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Ncore to focus on hardware design

A PART from marketing Yantra, its light-weight multimedia laptop PC, the Bangalore-based Ncore Technology (Pvt) Ltd. will also focus on marketing its hardware design skills internationally. In particular, the company will focus on the design of Digital Signal Processor (DSP) based systems and Application Specific Integrated Circuits (ASICs).

According to Mr. Anal K Jain, Executive Director, Ncore, the company's DSP-based technology for modems has attracted the attention of several international companies. "Last week we signed an agreement with an Israeli company. We have also licensed out the technology to a Korean company," he told *Business Line*.

Mr. Jain said the company's 45-member team of professionals was also doing some ASIC design work for a few international companies. Mr. Jain, who was until recently heading the Indian operations of US-based Sun Microsystems Inc., said he would look after the marketing operations of Ncore. He said his initial focus would be on the US and Japanese markets.

He is also optimistic on the potential of Yantra which, according to him, is the lightest multimedia laptop PC in the market. Ncore would not compete directly with leading multinational players like Toshiba and Compaq, but instead carve out for itself a niche by offering wide customisation on its laptop. Mr. Jain said he was confident that within a few years, the margins on customised laptops would be too narrow to interest the larger players. Ncore was originally promoted by Mr. Vinay Deshpande, who earlier founded PSI Data Systems. PSI Data has since then been sold out to the France-based Bull Systems.

"Ncore is essentially the former R&D division of PSI. Vinay and his team are very good technically. My job will be to make sure what they makes business sense." Mr. Jain said.

Ncore has attracted equity participation from TDICI and a US-based venture capital firm. Apart from Mr. Jain and Mr. Deshpande, two other employees in the company also hold equity in the company.