

Software firms need to develop defensible niche

In his first-ever interview after being elected the chairman of Nasscom, **Ganesh Natarajan** speaks about his priorities with **Amit Tripathi**.

What's on your agenda as the chairman of Nasscom?

✓ My agenda as chairman is to focus on three Cs - creativity, community and collaboration. These are difficult times for the Indian industry with the dollar dropping, the western economies softening and input costs rising in India. We need to work together as individuals and organisations to go forward in our tryst with a global destiny. I hope to play a catalyst role in that process. ✓

You have been heading innovation forum at Nasscom for some time now. As a chairman will it become easier for you to carry forward your plans? What's your strategy to foster innovation?

Creativity of individuals when supported and monetised becomes innovation. In the last four years, the innovation movement at Nasscom has gathered substantial momentum with product, process and business model innovation sprouting all over the landscape. I will certainly take that initiative forward this year as well.

Large-caps have been facing the economic downturn for a while now, which is why there is more focus on the mid- and small-caps. Is there a concrete roadmap to boost mid- and small-caps?

Every company needs to develop a defensible niche and smaller companies need to ensure that they are not following "me-too" strategies. Nasscom's focus



■ Ganesh Natarajan

q&a

through product, emerging companies and innovation forums has enabled small- and mid-caps to think out-of-the-box which is the reason why the growth in the industry is much more widespread today.

What are some of the efforts you would initiate towards boosting IP creation from Indian IT companies?

The product forum has ad-

ressed this over many years and we are encouraging firms to seek IP even within their normal projects so that we can build more productivity through templates and reusable components. We will intensify these efforts this year and ensure that more opportunities are opened up all over the world for these firms.

Do you think one year is too little a time to see ideas actually converting into tangible results?

Nasscom's success is due to a healthy mix of short- and long-

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term initiatives and the maturity of the organisation permits long-term ideas to be carried forward even when office bearers change. So a year is adequate to enable both continuity and change.

What are some of the paradigm shifts from Nasscom that we may witness in the coming one year?

We need to be able to deliver growth and innovation in what promises to be a tough year for the industry. Looking beyond the normal capability of India to harness the potential of "Bharat" and enabling gender equality, which is already the hallmark of this sector, to provide more women leaders for the industry are two clear focus areas for me and this would result in new thinking paradigms for the corporate sector in India.

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