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Guest Editorial

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R Sridaran

COO

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R. Sridaran, Vice President Larsen & Toubro (L&T) is COO of L&T Infocity Ltd and heading IT/ITeS infrastructure vertical of L&T Group of Companies across the Globe.

He has been with Larsen & Toubro Limited for more than 30 years, on important assignments in divisions like Electronics, Data Products, and Switchgear Standard Products etc. It was in 1997 that L&T forayed into the business of developing HITEC City spread across 151 Acres in Hyderabad and Mr. Sridaran was entrusted with the responsibility to head the project. He was instrumental in bringing reputed companies viz. Microsoft, Oracle, GE and many more to HITEC City.

His initiatives resulted in major IT MNC's like HSBC, Deloitte and Motorola setting up their exclusive facilities in HITEC City. He was also responsible for securing consultancy services for L&T Infocity and helping Delhi Metro Rail Corporation set up a modern IT Park in New Delhi. Under his able leadership, the success story of HITEC City has been taken forward from Hyderabad to Kolkata, Vishakhapatnam, Kochi, Vijayawada, Nagpur and also to Colombo.

Mr. Sridaran has vast experience in channel management, OEM management and specific interest in manpower development. He has been conferred on the "Manager of the Year 2006" by the Hyderabad Management Association. He is on the Board of Joint Venture Companies like Hyderabad International Trade Expositions Limited, L&T HITECH City Vijayawada, L&T Phoenix Infoparks Pvt. Ltd Hyderabad, L&T Arun Excello IT SEZ Chennai, L&T Tech Park Kochi and L&T Infocity Sri Lanka.

Mr. Sridaran is a 1972 graduate in Electrical Engineering from University of Madras. He has also pursued several management programs of Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, Indian School of Business Hyderabad etc.

Mr. Sridaran has the unique vision and capability of catering to the IT Infrastructure needs of Modern India

Vijayawada, the next IT destination

The state of Andhra Pradesh (AP) has recorded a steady growth in IT exports at INR 325 billion, a 24.5% increase over last year and much above the tentative national average of 20.65%. The commitment of the state towards IT industry is best reflected in the fact that it has the largest number of IT/ITeS Special Economic Zones in the country. 59 of total 350 formally approved IT/ITeS SEZs are located in the state. These have projected a direct employment of up to 300,000 over the next five years and are likely to infuse investment worth INR 161 billion. Apart from Hyderabad, Tier II cities like Vijayawada, Warangal, Vishakhapatnam, Kakinada and Tirupati are being developed by the state government as the next IT destinations.

Larsen & Toubro Limited with a legacy of 32 million sq. ft. of quality IT infrastructure is in constant persuasion of developing cosmopolitan cities into IT destinations. In recognition of this strength, AP government has entrusted L&T with the responsibility of developing the IT/ITeS SEZ at Vijayawada thru its subsidiary.

The changing global scenario is forcing IT companies to look for better cost saving destinations, Tier II cities stand as an answer to such markets. With a sizeable percentage of Indian software professionals hailing from the Tier II city of Vijayawada, it brags to be the next attractive IT hub.

Manpower is the key for successful and viable IT/ITeS operations. Statistics reveal that one out of every four of Indian Software Professionals are from the state of Andhra Pradesh and a majority of these from Vijayawada/Coastal Andhra region, typifying the excellent manpower available for IT/ITeS operations, in this area of AP resulting in low HR costs and low attrition rates. It has a catchment of nearly 100,000 graduates including 27,575 engineers and 2,600 MCA passing out annually.

The Tier II city of Vijayawada is equipped with requisite infrastructure such as thermal power stations, satellite earth stations, network/bandwidth providers and is also rich in good schools and excellent colleges for technical and non technical man power.

Vijayawada is one of busiest cities due to its strong commercial hold in the entire state. Located at about 5 hours drive from Hyderabad and about 6 hours drive from Chennai, Vijayawada is centrally located and well connected to various parts of the country by Rail, Road and Air. It has the largest railway junction in South Central Railways and the biggest bus terminal in Asia.

There are about 32 IT firms in Vijayawada, which generate revenues of approximately INR 1 billion.

The city is also a major tourist attraction with Prakasham barrage, Undavalli caves, Rajiv Gandhi Park, Gandhi Hill, Victoria Museum, Mogalarajapuram Caves, Bhavani Island, Kondapalli Fort, apart from a number of movie theatres and places of religious interest.

This Cosmopolitan city has several initiatives taken by the Municipal Corporation of Vijayawada (www.ourvmc.org) to take it to the next level of urbanization.

About L&T HITECH City Limited, Vijayawada

After the success of HITEC City at Hyderabad, Larsen and Toubro Limited, through its Special Purpose Vehicle, L&T HITECH City Limited (www.ltinfinity.com/lthl), a joint venture company of L&T Infocity Limited and Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation Limited (APIIC, <http://www.apiiclttd.com>), is promoting the IT/ITeS Special Economic Zone at Vijayawada. This project is named as Vijayawada IT Zone. This IT/ITeS SEZ is spread over 30 acres of land right opposite Vijayawada Airport. It is envisaged to develop an Integrated Township with 1.1 million sq. ft. of IT space and 0.4 million sq. ft. of residential space with "Walk to Work" concept. Apart from the city of Vijayawada, the project also offers cost advantages for IT companies with top-notch infrastructure.

APIIC, the fastest growing state government enterprise in Andhra Pradesh; has developed over 33,000 acres of land and set up IT/Knowledge Parks, Industrial estates and export promotion parks. It is the nodal agency for government sponsored schemes like Export Promotion Industrial Parks, Integrated Infrastructure Development Centers, etc.

L&T Infocity Limited (www.ltinfinity.com) is a JV of Larsen & Toubro Limited and Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation Limited. The company has developed HITEC City (Hyderabad Information Technology Engineering Consultancy City), spread over an area of 158 acres at Madhapur, Hyderabad. It has developed about 5 million sq. ft. globally. It has the highest rating "DRI" by ICRA, signifies very strong real estate project execution capabilities.

Larsen & Toubro Limited (www.larsentoubro.com), a US\$8.5 billion company, is India's Premier conglomerate with business interests spanning engineering, construction core and information technology. It ranks among the top Indian companies in the private sector. Its operations are characterized by a strong technology base, world-class quality assurance processes and an abiding commitment to the customer over 7 decades.
