

GROWTH | RUN

■ **Fitness industry is growing at a rate of 20-25%: Experts**

Marathons spur sportswear mart

K.T.P. RADHIKA
CHENNAI MARCH 10

The increasing interest in running events like marathons across India is giving a leg up to the fitness and sports wear market.

In the past two years running events have doubled in India. In 2014 alone, more than 700 major running events happened. This is seen as one of the key reasons behind the rise in sales of gym equipment such as treadmills

and fitness cycles.

"Any mass sports events will definitely bring boom to the fitness industry. They need weight training. For the past few years we are witnessing about 10 per cent increase in our business," said Prashant Talwalkar, MD & CEO, Talwalkars.

According to Arvind Bharti, who heads RunnersforLife, one of India's largest running community, marathons are increasing every year

and the number of runners has gone up.

Serious runners are hitting gyms or using home-based gym equipments for strength training. Experts say that the fitness industry currently worth ₹8000 crore is growing at a rate of 20-25 per cent. Leading fitness chains are trying to tap this opportunity.

"Large fitness chains have started organising marathons as they can get access to more than 600 people at a time. Also in

fitness centers, the number of treadmills and cycles have gone up recently," stated Bengaluru based Marathon runner and trainer D. Dharmendra said.

For companies that sell fitness equipments, running events like marathons are high-end specialised business. Sales have gone up in categories like fitness and weight training equipments.

For the e-commerce company Snapdeal, sports

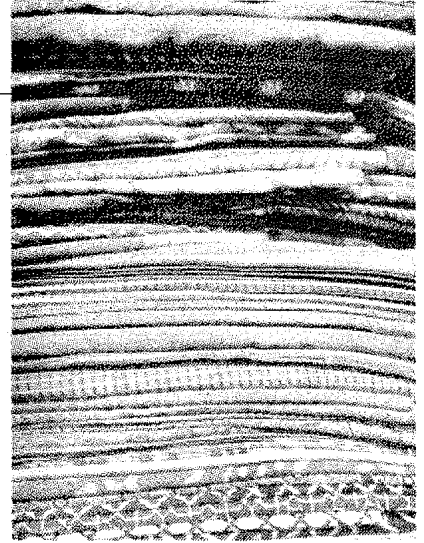
and fitness business is growing at 20 per cent month on month in the last six months. "Sports & fitness category at Snapdeal has seen a tremendous response from customers in the last 12 months. Some of the top selling products in fitness category are home gym equipments, treadmills and bicycles," said Amit Maheshwari, vice president — fashion, Snapdeal.com. It is aiming to get to ₹900 crore year end.

Summer is here!

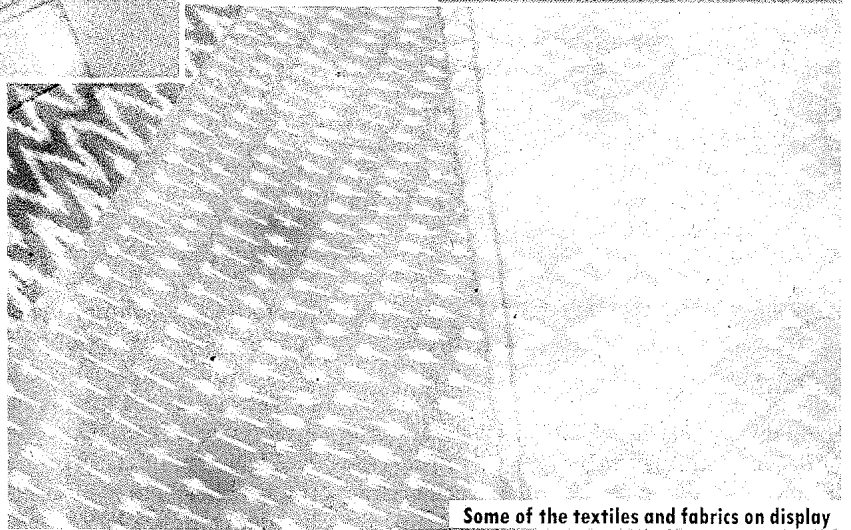
OUR CORRESPONDENT

KAIRI-2015 is an exhibition of textiles for summer. It is an initiative of Delhi Crafts Council to provide marketing assistance to skilled weaver and printers from across the country to exhibit their textiles to a discerning audience. Sarees, dupattas, stoles and fabrics available at the Exhibition include a range of Khadi, Ajrakh, Bandhani, Kalamkari, Banaras weaves, Laheriya, Ikat, Kota, Maheshwari, Chand-eri, Bagh prints,

Tribal weaves from Bastar, South India weaves and Prints from Jaipur amongst a huge variety of traditional techniques. The exhibition will be held from March 12 to 14 at the Aga Khan Hall, 6 Bhagwaan Daas Road in the Capital. Delhi Craft Council seeks to showcase the excellence and creativity of the traditional Indian artisan, both in handicrafts and textiles. It is an Initiative of the Crafts Council of India, a NGO working with handlooms and handicrafts for over four decades.



WHEN: March 12-14
WHERE: Aga Khan Hall, 6
Bhagwaan Daas Road



Some of the textiles and fabrics on display

● Authentic sarees

Draping the six yards in Tamil-style

Tamil Nadu is a prominent state in the handloom sector, having 2.5 lakh handloom weavers. There are 1,300 handloom weavers cooperative societies in the southern state which produces exquisite, traditional and contemporary varieties of hand-woven fabrics.

Giving Delhiites an opportunity to buy these traditional handloom products, Tamil Nadu Handloom Expo was recently organised at Dilli Haat, Janakpuri. To visitors' surprise these items were priced same as that at the producer's sale counters in Tamil Nadu.

The expo was organised by the Department of Handlooms and Textiles, Government of Tamil Nadu to provide an opportunity to the city residents to access these unique fabrics and impetus to the weavers practising the craft.

About 40 selected pioneer handloom weavers' societies participated and displayed their selected varieties. To attract customers, they introduced new designs and colour combinations in traditional wear.

On display were most sought after sarees from Kanchipuram, Thirubuvanam, Arani and Paramakkudi. From Dindigul were soft silk and kora silk sarees.

Considering that summer is knocking at the door, weavers brought good collection of cotton sarees from Coimbatore and Salem. Also, dominating these stalls were *Angavastrams*, cotton *lungies* and silk *dhoties* for men.

Handloom weavers from Erode and Chennimalai region brought their traditional cotton bed sheets, bed spreads, pillow covers, towels



ELEGANT ATTIRE Traditional and designer sarees were the most sought after items at the Tamil Nadu Handloom Expo.

and welcome floor mats. What attracted visitors in these stalls were carpets of Bhavani and Ganapathipalayam area.

However, the weavers, not well versed with the Hindi language, couldn't tell the tales behind them joining the craft.

For visitor discounts came as a surprise, "We are excited about the discounts that are being offered varying from 20 to 50 per cent on the original products," says Kamini Duggal, a homemaker.

DHNS



Sculpted Perfection

An exclusive peek into Anamika Khanna's Lakme Fashion Week finale collection

KIMI DANGOR

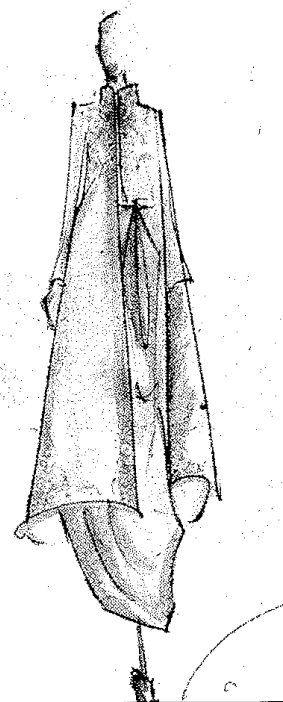
ONE OF the most awaited shows of Lakme Fashion Week (LFW) Summer/Resort 2015 is undoubtedly Anamika Khanna's finale presentation. The Kolkata-based designer's rendition of cosmetic giant Lakme's theme "Sculpt" has fashion watchers intrigued and curious, especially when the otherwise reticent designer confesses that she plans to have fun with the collection and not follow any rules.

Khanna, known for her unique blending of traditional drapes and age-old embroideries with global shapes and contemporary silhouettes has, over the years, not only become part of an elite line of couturiers but also acquired a growing celebrity following with fashionistas such as Sonam Kapoor, Neha Dhupia and Jacqueline Fernandez favouring her looks on the red carpet.

On March 22, she will present her interpretation of Sculpt in a "sharp, edgy and experimental" collection at a secret "historic" location. "A certain image comes to mind when we think of the word sculpt. I've decided to completely deconstruct that image," says Khanna. The collection will see the designer revert to a "purity of form. It's a collection of contrasts. I've taken In-



Anamika Khanna; her sketch of a garment from Lakme Fashion Week finale collection



dian shapes, deconstructed them and re-moulded and sculpted them in a very organic way. There is a marked contrast between structure and fluidity," she says.

The distinction will also be seen in the colour palette where Khanna's favourite ivory will meet black, gunmetal and a splash of pretty pastels in her trademark muslin and organza. Her forte lies in embroideries and this collection will also see zardozi embroidery given sculptural proportions with a three-

dimensional depiction.

It will be Lakme brand ambassador Kareena Kapoor Khan, who will don her show-stopping creation on the finale runway. With fellow Kolkata designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee set to open LFW on March 17 with an off-site show, and Khanna prepping to close the event with a grand flourish, it looks like this edition of LFW will have more than a passing Bengali influence. "It is definitely a proud moment for us," says Khanna.