

# "Robust future ahead for PMC services in 12th Plan period"

Despite a substantially lower industrial performance, the 12th plan envisaging 14% industrial growth opens bright avenues for project management and consultancy services, says **SUNIL SRIVASTAVA**, Managing Director, Balaji Railroad Systems Ltd in an interview with Projects World.



**The gaining momentum attached with the infra construction projects has accelerated the importance of project management and consultancy services (PMC). Which are the major infra segments paving more scope for implementation of these services in India?**

With the Government of India using infrastructure investment as a major tool to increase the GDP growth and accelerate Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the country, escalation is witnessed in the multilateral funded projects and public-private partnership (PPP) options. To successfully implement such projects, the scope and importance of PMC services are gaining focus. At present, number of power projects are trapped due to the lack of coal linkages, hence there is not much headway in this sector. As far as road sector is concerned, it is progressing at a steady pace and generating adequate scope for PMC services. However, the sector likely to generate big demand inflow in the PMC services is the rail/metro segments.

Indian Railways have started finalizing the contracts on the Dedicated Freight Corridors and the activity of PMC for both the Western and Eastern corridor is gaining momentum. Similarly, there is an upsurge in metro projects across the country which will also provide large opportunities for PMC services. In the medium – long term sector, the future looks bright for PMC services in India.

**BARSYL has been long involved in the process of PMC services, what are the changing trends associated with PMC?**

BARSYL is involved in the design and project management consultancy services for over 25 years. During this long journey, we have seen a sea-change in the overall approach for implementing projects. The construction methodology has advanced with the availability of high technology construction equipments and resources.

The clients today believe that 'Time is money' and would like to have all the projects completed 'On-time'. As such monitoring all aspects of the project is becoming very important.

The project management services a decade ago were usually focused only on project planning, identification of vendors

and quality check of work. This concept has now changed and today the clients expect a project management consultant to take the responsibility for planning all resources, tender process management, monitoring quality as well as costs, and trouble shooting. This needs the services of a full-fledged

team of trained professionals in technical skills of engineering and their sub groups like civil, electrical, mechanical, transportation etc., on one side and the supporting staff in planning, financial and material management systems.

BARSYL has a full-fledged division

undertaking project management services with qualified and experienced team of professionals handling projects for Railway Siding's Metros and other urban transport systems.

**Brief us about your recent pact with DEG Signal Ltd (UK)? How will this deal benefit BARSYL in strengthening the company's position?**

We first worked with DEG Signal in 2001-2003, when there was a resource shortage in the United Kingdom's rail industry. We were able to support a large number of critical signaling projects by offering our design services. However with the slowdown in investments in rail sector in the UK, we scaled down our activities. In the intervening period both the companies have added new skill sets and again signed a long-term agreement to work jointly not only in the UK market but other European countries as well. The agreement is beneficial to both the companies, as DEG gets access to a large pool of experienced signal design resources, at the same time BARSYL gets access to large UK and European markets to offer its services. This provides a win – win situation to both.

**Lack of skilled manpower has been always a major issue. How has BARSYL combated these hiccups while executing projects?**

BARSYL had visualized the shortage of skilled manpower at a very early stage and keeping this in view we have always been on the forefront of training. Besides, BARSYL is the only railway consultancy company in India which has a full-fledged in-house training programme to develop and train railway engineers. Owing to our long-term vision we have not faced many hiccups due to the lack of trained resources. However, retention of these trained forces is a problem. Today, we are proud of those railway engineers trained by BARSYL who can be

found in most of the railway consultancy companies not only in India but also right from UK to Australia.

In future, the pressure on resources is only going to increase and anticipating this, BARSYL has now set up an independent and dedicated training facility 'Institute of Metro & Rail Technology' (IMRT) to train various levels of professionals right from entry level to top management in all aspects of rail and metro technology. IMRT has agreements with leading international institutions like Singapore Metro, Hong Kong Metro, and Institute of Urban Transport - for content development, course certification and sharing of training infrastructure.

**How do you foresee the future of PMC services? And also share the outlined future plans?**

RVNL, IRCON and other Government of India undertakings which are developing the Dedicated Freight Corridors with multi-lateral funding have now realized that they cannot undertake project management directly. Moreover, the funding agencies have made it obligatory that the major departments should equip Project Management services for ensuring efficient and timely delivery of projects.

The prospect of project management services is entirely linked with the industrial growth. A bright future is ahead in the 12th plan where an industrial growth of 14% is envisaged even though on date the growth is substantially lower.

BARSYL is a leading player in design and Project Management Services for the complete spectrum of rail infrastructure covering long distance as well as urban rail. With Metro as the 'in-thing' for almost all the Metropolis and 2-tier cities, there exists a robust future for BARSYL.