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Ceat to bid adieu to mascot rhino

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The 'galloping rhino' looks set to be walking into the sunset. The ubiquitous mascot of Mumbai-based tyre major — Ceat Tyres — is expected to be withdrawn from the company's logo.

The company, which is a part of the Rs 13,000 crore RPG Group, is undergoing a major overhaul of its brand image. The brand-rebuilding exercise, which lasted for more than 10 months, was conducted by advertising agency Ogilvy and Mather (O&M). An announcement is expected tomorrow.

The exercise is primarily targeted at helping the brand grow in the international as well as the domestic market, especially when Ceat itself is undergoing a major capacity expansion along with a restructuring programme.

The rhino, together with the catch phrase 'Born tough' has been a part of the company's brand promotion campaign for a long time as it promoted the tough concept of its tyres.

To generate feedback for rebranding, O&M collected data from Ceat's customers, deal-

ers and outside experts. The exercise was centred around durability and usage of the company's tyres under various conditions.

The rebranding initiative is expected to help grow the company's sales revenue, which grew by less than nine per cent during the first three quarters of this financial year. The fourth quarter is not expected to be much better, with the topline of most tyre companies expected to come under pressure due to the spiralling cost of raw material and the general slowdown in the automobile industry.

Ceat is also looking to set up an export-dedicated facility in the country and is looking to expand in the overseas markets including the European region. Last year, the company went in for a financial restructuring exercise wherein every one share of the company out of every four held will get converted into a share of the investment company CHI.

The company is in talks with international companies for a technological tie-up for setting up a manufacturing facility in India. It is negotiating with the state governments of Gujarat and Maharashtra on this.

