

# POWERLINE

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Special Story

## Lighting the Way 16

PAT and UJALA begin to show results



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## Prashant Panda

President, Solar Business, ACME

**P**rashant Panda joined ACME in June 2015 and is currently president of the company's solar business. In his current role, he is responsible for the business development and power purchase agreement management portfolio. Panda has over two decades of experience in the power sector, serving in various capacities in the areas of corporate planning and business development. In the past, he has been associated with organisations such as Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (Powergrid), Reliance Energy and JSW Energy.

According to Panda, "The entire sector is going through a transient phase and needs to settle down sooner rather than later." He feels that going ahead, the serious players would need to bid cautiously as they accumulate more projects and consolidate their portfolios. With regard to renewable energy, Panda remarks that the key challenges facing

the segment pertain to the development of self-reliant solar photovoltaic module manufacturing capacities, cost efficient evacuation infrastructure, and storage technologies. However, he feels that the government has adopted a positive approach to address these challenges.

Talking about emerging technologies in the solar segment, he says, "Module efficiencies will touch 22-24 per cent by 2021-22, with passivated emitter rear contact and heterojunction technologies coming in. However, the evolution of energy storage solutions at the utility-scale is the most important as it would enable renewable energy to be handled more efficiently."

Reflecting on his career, Panda fondly remembers his tenure at Powergrid, as it was his first job. He also cherishes work-



ing with ACME during the past year, wherein the company's installed capacity grew from 575 MW to 1,500 MW.

Panda is an electrical engineer and also has a degree in management from XIM, Bhubaneswar. His job involves extensive travel-

ling. So when he has some time to spare, he likes cooking for his family. He also likes to read, watch movies and listen to music. Dan Brown is his favourite author, while in music, his favourites include Kishore Kumar, Lata Mangeshkar, Cliff Richards, Kenny Rogers and Madonna.

Later in life, he hopes to write a book based on his experience of modern Indian culture. Panda's family includes his wife Monalisa, who is an angel therapist, and their two school-going daughters, Anoushka, 17, and Anshita, 11. ■