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# Rohit Jawa Next MD & CEO at HUL

To succeed Sanjiv Mehta, who will retire after a 10-year stint with company

Our Bureau

**Mumbai:** Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) has named Rohit Jawa, 56, as its new managing director and CEO effective June 27, succeeding Sanjiv Mehta, who will retire from the company after a 10-year stint in India.

Jawa will join the country's biggest consumer goods maker as CEO designate and whole-time director on April 1. He will al-

so take over as president, Unilever South Asia, joining the Unilever Leadership Executive (ULE) in April. ET had first reported December 15, 2022, that

HUL had shortlisted Jawa as one of the candidates to take over from Mehta.

"I am delighted to welcome Rohit back to India. He has a deep

understanding of the business landscape particularly in Asia and has led the transformation of Unilever businesses in China and in the Philippines. I am certain that with his astute business acumen, and growth mindset, Rohit will take HUL to the next level of performance," HUL chairman Nitin Paranjpe said in the announcement.

Jawa is currently chief of transformation for Unilever in London. Since January 2022, he has been part of Unilever's new strategy of creating five distinct businesses. An MBA in marketing from FMS, Delhi, Jawa joined HUL in 1988 as a management trainee.

**ROHIT JAWA**, 56, is chief of transformation at Unilever in London since Jan 2022

**Started career** with HUL as management trainee in 1988

**Has proven track record** of sustained biz results across India, South East Asia, and North Asia

**Will join HUL** as CEO designate and whole-time director on April 1

**Will also take over** as president, Unilever South Asia in April

**ET HAD FIRST REPORTED DECEMBER 15, 2022 THAT FRONTRUNNERS FOR THE CORNER OFFICE AT HUL INCLUDED ROHIT JAWA WHO WAS SEEN INTERNALLY AS A STRONG CONTENDER**



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# 'Strong Track Record'

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He has held leadership roles in sales, marketing, transformation and general management within Unilever. As chief of transformation at Unilever, Jawa works closely with Paranjpe, who is also the chief transformation officer, both overseeing the category-led structure strategy and how segments and roles can be integrated across geographies.

Before taking up his current role at the parent, Jawa was executive vice president for North Asia and chairman of Unilever China, the company's third-largest market after the US and India. He has worked in India, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia and China with a broad experience across home care, personal care and food sectors.

"Rohit has a strong track record working across both categories and geographies. Even more important, Rohit knows various parts of the HUL operation intimately and that is a big advantage," said Gopal Vittal, chief executive of Bharti Airtel and former HUL executive who worked with Jawa.

Mehta, 62, took over as the MD and CEO of HUL in October 2013, leading the business through a period of sustained growth. During his decade at the helm, the business crossed the Rs 50,000 crore turnover mark and the market capitalisation of the company increased more than four times from \$17 billion to \$75 billion (Rs 5.8 lakh crore), reinforcing HUL's position as one of India's most valuable businesses. That's more than the combined market cap of rivals Colgate, Dabur, Marico and Godrej Consumer Products. In fact, HUL's market cap is more than that of global FMCG companies such as Kraft Heinz, Reckitt Benckiser, General Mills and Col-

gate. "It is not just the numbers but the capabilities we have built to reinvent the company. Winning in Many Indias (WiMI) strategy recognises the heterogeneity of India and has given us a significant competitive edge and is hard to replicate," said Mehta, who has spent 31 years in nearly 25 Unilever markets. The "Re-imagine HUL agenda is a great example of a legacy company reinventing itself with data and technology. Our Jarvis model allows us to optimise different variables using Bayesian modelling. From a linear value chain, HUL is becoming a web of ecosystems."

Mehta oversaw the Indian business outpacing Brazil to become the second largest market behind the US in terms of sales for Anglo-Dutch consumer products giant Unilever. In addition, HUL's operating margins are at its highest ever at 23.8% now, jumping nearly 8 percentage points over the past nine years, even as sales doubled. Mehta's stint also had its fair share of challenges — from demonetisation and GST implementation to the pandemic-led disruption.

"Sanjiv with his foresight has led HUL to become a high-performing and future-fit business," Paranjpe said in his statement. "He has been an integral part of the Unilever Leadership Executive and has driven the South Asia growth agenda as the president of the market cluster. Through his passion, commitment, and endless energy, he leaves behind a business that is now poised to achieve even greater heights."



**Before taking up his current role at the parent, Jawa was executive VP for North Asia and chairman of Unilever China**