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INDRANIL BOSE, R. SOMASUNDARAM

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MYTRAH ENERGY: GROWTH BEYOND WIND?

Ravi Kailas looked out the window of his London flat, reflecting on the rapid growth of Mytrah Energy Limited, the company he founded barely four years ago. The company had upended the norms of the wind energy sector in India by focusing on profits through excellence in core operations rather than through subsidies and state handouts. Most importantly, Mytrah had established itself as a dominant player despite being a newbie in a fifteen year old industry.

Now, Ravi was mulling the company's next steps, with three options on the table: grow its core wind energy business or build a totally new business in another part of the renewable energy sector or expand into the broader infrastructure domain.

Each option had attractive features, but would require a major capital raise, thereby committing significant company effort, time, money and management attention. Ravi was the consummate big picture guy who routinely empowered his team and let them handle the execution details. The inside joke was that he would have loved to tell his team, "Go figure out how to do all three simultaneously!" But even Ravi realized that, at present, Mytrah only had the bandwidth to pursue one of the opportunities.

RAVI'S STORY – THE BEGINNING

A curious and imaginative child, Ravi was a bright, but relatively disinterested, student who did not feel challenged by the school curriculum. Sensing Ravi's potential, the school authorities accelerated him two grades. This risky decision had the desired effect. Ravi now had to work hard to prove himself. Ravi's early intellectual development was also deeply

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influenced by his father and his father's five younger brothers, most of whom were successful entrepreneurs.

Ravi had always been intrigued by the idea of building a successful venture that would go beyond personal wealth creation to become an enduring institution that enriched lives. He recalled:

“My father and uncles instilled an abiding respect for education, and for the value of achieving something on one's own. I drew inspiration from the house of Tatas. I discovered their philosophy through Russi Lala's books, especially The Creation of Wealth – The Tata Story, which became my permanent offering for a blessing at the family altar on the occasion of Vinayaka Chaturthi.”

- Ravi Kailas, Chairman & CEO, Mytrah Energy

Ravi started his professional career by working for his father, but soon struck out on his own. Over a 25-year period, Ravi used this approach to create successful ventures in industries as diverse as software, real estate, franchising, digital media, telecom, infrastructure and financial services. In 1996, Ravi started Zip Global Network, an independent payphone service provider. In 2002, Ravi co-founded Xius Technologies, a telecommunications software company that launched the world's first inter-operator prepaid roaming service. Also in 2002, Ravi started Altius Investment Trust, a real estate financial options company.

By 2005, Ravi had used his 'tangential option' approach to set up six ventures. But he now thirsted for something more audacious. But, to summit a new mountain, he would have to descend from his current peak. So, between 2005 and 2006, Ravi sold his stake in his existing businesses and started devoting all his time to identifying the next big opportunity.