

Transfer of ADRs by Non-residents

The Ministry of Finance, Government of India, has granted general permission for the transfer of ADRs outside India and also permitted non-resident holders of ADRs to surrender ADRs in exchange for the underlying shares. Pursuant to the terms of the Deposit Agreement an investor who surrenders ADRs and withdraws shares is permitted to re-deposit such shares subject to the total issued ADRs and obtain ADRs at a later time.

Fungibility of ADRs

In March 2001, the RBI permitted the re-conversion of shares of Indian Companies into ADRs, subject to the following conditions:

- the Indian company has issued ADRs;
- the shares of the Indian company are purchased by a registered stock broker in India in the name of the Depository, on behalf of the non-resident investor who wishes to convert such shares into ADRs;
- shares are purchased on a recognized stock exchange;
- the shares are purchased with the permission of the custodian of the ADRs of the Indian company and are deposited with the custodian;
- the issuer company has authorized the custodian to accept shares from non-resident investors for re-issuance of ADRs;
- the number of shares so purchased do not exceed the ADRs converted into underlying shares, and are in compliance with the sectoral caps applicable under the Foreign Direct Investment regime; and
- the non-resident investor, broker, custodian and the overseas depository comply with the provisions of the Depository Receipt Mechanism and the guidelines issued thereunder from time to time.

Also the RBI has prescribed that the domestic custodians are the entity required to ensure compliance with the RBI guidelines and to file reports with the RBI from time to time. The domestic custodian is also required to perform the following functions:

- provide a certificate to the RBI and the SEBI stating that the sectoral caps for foreign investment in the relevant company have not been breached;
- monitor the total number of ADRs that have been converted into underlying shares by non-resident investors;
- liaise with the issuer company to ensure that the foreign investment restrictions, if any, are not being breached; and
- file a monthly report about the ADR transactions under the two-way fungibility arrangement with the RBI and the SEBI.

E. Taxation.

This section describes the material United States federal and Indian stamp duty and income and service tax consequences of owning shares or ADSs. It applies to you only if you hold your shares or ADSs as capital assets for tax purposes. This section does not apply to you if you are a member of a special class of holders subject to special rules, including:

- a dealer in securities,
- a trader in securities that elects to use a mark-to-market method of accounting for securities holdings,
- a tax-exempt organization,
- a life insurance company,
- a person liable for alternative minimum tax,
- a person that actually or constructively owns 10% or more of our voting stock,
- a person that holds shares or ADSs as part of a straddle or a hedging or conversion transaction, or
- a U.S. holder (as defined below) whose functional currency is not the dollar.

This section is based on the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, its legislative history, existing and proposed regulations, published rulings and court decisions, and the laws of India all as currently in effect, as well as on the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of India for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income (the "Treaty"). These laws are subject to change, possibly on a retroactive basis. In addition, this section is based in part upon the representations of the Depository and the assumption that each obligation in the Deposit Agreement and any related agreement will be performed in accordance with its terms.

You are a U.S. holder if you are a beneficial owner of shares or ADSs and you are, for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

- a citizen or resident of the United States,
- a domestic corporation,
- an estate whose income is subject to United States federal income tax regardless of its source, or
- a trust if a United States court can exercise primary supervision over the trust's administration and one or more United States persons are authorized to control all substantial decisions of the trust.

With regard to Indian tax, the following discussion addresses only the tax consequences for persons that are "non-residents" of India, as defined in the Indian Income Tax Act of 1961, or the Income Tax Act and is based on the provisions of Section 115AC and other applicable provisions of the Income Tax Act and the Issue of Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds and Ordinary Shares (through Depository Receipt Mechanism) Scheme 1993 promulgated by the Government of India, or together the Section 115AC Regime.

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You should consult your own tax advisor regarding the United States federal, state and local and the Indian and other tax consequences of owning and disposing of shares and ADSs in your particular circumstances.

This discussion addresses only United States federal income taxation and Indian stamp duty and income and service taxation.

In general, and taking into account the earlier assumptions, for United States federal income and Indian tax purposes, if you hold ADRs evidencing ADSs, you will be treated as the owner of the shares represented by those ADRs. Exchanges of shares for ADRs, and ADRs for shares, generally will not be subject to United States federal income or to Indian tax, but such exchange may give rise to Indian stamp duty as described below under “– Stamp Duty”.

Taxation of Dividends

Indian Taxation. Dividends paid to non-residents of India will not be liable to tax. However, the Company will be liable to pay a “dividend distribution tax” currently at the rate of 15% (plus a surcharge at 10% and education cess at the rate of 3% on the dividend distribution tax and surcharge) on the total amount distributed as a dividend. The effective rate of dividend distribution tax is 17%.

Distributions to non-residents of India of additional ADSs or shares or rights to subscribe for such shares made with respect to ADSs or shares are not subject to Indian tax.

U.S. Holders. Under the United States federal income tax laws, and subject to the passive foreign investment company, or PFIC rules described below, if you are a U.S. holder, the gross amount of any dividend we pay out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits (as determined for United States federal income tax purposes) is subject to United States federal income taxation. If you are a noncorporate U.S. holder, dividends paid to you in taxable years beginning before January 1, 2011 that constitute qualified dividend income will be taxable to you at a maximum tax rate of 15% provided that you hold the shares or ADSs for more than 60 days during the 121-day period beginning 60 days before the ex-dividend date and meet other holding period requirements. Dividends we pay with respect to the shares or ADSs generally will be qualified dividend income.

The dividend is taxable to you when you, in the case of shares, or the Depositary, in the case of ADSs, receive the dividend, actually or constructively. The dividend will not be eligible for the dividends-received deduction generally allowed to United States corporations in respect of dividends received from other United States corporations.

The amount of the dividend distribution that you must include in your income as a U.S. holder will be the U.S. dollar value of the rupee payments made, determined at the spot rupee/U.S. dollar rate on the date the dividend distribution is includible in your income, regardless of whether the payment is in fact converted into U.S. dollars. Generally, any gain or loss resulting from currency exchange fluctuations during the period from the date you include the dividend payment in income to the date you convert the payment into U.S. dollars will be treated as ordinary income or loss and will not be eligible for the special tax rate applicable to qualified dividend income. The gain or loss generally will be income or loss from sources within the United States for foreign tax credit limitation purposes.

Distributions in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits, as determined for United States federal income tax purposes, will be treated as a non-taxable return of capital to the extent of your basis in the shares or ADSs and thereafter as capital gain.

Dividends will be income from sources outside the United States. Dividends paid in taxable years beginning before January 1, 2007 generally will be “passive” or “financial services” income, and dividends paid in taxable years beginning after December 31, 2006 will, depending on your circumstances, be “passive” or “general” income which, in either case, is treated separately from other types of income for purposes of computing the foreign tax credit allowable to you.

Distributions of additional shares to you with respect to shares or ADSs that are made as part of a pro rata distribution to all of our shareholders generally will not be subject to United States federal income tax.

Taxation of Capital Gains

Indian Taxation

Capital Gains Generally. Under Section 115AC and other applicable provisions of the Income tax act 1961, any gain realized on the sale outside India of the ADSs from one non-resident of India to another non-resident holder is not subject to Indian capital gains tax. However, it is unclear whether a capital gain derived from the sale of rights by a non-resident of India to another non-resident holder outside India may be subject to Indian capital gains tax.

Capital gains arising to the non-resident investor on the transfer of the equity shares (including shares received in exchange of the ADSs) whether in India or outside India to a non-resident investor or Indian resident, will be liable for income tax under the provisions of the Income Tax Act.

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Equity shares (including shares issuable on the exchange of the ADSs) held by the non-resident investor for a period of more than 12 months are treated as long-term capital assets. If the equity shares are held for a period of 12 months or less, the capital gains arising on the sale thereof is to be treated as short-term capital gains. A non-resident holder's holding period (for purposes of determining the applicable Indian capital gains tax rate) in respect of shares received in exchange for ADSs commences on the date of the advice of withdrawal of such shares by the relevant depository to its custodian.

For the purpose of computing capital gains tax on the sale of the equity shares, the cost of acquisition of equity shares received in exchange for ADSs will be determined on the basis of the prevailing price of the shares on the Indian Stock Exchanges as on the date on which the relevant depository gives notice to its custodian for the delivery of such equity shares upon redemption of the ADSs, while the cost of acquisition of shares directly converted from the ADSs will be determined on the basis of the price prevailing on the Indian Stock Exchanges on the date of conversion into equity shares.

Gain realized on the sale of listed equity shares held for more than 12 months will not be subject to Indian capital gains tax if the Securities Transaction Tax ("STT") has been paid on the transaction. The STT will be levied on and collected by a domestic stock exchange on which equity shares are sold at the rate of 0.025% to 0.125% depending upon the nature of the transaction.

Any gain realized on the sale of equity shares held for more than 12 months on which no STT has been paid will be subject to Indian capital gains tax at the rate of 10% plus applicable surcharge on income tax and education cess at the applicable rates.

Capital gains realised in respect of equity shares held (calculated in the manner set forth in the prior paragraph) for 12 months or less (short term gain) on which STT is paid in the manner and rates set out above, is subject to tax at the rate of 10% plus applicable surcharge on income tax and an education cess at the applicable rate. In the event that no STT is paid, short term gain is subject to tax at variable rates with the maximum rate of 40% plus applicable rate of surcharge on income tax and education cess at the rate of 3% of the tax and surcharge. The actual rate of tax on short term gains depends on a number of factors, including the legal status of the non-resident holder and the type of income chargeable in India.

Tax on capital gains is to be deducted at source by the person paying for the shares in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Income Tax Act.

Capital Losses. The Section 115AC Regime does not deal with capital losses arising on a transfer of shares. In general terms, losses arising from a transfer of a capital asset in India can only be set off only against capital gains and not against any other income. A short-term capital loss can be set off against a capital gain, whether short-term or long-term. However, long term capital loss can only be set off against long term capital gain and not against short term capital gain. To the extent that the losses are not absorbed in the year of transfer, they may be carried forward for a period of eight assessment years immediately succeeding the assessment year for which the loss was first determined and may be set off against the capital gains assessable for such subsequent assessment years. In order to set off capital losses in this manner, the non-resident investor would be required to file appropriate and timely tax returns in India. The long term capital loss arising on sale of equity shares in respect of which STT is paid may not be available for set-off against any capital gains.

United States Federal Income Taxation.

U.S. Holders. Subject to the PFIC rules discussed below, if you are a U.S. holder and you sell or otherwise dispose of your shares or ADSs, you will recognize capital gain or loss for United States federal income tax purposes equal to the difference between the dollar value of the amount that you realize and your tax basis, determined in dollars, in your shares or ADSs. Capital gain of a non-corporate U.S. holder that is recognized on taxable years beginning before January 1, 2011 is generally taxed at a maximum rate of 15% where the holder has a holding period greater than one year. The gain or loss will generally be income or loss from sources within the United States for foreign tax credit limitation purposes.

Tax Treaties.

The provisions of the Agreement of Avoidance of Double Taxation entered into by Government with the country of residence of the non-resident investor will be applicable to the extent that they are more beneficial to the non-resident investor.

Dividend income is not subject to tax in India in the hands of the holder of the shares. If any Shares are held by a non resident investor following withdrawal thereof from the depository facility under the Deposit Agreement, provisions of double taxation treaty, if any, entered into by India with the country of residence of such non resident investor will be applicable to taxation of any capital gain arising from transfer of such shares.

However, during the period of fiduciary ownership of Shares in the hands of the Overseas Depository Bank, the provisions of Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement entered into by the Government of India with the country of residence of the Overseas Depository Bank will be applicable in the matter of taxation of capital gains in respect of ADSs.

Stamp Duty. Under Indian law, any transfer of ADSs will be exempt from liability to Indian stamp duty. Purchasers of shares who seek to register such shares on the share register of the company are required to pay Indian stamp duty at the rate of