

# Godfrey Phillips plans national roll-out

**Our Bureau**

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Godfrey Phillips, a K. K. Modi Group and Philip Morris joint venture, and the second largest player in the domestic cigarette industry after ITC, is set to go national very soon.

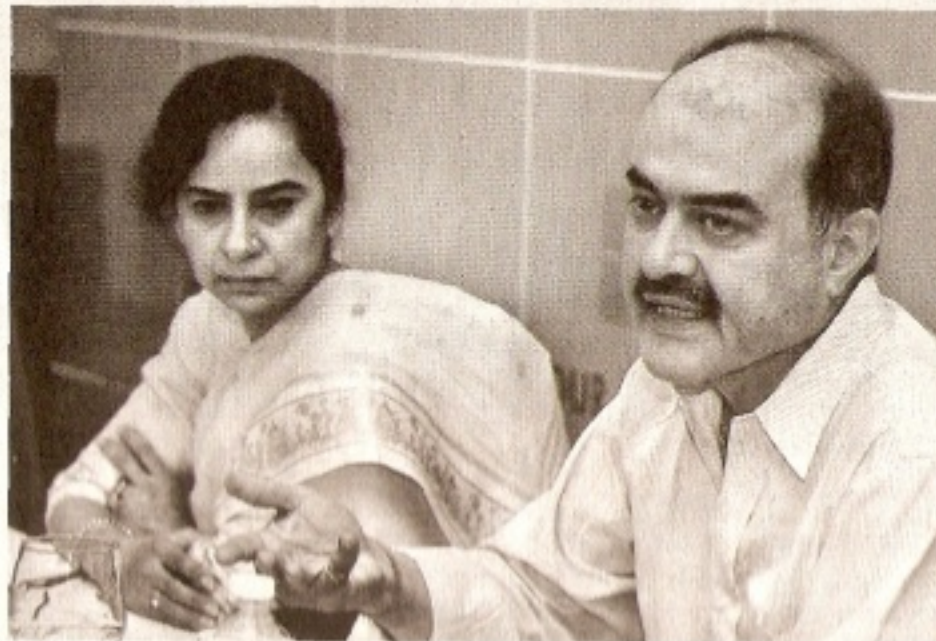
The company, which was not selling its products in the South, except for a small presence in Andhra Pradesh, today launched its Four Square brand of cigarettes in the Tamil Nadu market.

According to Ms Nita Kapoor, Executive Vice-President (Marketing and Corporate Affairs), Godfrey Phillips India Ltd, Tamil Nadu, is the second largest cigarette market after Andhra Pradesh, "and a strategically critical market to grow".

She said the State consumes 840 million sticks a month, which is close to 10 per cent of the 8.5-billion-sticks-a-month all-India market. Andhra Pradesh accounts for 14 per cent of the market.

Currently, ITC is the biggest player in Tamil Nadu with almost 99 per cent market share. "We are targeting 5 per cent share of this market in the first year," said Ms Kapoor.

The company reported Rs 1,838 crore turnover and Rs 170 crore profits for 2007-08. With the pro-



Mr Bisham Wadera, Executive Vice-President, Sales, Godfrey Phillips India Ltd, and Ms Nita Kapoor, Executive Vice-President, Marketing and Corporate Affairs, at a press conference in Chennai on Wednesday. — Bijoy Ghosh

posed retail expansion, it is aiming to push the turnover beyond Rs 2,200 crore in the next financial year.

Nationally, Godfrey Phillips enjoys 12.5 per cent market share in terms of volume and 11 per cent share in value.

To meet the likely demand, Godfrey Phillips is setting up a 1.5-billion-sticks-a-month facility near

Mumbai at an investment of Rs 200 crore. It currently has two facilities in Ghaziabad and in Mumbai.

Besides, it also plans to expand its bidi portfolio in the next few months. The company currently sells its Sona brand of bidis in Rajasthan, Haryana and Gujarat. "We also plan to foray into some chewing products in the months to come," said Ms Kapoor.