

Global wellness brand opens office in Dhaka

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

VLCC Health Care Ltd, a leading wellness brand in Asia, yesterday launched operation in Bangladesh with a promise to introduce its flagship health care and beauty products and services to serve the largely untapped market.

"We know there is a huge gap between supply and demand in Bangladesh for wellness products and services, and we have the solutions," said Sandeep Ahuja, managing director of VLCC, at a press conference at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.

Ahuja, who inaugurated the centre in Gulshan earlier in the morning, said VLCC would set up two more outlets in Bangladesh in the next 12 months.

Over the last few years, Bangladesh has turned out as a destination for global wellness industry, thanks to a vast population, rising disposable incomes, increasingly demanding and stressful work-place conditions and sedentary lifestyles.

"So, we are looking at Bangladeshi market aggressively," Ahuja said.

Delhi-based VLCC is a pioneer in the global wellness arena. The brand has a network spread of over 237 locations across 102 cities in eight countries including India, the UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

The firm employs 7,000 employees including doctors, nutritionists, dietitians, psychologists, counselors, physiotherapists, nurses and therapists, and served over one crore customers since its inception in 1989.

In Dhaka, it has already employed 40 people, all of them are Bangladeshi, at its centre in Gulshan and spent \$5 lakh in the last six months, said Rajat Mathur, vice president of VLCC international business.

The spending is part of the \$15 million VLCC has set aside to make its footprint in three Asian markets -- Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Of the money, about 40 percent will come to Bangladesh, said Ahuja.

More people will be employed as



Sandeep Ahuja

investment pours into Bangladesh to expand its business, said Mathur, also the head of the Bangladesh centre.

The wellness company operates in three areas -- slimming, skin and hair care; education and training; and manufacturing and personal care products.

The wellness treatments available at VLCC centres include de-stressing, detoxification, cleansing, deep relaxation, anti-aging, weight and inch loss, guidance in the area of nutrition and exercise.

Providing high-end services from ayurveda to a host of international massages, from anti-ageing facials to dermatological solutions, from hair solutions to pedicures or manicures, VLCC offers an array of therapies that address the health and beauty needs of every individual.

Ahuja said the VLCC personal care business offers over 100 herbal and ayurvedic skin-care, hair-care and body-care products. Of those, 60 percent will be available in Bangladesh at its centre as well as other stores in the market.

He said VLCC also plans to set up an institute for beauty and nutrition to train new talent, in view of the rapidly growing wellness industry and the corresponding demand for trained professionals.