

KEC to tap civil works in oil & gas sector

AMRITHA PILLAY
Mumbai, 12 February

With the central government's thrust on developing a gas-based economy, engineering company KEC International is aiming to tap civil work opportunities in the oil and gas segment. "We are looking at the sector, which will include projects like tankages, related infrastructure and pipelines," said Vimal Kejriwal, managing director.

Union petroleum minister Dharmendra Pradhan said in December that the country was moving to a gas-based economy. He put the investment planned for developing gas-based infrastructure at \$60 billion (₹4.3 trillion).

Kejriwal sees this as an opportune time to enter the oil and gas engineering segment, in the absence of I&FS and Punj Lloyd. Owing to financial concerns at both these, KEC sees no major company vying for the same set of orders.

To test the waters, Kejriwal says they'll bid for smaller projects worth ₹50-250 crore. With discussion on gas grids and new refinery complexes, civil orders from this segment should rise.

Old timer Srinath to take over as CEO of Tata Trusts

Pramit Jhaveri inducted as trustee of Dorabji Tata Trust with immediate effect

DEV CHATTERJEE
Mumbai, 12 February

Srinath Narasimhan, a Tata Group veteran, was on Wednesday appointed chief executive officer (CEO) of Tata Trusts with effect from April 1.

Srinath joins at a time when the trusts are facing litigation with the income tax department over its tax status. Also, the group is in the middle of a legal dispute with its former chairman Cyrus Mistry.

Tata Trusts owns 66 per cent stake in Tata Sons, the holding company of the group.

Narasimhan is currently managing director of Tata Teleservices, which sold its loss-making wireless telephony business to Bharti Airtel for free. But Tata Tele paid its bank debt and government dues worth ₹60,000 crore.

Narasimhan has held coveted positions in the Tata Group, including the post of managing director of Tata Communications. He had joined Tata Administrative Services in 1986.

In another top appointment, Pramit Jhaveri, former CEO of Citi India and former vice-chair-



Srinath Narasimhan (left), MD of Tata Teleservices, joins at a time when the trusts are facing litigation with the I-T department over its tax status; Former Citibank CEO Pramit Jhaveri



man of banking, capital markets and advisory for Asia-Pacific of the American bank, was inducted as a trustee of the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust with immediate effect.

In February last year, R Venkataramanan (popularly known as Venkat) had stepped down as managing trustee of Tata Trusts.

Subsequently, a search committee led by Ratan Tata, interviewed several internal

employees as well as professionals from elsewhere to select a CEO and finally zeroed in on Srinath by November.

After Venkat's resignation, Tata Trusts was managed by Ratan Tata along with a core group of officials. Among other recent changes in the organisation, Noel Tata, Ratan Tata's half-brother, was appointed a trustee of the Sir Ratan Tata Trust, which is the second biggest trust in the Tata Trusts

fold. One of the immediate challenges before Srinath will be to handle the litigation with the income tax department.

On October 31 last year, the I-T department cancelled the registration of six trusts (not the bigger ones) operating under Tata Trusts. It cited violation of norms applicable to charitable institutions. This may result in a tax liability of about ₹12,000 crore.

The Tatas are challenging the date of the order, which makes the trusts liable to pay a much higher amount of tax under the new tax provision introduced in June 2016 concerning charitable trusts.

Tata Trusts is of the view that the cancellation should apply retrospectively, as it had offered to surrender the registration in 2015. This is about a year before the new tax provision became effective.

Srinath will have to continue the work by the trusts in the field of education, health, environment and sanitation, among others. Tata Trusts today runs some of India's mega charitable programmes from the money it earns as dividend from Tata Sons.

Swiggy partners eateries to create delivery-only brands

NEHA ALAWADHI
New Delhi, 12 February

Food ordering and delivery aggregator Swiggy has partnered some restaurants on its platform to create delivery-only brands, with a separate identity from the parent eatery.

The aim is to cater to a gap in the food delivery requirement of particular areas. The initiative, called 'BrandWorks,' offers a different menu, images, packaging and pricing from the restaurant's usual menu.

Run experimentally over five-odd months, Bengaluru-headquartered Swiggy now has 100 BrandWorks brands across 13 cities. It plans to triple the number by the end of the year.

"We approached these restaurants with consumer need gaps, knowing their (restaurants') culinary capabilities. We said, let us co-create a brand in terms of menu, images, pricing, packaging. The brands are operated out of the partner's existing kitchens — so, its an asset-light, minimalistic, incremental expenditure for the partner to do more out of their existing kitchens, while consumer needs are getting met," said Vishal Bhatia,

chief executive of New Supply Business at Swiggy. For instance, he said, delivery-friendly Chinese food continues to be a gap in Delhi. Swiggy has, accordingly, partnered with Delhi-based Chinese and Thai food chain Bercos to create a delivery-only brand, called House of Chow. "It will be the same team and the existing kitchen (of Bercos). The packaging and some different products are the only extra cost for this brand. The portion sizes are also different — we have meals for one, individual meals and so on. We've also kept this as an independent brand, as we don't want to cannibalise the



The aim is to cater to a gap in the food delivery requirement in some particular areas

available at six Bercos outlets, which was begun three years earlier. This involved taking on lease on a property, refurbishing into small, shared, kitchens and sub-letting to restaurant chains.

It had, it earlier said, spent about ₹250 crore for opening a little over 1,000 such 'cloud kitchens' on a million sq ft of space.

Bercos brand," said Kabir Advani, managing partner of Bercos Restaurant.

House of Chow is currently available at six Bercos outlets, which was begun three years earlier. This involved taking on lease on a property, refurbishing into small, shared, kitchens and sub-letting to restaurant chains.

Bhatia's team is also the one that takes care of the Swiggy Access initiative, which was begun three years earlier. This involved taking on lease on a property, refurbishing into small, shared, kitchens and sub-letting to restaurant chains.

It had, it earlier said, spent about ₹250 crore for opening a little over 1,000 such 'cloud kitchens' on a million sq ft of space.

Godrej to challenge NGT order quashing green nod for project

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, 12 February

Realty firm Godrej Properties on Wednesday said it will challenge the NGT order quashing environmental nod granted to one of its housing project in Bengaluru, saying no construction work has been done in the buffer zone of lake. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) quashed the environmental clearance (EC) granted to a high-rise residential project being built by Godrej in Bengaluru for raising construction in the buffer zone of Kaikondrahalli lake.

"NGT has passed an order concerning our projects in Bengaluru. We reiterate that as a responsible corporate, we follow all concerned regulations and are confident of our compliance in this project," Godrej Properties said in a statement.

"There has been no construction in the buffer zone and we are confident of our merits and compliances in the case. We are in the process of challenging the said order," it added.



Godrej Properties is the real estate arm of diversified Godrej Group.

Earlier, a Bench of NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel and Justice S P Wangdi said no environmental clearance could have been granted which permitted construction in the buffer zone of Kaikondrahalli lake and drains merely by imposing a condition that no such construction will be raised.

"Stand of the project proponent that the project is permissible cannot be accepted. It is clear that the project stipulates construction in the buffer zone, in violation of zoning plan and judgment of this tribunal as affirmed by the Supreme Court. Accordingly, the appeal is allowed and the EC is quashed," the Bench said.