



# Best Managed Companies

A glittering ceremony to celebrate management excellence.



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**T**HE HALL WAS RESTLESS. Luminaries from India Inc could barely wait to lay their hands on copies of BT featuring the annual BT-AT Kearney survey of India's Best Managed Companies. This, in association with Microsoft India, was the award ceremony to coincide with the issue's release in Mumbai.

"It's a great time to be in business," said BT Editor Sanjoy Narayan, "and even more so to be in business journalism." Things were cheerful as never before, the perfect time to celebrate winners—to whom the evening was dedicated. India Today Editor-In-Chief Aroon Purie released the issue and explained the award's rationale: to give the industry something to measure overall excellence against. "For companies to succeed, the first thing they must have is passion—passion for their products, customer and for their employees," said Purie, "Also, differentiate yourself. Another *mantra* for success is innovation."

Echoing some of that, Ravi

1. **The winners:** Top honchos of the 13 best managed companies with their awards
2. **The cover story:** Aroon Purie, India Today Editor-In-Chief, releases the BT issue on India's Best Managed Companies



3. Vivek Gupta, A.T. Kearney India; R. Venkatesan, Microsoft India; Nandan Nilekani, Infosys; and Aroon Purie and Prabhu Chawla, India Today 4. R. Venkatesan; Shirish Kantekar, Wipro Infotech and Aroon Purie 5. R. Venkatesan; A.M. Naik, L&T; and Aroon Purie. 6. R. Venkatesan, Kalpana Morparia, ICICI; and Aroon Purie 7. Ramesh Adige, Ranbaxy; R. Venkatesan, Brian Tempest, Ranbaxy; Malvinder Singh, Ranbaxy; and Aroon Purie 8.. R. Venkatesan; S. Ramakrishnan, Tata Power; and Aroon Purie

Venkatesan, Chairman, Microsoft India, called this “a great time to be in India and perhaps even greater time to be an Indian”, and extolled the Indian tech companies that had done so much to “ignite our imagination” and the others that turned global excellence from a shibboleth to a profitable pursuit. He quoted C.K. Prahalad, however, as saying that, “Excellence is necessary but not sufficient... we must move beyond best practices to generating next practices.” Vivek Gupta, MD, AT Kearney India, took the hall through details of the survey. “These companies have been chosen,” he said, “because they’ve shown the



- 1. R. Venkatesan, Microsoft India; B.S. Shantharaju, Gujarat Gas; and Aroon Purie, India Today
- 2. Rahul Singh, E-Serve; and Aroon Purie
- 3. H.M. Barukha, Goodlass Nerolac Paints; and Aroon Purie
- 4. Nandan Nilekani, Infosys; and Malvinder Singh, Ranbaxy
- 5. In rapt attention: An assortment of corporate honchos proved the awards function anything but uninteresting.
- 6. Mike Khanna, HTA; Naina Lal Kidwai, HSBC; and A.M. Naik, L&T





**“For companies to succeed, the first thing they must have is passion”**

**ARON PURIE**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, INDIA TODAY



**“The real test for Infosys is how it deals with the change in environment”**

**NANDAN NILEKANI**  
PRESIDENT & CEO, INFOSYS



**“It’s a great time to be in India and even greater time to be an Indian”**

**RAVI VENKATESAN**  
CHAIRMAN, MICROSOFT INDIA



**“These companies have shown the path of how to create value”**

**VIVEK GUPTA**  
MD, A.T. KEARNEY INDIA

path of how to create value and also to create an enthusiasm among their employees and focus on results, and while doing all that also giving to the community.”

It was time for the big moment: the actual big award for the evening. It was not a surprise to anyone, really, as Infosys was called into the spotlight for felicitation. Nandan Nilekani, President & CEO, Infosys, collected the award, calling it a “special award for a number of reasons”. Rather than “opinion”, this selection was based on “vigorous analysis”. And Infosys had won with such stiff competition too—all the 13 other companies in the reckoning, to his mind, were worthy claimants to the prize. That



said, true to character, Nilekani struck a sober note about future challenges in his acceptance speech. “It’s too early for us to declare victory,” he said, sounding almost afraid that being handed laurels would induce his company to rest

on them, “The real test for Infosys is how it deals in the longevity, how it deals with the intergeneration of leadership, business cycles, and change in environment.” The company still had plenty of strategic choices to make, and that, more than accolades for past performance, would occupy him and his team as they strove for long-term significance.

After a quick vote of thanks, made by BT Publishing Director Pavan Varshnei in salutation to Microsoft, AT Kearney, Canon and Taj Hotels, it was time for the rest of the evening. With a hall-room packed with such an assortment of corporate honchos, this part was sure to prove anything but uninteresting. **bt**

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