

## Staying the course our # **POWER VICTORS**



**Anil Singh**  
National Head - Large Projects,  
Tata Power



### What were the hurdles that your cluster faced while maintaining business operations during the pandemic?

The pandemic was tough for everyone and it was no different for the teams at Tata Power. Some of the major hurdles faced by the teams in maintaining business operations, during the pandemic, were adherence to the multiple state administrative guidelines and obtaining clearances to resume project work across geographies.

Considering the uncertainties that everyone was suddenly forced to face, our teams had to quickly focus on remobilising stakeholders and the workforce. A major task for the teams was to take care of the availability of agencies/manpower for local service support – equipment hiring, utility service providers at guest house and project sites, transportation, etc. There were also considerable delays in the delivery of BOS items for the project schedule due to the scarcity of manpower, construction material and machinery at project sites.

To overcome the sudden shortage, the TPSSL project teams coordinated and arranged for travel including reservations, via rail or air, in some cases, for workers from their respective locations to project sites. These also included dedicated conveyance facility from destination ports to project sites. It did not end at that, the teams also arranged for vehicles to help with the conveyance of labourers to and from all labour camps in line with COVID-19 guidelines. Even this operation faced the challenge of ensuring on-time entry and exit of a huge workforce as per the state prescribed safety guidelines. This added substantial costs towards the project management budget for the teams, but the teams remained focused on ensuring safety.

Once the teams were able to resolve the issue of resuming operations at project sites, they were faced with the challenge of accommodating a huge workforce at labour colonies with precautionary guidelines like maintaining social distance, use of masks and sanitisers, etc. For example – for 250 MW, the team accommodated the manpower strength of approx. 1100 workforce at site.

For emergency needs, Tata Power ensured the arrangement of oxygen concentrators and medical facilities for workmen. Despite the best efforts of the project teams to contain and avoid the spread of the pandemic, at several project sites employees and workmen were infected with COVID-19, resulting in serious concerns on individual health safety as well as ensuring isolation/social distancing/quarantining of respective team members. The challenges were unique, but the teams of Tata Power had to constantly think on their feet and face the challenges not just at an individual level, but also at the team level.

There was no way that the teams at Tata Power or any other company could have prepared for what the pandemic forced everyone to face. However, the project teams and the management quickly turned things around with effective engagement. There was a time when the company experienced a low rate of manpower mobilisation post immediate recommencement of projects. The project teams strategized and planned for workforce deployment through small-scale labour suppliers rather than depending on existing I&C partners. It was no easy feat for the teams at Tata Power to obtain statutory as well as administrative clearances to enable the transport and facilitation of a huge workforce.

The leaders played an important role in encouraging and inspiring team members to ensure all precautionary measures were taken while also focusing on the adherence to project commitments. Aside from the precautionary measures, the pandemic opened the doors for employees to upskill and use the time to grow their skillsets. At Tata Power, employees were advised to take learning sessions on various knowledge areas through GYANKOSH – the online portal built by Tata Power, for learning and development. For some of the business lines, training sessions were conducted for various employees, channel partners, and their workforce with the help of OEMs. The teams also organised several awareness sessions at project sites with the engagement of the entire workforce regarding health guidelines.

On the customer front, Tata Power's team strategized to be open in their communication and while contractual obligations are normally the focus of the brands, the pandemic was not a normal circumstance and hence the Central/State Government guidelines on pandemic had to be adhered to. Their teams also coordinated with the Procurement/Expediting team and arranged meetings with respective suppliers encouraging them to resume manufacturing even with partial strength so that critical items could be delivered at the sites at the earliest possible. As the saying goes – the show must go on – Tata Power also focused on keeping its people safe and customers content.

**How did you address the hurdles faced? What were your most important lessons and experiences?**

**Share the significant initiatives launched during the pandemic in the realms of employee and customer-centricity.**

If anything, the pandemic brought out the importance of transparent communication in business. Since working remotely became the norm for many, the teams at Tata Power had daily discussions through virtual platforms (chaired by Chief Projects) with all Project Site Managers and Project Heads to assess the site situations and to extend any required support. Many business processes were reviewed, and team members contributed to making these processes more agile and understandable.

Most importantly, Tata Power had to carry out the vaccination for its entire workforce. Within the system, each employee and support staff were tracked for their vaccination status and the first dose of the vaccination was ensured within the least amount of time period. They also constituted teams to ensure that all the channel partners and

execution agencies' workforce were tracked and necessary support was provided to ensure 100% vaccination of all workmen working at Tata Power Project Sites. The vaccination drive was done by TPSSL through direct tie-ups with health centres in the vicinity.

**What social impact initiatives did your Cluster undertake to assist the community?**

In the Renewables cluster, the teams undertook the distribution of COVID-19 PPEs (Mask, Sanitiser, Oximeter, etc.) for the local health centres, hospitals, and primary schools, across respective project site locations. The teams also conducted awareness sessions with local communities like residents of the villages, workforce, security personnel, students to guide on the identification of health issues and the required action to prevent further spread. Along with these precautions, Tata Power also installed automated sanitisation through electrical connection systems at various project sites and in nearby areas.