

News monitored for: Pepsi - Corporate

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# 'Asian execs are in great demand'

Nandini Sen Gupta | TNN

**Puducherry:** She looks relaxed if jet-lagged as she catches up on precious rest-time at Le Pondy, the sprawling spa-cum-hotel complex on the outskirts of Puducherry. PepsiCo chairman and CEO Indra Nooyi may be a Chennai girl but she's not a frequent visitor to Puducherry. In the city to attend the wedding of her cousin Gayatri, daughter of Padmashri Aruna Sairam, well-known Carnatic musician and Indra's aunt, Nooyi admits she is "not even watching the news on television...so I have no idea what's going on out there". In a chat with TOI, Nooyi talks about the latest from the global corporate newsroom, particularly the appointment of Harish Manwani as Unilever COO.

**Harish Manwani has just been appointed COO at Unilever... is there a pattern here as more and more Asian brains, yourself included, make it to global corner rooms?**



**ONE-ON-ONE**  
Indra Nooyi | CHAIRMAN & CEO, PEPSICO

There are lots of good Indians in senior positions in companies across the world. Markets are shifting more and more towards Asia as the growth is happening in this part of the world. So these executives are in great demand. That's the reason why a lot more Asians are now becoming visible in global corporations and not merely in the FMCG sector. This trend is true for all of Asia, not just India. There are as many Chinese executives, for instance, who are also getting

key responsibilities in global companies.

**Going forward how will this trend pan out? Does this highlight the significance of not just the Indian or Asian market but also the capability of Indian/Asian managers?**

As Asian markets continue to grow, companies will need to make special efforts to understand Asia. Companies will need to cater to Asia, devise strategies for Asia. This is and will be very very important going forward because Asia will be the focus of growth. So companies will either look at someone who understands Asia and has substantial experience working here or an Asian. It is but natural that global companies will turn to Asian managers.

**Will the appointment of Asian managers in key roles leave some cultural imprint on global corporations?**

The shift in growth towards Asia will require com-

panies to do things differently. They will need to think differently because the tastes and habits are so different in Asia. Asian cultures are different, the cost structures are completely different and companies will have to change the way they do business now in order to build capability to focus on this fast growing Asian market.

**As PepsiCo CEO have you left your imprint on the company's culture? How has Pepsi changed thanks to its Indian CEO?**

Each CEO puts his/her own stamp on a company and that's not something that's peculiar to me or anybody else for that matter. Most big corporations have a core culture that is very strong and then each CEO puts their own stamp on it. As Asian markets grow, more and more Asians will join the company. So the corporate culture will evolve as the market mix evolves. It's part of the natural evolution of the company.