to Mr Bhola, although mega companies in the organised sector and exporting firms would opt for quality certification on their own, other domestic companies have to be coaxed to go for this.

This is where the government as well as the consumer organisation could play a vital role in promoting quality consciousness.

The low level of quality consciousness is reflected by the fact that so far only 835 Indian companies have received the quality certifications. □