research facility from a long time. That would be the story of Microsoft Research’s genesis in India. The theme in question is one of ‘fairness’ as told by Nick Myerson, considered one of the first Microsoft Research Labs to set up in Bangalore. In fact, the central quadrangle of the lab, which would be critical in coming years, was set up in 2005 when the research facility was set up in Bangalore. It was one of the venues where the collaboration across the globe, including with India, took place. Microsoft Research India, as a solution to help researchers in India, was announced in 2003 at the Microsoft Research Asia (MRA) lab in Singapore. In 2004, says he is quite satisfied with the progress, even without a blockbuster innovation. Production, emphasis on the Redmond hand, is not measured in terms of the number of innovations or the money spent. As evidence, he points out that someone from the Bangalore lab has made it to MIT’s TR35 (Technology Review 35, an annual list of the top 35 innovators across the world under 35) every year for the past three years. He adds: “We’ve been able to meet the bar of the other top 35 innovators across the world un-

Researchers at Microsoft’s lab are given a free-hand and not everything is aimed at developing products for research’s sake. “Delinking the R (research) from the D (development) was a netbook, a fingerprint reader and a low-cost mobile phone and is currently being used an NGO to track the delivery of medicines to 1,200 TB patients. Where Microsoft Research differs from the rest of the world is that in no way is a deterrent. Nor do researchers constantly think about how a product might find a place on the shelf. That’s where Anandan and his advanced development group come in. Anandan, also an old Microsoft hand of over 20 years, and his team are the bridge between product groups and the research. “We are the interface for both sides and we help ensure some of the research becomes products,” says Anandan, whose job profile includes “keeping his foot to the ground”. The idea is not to create a solution but to find a problem to solve in having some of the pipelines that could eventually be used, he says.

If all the research that goes on does not end up as a Microsoft product in some form or the other, if Anandan is not always looking over the researchers’ shoulders, how is the work at the lab evaluated? “Peer reviews,” explains Saketa Gaba, a researcher with the mobility, networks and systems group. “We have to prove the utility to broader research groups worldwide, and publishing papers is one way to do this.” By making our research public, we could end up with something much bigger than the sum of the parts,” says Gaba, who is working on a solution to ensure targeted delivery of下乡 advertisements that will not breach users’ privacy for which he is collaborat-

Microsoft Research India is now very much a part of the Microsoft Research arsenal, says Anandan. “The goal now,” he says, “is to come up with things that will create a legacy.” And he, for one, seems confident that is only a matter of time.