

A power-packed enterprise

At 28 Simarpreet Singh already has the distinction of having featured in the coveted Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia list of achievers for his innovative small-scale solar solutions company. In 2017 he was named among the "Top 40, Under 40 Entrepreneurs" by Solar Quarter magazine. He was the youngest in the list at 27. This energetic and driven young entrepreneur who founded the rooftop solar vertical of the Hartek group has a B.Tech in electrical engineering and a PG in Entrepreneurship, Financial Management and Business Strategy from SP Jain Institute of Management and Research, Mumbai. In just two years, his company has been instrumental in installing rooftop solar systems of almost 25MW capacity. And he is looking to add another 20MW this year. Though a second generation entrepreneur, Simarpreet is no stranger to the challenges and fears that a young entrepreneur has to face while entering a new field. Here he shares his entrepreneurial journey with J&C:

Inspiration

I had visited a village in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh in 2015, and was appalled to see the plight of people having no access to electricity. This strengthened my resolve to contribute to India's power sector value chain more meaningfully with focus on sustainable technologies. To do something to make a difference to the lives of over 300 million people living without electricity was my inspiration to work on a solar energy venture. Thus, Hartek Solar was 'born' two



years ago with a mission of fighting climate change.

USPs

What makes his venture different is the fact that he offers a plug-and-play solution, wherein each system is customised according to the type and size of a roof. Regular maintenance help and an app that allows remote mentoring of the amount of electricity produced and consumed are the other value additions that he offers.

Challenges

Though funding was not a major hurdle as I got initial seed funding from the parent company, the biggest challenge, however, was lack of public awareness about rooftop solar. Lack of policy initiatives like remunerative net-metering and incentives for financial investors in the residential segment, where we were looking to foray was also a major hurdle.

Achievements

Hartek Solar is among the first companies in India to launch 2-10 kWp customised rooftop solar kits equipped with a unique

FUTURE PLANS

We are firming our foothold by working on innovative small-scale solar solutions like solar trees and solar fencing to capitalise on emerging trends. We will also be focusing on energy storage solutions and charging stations infrastructure to build a truly sustainable ecosystem for future generations.

Digital substations equipped with SCADA and other automation devices, smart grid technologies, gas-insulated substations and biogas plants will be our other focus areas.

remote sensing technology in May last year. The company has installed 25-MW rooftop plants so far. Within just a year of launching its customised small-scale solar solutions, Hartek Solar has executed rooftop projects in more than 100 households in Chandigarh alone.

A word of advice

Follow your dreams with passion, believe in yourself, strive for excellence and do not hesitate to take calculated risks. Knowing that entrepreneurship can be quite a roller coaster ride, you should never give up. As entrepreneurs of the future, focus on a people-centric approach, coordinated teamwork and a strong value system.

— As told to Geetu Vaid