

Reliance kicks off \$5.6 bn retail foray in Hyderabad

Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), India's largest private sector company, has launched its \$5.6 billion foray into the retail trade business by opening 11 pilot stores for selling fresh fruits and vegetables, household staples, top-up grocery and dairy products here.

The new enterprise launched Thursday - being powered by group company Reliance Retail Ltd - will eventually have its footprint across the country with future plans for discount stores, malls, supermarkets, hypermarkets, speciality stores and conveniences.

'Our target is to open Reliance Fresh stores in 70 cities over the next 18-24 months. The focus is on freshness and hygiene and a world class supply chain has been put into place to ensure that high quality products are offered at very competitive rates,' said Gunender Kapur, president and CEO, foods, Reliance Retail.

'We are planning to have a pan-India presence. However, the next city after [Hyderabad](#) in which we are going to set up Reliance Fresh is yet to be decided,' Raghu Pillai, CEO of operations, Reliance Retail, told IANS.

'We will move ahead on this issue only after receiving feedback from our pilot projects launched today in Hyderabad,' he added.

The 11 pilot Reliance Fresh stores in this Andhra Pradesh capital will remain open from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. seven days a week.

Indicating adoption of an aggressive marketing strategy in the highly competitive market, Reliance Thursday also unveiled the RelianceOne scheme, a membership and loyalty programme for frequent shoppers at Reliance Fresh stores.

India's retail industry that opened up for single-brand foreign players recently has been estimated at \$202 billion. American retail giant Wal-Mart, France's Carrefour group and Britain's Tesco are some of major players waiting to enter India.

Reliance has already made it clear that Reliance Fresh is just the beginning and it would soon be moving into the non-food sector with a massive investment of Rs.250 billion over the next four years.

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