

INCREASING VALUE AND PERFORMANCE OF REAL ESTATE

WITH 25 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, 8000+ INSOURCED WORKFORCE AND OVER 100 MILLION SFT AUM, EMBASSY SERVICES PVT. LTD. IS ONE OF INDIA'S MOST TRUSTED INTEGRATED FACILITIES MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS.

PRADEEP LALA, MANAGING DIRECTOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT ESPL SHARES HIS VIEWS ON THE NEW TRENDS AND CHALLENGES IN THE FACILITY MANAGEMENT (FM) SECTOR.

Pradeep Lala anchors ESPL's growth both as a business visionary and industry expert. Sharing his experience he stated, "My journey in FM started with Embassy Services (ESPL) in 2013. While the firm was initially set up to manage the owned assets of the Embassy Group, my purpose in leading the firm was to establish a staunch leadership that furthers the legacy of the Embassy Group. I took it upon our vision to grow it across the open markets using our expertise garnered since 1995. The initial period was all about learning and understanding the depth of the sector. Little did i know that the nature of business embodies daily virtues that we imbibed as part of discipline and hygiene since childhood. This triggered my interest and enhanced my outlook toward the sector. Through my tenure, FM has evolved to a great extent; From being perceived as a back-end function, to becoming frontline warriors essential to business continuity for organizations."

FROM A BACKEND FUNCTION TO FRONTLINE WARRIORS

The pandemic's need for safety and hygiene at public and commercial spaces boosted the demand for

efficient facility management. **Pradeep Lala** agrees that before the pandemic, FM was considered a back-end function that required basic attention for sanitation and maintaining the uptime of technical assets.

"The pandemic allowed businesses to truly understand the ability of a professional and compliant FM partner to aid business continuity, minimize risks, increase productivity, and boost retention. Most businesses are now forced to comply with evolving norms and seek the perseverance of a highly responsible and safe facility, thereby requiring professional FM partners to assure the employees' and stakeholders' safety. Having said that, responsible organizations have always set precedence to this even prior to the pandemic, just tweaking more aspects to meet compliance goals set to suit the new normal."

NEW DEVELOPMENTS & LEARNINGS

With many organizations opting for a hybrid work model, there is a dynamic shift in the way office spaces function. **Pradeep Lala** concurs that the hybrid model does seem to be working for many sectors with the given hardships. "However, how effective it would be when we return to normal, if competitors engage

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in conventional models is yet to be seen. Regardless of the work models, I am sure that the commercial office segment is going to grow, and the significance of FM will be paramount. I also believe that the pandemic has been all about learning and quickly adapting to ambiguities. The most important virtue all of us have learnt is the concept of flexibility – physically and mentally. We have not only had to venture into the idea of a flexible workspace, but we have also had to extend flexibility as part of our business ethos and partnership with stakeholders.”

ESPL SETTING GLOBAL BENCHMARKS

As an FM provider, ESPL has spent the past few years developing technology tools to aid its service delivery. These tools are a bouquet of technology modules called ‘E-Spectrum.’ Elaborating on the initiative, **Pradeep Lala** shares, “What these tools do is allow for remote management of assets and automation of reporting and data analytics. Especially during this pandemic, these tools allowed us to engage with clients through seamless delivery of operations, with zero downtime, in a remote setup. Another engaging experience we had related to BCP was with one of our IT clients, we took the responsibility of sanitising, packaging and even transporting PCs to the



FROM A VAGUE SENTIMENT OF BEING A CLEANING INDUSTRY, THE SCOPE TODAY INVOLVES SUSTAINABILITY AND TECHNICAL ASSET MANAGEMENT GOING IN-DEPTH TO CREATE A BETTER WORLD TO WORK AND LIVE IN. THIS IS BY FAR THE MOST RAPIDLY GROWING INDUSTRY THAT PROVIDES EMPLOYMENT TO THE MAJORITY OF BLUE-COLLAR WORKERS, FOCUSED ON FOSTERING HOLISTIC WELLBEING.”

employees’ homes to aid their BCP. Such initiatives clearly contrast the advantage a great FM partner can bring forth. Moreover, we strive to comply with benchmarks set by global bodies such as LEED, BSC, USGBC, IGBC, GRESB, etc.

These bodies audit our practices that require adherence to benchmarks in Energy Management, Water Management, Waste Management, employee physical and mental wellbeing, etc. To qualify with a 5-star rating in these audits, we control infrastructure and technology upgrades worth over 100 Cr per annum. These will be spent on energy-saving equipment such as HVACs, AHUs, PUCs, LED Lighting, STPs, OWCs, IAQ monitors, etc.

A major contributor to achieving these goals is renewable energy. A 100 MW solar plant located in Bellary, Karnataka provides renewable energy to 3 of our business parks in Bangalore, while other parks across the country foster use of energy through rooftop solar panels as much as possible. As the FM partner, we employ experts in Energy Management to suggest plans for wheeling of energy to end-users and use the best practices for O&M of the plants.”

FUTURE GROWTH OF THE SECTOR

On an optimistic note, **Pradeep Lala** expresses that the future looks extremely promising with exponential growth for the sector. “Post pandemic routines will boost the deployment of manpower to meet the updated standards and frequency set to comply with norms. This along with



WITH INCREASING ACCEPTANCE OF OUTSOURCING NON-CORE ACTIVITIES, BURGEONING DEMAND FROM COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL CUSTOMERS TO DELIVER SUPERIOR LIFESTYLE EXPERIENCES TO END-USERS, AND THE GOVERNMENT’S PUSH FOR SMART CITIES, THE PROFESSIONAL, ORGANISED SECTOR IS SET TO FLOURISH.”

a rapid transformation in the industrial, warehousing and logistics sector will boost the demand for FM services. Apart from this, with responsible organizations seeking certifications from globally renowned bodies, the role of FM service providers will continue to grow beyond the conventional FM scope of services, with more focus on ESG, Technology, Surveillance, AI, Data Analytics, etc.”