

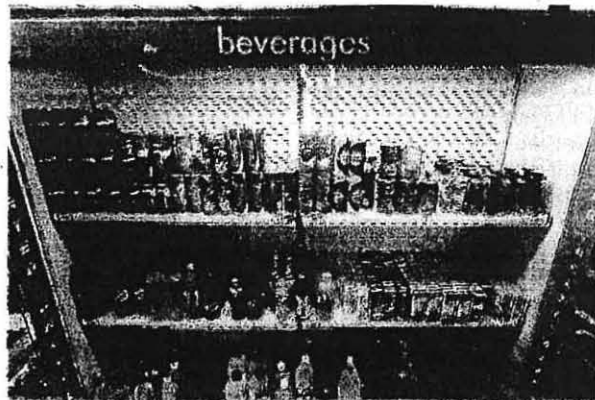
# Coca-Cola India set to extend Limca to the hydrating sports drink category

Suneera Tandon  
suneera.t@htlive.com  
NEW DELHI

Coca-Cola India is extending brand Limca into the hydrating sports drinks category, in a first for the lemon-flavoured beverage, according to people familiar with the company's plans.

This will be the first brand extension for Limca, which was acquired from Ramesh Chauhan's Parle Bisleri Ltd. in the early 1990s along with other valuable brands such as Thums Up, Maaza, and Gold Spot. The deal also marked Coca-Cola's re-entry into the country in 1993 after an absence of 16 years.

Brands such as Thums Up and Maaza have continued to scale, but Limca's reach is relatively limited as it is more popular in the north. In terms of market share at an all India level, Limca stands at number four within Coca-Cola India's sparkling portfolio as well as within the sparkling category as a whole, according to Niel-



Limca reported sales of ₹2,061 crore in FY21, industry data show. But, other brands of the company dominate the market. MINT

sen data. Brand Limca, which turned 50 in 2021, relies heavily on in-home consumption.

"Coke will launch a sports drink under Limca, which is the new hydration brand," a person familiar with the company's plan said on the condition of anonymity. "The focus is on Limca. It will be Limca with enhanced isotonic properties, more like a sports drink," said another person, also asking not to be named.

Coca-Cola also sells the Aquarius brand in India that is

pegged as a mass-market hydration brand available in several flavours. It competes with Tata Consumer Products Ltd's Tata Gluco+.

"Limca has strong credentials and rather than building through a new brand Aquarius, a brand such as Limca can get a new life with the extension," said the first person quoted above. The brand could be positioned in the mass market category.

A company spokesperson said: "We are unable to pro-

vide any information at the present moment."

Limca reported sales of ₹2,061 crore in FY21, according to industry data. However, other brands of the company dominate the country's beverages market.

In 2021 Thums Up became a \$1 billion brand, the first to reach the milestone from its portfolio of beverages in India. Maaza reported 2021 revenue of ₹2,826 crore.

The company sells a range of beverages in India including Coca-Cola, Diet Coke, Thums Up, Fanta, Limca, Sprite, Sprite Zero, Maaza, Vio flavoured milk, Minute Maid, and Aquarius Kinley. The beverage maker reaches well over 3 million outlets in India.

India ranked among its key consuming nations in the Asia-Pacific, the company said during its earnings for the quarter ended 31 March.

Coca-Cola is expanding its consumer base by adding affordable product offerings, as well as by reaching more outlets in India, the company said then.