AV Birla Group's fashion division ties up with textile ministry

By Radhika Bhalla
in New Delhi

Following Textile Minister Smriti Irani's initiative towards reviving handloom fabric in Varanasi in August earlier this year, monowear brand Peter England rolled out their first capsule collection in handloom fabric on Monday in the Capital.

The launch is a part of a strategic collaboration between Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd's (ABFRL) and the Government of India's 'India Handloom Brand' to work together to promote the Indian handloom industry. The announcement was made in the presence of Irani and Manish Singhal, Brand Head, Peter England.

Speaking to Mail Today, Singhal explained, "The government of India is taking many initiatives on handlooms. They had called for a big conclave in Varanasi a few months ago, where they invited massive brands to do partnerships for India Handloom Brand. Based on this, Peter England was asked to work with clusters in Andhra Pradesh of which one is in Mangalagiri. Within 90 days we have launched this small collection in 50 stores across India."

The range of shirts for men come in 17 designs and are designed by in-house designers at Peter England. While most are silk based fabrics, some are cotton. The price range is between Rs 1,500 and Rs 1,700.

"Unveiling the new collection, Irani said, "Authentic handloom products are gaining prominence with Indian consumer. Our collaboration with Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail's well known brand - Peter England will allow weavers to satiate this demand by making their products available in the market. Weavers will also get the right value and viability in the men's fashion garments market for their quality fabrics, through this partnership with Peter England and their direct sales channel."

Singhal adds, "The USP is that the fabric is more sustainable because it is made by hand, with no power used. We can also benefit from this. Also, the dyes used to process these fabrics are safe for the environment without any harmful chemicals."

Commenting on upcoming collections in this segment, he adds, "Now that we are working with the India Handloom brand, they are suggesting another cluster in Kerala and another one in Andhra Pradesh. We plan to make it big in 6 months or so, and are looking at major cities like Mumbai, Delhi, and New Delhi for our next collection."

The "India Handloom Brand" was launched by the Prime Minister August 1, 2018, in order to promote the branding of high quality handloom products, with zero defects and zero impact on the environment.

"We plan to expand our collection to 75 stores from current 15 across the country in the coming financial year. We intend to procure 1 lakh metres of fabric from various clusters doing work for us, under the brand "India Handloom Brand," Singhal disclosed.

These garments are crafted using 100% handloom fabric which is unique in style and comfort, making this line of fashion attire truly Indian and authentic."

Ministry of Textiles had done research about marketing of India Handloom Brand products. One of the major findings was that the product range has a very big gap for branded menswear," Anik Kumar, Development Commissioner, Handlooms said.