

APEEJAY SURRENDRA GROUP LINES UP AMBITIOUS PLANS FOR ITS TEA BRAND

Watch out Tetley, here comes Typhoo from UK

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The Apeejay Surrendra Group, one of the largest tea producers in India, is sprucing up Typhoo, its 100-year-old UK tea brand which it acquired a few years back, to storm the premium tea brand segment in India.

It is all set to unfold an elaborate brand connect by rolling out a host of premium-end tea offerings over the next few months.

The group, which owns Park Hotels, Oxford book stores and Apeejay Shipping among other businesses, has plans to take Typhoo outside the UK to over 35 countries.

Typhoo has been selected as one of the buyers of tea from India for Harrods, said to be most premium shop in the world for tea.



Karan Paul, chairman, Apeejay Surrendra Group, told *DNA Money*, "In India, the idea is to address a niche segment and we will focus on the major metros principally. We've launched nine variants and plan to launch 10-15 new variants of tea bags in various flavours and in-

fusions over the next few months."

Typhoo is set to compete with other major value added tea brands like Twinings, Tetley and Lever in India.

"We're doing new product innovations over the next six months and markets have not

The British connection

Typhoo is set to take on major value added tea brands like Twinings, Tetley and Lever in India

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seen so much in terms of variants. Polypouch is a difficult market but there is enough scope in tea bags...the segment is not an overcrowded one," Paul said.

Typhoo fruit infusions are

the first-of-its-kind of beverage in India, he said. "At present infusions are imported. We want to be seen as an innovative and interesting company with lots of different products. These could be in flavours of green, teas that are liquorish, variants of tea estates," he said.

The Indian premium tea bag segment is not a high volume but a high-value market. All major players like Twinings, Tata Tea and Hindustan Unilever have been launching tea variants riding on the increasing trend of changing consumer patterns. The premium segment is estimated to be about 5% of the total packet tea market, which is at around Rs 8,000 crore.

Paul said that the marketing will largely be low key and the group will come out with a reasonable marketing plan which

is not so expensive and with a full in-house team.

On the new Harrods deal, Paul said, "We've been sourcing and packing teas for them in UK for a while and have just won the business in India and this can work as a global supply chain."

Apeejay Typhoo Tea is also firming up its global plans.

"We have a team in Mombasa, India and UK, and in six months to a year we should be doing our business rapidly. Outside UK we want to grow our markets for the Typhoo brand in North America, Canada, Africa, CIS and central southern Europe. Earlier, the international business was a small component of Typhoo. Our strategy will be to push the markets. India is different. Here the idea is to build the Typhoo brand as it a long-term play," he said.