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PepsiCo India opens 'Smart Choice' cafés

SHAHANA JOSHI
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Food and beverages major PepsiCo India is in the process of launching its own café outlets in New Delhi and four other cities by the end of the year.

Christened 'Smart Choice', PepsiCo launched the first such cafe in Chennai recently to promote its key category — the health segment — which was marketed under the name 'Snack Smart'. The café will offer a range of choices for consumers — recipes like Quaker muffins, Quaker Idly (made from Quaker oats, a PepsiCo product), Tropicana 100 per cent smoothies, Nimbooz (the company's lemon-flavoured beverage), coconut mint mocktails — all of which will also be served at the café as a health alternative. A gymnasium is also on the cards.

PepsiCo has partnered with the Centre for Nutrition Counseling, Research and Ex-

tension Activities at Women's Christian College, Chennai, for this project. The Smart Choice Café will cater to students on the campus for healthy breakfast choices.

The company hopes the initiative would not only push its own products but "also act as an incentive for its consumers to eat healthy foods and stay fit".

"Keeping with its emphasis on performance with purpose, PepsiCo has always partnered with different stakeholders in promoting good nutrition and healthy lifestyles, and this is yet another milestone in a continuous endeavour to do better than our best to be part of a solution to make tomorrow better than today," Mallika Janakiraman, vice-president, health and wellness, PepsiCo India, told *Business Standard*.

Analysts say by initiating such moves, FMCG companies could now be seriously looking beyond solely their own products. "This

could lead to a trend where-in the target would not be just a place in the consumer's life — in the kitchen or in the cabinets — but the consumer's life itself," remarked a senior analyst. The aim now is lifestyle and not just pure consumption.

The company has been sharpening its focus on the health segment over the years. In fact, Indra Nooyi, global chairman of PepsiCo, has made public the company's intention to focus on the health segment and it plans to increase substantially the contribution of this segment to the overall turnover of the company.

With beverage volumes of the company growing by about 32 per cent in India, the highest for the company the world over, industry experts believe that PepsiCo is going to do all it can to keep the Indian market very satisfied. They point out that the innovations that are made here are more than in most countries.