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McDonald's licensee Jatia family plans to consolidate business

fe Bureau

Mumbai, Dec 7: The Jatia family, promoters of Hardcastle Restaurants, the licensee for the world's biggest restaurant chain McDonald's, is consolidating its various businesses under a listed parent company at a time when the restaurants and eating out industry is growing at 15-20% in India.

The move will bring the BL Jatia Group's Hardcastle Restaurants (through its majority shareholder Triple A Foods) and Westpoint Leisure parks (majority shareholder of Triple A Foods) under Westlife Development, with interests in trading, hospitality and quick service restaurants.

The family is now looking to bring in more equity into its consumer business. The family holds majority ownership directly and indirectly in all these companies. "This would help the listed company increase its valuation as it brings into its fold a relatively successful restaurant business," an analyst with a domestic brokerage said.

Hardcastle Restaurants, which had bought out McDonald's stake in the franchise in 2010, has a network of about 140 stores in the west and south and plans to expand to 250 restaurants by 2015.

The merger approval from different regulators may take six to nine months, said Amit Jatia, vice-chairman of Westlife Development.