

As Apple plots India push, Samsung stakes turf with revamped phones

REUTERS, Mumbai/Seoul
Samsung Electronics Co Ltd is regaining smartphone share in India with a revamped line-up packed with special features including a safety mode for motorcyclists, as rival Apple Inc readies a renewed push into the world's fastest-growing market.

Long the leader in price-conscious India, the South Korean giant had been losing ground to local rivals such as Micromax and Lava, as well as Chinese brands.

But Samsung's Indian market share rose to 30 percent as of February this year, from 28.6 percent in the fourth quarter of 2015 and 27.4 percent in the final quarter of 2014, research firm Counterpoint says.

The company credits strong sales for its mid-tier products, particularly its new Galaxy J series phones.

"Differentiated offerings are driving the trend in the mid-to-low-end segment," said Manu Sharma, vice president of product marketing for Samsung India Electronics.

For example, Samsung recently introduced its "S bike" mode, a feature targeted at India's legions of motorbike riders that, when activated, notifies callers that the phone's owner is riding and cannot answer.

Other draws for buyers include models with features for using less data or keeping the phone alive for longer when charging is not possible.

Researcher GfK says the J2, J5 and J7 account for nearly 20 percent of the Indian mobile market by value. Production cost savings are also enabling Samsung to sell



A salesperson serves a customer at a Samsung store in New Delhi.

higher-quality phones for less, analysts said.

Samsung's surge in the No. 2 smartphone market behind China comes as arch-rival Apple struggles to gain a footing with its expensive phones, holding market share of just 2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2015. The US firm's renewed efforts to import and sell used iPhones, meanwhile, are facing opposition from local vendors.

Samsung's gains also underscore how the world's No. 1 smartphone maker, with just under a fifth of the global market as of the end of 2015, is finding its footing after a long slide.

Though still squeezed by Apple in the premium segment and by Chinese rivals such as Huawei Technologies Co Ltd at the lower end, analysts say Samsung is righting

itself by launching more attractive products and shaving production costs to compete better on price.

"Samsung mid-level smartphones, especially the J series, have been doing quite well in emerging countries, especially in India," said Tarun Pathak, an analyst for Counterpoint Technology, noting that budget-tier products have driven volumes for the South Korean firm in recent quarters.

Such efforts, and better-than-anticipated sales for its flagship Galaxy S7 devices, are expected to lift Samsung's earnings. Some analysts now expect Samsung's January-March profit to top 6 trillion won (\$5.2 billion), compared with the Thomson Reuters StarMine SmartEstimate of 5.6 trillion won derived from a survey of 22 analysts.

Though Samsung will offer no details beyond estimated January-March revenue and operating profit when it gives guidance on Thursday, analysts expect its mobile division to have been its top earner for the first time in seven quarters.

Since mid-2014, Samsung has been overhauling its product design, particularly in the mid-to-low tier segments, phasing out old and unpopular models and launching new devices including the A, E and J series.

The newer devices incorporate parts and features traditionally found only in high-end phones, such as metal frames and organic light-emitting diode (OLED) screens.

As well as giving the phones a premium feel, that also enables Samsung to increase the number of components common across its products, cutting costs and enabling more aggressive pricing, analysts said.

Dongbu Securities analyst Yoo Eui-hyung said such efforts could boost mobile division margins by 1 or 2 percentage points, although savings were likely to be offset by price cuts. "Samsung is trying to hold its ground," he said.

Still, Samsung is expected to remain under pressure from Chinese competitors growing more aggressive overseas as growth at home slows.

"Samsung has regrouped itself but will have to be constantly on its toes," IDC analyst Kiranjeet Kaur said.

In addition to trying to secure permission to sell used, or refurbished, phones in India, Apple is betting its new 4-inch iPhone SE can help it gain new customers in the country.

Strong dollar, mild weather shrink H&M profits

AFP, Stockholm

Swedish clothing retailer Hennes et Mauritz (H&M) on Wednesday posted first quarter profits down almost 30 percent on a strong dollar and mild weather hitting its winter collection.

The Stockholm-based fast fashion firm said December through February profits came in at 2.54 billion kronor (275 million euros/\$310 million), down from 3.61 billion a year earlier albeit slightly ahead of analysts' forecasts.

Sales were up 8.5 percent year-on-year or nine percent in local currency terms at 43.7 billion kronor compared with a 15 percent rise in the first quarter 2015.

The results "reflect more expensive supply given the (strong) dollar and increased discounting due to high volume of unsold merchandise in winter collections following a mild winter," CEO Karl-Johan Persson said.

With a sizeable proportion of production costs linked to the dollar the currency effect is likely to weigh on second-quarter results before fading away from the third quarter, H&M predicted.

The chain is to continue its recent international expansion by taking its global store base count past 4,000 this month -- double 2010 -- by opening a store in India. Further expansion is planned in the months ahead in South Africa, Switzerland and Hungary.

Obama: tax avoidance is a big global problem

AFP, Washington

US President Barack Obama said Tuesday that the revelations that powerful international politicians and businessmen have hidden money in shell companies shows tax avoidance is a global issue.

He said wealthy individuals and corporations are "gaming the system" by making use of tax code loopholes that average taxpayers do not have access to.

He also labelled "insidious" the growing practice of US companies merging with foreign firms just to cut their tax liabilities.

While enjoying the strengths of the US economy -- its workers, rule of law, and infrastructure -- such companies are not "paying their fair share," he said.

"Tax avoidance is a big global problem," Obama said, making reference to documents leaked from a Panama law firm that show thousands of anonymous companies could have been used by wealthy people to hide income.

"It's not unique to other countries, because there are people in America who are taking advantage of the same stuff."

"A lot of it is legal, but that's exactly the problem."

Obama took aim at companies exploiting weaknesses in laws to legally slash their US tax obligations, effectively undercutting the US government's income base.

On Monday, the US Treasury tightened rules against "inversion" deals, in which US companies merge with foreign firms to move their official address offshore -- but not their US operations -- to avoid paying US taxes.

Such moves, like a pending \$160 billion tie-up between pharmaceutical giants Pfizer

and Allergan, exploit loopholes that allow the companies to "get out of paying their fair share of taxes here at home," Obama said.

"They effectively renounce their citizenship. They declare that they're based somewhere else, thereby getting all the rewards of being an American company without fulfilling the responsibilities to pay their taxes the way everybody else is supposed to pay them," he said.

"It sticks the rest of us with the tab. And it makes hard-working Americans feel like the deck is stacked against them."

The president called for Congress to take action on tax code reforms to eliminate loopholes that allow such blatant avoidance.

"Tax laws" are so poorly designed that they allow people, if they've got enough lawyers and enough accountants, to wiggle out of responsibilities," Obama said.

On Monday, the White House issued an update to its still-blocked 2012 business tax reform proposal to Congress, saying reforms are more urgently needed than before given the surge in inversion deals.

Reforms would slow inversions while better supporting investment and hiring inside the United States and cutting the costs to businesses of tax compliance, the White House said.

They would also stem the shifting offshore of an estimated \$100 billion a year of corporate income to avoid taxes.

"Reform should not only eliminate undesirable incentives; it should also provide incentives to support economic activities that benefit the broader economy," the new outline said.



Kazi Wahidul Alam, centre, editor of the Bangladesh Monitor and chairman of the Novoair Dhaka Travel Mart 2016 organising committee, announces the schedule of the fair at a press meet at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in Dhaka yesterday. Syed Ahasan Hossain Kazi, left, general manager of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, and Mofizur Rahman, managing director of Novoair, are also seen. The four-day international event will begin at the hotel tomorrow.

TRIUNE

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Memo No. NIPORT/Research-944/PRW/2013/(part-1)/665

Date: ১১ মার্চ ১৪২২
4 April 2016

Subject: Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)

National Institute of Population Research and Training (NIPORT) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHF) has been allocated public fund under the "Research and Development" component of the Operational Plan "Training Research and Development" of HPNSDP and it intends to procure services in order to conduct the research studies or study related activities (e.g. study data collection, data editing/coding, data entry, analysis) under the following six separate packages:

- GOB-NPS-01: Factors affecting utilization of Antenatal Care (ANC), and Post Natal Care (PNC) services in community and public health facilities.
- GOB-NPS-02: Fertility and contraceptive behaviour of women with migrant and non-migrant husbands: identify the ways to address client needs.
- GOB-NPS-03: Follow-up of Essential Newborn Care (ENC) Training for service providers and health workers.
- GOB-NPS-04: Assessment of appropriate strategies to prevent unplanned pregnancies among adolescents.
- GOB-NPS-05: Situation Analysis on unwanted pregnancy and Menstrual Regulation (MR).
- GOB-NPS-06: Use of tobacco and related substances use pattern among young and adolescent.

To complete the abovementioned packages primary and secondary data collection will be needed. Activities for each of the packages need to be completed by the December 2016.

Consultants (research firms) may submit EOI for each package, but for each package separate EOI needs to be submitted for separate evaluation.

NIPORT now invites eligible consulting firms to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) for the above services. Interested consultants (firms) are invited to provide information indicating that they are qualified to provide the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar operating conditions, availability of appropriate professional qualification and experience among staff). The EOIs will be reviewed on the basis of the following:

- Age of business of consultant (firm) in activities.
- Availability of key professional staff (list of management, key personnel).
- Turnover of the consultant (firm).
- Experience of the consultant (firm) in similar field.
- Experience of the consultant (firm) in other works/assignments.
- Support service of the consultant (firm).

Consultants (research firm) may associate to enhance their qualifications, but should clearly mention whether the association is in the form of a "Joint-Venture" or of "Sub-Consultancy". In the case of a joint venture, all members of such "association" should have real and well-defined inputs to the assignment and it is preferable to limit the total number of firms including the associates to a maximum of four.

Special Instructions:

- Incomplete/partial EOIs will be rejected.
- Interested firm(s) must provide focused information demonstrating that they are qualified to perform the services.
- The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the EOIs, or annul the EOI process at any stage without assigning any reason(s) whatsoever and without incurring any liability to the affected applicant(s).

A consultant (research firm) will be selected in accordance with the Public Procurement Act 2006 and Public Procurement Regulations 2008 (with latest amendments) issued by the GOB.

Interested consulting firm(s) is required to submit their EOI along with relevant supporting documents (2 copies) in a sealed envelope to the address indicated below by 4 pm on April 19, 2016. EOIs submitted through emails should also reach to the e-mail address mentioned below by 4.00pm on the same date.

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below from 9:00 am to 4:00pm (except holidays).

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Anbang to buy Allianz's S Korean business

REUTERS, Seoul

China's Anbang Insurance Group has agreed to buy German insurer Allianz's South Korean businesses for an undisclosed sum, it said on Wednesday, extending a push that has so far seen it spend billions of dollars on overseas assets.

Anbang has been one of the biggest corporate buyers from China in the last few years and this latest deal is its first move since it unexpectedly withdrew from a \$14 billion bid for Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc last week.

It will buy Allianz Life Insurance Korea and asset management firm Allianz Global Investors Korea, the Chinese and German companies said in a joint statement.

The purchases expand Anbang's presence in South Korea after it bought a 63 percent stake in Tongyang Life Insurance last year for 1.1 trillion won (\$949 million).

Allianz is selling the operations as part of a global overhaul in a tough low-interest rate environment. It has been active in South Korea since 1999 but will have little remaining operations there once the sale is completed.

The South Korean businesses, which have more than 1,000 employees and 1.2 million customers, had premiums of 1.7 billion euros (\$1.9 billion) last year and made a 244 million euro operating loss.

German industrial production slips in February

AFP, Frankfurt

German industrial production declined in February, but not as sharply as expected, weighed down by falling activity in the manufacturing and energy sectors, the economy ministry said on Wednesday.

The ministry calculated that factory output -- a key yardstick for gauging the health of Europe's biggest economy -- contracted by 0.5 percent in February compared with a month earlier, corrected for seasonal factors.

Analysts had been projecting in a sharper decline of 1.5 percent in February following a jump of 2.3 percent in January.

Manufacturing output was down by 0.5 percent month-on-month and energy output dropped by 1.8 percent, while the mild weather pushed construction output up by 1.3 percent, the ministry said.

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পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

কুড়িগ্রাম জেলার ০৯টি উপজেলার ৭০টি ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের কর্তৃক ইউনিয়ন গ্রামপুলিশদের (দফসার ও মহল্লাদার) ২০১৫-২০১৬ সালের পুনঃ দরপত্রের পেশাদার ও অন্যান্য সরঞ্জামাদি সরবরাহের নিমিত্ত পূর্ব অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ী/পেশাদার সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিচের হতে সীলমোহরযুক্ত বামে পূর্ণাঙ্গ দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্র.সং/বিভাগ	ছাদীয়া সরকারের বিদায়, ছাদীয়া সরকার, পল্টা উদ্যান ও সরকার মহলাদার, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা।
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২	সম্মানিত সংস্থার নাম
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১২	সম্মানিত সংস্থার ঠিকানা

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৮	স্মারকদের সোজা		০৬০টি
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জি: ৭৭৮