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# Extend PLI Scheme For Water Industry: Ajay Popat





**Ajay Popat**, President, Ion Exchange (India) Ltd.

**India:** Never before had the world realized the necessity to use water as a basic means of sanitation to frequently wash hands and minimize the spread of a pandemic.

The Government of India has unleashed a large number of welfare Initiatives apart from the daunting task of vaccinating the country's millions. The world had appreciated its successful implementation of vaccinating a large part of the country's population. Notably, it announced measures to buoy up the economy, particularly rolling out huge investments to significantly ramp up water infrastructure in the country and inviting private sector participation in implementing schemes like "Har Ghar Jal" at a fast pace.

The SOPs to MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) which are the backbone of our GDP and employment to millions ensured that India registered one of the best economic growths despite socio, economic and health challenges posed by the pandemic.

Amongst several laudable initiatives to bolster investment is the introduction of PLI (Production Linked Incentive) schemes in several sectors. Considering the large planned investment in developing the country's water infrastructure on the platform of self-dependence, it will be a welcome move to extend the scheme to participants of the water industry including component manufacturers.





help meet all planned objectives in sustainable water and sanitation management whilst sustaining economic growth and development.

Energy, Food, and Sustainable Agri practices are interrelated. The Government of India had launched the SATAT scheme to encourage conversion of renewable feedstocks like agro residues (which otherwise were burnt, adding to air pollution) into a renewable source of energy and fuels that can be used to improve the sustainability quotient of water and agri production by using renewable energy instead of fossil fuels. The scheme also aimed at increasing the share of renewable energy (currently 15%) to the overall energy production in India. Eventually, it would also contribute to meeting our net-zero goals by 2070 as committed at the recently concluded COP 26 climate change conference.

Till recent time, investment in such projects was subsidized by MNRE to actively promote the “waste to (green) energy” concept, manage agro/domestic waste more sustainably by providing the necessary budgetary support to produce green energy at prices even more competitive than the fossil fuels used for Agri production and water & wastewater treatment. Unfortunately, these subsidies were withdrawn recently. This has badly affected the committed and planned investment by entrepreneurs in this sector which also ensures “circularity” in agro production.

Since water and electricity are strongly correlated and interdependent, sustainable energy generation using renewable sources like agro-waste ensures sustainable and economical production of water, efficient solid, liquid waste management at lower costs through innovative integrated waste management processes that recover water, green energy, and nutrient-rich fertilizers.

Therefore, the Union Budget should restore the prior subsidy incentives to this nascent industry which has a big role to play in the country's overarching (to be) sustainable and sustainability goals.

*Associated with Ion Exchange since 1994, **Ajay Popat** has spearheaded several initiatives in developing and successfully commercializing proprietary, advanced, and sustainable technologies for purification and separation in water, wastewater treatment and more recently in areas of renewable energy in compliance with the legal, environmental, economic and social requirement of India.*





*100 papers on the subject of sustainable environmental management practices. He continues to play an active role to facilitate industry and its associated initiatives to achieve efficiency and excellence in water and energy management practices benefiting all stakeholders.*

*Mr. Popat loves to read, socialize, mentor people in the field of water and environment, plastics, surface coating, and chemicals, apart from general management, business strategy, and competition.*

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**Tariq Siddiqui** on January 24, 2022 at 11:47 AM

Water Industry despite being the harbinger of human and economic development has not been given its due credit and respect. With scarcity becoming intense, we need to think about capacity development in all aspect of water management from infrastructure, human capital, equipment & product, technology, spares and skill force. The PLI scheme must be considered and Water Industry should be given equal importance like others.

Reply

**Ajay Popat** on January 24, 2022 at 2:06 PM

Thanks for your complementary suggestions Mr Tariq  
I couldn't have agreed more 😊

Reply

**Nirav Saraiya** on January 31, 2022 at 10:59 AM

Water Conservation is not given due importance by many industries. Rainwater

