

# “Maharashtra is on the cusp of growth”

**SUBHASH SETHI**, Chairman, SPML Infra Limited shares with Garima Pant on how his organization is looking forward to be part of the development plan to realize the vision of Maharashtra government



## How do you see the present state of infrastructure in Maharashtra?

Maharashtra is among the fastest growing states in India with gross state domestic product (GSDP) for 2016-17 is about 9.4 per cent compared to 8.5 per cent in 2015-16. The growth surge happened largely due to a 12.5 per cent growth in agriculture, 10.2 per cent in electricity, gas, water supply and other utility services and 10.8 per cent in services.

Maharashtra's infrastructure sector has grown significantly in the past few years with substantial rise in the number of industrial clusters, airports, ports, and has emerged as a key hub for automobile, IT and ITeS, electronics and captive business outsourcing industries with approximately 35 per cent of the country's automobile output. The DIPP reports suggest that FDI inflows in the state during April 2000 to March 2017 were at US\$ 102.28 billion. But the state needs to focus on developing sustainable infrastructure for water, irrigation and power infrastructure to address the regular water scarcity issues for both agriculture and drinking purposes and connecting rural and village population with electricity.

## How would you describe the ease of doing business in the state of Maharashtra?

There is significant change we have seen in Maharashtra under the current government in terms of ease of doing business in the state. With central funding and many new initiatives, the state is on the path of development. Although Maharashtra has slipped two places last year to be at 10th place in state ranking on ease of doing business in the national Business Action Reform Plan (BARP) index, but it has retained its position as the leading investment destination over the years. The state government has taken progressive steps such as incentivizing the industry, developing better industrial and urban infrastructure and easing of the regulatory mechanism to create conducive environment for businesses to start and operate.

## What are the policy measures that make Maharashtra as your state of choice for doing business?

The government is proactive in terms of making Maharashtra a preferred state for attracting newer

businesses and creating opportunities for the existing ones. A number of good initiatives have been taken to increase the road connectivity between cities by developing new highways and expressways, increasing metro rail connectivity, developing new modern airports, increasing railway network, dedicated budgets for water supply and irrigation projects, smart grid and new scheme for improving electricity distribution system in the state with power transmission & distribution projects among many others. The central grant of INR 67,523 crore for urban infrastructure in Maharashtra in three years is the highest investment in urban infrastructure development approved for any Indian state.

Maharashtra has made several policy changes aimed at making it easier to start and do business in the state including Retail Trade Policy, which provides online registration for small enterprises; single window policy for various permissions and licenses through an online portal, permission to set up industries on agricultural land and in no-development zones, randomized risk-based inspection and

self-certification policy for labour and environment clearances, auto-renewal of consents based on self-certification for orange and green category industries etc. These policy interventions has supported new businesses to set up and helped in social and economic development of the state

#### What are the future growth opportunities you see in the state?

Maharashtra is on the cusp of growth and being the second largest state in India with over 12 crore population, it has tremendous opportunities for

to almost 40 million populations across several states and having good experience in Maharashtra, will help us in developing water supply and irrigation infrastructure in the state. The decentralized modern sewerage network and sewage treatment plant at Mira Bhayander and Nasik will help in developing robust wastewater infrastructure. Our earlier experience in executing a number of rural electrification and power transmission & distribution projects will help us with future power projects in the state. Our more than a decade experience in

Bodies (ULBs). We are looking forward to be part of the development plan to realize the vision of Maharashtra government by developing sustainable smart infrastructure in the state.

#### Which future projects in the state you would like to be a part of or see develop that hold tremendous potential to transform Maharashtra?

SPML Infra have executed a number of power, water, irrigation and wastewater treatment projects in the state and being an expected choice for future projects, is looking forward to continue our association with drinking water and irrigation, wastewater, solid waste management and power transmission & distribution projects. Our core strengths in water supply, irrigation and power T&D segment will help us execute the future projects as per international standards with utmost quality and to the best satisfaction of our clients. We have been working with State Water & Irrigation Department, State and Central Power Development organization, Maharashtra Jal Pradhikaran Nigam, and a number of municipalities in the state for quite a long time and have very amiable relations with our esteemed clients. The irrigation projects will help the farmers to get good produce from their fields and the drought and farmer related issues would certainly be eliminated. The water supply projects will help in providing clean drinking water to the large number of urban and semi urban population currently facing water scarcity. The power situation in the state is going to improve with installation of higher capacity technologically advanced power infrastructure including GIS substations and Autotransformers. With a number of power infrastructure development projects planned, the state will be able to connect hundreds of villages with electricity that will help in improving their living standards as well as state's social and economic well being.

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growth. With the biggest funding from the centre for developing sustainable infrastructure in the next three years, there are immense opportunities for credible infrastructure development companies like SPML Infra. We are developing a smart city in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh under the Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor Scheme and this experience will help us in assisting the state government with the development of smart cities in the state. Being the largest water management company in the country with currently providing clean drinking water facilities

handling municipal solid waste management projects in Delhi and other cities will be useful in formulating and executing such projects in Maharashtra to reduce the load of the municipalities with maximum processing and recycling of the collection thus lowering the impact on environment. SPML Infra is currently executing Enabling Technology for Swachh Bharat Mission (eSBM) project, an ICT Platform to track and monitor waste transportation in 627 cities in 12 states and Andaman and Nicobar Island for enabling effective solid waste management in Urban Local