

Taxation

Indian Taxation

The following summary is based on the law and practice of the Indian Income-tax Act, 1961, or Income-Tax Act, including the special tax regime contained in Sections 115AC and 115ACA of the Income-tax Act read with the Issue of Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds and Ordinary Shares (through Depository Receipt Mechanism) Scheme, 1993, as amended on, January 19, 2000, or the Issue of Foreign Currency Convertible bonds and Ordinary Shares Scheme. The Income-tax Act is amended every year by the Finance Act of the relevant year. Some or all of the tax consequences of Sections 115AC and 115ACA may be amended or changed by future amendments to the Income-tax Act.

We believe this information is materially complete as of the date hereof, however, this summary is not intended to constitute a complete analysis of the individual tax consequences to non-resident holders or employees under Indian law for the acquisition, ownership and sale of ADSs and equity shares.

Residence. For purposes of the Income-tax Act, an individual is considered to be a resident of India during any fiscal year if he or she is in India in that year for:

- a period or periods amounting to 182 days or more; or
- 60 days or more and, within the four preceding years has been in India for a period or periods amounting to 365 days or more.

The period of 60 days referred to above shall be read as 182 days (i) in case of a citizen of India who leaves India in a fiscal year for the purposes of employment outside of India or (ii) in case of a citizen of India or a person of Indian origin living abroad who visits India and within the four preceding years has been in India for a period or periods amounting to 365 days or more.

A company is a resident of India if it is incorporated in India or the control and the management of its affairs is situated wholly in India. Companies that are not residents of India would be treated as non-residents for purposes of the Income-tax Act.

Taxation of Distributions. As per Section 10(34) of the Income Tax Act, dividends paid by Indian Companies on or after April 1, 2003 to its shareholders (whether resident in India or not) are not subject to tax. However, the Company paying the dividend is subject to a dividend distribution tax of 12.50% on the total amount it distributes, declares or pays as a dividend, in addition to the normal corporate tax. Additionally, the Finance Act, 2005 levies a surcharge of 10% on such tax and an additional surcharge namely “education cess” of 2% on such tax and surcharge, after which the dividend distribution tax payable would be 14.03%.

Any distributions of additional ADSs or equity shares to resident or non- resident holders will not be subject to Indian tax.

Taxation of Capital Gains. The following is a brief summary of capital gains taxation of non-resident holders and resident employees in respect of the sale of ADSs and equity shares received upon redemption of ADSs. The relevant provisions are contained mainly in sections 45, 47(vii)(a), 115AC and 115ACA, of the Income Tax Act, in conjunction with the Issue of Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds and Ordinary Shares Scheme.

Gains realized upon the sale of ADSs or shares that have been held for a period of more than thirty-six months and twelve months, respectively, are considered long term capital gains. Gains realized upon the sale of ADSs or shares that have been held for a period of thirty six months or less and twelve months or less, respectively, are considered short term capital gains. Capital gains are taxed as follows:

- Gains from a sale of ADSs outside India, by a non-resident to another non-resident are not taxable in India.
- Long term capital gains realized by a resident employee from the transfer of the ADSs will be subject to tax at the rate of 10%. Short-term capital gains on such a transfer will be taxed at graduated rates with a maximum of 30%.

- Long-term capital gains realized by non-resident upon the sale of equity shares obtained through the redemption of ADSs, settlement of such sale being made off a recognized stock exchange, are subject to tax at a rate of 10%. Short-term capital gains on such transfer will be taxed at graduated rates with a maximum of 30%.
- Long-term capital gains realized by a non-resident upon the sale of equity shares obtained through the redemption of ADSs, settlement of such sale being made on a recognized stock exchange, is exempt from tax and the Short-term capital gains on such sale will be taxed at 10%. An additional tax called “Securities Transaction Tax”, or “STT” (described in detail below) will be levied at the time of settlement.

In addition to the above rates, the Finance Act 2005 levies a surcharge of 10% on the above taxes, in the case of resident employees or the non-resident individuals, in case their aggregate taxable income exceed Rs. 10,00,000 during the relevant financial year and an additional surcharge called “education cess” of 2% on the above tax and surcharge.

The above rates may be reduced by the applicable tax treaty in case of non-residents. The capital gains tax is computed by applying the appropriate tax rates to the difference between the sale price and the purchase price of the equity shares or ADSs. Under the Issue of Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds and Ordinary Shares Scheme, the purchase price of equity shares in an Indian listed company received in exchange for ADSs will be the market price of the underlying shares on the date that the depository gives notice to the custodian of the delivery of the equity shares in exchange for the corresponding ADSs’ or the “stepped up” basis purchase price. The market price will be the price of the equity shares prevailing on The Stock Exchange, Mumbai or the National Stock Exchange. There is no corresponding provision under the Income Tax Act in relation to the “stepped up” basis for the purchase price of equity shares. However the tax department in India has not denied this benefit. In the event that the tax department denies this benefit, the original purchase price of ADSs would be considered the purchase price for computing the capital gains tax.

According to the Issue of Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds and Ordinary Shares Scheme, a non-resident holder’s holding period for the purposes of determining the applicable Indian capital gains tax rate in respect of equity shares received in exchange for ADSs commences on the date of the notice of the redemption by the depository to the custodian. However, the Issue of Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds and Ordinary Shares Scheme does not address this issue in the case of resident employees, and it is therefore unclear as to when the holding period for the purposes of determining capital gains tax commences for such a resident employee.

The Issue of Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds and Ordinary Shares Scheme provides that if the equity shares are sold on a recognized stock exchange in India against payment in Indian rupees, they will no longer be eligible for the preferential tax treatment.

It is unclear as to whether section 115AC and the Issue of Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds and Ordinary Shares Scheme are applicable to a non-resident who acquires equity shares outside India from a non-resident holder of equity shares after receipt of the equity shares upon redemption of the ADSs.

It is unclear as to whether capital gains derived from the sale of subscription rights or other rights by a non-resident holder not entitled to an exemption under a tax treaty will be subject to Indian capital gains tax. If such subscription rights or other rights are deemed by the Indian tax authorities to be situated within India, the gains realized on the sale of such subscription rights or other rights will be subject to Indian taxation. The capital gains realized on the sale of such subscription rights or other rights, which will generally be in the nature of short term capital gains, will be subject to tax at variable rates with a maximum rate of 40% in case of a foreign company and at graduated rate with a maximum of 30%, in case of resident employees and non-resident individuals. In addition to this, there will be a surcharge of 10% in the case of all corporate holders and in the case of non-corporate holders with an aggregate taxable income exceeding Rs. 10,00,000 and an additional surcharge called “education cess” of 2% on the above tax and surcharge.

As per Section 55(2) of the Income Tax Act, the cost of any share (commonly called a “bonus share”) allotted to any shareholder without any payment and on the basis of such shareholder’s share holdings, shall be nil. The holding period of bonus shares for the purpose of determining the nature of capital gains shall commence on the date of allotment of such shares by the company.

Securities Transaction Tax: The Finance Act, 2004 has introduced certain new provisions with regard to taxes on the sale and purchase of securities, including equity shares. On and after October 1, 2004, in respect of a sale and purchase of equity shares entered into on a recognized stock exchange, (i) both the buyer and seller are required to pay each a Securities Transaction Tax, or STT at the rate of 0.075% of the transaction value of the securities, if a transaction is a delivery based transaction i.e. the transaction involves actual delivery or transfer of shares; (ii) the seller of the shares

is required to pay a STT at the rate of 0.015% of the transaction value of the securities, if the transaction is a non-delivery based transaction, i.e. a transaction settled without taking delivery of the shares. The Finance Act, 2005 has increased the rate STT, with effect from April 1, 2005, in respect of a sale and purchase of equity shares entered into on a recognized stock exchange, to 0.1% for delivery based transactions and 0.02% for non-delivery based transactions.

Withholding Tax on Capital Gains. Any gain realized by a non-resident or resident employee on the sale of equity shares is subject to Indian capital gains tax, which, in the case of a non-resident is to be withheld at the source by the buyer. However, as per the provisions of Section 196D(2) of the Income Tax Act, no withholding tax is required to be deducted by way of capital gains arising to Foreign Institutional Investors as defined in Section 115AD of the Income Tax Act on the transfer of securities defined in Section 115AD of the Income Tax Act.

Buy-back of Securities. Indian companies are not subject to any tax on the buy-back of their shares. However, the shareholders will be taxed on any resulting gains. Our company would be required to deduct tax at source according to the capital gains tax liability of a non-resident shareholder.

Stamp Duty and Transfer Tax. Upon issuance of the equity shares underlying our ADSs, companies will be required to pay a stamp duty of 0.1% per share of the issue price of the underlying equity shares. A transfer of ADSs is not subject to Indian stamp duty. However, upon the acquisition of equity shares from the depository in exchange for ADSs, the non-resident holder will be liable for Indian stamp duty at the rate of 0.25% of the market value of the ADSs or equity shares exchanged. A sale of equity shares by a non-resident holder will also be subject to Indian stamp duty at the rate of 0.25% of the market value of the equity shares on the trade date, although customarily such tax is borne by the transferee. Shares must be traded in dematerialized form. The transfer of shares in dematerialized form is currently not subject to stamp duty.

Wealth Tax. The holding of the ADSs and the holding of underlying equity shares by resident and non-resident holders will be exempt from Indian wealth tax. Non-resident holders are advised to consult their own tax advisors regarding this issue.

Gift Tax and Estate Duty. Indian gift tax was abolished as of October 1998. Indian Estate Duty was abolished as of March 1985. On and after September 1, 2004, an sum of money exceeding Rs. 25,000 (approx \$ 570), received by a individual without consideration will be subject to tax at graduated rates with a maximum of 30% (excluding applicable surcharge and education cess), unless the same was received from a relative as defined in Explanation under Section 56(v), or on the occasion of the marriage of the Individual or under a will or by way of inheritance or in contemplation of death of the payer. The Taxation Laws Amendment Bill, 2005 introduced in the Parliament on May 12, 2005 proposes to levy the above tax in case the sum of money exceeds in aggregate Rs. 50,000 in a fiscal year. We cannot assure that these provisions will not be amended further in future. Non-resident holders are advised to consult their own tax advisors regarding this issue.

Service Tax. Brokerage or commission paid to stock brokers in connection with the sale or purchase of shares is subject to a service tax of 10% excluding surcharges and education cess. The stock broker is responsible for collecting the service tax from the shareholder and paying it to the relevant authority.

PROSPECTIVE PURCHASERS SHOULD CONSULT THEIR OWN TAX ADVISORS WITH RESPECT TO THE INDIAN AND THEIR LOCAL TAX CONSEQUENCES OF ACQUIRING, OWNING OR DISPOSING OF EQUITY SHARES OR ADSs.

United States Federal Taxation

The following is a summary of the material U.S. federal income and estate tax consequences that may be relevant with respect to the acquisition, ownership and disposition of equity shares or ADSs. This summary addresses the U.S. federal income and estate tax considerations of holders that are U.S. persons. U.S. persons are citizens or residents of the United States, or corporations created in or under the laws of the United States or any political subdivision thereof or therein, estates, the income of which is subject to U.S. federal income taxation regardless of its source and trusts for which a U.S. court exercises primary supervision and a U.S. person has the authority to control all substantial decisions and who will hold equity shares or ADSs as capital assets or U.S. Holder.

This summary does not address tax considerations applicable to holders that may be subject to special tax rules, such as banks, insurance companies, dealers in securities or currencies, tax-exempt entities, persons that will hold equity shares or ADSs as a position in a “straddle” or as part of a “hedging” or “conversion” transaction for tax purposes, persons that have a “functional currency” other than the U.S. dollar or holders of 10% or more, by voting power or value,

of the stock of our company. This summary is based on the tax laws of the United States as in effect on the date of this document and on United States Treasury Regulations in effect or, in some cases, proposed, as of the date of this document, as well as judicial and administrative interpretations thereof available on or before such date and is based in part on the assumption that each obligation in the deposit agreement and any related agreement will be performed in accordance with its terms. All of the foregoing is subject to change, which change could apply retroactively and could affect the tax consequences described below.

Each prospective investor should consult his, her or its own tax advisor with respect to the U.S. federal, state, local and foreign tax consequences of acquiring, owning or disposing of equity shares or ADSs.

Ownership of ADSs. For U.S. federal income tax purposes, holders of ADSs will be treated as the owners of equity shares represented by such ADSs.

Dividends. Except for equity shares, if any, distributed pro rata to all shareholders of our company, including holders of ADSs, distributions of cash or property with respect to equity shares will be included in income by a U.S. holder as foreign source dividend income at the time of receipt, which in the case of a U.S. holder of ADSs generally will be the date of receipt by the depository, to the extent such distributions are made from the current or accumulated earnings and profits (as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles) of our company. Such dividends will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction generally allowed to corporate U.S. holders. To the extent, if any, that the amount of any distribution by our company exceeds our company's current and accumulated earnings and profits as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles, it will be treated first as a tax-free return of the U.S. holder's tax basis in the equity shares or ADSs and thereafter as capital gain.

Subject to certain conditions and limitations, dividends paid to non-corporate U.S. holders, including individuals, may be eligible for a reduced rate of taxation if we are deemed to be a "qualified foreign corporation" for United States federal income tax purposes. A qualified foreign corporation includes a foreign corporation if (1) its shares (or, according to legislative history, its ADSs) are readily tradable on an established securities market in the United States or (2) it is eligible for the benefits under a comprehensive income tax treaty with the United States. In addition, a corporation is not a qualified foreign corporation if it is a passive foreign investment company (as discussed below). The ADSs are traded on the New York Stock Exchange. Due to the absence of specific statutory provisions addressing ADSs, there can be no assurance that we are qualified foreign corporation solely as a result of our listing on New York Stock Exchange. Nonetheless, we may be eligible for benefits under the comprehensive income tax treaty between India and the United States. The reduced rate of taxation will not apply to dividends received in taxable years beginning after December 31, 2008.

Subject to certain conditions and limitations, any Indian dividend distribution taxes imposed upon distributions paid to a U.S. Holder will be eligible for credit against the U.S. holder's federal income tax liability. Alternatively, a U.S. holder may claim a deduction for such amount, but only for a year in which a U.S. holder elects to do so with respect to all foreign income taxes. The overall limitation on foreign taxes eligible for credit is calculated separately with respect to specific classes of income. For this purpose, dividends distributed by us with respect to equity shares or ADSs will be income from sources outside the United States, and, for tax years beginning before January 1, 2007, will generally be "passive income", or "financial services income", and for tax years beginning after December 31, 2006, will generally be "passive category income" or "general category income" for purposes of computing the United States foreign tax credit allowable to a U.S. holder.

If dividends are paid in Indian rupees, the amount of the dividend distribution included in the income of a U.S. holder will be in the U.S. dollar value of the payments made in Indian rupees, determined at a spot exchange rate between Indian rupees and U.S. dollars applicable to the date such dividend is included in the income of the U.S. holder, regardless of whether the payment is in fact converted into U.S. dollars. Generally, gain or loss, if any, resulting from currency exchange fluctuations during the period from the date the dividend is paid to the date such payment is converted into U.S. dollars will be treated as U.S. source ordinary income or loss.

A non-U.S. holder of equity shares or ADSs generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax or withholding tax on dividends received on equity shares or ADSs unless such income is effectively connected with the conduct by such non-U.S. holder of a trade or business in the United States.

Sale or Exchange of Equity Shares or ADSs. A U.S. holder generally will recognize gain or loss on the sale or exchange of equity shares or ADSs equal to the difference between the amount realized on such sale or exchange and the U.S. holder's tax basis in the equity shares or ADSs, as the case may be. Such gain or loss will be capital gain or loss, and will be long-term capital gain or loss if the equity shares or ADSs, as the case may be, were held for more than one

year. Gain or loss, if any, recognized by a U.S. holder generally will be treated as U.S. source passive income or loss for U.S. foreign tax credit purposes.

A non-U.S. holder of equity shares or ADSs generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income or withholding tax on any gain realized on the sale or exchange of such equity shares or ADSs unless:

- such gain is effectively connected with the conduct by such non-U.S. holder of a trade or business in the U.S.; or
- in the case of any gain realized by an individual non-U.S. holder, such holder is present in the United States for 183 days or more in the taxable year of such sale and other conditions are met.

Estate Taxes. An individual shareholder who is a citizen or resident of the United States for U.S. federal estate tax purposes will have the value of the equity shares or ADSs owned by such holder included in his or her gross estate for U.S. federal estate tax purposes. An individual holder who actually pays Indian estate tax with respect to the equity shares will, however, be entitled to credit the amount of such tax against his or her U.S. federal estate tax liability, subject to a number of conditions and limitations.

Any dividends paid, or proceeds on a sale of, equity shares or ADSs to or by a U.S. holder may be subject to U.S. information reporting, and a 31% backup withholding tax may apply unless the holder is an exempt recipient or provides a U.S. taxpayer identification number, certifies that such holder is not subject to backup withholding and otherwise complies with any applicable backup withholding requirements. Any amount withheld under the backup withholding rules will be allowed as a refund or credit against the holder's U.S. federal income tax, provided that the required information is furnished to the Internal Revenue Service.

Passive Foreign Investment Company. A non-U.S. corporation will be classified as a passive foreign investment company for U.S. Federal income tax purposes if either:

- 75% or more of its gross income for the taxable year is passive income; or
- on average for the taxable year by value, or, if it is not a publicly traded corporation and so elects, by adjusted basis, if 50% or more of its assets produce or are held for the production of passive income.

We do not believe that we satisfy either of the tests for passive foreign investment company status. If we were to be a passive foreign investment company for any taxable year, U.S. holders would be required to either:

- pay an interest charge together with tax calculated at maximum ordinary income rates on "excess distributions," which is defined to include gain on a sale or other disposition of equity shares;
- if a qualified electing fund election is made, include in their taxable income their pro rata share of undistributed amounts of our income; or
- if the equity shares are "marketable" and a mark-to-market election is made, mark-to-market the equity shares each taxable year and recognize ordinary gain and, to the extent of prior ordinary gain, ordinary loss for the increase or decrease in market value for such taxable year.

The above summary is not intended to constitute a complete analysis of all tax consequences relating to ownership of equity shares or ADSs. You should consult your own tax advisor concerning the tax consequences of your particular situation.