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## Vi-John forays into Indian liquor business

Sep 14, 2012 - Abhishek Chakraborty | Delhi

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Vi-John group, one of the largest shaving cream manufacturer in the world, entered into a joint venture agreement with Spain's beer major — Mahou-San Miguel — and announced the launch of two new beer brands Dare Devil 10000 and Mahou Cinco Estrallas in the Indian market.

Bhupinder Singh Kochar, chairman, Vi-John group, said, "We are proud to announce Vi-John's foray into the liquor business and we see a great potential in this sector. Mahou San Miguel group is the market leader in Spain, and also the No. 1 exporter, producing more than 75 per cent of the national beer marketed outside Spain. We are confident that this association will be a great success."

For now, Dare Devil and Mahou will be made available across five northeastern states — Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and Bihar. And slowly the company will try to make the beer available in other northern states, like Delhi etc.

Dare Devil is priced between Rs 90-Rs 100 for 650 ml bottle and Rs 40-Rs 50 for 330 ml bottle. Mahou is slightly high-priced, which will be Rs 130-Rs 150 for 330 ml bottle.

When asked why is Vi-John, which has till now only opened to FMCG goods, is venturing into beer, Vimal Pande, the CEO who joined the company last year and has previously worked with SC Johnson, the company that markets AllOut mosquito repellent, PepsiCo India and Emami, said, "We want to grow and that is the reason we are venturing into the beer business. We have decided to partner with the Mahou San Miguel group after holding a lot of discussions among ourselves."

Alberto Rodriguez-Toquero, the managing director of Mahou San Miguel, said they see an immense opportunity in the Indian market, as the economy is attractive and most of the population is young. "We see immense opportunity in the Indian beer market, which is comparatively new, and are pleased to be associated with the Vi-John group."

When asked why they have chosen Vi-John only to partner up with, Mr Alberto said that the bonding with Vi-John will be good as both the companies are family-run enterprises. "We are a family-run business and Vi-John is also family-run enterprise. So the bonding will be good."

He also said that since Vi-John is a very old company, it knows the market very well and its experience will surely help the Macou San Miguel group in its venture in India. "Vi-John group has a vast experience of the Indian market. And it will surely help us," said Mr Alberto.

Mahou San Miguel was founded in 1890 in Madrid, Spain, and today is one of the largest independent brewers in Europe. It is also the market leader in one of

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