

# 'We will have 10 start-up investments in 2016'



**C P GURNANI & JAGDISH MITRA**

CEO & head of strategy and growth factories, Tech Mahindra, respectively

## What is the genesis of the annual innovation conclave?

**Gurnani:** The genesis of this conference actually dates back to the Satyam days. I will say I inherited this from the Satyam legacy. Satyam did a study and brought designers from all over the world to set up what is now called the Neuron Zone, which is divided into various compartments. It is the bedrock of our innovation and we made it a part of our innovation journey itself.

## Tech Mahindra is said to have set aside \$200 million to invest in innovative start-ups. Any investments planned for FY16?

**Gurnani:** The board is providing the right leadership by making sure innovation is high on the agenda. And, it (start-ups) is not only one fixed stream. There are a lot of these smaller initiatives that we are doing internally and externally. Within 2016 calendar year, we would have 10 investments (across artificial intelligence, robotics and Internet of Things).

Tech Mahindra, India's fifth-largest software services firm, is sharpening its focus on innovation and on developing next-generation technologies. Chief executive officer **C P GURNANI** and head of strategy and growth factories **JAGDISH MITRA** spoke to K Rajani Kanth on the sidelines of Tech Mahindra's annual innovation conclave in Hyderabad about the company's innovation strategy, start-up investments, and mergers and acquisition plans. Excerpts:



**C P Gurnani**



**Jagdish Mitra**

## How is Tech M promoting innovation culture internally?

**Mitra:** How do you inculcate a culture of innovation in a 105,000-people company? If you look at some of the things or experiments we started doing – whether it is automation, starting new businesses, the way we approach a new market or even the way the HR (human resources) functions – we have an innovation tag to it. We encourage our associates to come forward with an idea, try it and make it to the market. It doesn't matter if you fail. I have experimented a lot in this company, and a large amount of those have failed. The fact that I have been considered a leader in the com-

pany shows the culture is about trying, experimenting and being sincere.

The company has now become big enough with 105,000 people. One of the points we will have to realise is, no longer can it be a top-down driven organisation. So, how do you create a culture which allows youngsters to talk, how do you create a culture that cannot be developed here but in the ecosystem outside, which are start-ups? It is not about I have made it. It is all about 'did we make it?'. 'We' is important in this whole story and we always embrace that.

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