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Co Finds India A Critical Market, To Launch All Products

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Our Bureau
CHENNAI

GLOBAL beverages and snacks major PepsiCo's chairman and CEO Indra Nooyi, who is in on a visit to India, traced the organisation's guiding principle 'Performance with Purpose' and her own management style to India.

"India was always on my map. It was the centre of my world. And I think I can trace a line from my home in what was then Madras to the corporate philosophy we now espouse," Ms Nooyi said speaking to reporters at Pammal near Chennai. She was here on Saturday to inspect PepsiCo-Exnora waste management centre sponsored by the company.

India accounts for only a small chunk of PepsiCo's \$35 billion plus revenues now. But it is a critical market for the future, she said. Company officials expect the beverage business in the country to triple in the next three years. It would eventually launch all its products in the country. However, India appeared to dominate Pepsi at a different plane, Ms Nooyi's speech suggested.

"I am fond of saying that your work and your life do not exist in separate compartments. Together they form the person that is you. The way I do the job, the way I like to run the company, bears all the hallmarks of my upbringing. I have been inspired and advised by so many people along the way. No doubt, some of the things I do can be explained by my background without me even being aware of it," she said.

"But I can tell you the biggest thing I take with



me when I return to the US. It is my sense that a company is embedded in a society. It is a sense that there must be a noble calling in what you do. There is something specifically Indian about this," she said.

She drew parallels between PepsiCo's corporate philosophy 'performance with purpose' — and Bhagavad Gita, where the drama is around the conflict between two moral positions. Krishna's insistence on doing your duty and Arjuna's claim that action must generate good consequences, she said. And then, describing Pepsi's focus on environmental sustainability in India — covering waste management, water replenishment and partnering with farmers — Ms Nooyi said, "We can do our duty and we can generate good things. The drama can have a happy ending. So Krishna and Arjuna can be reconciled."

Ms Nooyi was brought up in Chennai, studied here up till her graduation (she has a BSc from Madras Christian College), and nurtures fond memories of it. "The city has great intelligence, great culture and great value," she said. When asked what the secret of her vibrancy was, Ms Nooyi replied "curd rice". In fact, she had recently bought an apartment in the city. She said since she was from Chennai, it was only logical that she bought a home here.

However, infrastructure had not kept pace with the city's growth, she said. "If there is anything that I would ask the government, it would be to improve infrastructure," she said. Asked if she has met the chief minister, M Karunanidhi during this visit, Ms Nooyi said not yet. But PepsiCo officials are trying to arrange a meeting.

Asked about increasing presence of Indians in the top management of global companies, the latest example being Vikram Pandit of Citigroup, Ms Nooyi said the all of them were products of Indian education system augmented by the US system. They had exposure to democracy and capitalism, could function efficiently and are confident. They are the products of two great democracies she said.

Speaking about the project in Pammal, Ms Nooyi said, the PepsiCo-Exnora Waste to Wealth partnership was already touching more than 100,000 people. "We expect to impact another 100,000 people in 2008, expanding to several larger cities," she said. It are also setting up a PepsiCo and Exnora environmental training institute in Pammal to codify the model and help in spreading it to other regions.