

# Private Equity

The *BW DealTracker* debuted in January as a monthly feature to track the latest in the M&A and private equity (PE) markets. Since then, PE activity and its subset, venture capital, has taken centre stage in India's changing corporate environment. As the PE market gains further ground in India, we will update you on the latest in collaboration with Thomson Financial fortnightly.

START-UPS

## A growing tribe

**B**ANGALORE, venture capital, technology startups—the three mix rather well. Add a fourth ingredient, Stanford University, and that's the heady cocktail we stumbled onto two weeks ago when *BW* got an exclusive peek into a VC networking soiree in the heart of India's pub capital. Host SVB Global, which was celebrating the completion of its second year here, had thrown together an even number of VCs and entrepreneurs to, well, talk deals. That's how we met 3D Solid Compression (3D SoC), the first startup to be incubated by Stanford University in India.

3D SoC was formally launched in July. It is a joint project between Stanford and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore. In many ways, 3D SoC epitomises the classical Silicon Valley



MEETING OF MINDS: Krishnan Ramaswami and K.K. Venkatraman of new startup 3D SoC

startup—a model pioneered by Stanford nearly two decades ago. Fritz Prinz, professor of mechanical engineering and material sciences at Stanford, and Krishnan Ramaswami, then a PhD student in the same department, started research on computer-generated 3D models a few years ago. Ramaswami came back to IISc to continue the work

with B. Gurusoorthy, chairman of the Centre for Product Design & Manufacturing. Sometime in 2005, they decided to commercialise the project through 3D SoC. This July, K.K. Venkatraman, an IISc alumnus, joined them as CEO.

We met Venkatraman at the SVB soiree. He was looking for investors, naturally. More on 3D SoC at [www.businessworld.in](http://www.businessworld.in).

The most exciting part in all this is Stanford's direct presence in India and validates at best the upsurge in technology entrepreneurship in India.

We also met other interesting people that evening—K. Rangarajan, who moved base from the US to start Neureol Technologies, and Gopala Krishnan, CEO of mobile content startup Mobile2Win. Also, VCs from Helion Ventures, Baring Private Equity and Intel Capital turned up in full strength. A little secret: a senior executive from Microsoft Research Lab India was also there to see if anybody would fund his yet-to-be formed startup. This tribe is certainly growing. Watch this space. ■

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