



Peter England partners with IHB to sell handloom brand collection

Menswear brand Peter England owned by Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd (ABFRL) in partnership with India Handloom Brand (IHB), launched on Monday a collection of handloom shirts from its stores across India, a government initiative to promote high quality handloom products.

As part of this partnership with Development Commissioner Handlooms, Ministry of Textiles,, Peter England has collaborated with handloom weavers from Mangalgiri in Andhra Pradesh to develop an exclusive line of shirts, an India Handloom Brand collection. ABFRL will initially sell shirts from this collection at Rs1,699 each at 15 Peter England outlets, before taking them to at least 75 outlets across 25-30 cities by 2017-18.

Manish Singhai, brand head at Peter England, Madura Fashion and Lifestyle, a unit of ABFRL said that they want to keep the collection affordable. So, they have deliberately kept margins low in these products. They have been working on sustainable fabrics for the last six years. This initiative is a part of that legacy.

They intend to procure 1 lakh metres of fabric from various clusters being developed and nurtured by India Handloom Brand, Manish Singhai, said.

Apart from Peter England, Madura Fashion and Lifestyle has brands like Louis Philippe, Van Heusen and Pantaloons in its portfolio.

Singhai added that Pantaloons is also looking at partnering with IHB. Pantaloons is still evaluating the plans but has not finalized anything.

Smriti Irani, minister of textiles, said at the launch of the partnership that authentic handloom products have always found resonance with Indian consumer. Their partnership with Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail's well known brand Peter England will allow weavers to get the right value and visibility in the mens fashion garments market for their quality fabrics through this partnership with Peter England and their direct sales channel.

Alok Kumar, development commissioner (handlooms) at the ministry of textiles, said that the 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 mens formals. The ministry also had met 10 garment manufacturing firms in August who had shown interest in partnering with IHB.

Ten brands had come forward for this initiative. While some have already started producing handloom products, others are in the testing stage. Colorplus and Reliance Trends have shown interest in this initiative, he said.