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## Unilever veteran Jawa is HUL CEO

1 Rohit Jawa, Unilever's chief of transformation, will take over as MD & CEO of HUL on June 27. Jawa, who started his career with HUL as a management trainee in 1988, will succeed Sanjiv Mehta, who retires after a decade at the helm. **P27**

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# Mehta retires, Unilever veteran Jawa HUL CEO

## Sanjiv Mehta To Leave After 10 Yrs At Helm, FMCG Giant Picks Rohit Jawa As Successor

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Mumbai:** Unilever veteran Rohit Jawa (56) will take over as MD & CEO of Hindustan Unilever (HUL) from Sanjiv Mehta on June 27 — a day after the FMCG giant's AGM. Mehta (62) will retire from the company after a decade-long tenure at the helm.

In a statement, HUL said Jawa, currently Unilever's chief of transformation, will join the company as CEO-designate and whole-time director from April 1. He will also take over as Unilever south Asia president and will join the Unilever Leadership Executive (ULE) from April 1.

Jawa, who has been instrumental in orchestrating an end-to-end transformation of Unilever and has a deep understanding of the Indian FMCG landscape, is said to be an empathetic boss who always leads from the front.

HUL's non-executive chairman Nitin Paranjpe said, "Rohit's varied experiences across operating companies and strategic transformation roles have honed his ability to integrate the strength of traditional markets with digital technologies and future-fit business models. This positions him well to take HUL and south Asia into its next exciting growth phase".

With HUL delivering a strong inning under Mehta — adding Rs 32,000 crore to the turnover to cross the Rs 50,000-crore mark in 10 years, growing it by 2.3x and increasing market capitalisation by more than four times to \$75 billion from \$17 billion — the benchmarks set for Jawa are high. Moreover, India is the second-largest market for Unilever in value (largest in volume) after the US, and there are expectations that it will overtake the US at some point if the growth levels remain steady.

Being a lifer at Unilever, Jawa is not new to the company's culture. Having started his career with HUL as a management trainee in 1988, Jawa has a proven track record of sustained business results across India, southeast Asia, and north Asia. Later, as EVP for North Asia & chairman for Unilever China, he led a significant transformation of Unilever China into a competitive, profitable, and consistent business, now Unilever's third-biggest market globally. As chairman of Unilever Philippines, he led the business to become one of the top 10 markets for Unilever.

A Bachelor of Science from St Stephen's College, Delhi, Jawa did his MBA from Faculty of Management Studies,

### MCAP UP 4X IN A DECADE, SALES CROSSED ₹50K CR

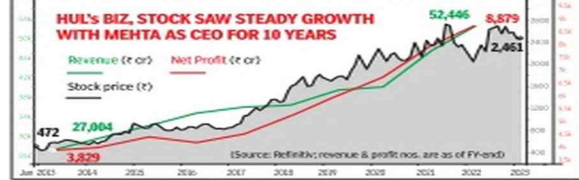
#### Mehta Went Beyond Growth, Pushed Agility & Diversity

- **Sanjiv Mehta** (62) took over as MD & CEO of HUL in **Oct 2013**, when discretionary spends had slowed
- During his decade at the helm, HUL crossed the **₹50,000cr** turnover mark and the co's market cap rose 4x to **\$75bn** from **\$17bn**, the co said
- His tenure saw several M&A deals such as GSK Consumer Healthcare into HUL, **one of the biggest mergers in FMCG** in India
- Mehta also championed diversity agenda. **HUL has the highest share of women managers (45%)** among India's top 100 cos by market cap



#### Transformation Expert At The Helm

- **Rohit Jawa** (56) is chief of transformation for Unilever based in UK since Jan 2022
- Jawa had joined Unilever in **1988** as a **management trainee** fresh out of **Faculty of Management Studies, Delhi**
- He has held leadership roles across **sales, marketing, transformation** and general management in countries like Vietnam and Singapore
- Jawa led transformation of Unilever business in **China and Philippines**



Delhi. He also did an Advance Management Program from Harvard Business school.

Industry veterans describe Jawa as a "complete man" who's a people's person. Managing paradoxes and polarities can be equally challenging for a leader. Analysts said the task is also cut out for Jawa to nurture and grow what Mehta planted. These include scaling the recent acquisitions in the D2C (direct-to-consumer) space and the agenda of 'reimagine HUL'. Jawa would also have to formulate strategies to combat new entrants like Reliance in the FMCG space.

**“** In HUL's long-standing tradition, we have smooth succession. HUL scaled new heights under Sanjiv's outstanding leadership and Rohit has a great track record and the right values to take this iconic company to the next level. He is a grounded, people-oriented leader and the perfect casting for this role

**—Harish Manwani |**  
FORMER CHAIRMAN, HUL

On the other hand, the core of Mehta's success mantra has been the proposition of long-term value-creation anchored by growth, high-performance anatomy and distinctive capabilities. He introduced several transformative business programmes such as 'Dial Up the Big Q' and 'Winning in Many Indias' to make the business more consumer-centric, agile, and

resilient. Mehta also led the business into future growth segments with several strategic mergers and acquisitions such as the amalgamation of GSK Consumer Healthcare into HUL, one of the biggest mergers in the history of FMCG in the country.

"Sanjiv with his foresight has led HUL to become a high-performing and future-fit business. 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. As president of Ficci last year, Sanjiv made a significant contribution towards the industry in India. Through his passion, commitment, and endless energy, he leaves behind a business that is now poised to achieve even greater heights," said Paranjpe.

In a note, while expressing his gratitude to a "dream team", Mehta said: "I would like to welcome my successor, Rohit Jawa. I am sure under him new records will be set and the business will go further and higher: I am excitedly looking forward to my next inning. I am reminded of Robert Frost's famous lines — 'Miles to go before I sleep.'" Although Mehta did not reveal his cards, he told TOI: "My best is yet to come". Reportedly, among others in the running for the top role was Priya Nair, global CMO (beauty & wellbeing). A young achiever, Nair continues to be a key candidate for country leadership roles within Unilever.