

Power Trip

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What makes **Derrick Philippe GOSSELIN**, Executive VP of Suez Tractebel play his cards carefully in the Indian energy sector?

What do you do in your first-ever visit to India? Taste *dal*, *sabzi* and *halwa*, explore Indian culture and see the Taj. Yes, Derrick Philippe Gosselin has all these in his agenda, but for this executive vice-president and chief strategy officer of Belgium's energy giant Suez Tractebel, his maiden visit to India means more than that.

"We are looking at India as a potential investment destination. In fact, our representatives came to this country in mid-1990s to invest in the power sector. But we didn't find Indian government's policies very clear.

However, India has changed over the years and if it provides an investment friendly environment, we would invest in the energy sector," says Derrick, representing the company with an electric generating capacity of approximately 55,000 MW.

While tasting *gazar ki halwa* for the first time, Derrick explained the bitter reality of investing huge amount of money in projects with long gestation period. "We have to be convinced of government's policies.

We must be clear about all the terms and conditions. If we invest in an infrastructure project a particular country, we are stuck in that country for at least 20-25 years.

We can't export energy and hence, we are bound to sell power on the whims of the government. So, we have to be extremely careful in our decision for such an investment," said Derrick during his visit to India for the World Economic Forum summit.

And it's not energy that's top on this 48-year-old's mind. Derrick is quite a multi-faceted personality. A doctorate in economics, he teaches business and international marketing at Ghent University. He is advisor to the foreign affairs ministry and a member of King Baudouin Foundation.

"It's not easy to simultaneously work and get involved in academics. At present, I just spend 10% of my time in teaching at the university. But I enjoy being with students from all over the world. They bring fresh ideas to me," he says.

Derrick holds MSc degrees in electrical engineering and control engineering from Ghent University and a master of industrial business administration from Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School. He holds as well advanced business degrees from INSEAD, London Business School and Oxford University.

Do these degrees have any impact on his career graph? "Yes, it helps. But many a time, your destiny takes you ahead. Most of my family members were lawyers serving the government. But I opted for engineering, management and economics," Derrick laughs.