

The AMRUT scheme needs to be closely integrated and synergized with other urban renewal schemes



SPML Infra is firmly placed to receive and execute large and complex projects, says **SUBHASH SETHI**, Chairman, SPML Infra

The last four years have seen a slew of announcements for the improvement of infrastructure in the country, including water and wastewater management. How has SPML Infra's water and wastewater vertical grown in these four years in terms of revenue and technology?

A number of schemes launched in last four years by the government have started showing results. Government's focus on easing the policies and improving infrastructure with specific focus on urban and rural transformation like Smart City Mission, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), Housing for All, Water Supply and Irrigation Projects, National Mission for Clean Ganga, Swachh Bharat Mission among others has contributed towards healthy growth. SPML Infra has executed some of the important water supply and wastewater projects during the past four years - Pokhran Water Supply Project, Cauvery Water Supply Scheme for Bengaluru City, 42 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant and Sewerage Network in Kanpur, and others and has also received several new

orders for development of key infrastructure in these segments. Apart from project developments, SPML Infra also registered healthy revenue growth in the last four years from INR 14,455 million in FY'15 to INR 21,101 million in FY'18 and the water and wastewater segment consisting of about 70% of the total revenue of the company.

What are the expertise and technological competence, you offer for water and wastewater management in India?

SPML Infra started managing water at the time when nobody was talking about it as it was not a proper business proposition then. But with sheer commitment and dedication, the company continued developing water infrastructure in different states. In a rich legacy of more than five decades when SPML Infra started dealing with water, it is the only water management company in India that has completed more than 600 projects in this segment and is known for commissioning world-class water supply and recycling projects. An ISO 9001:2015 certified

company; SPML Infra is currently providing drinking water facilities to over 40 million people of the country and is among the World's Top 50 Private Water Companies as per the research conducted by Global Water Intelligence, London. SPML Infra is currently working on 36 water supply and wastewater management projects in several states that will help it in providing drinking water facilities to another few million people and reducing water pollution with sewage and effluent treatment. SPML Infra is one of the largest water management companies in India, making it possible

What are the challenges and opportunities Government's urban renewal schemes like AMRUT offer for SPML Infra in waste water management?

Indian cities are rapidly growing both in terms of population and geographical landscape. New settlements and colonies are coming up in almost all cities. The government has planned to rejuvenate and develop sustainable infrastructure to provide basic services like water supply, sewerage, septage, storm water drainage, urban transport, green spaces and parks, administrative reforms and



to bid for water supply projects up to INR 12,000 million. SPML's expertise in laying pipes >3,000 millimeters in diameter and >100 kilometers in length has enhanced credibility and it can execute large pipeline project upto 4000 mm diameter in all terrain conditions. With integrated strengths in engineering designs, project and resource management and construction to commissioning expertise, the company can execute large and complex projects in drinking water supply and management, bulk water supply, large pipeline and pumping station, sewage, effluent or tertiary treatment with latest technology and sewerage network in big cities.

capacity building for the growing 500 towns and cities in India under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) scheme. The implementation of AMRUT is linked to a set of reforms which seeks to lay foundation to enable cities and towns to eventually grow into smart cities. There are good opportunities of development of water supply & distribution projects and sewage treatment plants under this scheme for all infrastructure development companies including SPML Infra. We are hopeful that SPML Infra will be an important partner with municipalities and urban local bodies for the infrastructure development for water

supply and wastewater management projects as States and the Union Territories have the liberty and flexibility in formulation, approval and execution of projects without the system of central approval for individual projects. The dedicated budget allocated for this scheme will be available to state governments. Another positive point of this scheme is that projects without availability of land and clearances will not be included which normally delays any infrastructure projects.

The AMRUT scheme needs to be closely integrated and synergized with other urban renewal schemes like Smart City Mission and Housing for All in order to work well. Any city aspiring for the basic aspects of urban infrastructure and living has to leverage on all these schemes for a better facility development and management.

For water supply, sewerage, storm water drains and urban transport, centre's share to be in the range of one-third of project cost to 50 per cent and remaining funds to be provided by the concerned state's to allocate and fund a project. Sometime the fund crunch at state level delays project planning and execution schedules.

Other challenges include shortage of urban planners, financial experts, and procurement analysts in smaller tier-II cities to implement the projects.

There is a shortage of skilled manpower in water and wastewater sector in India. What are the steps SPML Infra is taking to increase skilled manpower?

Indian infrastructure sector is not without its set of problems. Skilled manpower and competent project management personnel is very important in water and wastewater projects as they require specialized technical people during the project construction as well as in the O&M phase. With the advent of modern

technology and digitization of systems, technical and managerial competency is critical in ensuring timely execution of projects and optimum performance upon commissioning. As a company engaged in large number of water infrastructure development projects, we provide regular training to our teams to ensure they are up-to-date with latest technology, technical skills, higher motivation and productivity.

To keep abreast of the competitors a company has to continuously innovate and improve? What are the R&D efforts SPML Infra is taking in this regard?

The technology has advanced in all segment of life and there are new technologies available for infrastructure companies as well. The design engineering have transformed from being a flat format to 3-dimensional, which helped in minimizing errors and improving productivity during the execution period. Procurement and transportation of equipment, machineries and materials are important part of infrastructure development and with the advent of advance technology for transportation, intelligent logistics, and faster mobility is making project execution more efficient. Project tracker is another technological advancement that incorporates the use of smartphones and tablets in project execution, the real time information between work teams and the company management helps in taking swift remedial steps by improving several areas that hamper the work due to avoidable reasons. SPML Infra has integrated its strengths in depth engineering, process technology, project management, resource management, apart from adopting state-of-the-art technology solutions available for project management with cloud based data management system. Our in house engineering team is on

constant research and development to provide innovative and best engineering solutions without compromising on quality. SPML Infra strives for speed and perfection in all projects with the help of well qualified and experienced project teams to deliver projects on scheduled time.

What will be the company's growth agenda for the next three years? Is there expansion or new acquisition in the offing?

The strategic and ambitious approach by the government for infrastructure development with huge

company is one of the largest water engineering companies and has individual capability in executing large scale water projects. We can bid for drinking water supply and management project of up to INR 12,000 million that will help us in getting more big ticket projects. Our expertise in large diameter (above 3,000 mm dia) and length beyond 100 km in pipeline projects will help us in executing high value irrigation projects. We have already executed 220 kV GIS substation and 400 kV – 500 MVA autotransformer that will help us in going for the largest capacity of 400kV & 765 kV power



investment in urban infrastructure, water and wastewater, power transmission & distribution, rural electrification, roads & highways, ports, coal mining, and several others will provide considerable growth in next few years. SPML Infra is already part of some of the large infrastructure development projects in India and our execution activities are at peak level to complete those ambitious projects on time. With years of rich experience and 600 executed infrastructure projects in water, irrigation and wastewater treatment segments, SPML Infra is firmly placed to receive and execute large and complex projects. The

substation projects. With all these experience and good execution capabilities, we are looking forward to continue our association with Centre and State governments and other implementing agencies to receive new projects in water supply and irrigation, wastewater treatment, solid waste management and power transmission & distribution sectors. Considering the niche position we have created for ourselves in the water segment; we intend to use it to our advantage. We are expanding our footprints on water and power projects and will continuously doing so in the years to come.

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