

HUL Enters Premium Water Purifier Market with Marvella

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Hindustan Unilever has entered the premium water purifier segment, three years after entering the market with its affordable Pureit range, now the largest-selling water purifier in the country.

The new product, Pureit Marvella RO (Reverse Osmosis), at ₹13,500, is priced fifteen times more than the company's base product, Pureit Intella, which starts at ₹900.

"Our strategy has been to build the product portfolio across price points," said Hindustan Unilever General Manager, Water Business, Vikram Surendran.

The move intensifies its battle with Eureka Forbes in the ₹1,600-crore water purifier market and extends it to the Rs 550-crore RO market.

Eureka Forbes leads this market, which has products ranging from ₹6,000 to ₹16,000,



with 52% share.

But it will be a tough task to take on Eureka Forbes, which has more than 4,000 service staff across the country, in a service-centred business.

Marzin Shroff, Eureka Forbes' CEO, direct sales, and senior vice-president, marketing, said, "The biggest challenge in this category is service. Such products unlike other consumer durables require a dedicated and periodic service approach."

Multinationals such as Whirlpool and Philips have not been able to garner more than 5% share despite selling

water purifiers for three years now.

Analysts said that the country's largest consumer product maker had to enter the premium segment to increase the profitability of its water purifier business.

Hindustan Unilever's move could also be due to the arrival of several players in the entry-level water purifier market in the last two years. One strong competitor is Tata's Swach, which sells products starting from ₹499.

India's water purifier market, growing by 22% annually is still in the nascent stage because its penetration of lower single digit.

Hindustan Unilever has the support of its parent Unilever in the water business as it has already been taking the indigenous brand to other markets such as Mexico and Indonesia.

The company does not report the performance of its water business separately