

# Aditya Birla Retail plans to set up 8 hypermarkets

**Our Bureau**

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Aditya Birla Retail Ltd plans to set up eight hypermarkets in 2009-10, including one each in Hyderabad and in Visakhapatnam, in addition to 100 additional More supermarkets, according to its CEO, Mr Thomas Varghese.

At a press meet here on Friday on the occasion of the launch of private label products in More supermarkets, he said each of the proposed hypermarket would entail an expenditure of Rs 10-12 crore.

"At present, we have hypermarkets only in Baroda and Mysore. We have 660 More supermarkets in the country,

150 of them in Andhra Pradesh and 30 in Vizag. We have a fairly large network of supermarkets for a city of Vizag's size," he said.

## **55 STORES CLOSED**

The company had closed 55 More stores as they were either in unsuitable locations or economically unviable. However, he said, economic recession had nothing to with it.

Mr Varghese said the company is introducing private label products in Vizag stores on a trial basis. "Trends indicate that private label products are gaining acceptance on a large scale. We want a share of 30-40 per cent for such products in our total sales in the next five

years. At present, we are selling only 3 per cent," he explained.

The CEO said stringent quality norms would be adhered to in sourcing such products, and it would benefit retailers and customers. As many as 500 such products would be available in the stores, he added.

He said the sales turnover of Aditya Birla Retail amounted to Rs 1,150 crore during the current financial year against Rs 500 crore in the previous year.

"More than 2 lakh customers visit our stores every day in the county and we have 10 lakh members in our More clubs. We have a strong presence in the South, especially in Andhra Pradesh, and we want to expand further," he said.