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New Delhi: Textile Ministry's initiative to tie up with retail brands on Monday materialised with home-grown ethnic wear brand BIBA launching the first range of apparels under the India Handloom Brand here.

The brand by Textiles Ministry, Government of India, seeks to conserve and promote Indian handloom, as well as facilitate the marketing of such products.

The range comprises of Ikat fabrics, popular in eastern and south eastern regions of the country, particularly the states of Odisha and Telangana, was launched by Union Textile Minister Smriti Irani at the BIBA's new store in Lajpat Nagar here.

Irani had announced the initiative in Benaras on August 7, calling all leading brands to partner with India Handloom Brand to revive the industry.

"Ministry of Textiles is focusing to promote and revive the Indian handlooms and the Indian weaves. Our country has a rich textile heritage and to come up with an initiative such as this wherein brands are collaborating with a government initiative allows for making the programme bigger and successful.

"It will not only make us conscious of our rich legacy, but also, with Delhi facing some environmental challenges, it should be mentioned that handloom is environmentally sustainable and friendly," Irani said.

Under the initiative, the brands are required to create apparels using the Indian Handloom Brand fabric promoted by Ministry of Textiles.

BIBA's Ikat collection now comes with an additional tag of 'India Handloom Brand'.

Irani said the initiative will help the weavers and local artisans to showcase their works on a wider platform and help provide a contemporary outlook to the products.

"We have used the fabric promoted by the Textile Ministry to craft some exclusive pieces for the collection, and help revive and expand the Indian Handloom industry," Siddhartha Bindra, Managing Director, BIBA said.