

firm, Jupiter Capital, besides acquiring a 51 per cent stake in a leading Malayalam TV channel, Asianet, for about Rs150 crore.

Within a span of four years, Jupiter has successfully focussed on investments in critical areas, like transportation infrastructure, and has brought leading international investors, like NOL Singapore, EADS France and News Corp (USA), into India.

Chandrasekhar has also made other significant investments in Kerala and Karnataka. The Hassan Aviation Cluster, comprising a world-class airport, ICD terminals and MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul), is underway in Karnataka. An aerospace training facility near the Devanahalli Airport is also under progress.

A super specialty hospital, in collaboration with a leading international hospital group, is in the pipeline. It is envisaged that around Rs3,000 crore will be invested in the coming three years in Karnataka. Chandrasekhar has also made investments of over Rs500 crore in the hospitality sector to

develop Kerala's tourism industry.

Despite investments in diverse sectors, Chandrasekhar is sure about one thing – he now wants to focus his energies on public policy. This is in contrast to other industrialists, such as liquor baron Vijay Mallya and steel magnate Naveen Jindal, who remained hands-on with their businesses despite being members of Parliament. Chandrasekhar's stints as the president of FICCI (he was the youngest president of FICCI) and his current tenure as a member of the Rajya Sabha have helped cement his decision.

On the rationale behind his decision, he says, "Although the Indian telecom sector should have become much more transparent in line with other mature telecom markets, it has, in fact, become less transparent. While, the telecom success story in India is a great showcase of private capital-led infrastructure, the regulatory side remains murky, and every five to seven years there is a series of questionable decisions: be it the Sukhram case in 1995-96, the WLL case in 2001 or the

current controversy surrounding telecom licences. There is also a need for an expert in the government, a role that I intend to play."

Chandrasekhar seems to be enjoying this role. A typical day for him begins at 6 am with a workout (he has got back into shape and now weighs 96 kg). If the Parliament is in session, he reaches Delhi a week before, and goes home (Bangalore) on the weekends.

Chandrasekhar may be caught up with policy issues, but one never knows when he may spring a surprise. He has a knack of coming up with innovative and enterprising moves. In 1997-98, Chandrasekhar visited 38 investors in 12 countries and came up with India's first ADR (American Depository Receipt) offering by a telecom company. Credit also goes to him for tirelessly working to help set up an independent regulator (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India) for the Indian telecom industry. His career as a corporate honcho is far from over. One needs to watch out for his next move.

♦ YASHVENDRA SINGH

## FRONTRUNNERS



### IMAGE BUILDING

**Sheran Mehra** (34) equates her progression from advertising and marketing FMCGs to financial services, to her move from simple sprinting to running a marathon. "It runs on the same parallel. A sprint may last for a few minutes; but for a marathon, you are in it for the long run," says Mehra. Fresh out of the Institute of Management Education, Ghaziabad, Mehra's first break came in 1998 with SSC&B Lintas, which was followed by a stint at Ogilvy, where she successfully re-launched brands like Huggies and Kotex. In 2005, Mehra decided to venture into marketing financial services. She joined HSBC, where she held the position of AVP, brand and marketing communication, and was also part of the team that won the best brand activation award at the HSBC annual Asia Pacific Regional Awards. In 2006, Mehra joined Barclays as a marketing

manager; she was promoted to the head of marketing in 2007. Mehra joined Dhanalakshmi Bank this year as head, marketing and corporate communications. "I am responsible for getting the brand noticed, creating an image and building a brand promise," says Mehra.

### TECH SAVVY

The 'Internet guy' is how **Ratnakar Bharti** (36), head, sales, Ideacts Innovations, describes himself. With 11 years of experience in advertising sales within the Internet advertising industry, Bharti has worked with the likes of *Business Standard* and *Indiabulls.com*. He joined Intercept Technologies, an online marketing solutions company, in 2001, from where he progressed to Rediff.com. Bharti was promoted to director, media sales (regional head), in 2006, when he handled generating advertising revenue in Mumbai.



### BUSY BEE

**Nipun Kaushal** (34) has a lot on his hands as head, marketing, ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company Ltd. He generates marketing strategies, brand building and communication, customer acquisition and retention. With a mechanical engineering degree from Karnataka University, he completed his masters in business management from International Management Institute (IMI), Delhi. In 2005, he joined Citi Financial India, where he held the post of AVP, and in 2007 joined Future Capital Financial Services where he spearheaded the launch of the loyalty card programme, Future Card, and the launch of the financial arm of the Future Group, Future Money.