

# Skipper to power up on infra push in North-East

## Transmission tower-maker opens facility in Guwahati

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Kolkata, March 29

Electricity transmission tower maker, Skipper Ltd, is betting big on the Centre's infrastructure push in the North-East and increasing power trade potential with eastern neighbours for growth.

India imports hydro-power from Bhutan and exports thermal power to Nepal and Bhutan through multiple points meeting significant portion of the peak deficit in both the countries. Plans are on to widen the scope of the power trade and create a regional open market platform.

From a turnover of ₹10 crore in 2001-02 to ₹1,500 crore in 2015-16, the Kolkata-headquartered company had a dream run the last 15 years. Towers contribute 90 per cent of the business.

Skipper opened a ₹70-crore facility in Guwahati on Tuesday, taking the total fabrication and finishing capacity to 2,30,000 tonnes per annum, up from 2,00,000 tonnes, to serve the local demand mostly from PowerGrid Corporation.

The Narendra Modi government has already announced a ₹10,000-crore plan to upgrade the transmission and distribution system in Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura. Of the outlay, ₹5,111 crore is under the North Eastern Region Power System Improvement

Project (Nerpsip), spearheaded by PowerGrid.

### PowerGrid requirement

"Our plant will primarily cater to the demand from PowerGrid," Saran Bansal Director, Skipper, told *Business-Line*. Bansal, a second generation promoter of the company, joined the business in 2002.

According to him, transmission activity is the strongest in Arunachal Pradesh, as India is readying to give a big push to hydro-electricity generation in the region.

North-East apart, Uttar Pradesh has also been paying attention to revamp its transmission and distribution system. Further, a host of projects are coming up in Andhra Pradesh, Telengana and Mad-

### Skipper



hya Pradesh for evacuation of solar power.

### Order book position

Skipper already has an order book position of ₹2,400 crore. This includes ₹405 crore worth of orders received on March 24 from PowerGrid and the transmission utilities of Telangana and Uttarakhand.

Nearly 25 per cent of Skipper's power sector revenue comes from exports, primar-

ily to countries like Peru and Chile. Bansal is planning to intensify export activities.

Electricity towers apart, the company is also present in polymer pipes and fittings with a total capacity of 48,000 tonnes per annum. Considering the intense activity in the irrigation sector, the growth outlook for this sector is positive.

### Surge in share price

The growth potential is already reflecting in the company's share price, which moved up from ₹130 (of ₹1 face value) to ₹175 in the last three months.

As of December, various mutual funds, funds, foreign portfolio investors and financial institutions held 88 per cent of the 27 per cent public holding.