

Shishir Parikh

President and Chief Financial Officer, GTL Infrastructure

When one is part of a company that is continuously growing and has ambitious expansion plans, there is no shortage of challenges," says Shishir Parikh, president and chief financial officer (CFO) of GTL Infrastructure, the latest venture of the GTL Group which sets up shared passive infrastructure for telecom operators.

Parikh believes that a modest beginning to life has helped him build a solid foundation. From a middle-class family, his early years of education and professional experience, though challenging, did not yield the kind of benefits he had hoped for.

He believed in his potential and pressed on nonetheless, certain that the future would be brighter. He completed his chartered accountancy and applied himself to work in a variety of sectors ranging from dyes and chemicals to international construction and high-tech printing technology.

In 1994, he joined the GTL Group and his career escalated at the same pace as the changes that occurred after liberalisation, especially in the area of telecom and finance. Within GTL, he contributed to the transformation of the



accounts department by restructuring and redeploying the manpower, introducing Oracle ERP systems, and establishing further systems and processes. His initiative and hard work won him recognition and the post of CFO.

With a target to install 6,700 towers by 2008, he has to manage Rs 20.3 billion of investment. Parikh is also responsible for the financial management, budgets and accounts of the company – a critical factor right now. "Raising cost-effective funds from national and international markets and maintaining the momentum that we have generated are my targets at the moment," he says. With so much to do, his current job is turning into a memorable assignment.

Regarding telecom trends, he sees a huge increase in the subscriber base in rural and semi-urban areas, which will open broader avenues for his company. He expects major consolidation in this sector.

Parikh believes that "teamwork yields maximum returns". So he ensures that there is a cross-allocation of tasks with periodic joint reviews. This has enabled him to build a cohesive team.

Parikh enjoys being with people, whether it's his family or his colleagues. "Man is a social animal and whenever he gets time, he socialises," he says.

He believes in the need to strike the right balance between physical, mental and spiritual well-being. He is also a fitness freak. For relaxation, he enjoys reading and watching Hindi movies. ▲