



Sep 14, 2012 02:14 PM IST | Source: PTI

## VI John group forays into liquor segment in India

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The two partners have formed a 50:50 joint venture -- Arian Breweries and Distilleries -- and has set a target to garner around 2 per cent of the estimated 16 million hectolitres per annum beer market in India.

"Our initial focus is on North India. We are aiming at 10 per cent market share in the region in the initial stage. It would translate into two per cent share at national level," Arian Breweries and Distilleries CEO Francisco Ayuga told reporters here.

The JV has launched Dare Devil 10,000 premium strong beer and Mahou Cinco Estrallas in the Indian market. It has a brewery at Bhiwadi in Rajasthan with a capacity to produce 2.5 lakh hectolitres of beer.

In the initial stage the company will focus on northern states, including Rajasthan, Haryana and Uttrakhand.

The JV has started manufacturing Dare Devil brand at its Bhiwadi plant while it will start production of Mahou before the end of current fiscal year, Arian Breweries and Distilleries Director Harpreet Sachdeva said.

When asked if the group is moving away from FMCG sector, VI John Group CEO Vimal Pande said: "We are not moving away from FMCG business. As part of expansion of the Group, we have entered liquor business".

VI John Group, which markets various personal care brands, including VI John shaving cream, reported a turnover of Rs 250 crore last year.

Spanish firm Mahou San Miguel, is one of the largest brewers in Europe which markets its beer brands in around 40 countries.

"With VI John's understanding of consumers in India and Mahou San Miguel's expertise in beer segment, we are confident that we will be successful in our venture," Mahou San Miguel Managing Director Alberto Rodriguez-Toquero said.

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