

MORE NEW FACES ON *FORBES ASIA'S* “BEST UNDER A BILLION” 2010 LIST



Singapore, 2 September 2010 – More companies are making their maiden appearance on *Forbes Asia's* “Best Under A Billion” list this year. In all, one hundred and fifty-one firms are new on the list, compared with 136 last year, while 49 are returnees. Firms in information technology, healthcare and electronics sectors accounted for close to half of the 200 companies on the list.

The annual “Best Under A Billion” list picks the top-performing 200 firms from close to 13,000 publicly listed Asia-Pacific companies with actively traded shares and sales between US\$5 million and \$1 billion. Selection of the final 200 was based on earnings growth, sales growth, and shareholders’ return on equity in the past 12 months and over three years.

Among the new companies this year is Vinamilk from Vietnam, the first time that a firm from the Southeast Asian state has made the list. The company holds a one-third share of Vietnam’s dairy products market. It recently started work on a \$120 million dairy plant, near Ho Chi Minh City, that is expected to be the biggest in Southeast Asia.

Also new faces from the Southeast Asian region are glove maker Hartalega Holdings from Malaysia and MCS Steel from Thailand.

Asia’s economic giants China and India contributed their share of new entries as well. They include Chinese real estate brokerage firm E-house and Indian animated movie maker Compact Disc India.

Among the returning firms this year is Indian software company Micro Technologies. Also listed last year, its revenues soared 79% to \$102 million compared with last year, while its net income went up from \$14 million to \$20 million.

Chinese internet search engine Baidu also returned to the list from last year with its revenue up from \$462 million in 2009 to \$651 million this year, while net earnings also increased from \$151 million to \$217 million.

Another notable returnee is Thailand's Dynasty Ceramic. During the political protests in May that brought central Bangkok to a standstill, sales of tiles at the company's 170 outlets increased 15% from the year before. Also, the firm's stock price is up 90% over the past 12 months. Its CEO Roongroj Saengsastra is featured in a profile story in the latest issue of *Forbes Asia*.

This year, China and Hong Kong have once again outdone the rest of Asia Pacific with the most number of small and midsize firms represented on the list. This is the third consecutive year that both economies have dominated the list with seventy one firms making the cut, down from 78 last year.

India is in second place with 39 entries, 19 more than last year, thus making it the biggest gainer. More Indian companies made the list this year as the country is less open than many other Asian economies and was therefore less affected by the global downturn.

South Korea is in third position with 20 companies, followed by Taiwan with 19, and Australia with 13. Japan, which produced 24 entries last year, has only two companies represented this year because of domestic economic woes. It ties with Pakistan and Sri Lanka, each with also two firms on the list.

The 200 winning companies will be honored at the *Forbes Asia* "Best Under A Billion" award ceremony and dinner in Hong Kong on November 23, 2010. The event's host sponsor is Invest Hong Kong and presenting sponsor is SAP.

The "Best Under A Billion" list appears in the September issue of *Forbes Asia*, which is available on newsstands now.

For more information, visit www.forbes.com/BUB

<u>Economy</u>	<u>No. of firms this year</u>	<u>No. of firms last year</u>
China & Hong Kong	71	78
India	39	20
South Korea	20	23
Taiwan	19	16
Australia	13	18
Malaysia	9	8
Thailand	9	5
Singapore	8	5
The Philippines	3	0
Japan	2	24
Pakistan	2	0
Sri Lanka	2	1
Indonesia	1	1
New Zealand	1	1
Vietnam	1	0
TOTAL	200	200

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