

Grasim forays into FMCG through Birla Cellulose

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The Aditya Birla Group has entered the FMCG business with the launch of personal and home care brands through Birla Cellulose, its umbrella brand of viscose fibre. Grasim, the group's flagship company, also plans to introduce baby-care products later this year.

Birla Cellulose has rolled out five variants of Kara, a facial wet wipes brand and plans to unveil eight more variants. The homecare label Prim comprises kitchen and glass cleaning products.

The baby-care brand Purreta, offers freshness wipes comprising viscose fibre, will be launched later this year.

Vijay Kaul, chief marketing officer, Birla Cellulose, said, "The company has branded the commodity fibre and now wants to take it forward through various applications including fashion." The Indian market for products with viscose fibre is estimated to be around Rs 90 crore while



From left: Birla Cellulose CMO Vijay Kaul with models and designer Anita Dongre after the announcement of the tie-up between Birla Cellulose-Grasim and Anita Dongre in Mumbai

the global market is worth \$5 billion (Rs 20,000 crore)."

Prim and Kara are currently retailed at Aditya Birla's retail outlets 'More' and 'Trinethra' and other independent retail stores. The company has introduced the products in Gujarat, Punjab, Rajasthan and

will shortly enter other states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and West Bengal. Kaul mentioned that both the labels will be sold through retail as well as institutional channels. Another textile firm Ginni Filaments has already made its FMCG debut by introducing

personal hygiene and baby-care products made from non-woven spunlace fibre.

Grasim, the global viscose leader with 23 per cent market share, plans to invest Rs 1,600 crore for greenfield projects with an aim to grab 30 per cent market share by 2011.

It is setting up the fourth manufacturing unit in Egypt with a capacity of 240 tonnes per day (TPD) at an investment of Rs 800 crore. It has planned another greenfield 88,000-tonne plant at Vilayat (Gujarat) with an estimated capital cost of Rs 840 crore. The plant is expected to be commissioned within 2-3 years.

Birla Cellulose is putting thrust on association with national and international designers to widen the applications of the fibre. Kaul said, "We do intend to associate with international designers interested to work in India and our participation at the Milan and the upcoming Wills Fashion Week is an attempt to understand the requirements of the fashion industry."

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