

Interview

'We won't Succeed in Everything We Do'

**An interview with Mr. Sundar Pichai
CEO, Google Inc. (U.S.A.)**

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Physically, Sundar Pichai does not seem to have changed at all since August 2015, when he was named CEO of Google Inc. He is still just as slim and retains a boyish demeanour that belies his age (44). But rapid change and constant innovation are the mantras of the technology giant that he heads.

Recently he was again in India. Excerpts from an interview:

Q. When you come to India, what excites or frustrates you the most?

A. Each time, I see the progress in India in many small ways. The first time I took a plane was when I left for the US. Yesterday, I had a chance to meet some of the CEOs of the largest Indian airlines...there are close to 100 million people who fly in India now. The trends are all in the right direction. I met with some old friends in Bengaluru...they are starting and running schools. The ideas I heard are no different from what some of the best schools in the US are thinking about.

Q. Can you give us a heads up on what you might be writing?

A. Well, we're hiring at Google. You can join and you'd get to know them as well.

But 2016 was a big year for us. We made a big bet on machine learning and AI (artificial intelligence) and how we can use it to make our services better.

Q. Google tried its hand at social networks with Wave, Buzz, Orkut, Google+. These couldn't scale or sustain. What has Google learnt from that?

A. We want to always work on ambitious things and by definition, we won't succeed in everything we do. Its impossible to be very ambitious and not fail. When we write our company objectives, if we meet 70% of our objectives, we consider that as a success. If we meet 100% of our objectives, we always think we didn't write them ambitiously enough.

Q. Besides AI, Google had earlier talked of working on translation. How close are you to making something where I speak in English and you listen to it in Tamil?

A. It's progressing remarkably fast. But I think it's not going to be just about translation like you just described. You have to improve computing experience—hardware, software, everything so all of that work in real time.

Intelligent computing must be available for you when you need it so you can interact with it in more natural ways. I'd be disappointed if in five years we are not able to do what you just described.

Q. What was your first meeting with co-founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin like?

A. I do recall a meeting in which we were speaking. And from under the table, out came Larry. I didn't know Larry was there. Our projector system was not working... Larry was down there trying to fix it.

Q. How often do you meet

them?

A. I see them every week. My exchanges with them are always a big part of how I think about what to do. I value that a lot.

Q. Why in India tailoring of a product limited to launching a less data-hungry version of a regular product?

A. As we invest more in India and add more people, you will see products that are more substantial.

