IT industry to team up for social initiatives

FC Bureau
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THE Indian IT industry has decided to pool its combined expertise for contributing to various social initiatives, including volunteering for social cause, said information technology minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Thursday. The minister stressed that the IT sector needs to work towards coordinated corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts on a common platform for the interest of backward districts.

The IT minister, who chaired a two-hour meeting with IT stalwarts, said the companies in technology and electronics domain have decided to come together for "social action."

Representatives of many tech companies, including Google and Samsung, as well as apex industry bodies like Nasscom and the Indian Cellular Association (ICA), attended the meeting. "The idea of this meeting emanated from the wish of the prime minister," Prasad told reporters. Lauding strong performance of the Indian IT industry, the minister noted that technology companies had posted $168 billion in revenue and $127 billion in exports.

Time has now come for the IT industry to work, with co-ordination and compassion, for the welfare of the society, he said. "There is a larger need to bring CSR into a common pool for sharing best practices. The entire industry, IT and electronics, is committed to this and many ideas were discussed at the meeting," he said.

Some of the ideas that were thrown up at the brainstorming session include companies allowing sabbatical to employees to take up corporate social volunteering, undertaking social initiatives in backward and laggard districts and sharing of industry best practices on a common platform.

"On October 24, the PM will hold a town hall event in Delhi, where there will be thousands of IT professionals. He will also speak to CEOs and IT professionals in over a dozen locations to enthuse and inspire them to make India digital story, one of social inclusion," he said.

The meeting was attended by Debjani Ghosh (Nasscom president), Rajan Anandan (Google vice-president – South East Asia and India), TV Mohandas Pai (IT industry veteran), BVR Mohan Reddy (Cyient executive chairman), and Pankaj Mohindroo (Indian Cellular Association, national president), among others.