



The Government has identified **infrastructure development** as one of the 10 major thrust areas and this is laudable

The 2017-18 Budget is an extremely positive and optimistic budget, with many positive elements for the economy. The budget has laid out a clear and tangible roadmap for the future, identifying the priorities and key growth areas. The Government has identified infrastructure development as one of the 10 major thrust areas and this is laudable. A lot of initiatives have been announced for the power sector to promote access to power, energy security and clean energy. The allocation for Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gram Jyoti Yojana has been stepped up to Rs. 4,814 crore and this will provide a big boost to the sector, ensuring power supply for all. The plan to have 100% electrification of villages by May 2018 also needs special mention because it will help improve lifestyles and living standards in rural areas. This would benefit all industries and the economy. In the area of clean energy, the second phase of solar power development is to be taken up with an aim of generating 20,000 MW, and this is a great step.

For manufacturing and 'Make in India' initiatives, the setting up of Skill Centres across the country is a good move that will increase the talent pool within the country, benefiting the manufacturing industry at large, while also supporting the 'Make in India' initiative. Further, abolishing FIPB (Foreign Investment Promotion Board) will give a big boost to FDI and improve the Ease of Doing Business, benefiting the 'Make in India' programme. Also, the impending GST and the Demonetisation drive are already moving India from an informal to a formal economy, which will increase tax compliance and revenue collections. In a nutshell, it's very well balanced and growth oriented budget, which will be good for the economy and the people."



Mr. Gautam Seth
Joint Managing Director
HPL Electric & Power Ltd