

AV Birla Retail may rope in investor

Namrata Singh | TNN

Mumbai: Kumar Mangalam Birla's retail venture, Aditya Birla Retail, is reportedly open to roping in a financial investor to fund its expansion plans.

Even though the company declined comment, it is learnt from sources that the firm is not averse to diluting its equity by about 10% to a sleeping partner. However, it would rather wait for more clarity on the regulatory front with respect to such investments.

Given the rate at which Aditya Birla Retail is expanding, funding will be an important factor especially with the rising rentals in the realty market, industry sources said.

Aditya Birla Retail operates supermarkets under the 'more' brand and hypermarkets under the 'more.megastore' brand across the country. It is opening its sixth megastore in Thane (the first in Mumbai/Thane) on Thursday. With 632 supermarkets and five hypermarkets under its wings, Aditya Bir-



STOCKING UP

la Retail is gradually moving ahead with its expansion plans, even as it continues to identify and shut down unviable stores.

"We may close down 40-50 stores which we feel are not viable. However, this year, we would also be adding 48 more stores as part of our expansion drive," Thomas Varghese, CEO, Aditya Birla Retail told TOI.

According to Varghese, this year is critical for the company's stores from the point of view of profitability. In case a store is found to be unviable a year down the line, it would either be relocated or shut down.