

# Largest opportunity for growth is still in India: HDFC Bank Deputy MD

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Banking behemoth HDFC Bank sees the "largest opportunity" for its growth to still come out of India in the coming years and plans to persist with its "omni-channel" strategy to plumb deep into the growing domestic market, a top official said.

"Will we grow our international business? The answer is yes. However, the largest opportunity for growth for us is going to be India-centric," Paresh Sukthankar, Deputy Managing Director, HDFC Bank, told *BusinessLine*.

Given how the Indian economy is doing and given that a large part is unbanked or under-served, there is more of an opportunity to tap into within the country, Sukthankar said.

He said that the overall pie was growing and that HDFC Bank, which was growing faster than industry, was gaining market share from both both public sector and foreign banks.

"We want to be a bank that remains focussed on both retail and wholesale customer segments. We will continue to cater to all customer segments end-to-end," he said.

He also said that growth for HDFC Bank will come from all areas at different rates from different points of time.

"Different products will have faster or slower growth. Having a diversified portfolio allows us to grow at more stable growth rate. Being equally well-positioned across customers and geograph-

ies gives us stability for our own growth," Sukthankar said.

## Organic vs inorganic

While conceptually being open to inorganic growth, the top HDFC Bank official made it clear that the bank was not counting on acquisitions to deliver core growth ahead of the system.

"When it comes to achieving growth rates above the system, that we believe we can deliver through organic growth," he said.

At the same time, Sukthankar noted that if there are opportunities that comes up at various points of time, they get evaluated.

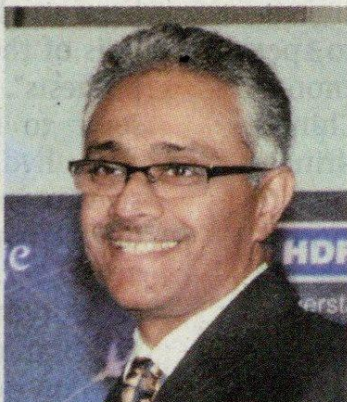
"Given our size and scale, are there too many of such opportunities that are meaningful for us and could move the needle, probably not so and less and less given our scale," he said.

Also, any inorganic transaction takes focus out of the bank's organic growth momentum, according to Sukthankar.

To demonstrate the organic growth capability of HDFC Bank, Sukthankar cited the example of 'debt capital markets' where the bank had over the last five or six years grown up to become the No 2 player.

Sukthankar hailed the latest Cabinet decision to keep certain promoters (wilful defaulters and those with proven misconduct) from bidding for stressed assets under the insolvency resolution process as "good move".

"It is very logical and a right thing to do," he said.



Paresh Sukthankar