

## Sushil Sethi Jain

Managing Director, SPML Infra Limited

**P**assionate about water management and sustainability, Sushil Sethi Jain has been working in the water and wastewater segments for over three decades. In his current capacity as managing director, SPML Infra Limited, Sethi has been instrumental in charting the firm's growth over the years. Starting from a time when water management was an unheard of business, SPML Infra is now one of the key water management companies in the country. It is the only Indian firm to be featured in the global top 40 private water and wastewater companies.

Sethi has helped change the way drinking water and wastewater projects are executed in the country. Based on his suggestions, the Rajasthan government has started awarding projects on a single-point responsibility basis, resulting in cost savings and timely water supply. He has also been responsible for the success of private participation in the water distribution segment. In line with his advice, the Delhi Jal Board is now successfully implementing water management projects on a PPP basis. He has also pushed for the inclusion of long-term operations and maintenance under the scope of construction projects. This model has been successfully implemented for all water supply and irrigation projects in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Delhi.

As per Sethi's suggestion, the central government has advised all states to follow technology-neutral tenders for sewage treatment projects. This has helped municipalities across the country avoid technology-based biases and move towards solution-focused projects. For his valuable contributions to infrastructure development, Sethi was conferred the Infrastructure Person of the Year award at the Construction Week India Awards, 2014.

Besides SPML Infra Limited, Sethi holds prestigious positions in various other organisations. He is co-chairman of the Northern Regional Development Council of ASSOCHAM. He is also a member of several task force committees under FICCI and is associated with CII as well.

Sethi has a bachelor's degree in commerce. He says, "I am passionate about water management and I have had no chance to think about anything else for the past 30 years. My job constantly challenges my abilities and allows me to execute new ideas." Inspired by his father, Sethi believes in planning for future development projects. Committed to community development and social service, he enjoys meeting new people. ▶



## Anoop Seth

Deputy MD, IL&FS Energy Development Company Limited

**A**fter working across several infrastructure sectors, I realised that power is by far the most exciting and challenging," says Anoop Seth, deputy managing director, IL&FS Energy Development Company. "It has the most complexities and the attraction of several subsectors within it." Seth joined the IL&FS Group in 2014 as MD of IL&FS Tamil Nadu Power Company. Earlier, he has worked with firms like AMP Capital Investors, ABN Amro Bank, Reliance Industries, Bank of America and Standard Chartered.



The power sector offers opportunities as well as challenges. There is a thrust on renewable energy, and policy reforms to create a level field for conventional and renewable energy in terms of tariffs, payment cycles, etc. will facilitate renewable sector growth. Moreover, unconnected households represent a substantial latent energy demand, which could dispel concerns regarding weak demand. On the other hand, challenges such as low PLFs of thermal plants, a diminished focus on hydro and stranded gas-based capacities are impediments. Seth believes that sustained action is necessary at the policy as well as sub-sector and individual asset levels. Moreover, the benefits of the Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana need to be fully harvested by way of improved utility performance, as these will have a trickle-down effect and benefit the sector as a whole. Going forward, issues surrounding low PLFs for coal plants will need to be addressed. "Tariff reforms are also key," he says.

Seth recalls his most memorable assignments as the Delhi and Mumbai airport privatisation, during his time with ABN Amro, which was the lead adviser to the government. "This is India's largest privatisation till date. It has enhanced the travel experience of millions of citizens besides generating surpluses for the Airports Authority of India," he says.

Seth has a master's in management studies from BITS, Pilani. In terms of management style, he likes to clearly define roles, responsibilities and deliverables for every team member, and empowers managers to make their own decisions for optimising the team's productivity.

Seth exercises regularly and spends his weekends with family or pursuing activities like rafting. He is an avid reader and reads about 10-12 books a year, mainly history and fiction. He enjoys music and is a "theatre buff" with a preference for "productions of amateur artistes and those on off-beat themes". In the future, he would like to get involved in teaching children. ▶