



Actresses Tamannaah Bhatia and Akshara Haasan showcase creations by designers Payal Singhal and Anaiikka, respectively, at the Lakme Fashion Week in Mumbai on Saturday.
— SATEJ SHINDE

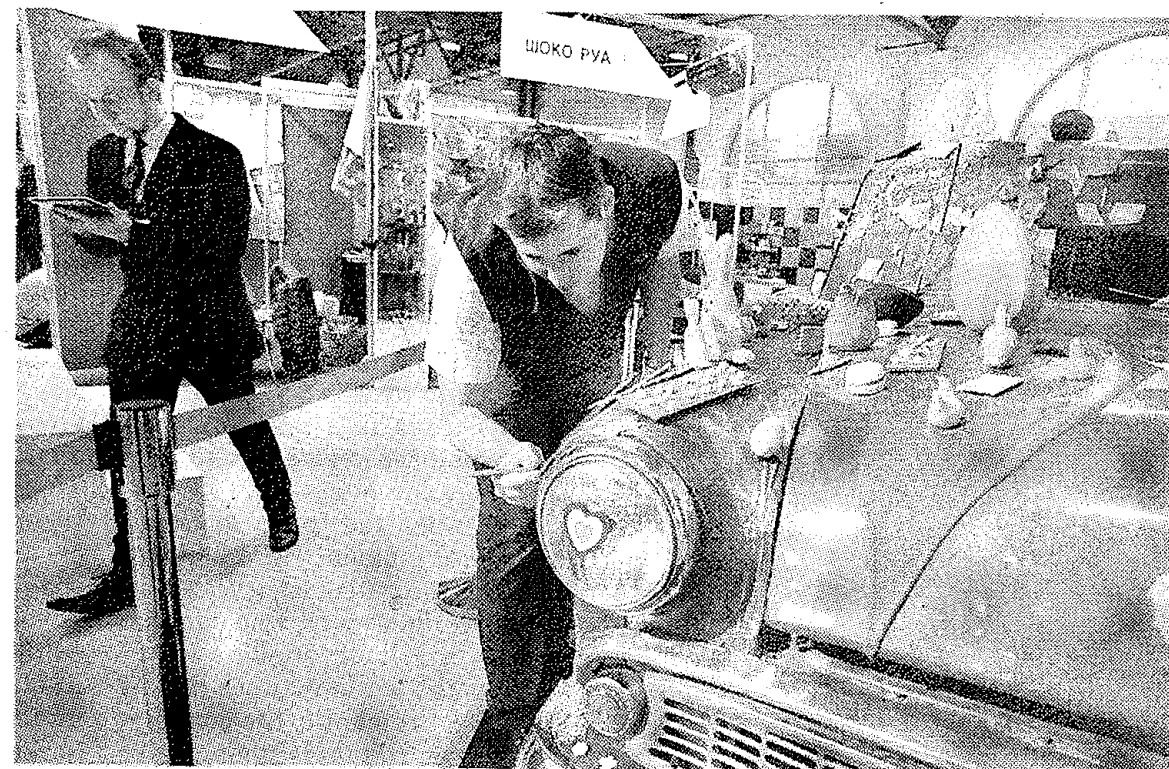


Singer Kanika Kapoor and actress Ileana D'Cruz perform on stage during a show by designer Anushree Reddy (centre) on Saturday.
— ASIAN AGE

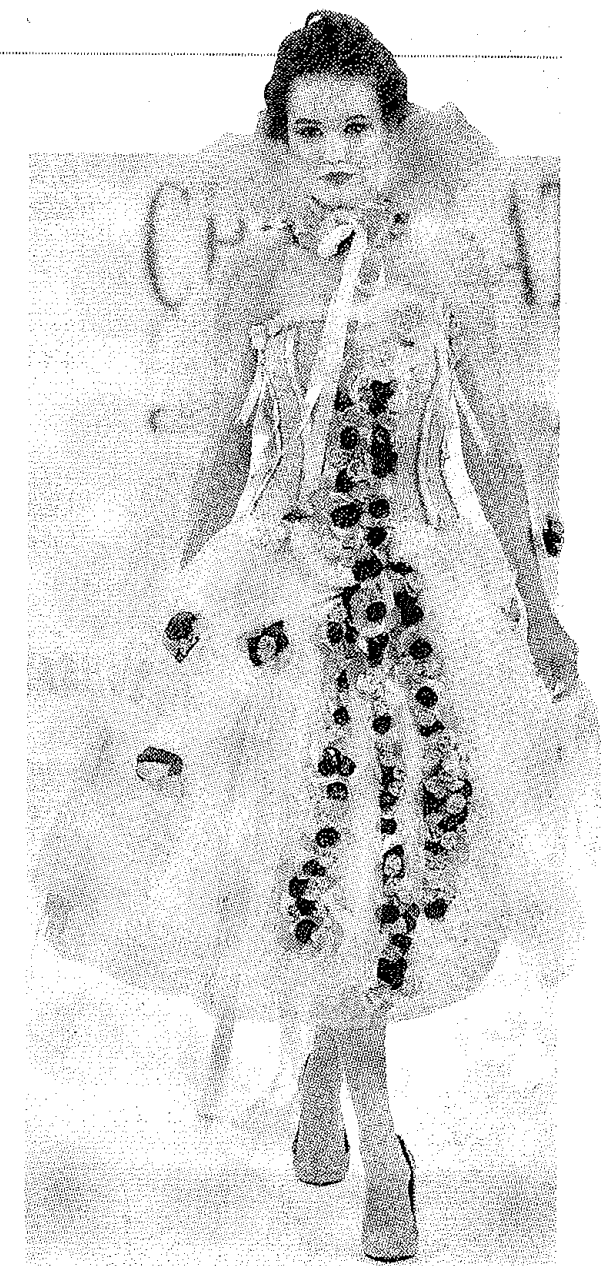
GLOBETROTTING



Keep calm and eat chocolate



From left: Models showcase dresses with parts made from chocolate and sweets, while (middle) a chocolatier decorates a Moskvich car with chocolate figures at the opening event of the "Salon du Chocolat" show in Moscow. When days are dark, friends are few and the state of your bank account makes you want to weep, there is only one thing you can do in bleak, crisis-hit Russia. Keep calm and eat some very expensive chocolate. That was the message from artisanal chocolatiers in Moscow, who attended the capital's first chocolate fair in seven years, in a sign that even as their wallets are battered by the dismal state of the ruble, there are some luxuries Russians are not willing to give up. Photos: AFP / Yuri Kadobnov



Autonomous status for sign language centre demanded

ANANYA PANDA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MARCH 21

Opposing the Union Government's plan to merge the Indian Sign Language Research & Training Centre (ISLRTC) and the National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped (NIHH), representatives from over 50 organisations for deaf have demanded autonomous status for the ISLRTC, as envisaged under the 11th Five Year Plan. If the government failed to do so, the section concerned would launch massive protests.

Calling for a rights-based model wherein the deaf were not seen as handicapped but as a language minority, activists argued that the ISLRTC would totally get lost in the larger agenda of NIHH, which was

being manned by people with no hearing deficiency. They pointed out that they would not be able to comprehend the larger objectives of the ISLRTC.

Differently-abled activists, under the leadership of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and the All-India Federation of the Deaf, recently met Union Cabinet Minister Arun Jaitley seeking his intervention into the matter.

Jaitley assured the delegation that he would take up the matter with the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities under the MSJE which had agreed to the proposal of the Union Cabinet regarding clubbing the ISLRTC and the NIHH recently.

The community for the deaf said the move would

defeat the whole purpose of the envisioned centre whose aim was development and promotion of sign language and training of teachers and interpreters.

Former Chief Advisor of ISLRTC at IGNOU Dr Madan Vasishtha underscored the need for ISLRTC's autonomy and said it should be developed as a "Centre of Excellence" with a rights-based approach instead of looking at it as a medical problem.

He highlighted the significance of having an independent centre and said sign language should be a medium of imparting education in schools and colleges in order to ensure real parity to the deaf.

Giving an ultimatum of one month for the government to change its decision, NAD Secretary A S

Narayanan said, "The International Deaf community is appalled at this regressive decision of the government and strongly opposes the injustice. We demand an autonomous, stand-alone organisation managed by the deaf people, for the deaf people."

NAD's president Zorin Singha asserted the NIHH had a different approach and focused on what the section did not have.

The deaf fraternity also released a Charter of Demands which included according Indian sign language, used by over 18 million hearing impaired across the country, official status in India, among others. Currently, there are 35 countries in the world which have given special status to their indigenous sign languages.



मुम्बई में लेक्मे फैशन वीक 2015 के दौरान अन्य माडलों के साथ
रैम्प पर आकर्षण का केन्द्र बनी बालीवुड स्टार शाहरुख खान की
पत्नी गौरी खान।
(छाया : प्रैट्र.)



Parul Duggal

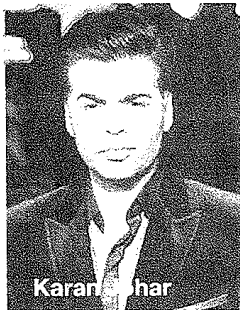


Shruti Aggarwal

Prathamesh Bandekar and Tejas Kudtarkar



Gauri Khan
with the models
during the show



Karan Johar

Satya Paul celebrated its 30th year anniversary through a unique collaboration with **Gauri Khan**, who co-designed their SS'15 collection for the Lakmé Fashion Week Summer Resort 2015. Inspired by an exotic holiday, the collection titled 'A Tropical

Wonder' focused on exotic and surreal elements of nature, comprising lush prints on casual and occasion-wear separates like sheer tunics, flowing kaftans, shift dresses and fluid sarees. The packed front row for the show included **Sophie Choudry, Malaika Arora Khan,**

Bhavna Pandey, Seema Khan, Maheep Kapoor, Suhana Khan, Kunal Kapoor, Zarine Khan, Elli Avram, Deanne Pandey, Kehkashan Patel, Sharmilla Khanna, Queenie Singh, Dabboo Ratnani, Avinash Gowariker, Mandira Bedi, Natasha Poonawala, Tanis-

ha Mukherjee, Rashmi Nigam and Tamannaah. Said Gauri, "I was an artist before I got into interiors. Colour is something I take on and Satya Paul uses vibrant colours, which is very inspiring for an artist."

— Seema.Sinha@timesgroup.com

Day Three of Lakme Fashion Week belonged to fashion's new guard

The Young and Effortless

KIMI DANGOR AND SHIKHA KUMAR

IN FASHION'S infinitely fickle universe, where trends are transient and the success of seasonal shows hinges on showstoppers, column inches and social media clicks, some designers are slowly emerging as its consistent new guard. Whether a few seasons old or

fresh off the GenNext boat, these designers have developed a signature style. Products of Lakme Fashion Week's (LFW) incubation process, they proved why they were more than just the flavour of the season with strikingly individualistic collections on Day Three of the Summer/Resort 2015 edition.



BOX ITEM

ORIGINAL ART PRINTS, wearable separates and breezy summer silhouettes — there wasn't much not to love about Quirkbox's collection "Wanderlust". Inspired by postcards from across the world, Rixi Bhatia and Jayesh Sachdev moved away from the saturated colour blocks of last season. While they stuck to their strengths with monuments and airplanes plastered over commercially-astute pieces such as suits, crop tops, flared skirts and dresses, the overall effect was less crowded than preceding collections.



ZIP CODE

EVER SINCE HIS FIRST collection in 2013, which questioned fashion conventions, Dhruv Kapur of DRVV has been creating gender-bending ensembles with impeccable finish. Kapur's construction was the star of his collection "Undress Code". From the opening vignette where two models wore refashioned jumpsuits and shirts with slashed sleeves, to deconstructed, literally falling-off-the-form gowns and jackets with his trademark zipper detailing and a beautiful basket weave, Kapur displayed more construction technique in the 16 garments he presented than a lot of designers show in full-length collections.

NIPPON POWER

RAGINI AHUJA'S Ikai girl makes strong feminist statements and wears anti-fit silhouettes with sheep nappa leather appliques. Add to this a Japanese influence and you have a winner. This season, Ahuja's line "Tribe" took a more feminine approach, with soft embroideries and delicate detailing. Polka dots and Japanese motifs made the Ikai girl more approachable.



FASHION WEEK

SUMMER/RESORT 2015



SPORTY SIDE

LAST SEASON'S standout GenNext designer, Dhruv Kapoor stuck to his steady sportswear influence in formalwear look. To an interesting interplay of fabrics and finishes, Kapoor added elements such as mesh detailing, leather pockets, fringing, and foiling and kept the collection interesting. We especially loved the biker jackets inferences, the latex trench coat and the snake-print pieces.

PHOTOS: AMIT CHAKRAVARTY, DILIP KAGDA



STRIPE SHOW

WITH ITS ULTRA CLEAN, minimal lines and oversized silhouettes, Amrita Khanna and Gursi Singh's collection screamed normcore. The Lovebirds duo, who played with horizontal stripes as the dominant theme of their second LFW show and kept the colours muted, are being recognised for their easy-to-wear style. With pleated culottes, pencil skirts, sack dresses and boxy tops, their unique unisex application was hard to miss.

Food on Wheels

TAXI aggregator Ola has entered the food delivery space with Ola Café, a service that will deliver food to your home from nearby restaurants. This service is available in select areas of Mumbai with plans to expand operations to Bangalore, Delhi and Hyderabad soon.

The service can be availed of by



updating to the latest version of the app and clicking on "café", which will provide a list of localities and restaurants where one can place an order. Similar to its cab service, customers can track the order through details provided by the application. Payment can be made through the application's inbuilt feature Ola Money or cash-on-delivery.

EFS

SHEER DRAMA

This summer calls for transparency as sheers rule the runway — concealing the essentials yet playing peek-a-boo

SHAGUFTA KALIM

THE ASIAN AGE

Going bare minimum is a little old school this season. What's truly hot this summer is transparency.

Style of the 'see through' kind has been ruling the global runway. The house of Alexander McQueen struck a winning note with a flimsy pencil skirt paired with a sequinned top in burnt gold. Balmain teamed sheer wide leg pants with a long tunic. Naeem Khan, Zahir Murad and Ellie Saab added a generous element of sheer to their gowns. Alexander Wang offered an androgynous look of structured tops with defined shoulders mixed with short pleated skirts in sheer.

"Sheer does best what it's meant for. It perfectly plays peek-a-boo — concealing the essentials and flaunting the highlighters," says designer Pawan Sachdeva.

Besides the staple sheer maxi dress, Pawan recommends sheer pants with a sleek summer jacket.

"Or pick sheer tops, especially the long ones that give the impression of a short dress yet look perfect with trousers or pencil skirts. The most eye-catching trend of the season is sheer and leather collaboration. Experiment with it as separates, or as embellishment — 3D leather applique

work on a sheer short dress looks striking. Basic colours like black and neutral are perfect for this look. One can also opt for opaque contrasts — it guarantees statement colour blocking," says Pawan. Sheers should not play solo, firmly believes designer

Sulakshna Monga, warning against falling in the risqué slot. Remember Rihanna's "meshy" outing on the red carpet last year?

Short dresses are an effortless summer staple, feels designer Chhaya Mehrotra. "Sheers are both sexy and chic. Sheers can make a statement in ethnic wear too. A *lehnga* or *anarkali* with a combination of organza and linen can turn out to be a statement piece of the season. I'd suggest teaming a sheer cape with tube tops on skirts or a long sheer dress layered with a shorter dress. A white or metallic sheer lace dress could be teamed with different inner layers. Sheer shrugs are also hot items this season," she says.

This year is all about staying loyal to a single colour

Monotones are her pick of the palette. "This year is all about staying loyal to a single colour. Even while indulging in sheer opaque designs, keep it all in monotone. For a little variation, try a subtle contrast of peach and nude."



(Clockwise from above) Models in outfits by Shikha and Vinita, Pawan Sachdeva and Komal Sood



A model displays an outfit by Sonaakshi Raaj

Style sheet

Rebel brides flirt with black

Many a modern bride has a mind and style of her own. And if whim strikes, she cocks a snook at convention without any qualms. Defying one of the loudest should-nots of wedding tradition, black is slowly finding its way into the trousseau.

Black has entered the festival circuit, so nothing should stop a bride from adorning this time-tested classy hue on her big day. An all-black ensemble may be too far-fetched but you can include elements of metallic, sequins and bejewelled embroidery, floral applique in gold on a black outfit to make it suit the occasion better. Remember you are aiming to be a stand-out bride and going for heavy embellishments will just beat



WINKY SINGH AND RASHIMA SINGH

the idea. Your high point should be understated elegance — achieved with black sophistication.

Since it's a deep shade, keep the embroidery in subtle tones of dull gold, rust and copper. The fabric could range from heavy silks to fluid chiffons. You can opt for cotton weaves or *khadi* as they make a beautiful picture in black. Try a flared long skirt in black with beaded

work and a well-structured top in a contrasting shade.

Brocades and *jamawars* offer excellent glamour and sensuality when presented in the classic combination of black and metallic hues and are well suited for structured gowns.

Rebel brides who opt for black don't just break taboos but look beautiful too.

The writers are designers and owners of the label Ministry of Design



fashion news

MADE IN INDIA

Designer Raghavendra Rathore showcased his collection at the LFW 2015 in Mumbai. His showstopper Riteish Deshmukh looked dapper in a navy blue night sky *kurta* paired with a white *churidar* and heavily embellished golden Nehru jacket. Rathore later commented, "The move from brick and mortar to cyber retail is pushing us to present our vision in more acceptable ways that appeal to the customer."

Tropical fiesta

✓ Gauri Khan's debut collection, celebrating 30 years of Satya Paul, made for an exotic end to Day Three of the Summer/Resort 2015 edition of the Lakmé Fashion Week Summer/Resort 2015. Staying in tune with the brand's design sensibilities, Gauri presented "A Tropical Wonder" — a collection of luxurious prints splashed over casual and occasion holiday wear. The star of the show — Gauri herself, who strutted down the ramp for her curtain call with all the elan of a show-stopper.

FINE PRINT

The print story was botanical: Palm motifs and calligraphic scribbles engineered in leaf and palm burnouts and splashed on outfits.

SARI STATE

Saris saw heavy use of satin georgette. Cotton silk, chiffon, georgette, luxe organza, tulle, satin Lurex borders were favourites as well.

NECK DEEP

The *cholis* were sexy and seductive: cross over halters, cut-out necklines, bikini styles, low back versions with tassels, tiny ones with knots.

MIX N MATCH

Mix and match separates took centre stage as sheer tunics, fluid kaftans, versatile shift dresses and elegant saris were all seen on the ramp.

RESORT STYLE

For lounging on the beach, there were kaftan tie-up, sheer shirts with mesh inserts, asymmetric tunics and flowing garments.

PHOTOS: SATEJ SHINDE



Nigerian model casts a spell

Foreign models who walked the ramp in India have all been tall, slender, confident and white. Breaking the spell after 15 years, this year is 23-year-old Ugochi Latoya Igwilo from Nigeria

SUSHMITA MURTHY
THE ASIAN AGE

✓ Scores of foreign models have walked down one of fashion's most celebrated platforms in India, Lakme Fashion Week (LFW) over the years. They've all been tall, slender, confident and most importantly, white. Breaking the spell after 15 years, this year is 23-year-old Ugochi Latoya Igwilo from Nigeria. Cutting a powerful picture with her short blonde crop, Ugochi is well aware of the attention she's been garnering as the first black model to walk the ramp at LFW. "I am not the most conventional face here, so a few designers are apprehensive to work with me. But again, there is also a certain level of excitement of working with an African model, which I really like. It's great that designers are willing to experiment and take chances," says Ugochi who came to India five years ago as a student of interior design at a college in Noida. "It was something my father suggest-



I am not the most conventional face here, so a few designers are apprehensive to work with me.

UGOCHI LATOYA IGWILO

ed. He's a businessman who has work connections here and it was his idea. I thought it was a good opportunity for me to move out of my country and explore another one. It was when I was studying there that I started doing fashion shows for college festivals and events."

Ugochi walked the ramp for designer Masaba Gupta at the ongoing LFW

Turn to Page 18

Ugochi walking the ramp at Lakme Fashion

Nigerian model...

Continued from Page 17

She further adds, "Then one day I decided to get a portfolio and approach some agencies and choreographers. That's how I started."

It may be her first time at LFW, but modeling isn't new to her, she reminds us when we ask her if she's been seeking tips from the more established names on the ramp. "I don't think they need to give me tips when they see that I am manag-

ing on my own. For a smart model it is very important that you watch and learn: I watch a lot of fashion television and music videos to pick up the charisma and poise needed on stage. I do a lot of research too. I know that a lot of models here have been in the business for a very long time, I have watched them on television and learnt. Even if they don't give me any advice, they're open and approachable," she says.

Having said that, friendly

advice is always welcome. "One afternoon when I was rubbing the make-up off my face, Ricky walked up to me and said 'don't do it like that, you need

to be softer on

your face!' So yes,

everybody is

very friendly,

professional

and encour-

aging. All the

girls I work

with are my

friends. We

lunch together,

laugh about

things and hang

out."

Thanks to a supportive

family back home, Ugochi has plans to approaching international fashion weeks soon. "My family is super supportive. As long as I am having fun, get-

ting work and growing as

a person," she says.

Are there any sartorial

preferences or

inhibitions she has?

"I like things that

are stylish and

quirky. I am open to

wearing anything

that fits well. But I

wouldn't want to

wear a thong on the

ramp. That'd be horri-

ble," she adds with a

For a smart model it is very important that you watch and learn. I watch a lot of fashion television and music videos to pick up the charisma and poise needed on stage. I do a lot of research too.

laugh.

Royal flavour, old world charm dominate Day 4

KUSUMITA DAS
MUMBAI

As the Lakme Fashion Week summer 2015 entered its fourth day, the mood was all about living the royal life. The ramp sartorially recreated palaces right from Istanbul to India. Mirror work was a leitmotif, something that designers Payal Singhal, Arpita Mehta and Kanika Saluja seemed to indulge in. Sonam and Paras Modi set the standards very high from the first show itself. Their collection "Istanblu" was inspired by the art seen in the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul.

Working with a limited colour palette of dark blue, muted whites and pearl greys, the designer duo

crafted a series of comfortable silhouettes comprising long jackets, draped pants, mini kurtas, bandhgalas and origami lounge pants that are a fresh take on the dhoti pants and hand embellished lehengas. The draped blouse was a standout while the blue and gold beautifully brought out the wall motifs and lattice grilled windows of the palace. The "shacket", which is a mix of the shirt and jacket added a dash of novelty to the silhouettes. The mint and old rose colour combination was particularly refreshing.

As the royalty veered closer home, Arpita Mehta and Anushree Reddy had their distinct expression of grandeur. Arpita's "Royal

Summer Affair" was a free spirited collection of sheer drape outfits in both Indian and Western silhouettes in creams and nudes. There was mirror work that enhanced the floral and geometric motifs. The gold embroidered stilettos too had mirrors on them adding to their sheen. The sheer element in all outfits rendered a flirty feel to them, thereby living up to their name. Anushree's "Royal Courtyard", however, took us right back behind royal walls. The Hyderabad-based designer found inspiration in the royal heritage of the city to create a line of bridal silhouettes. And to further pep up the mood the young designer had singer Kanika Kapoor perform



live on the ramp. As she crooned *Jugni*, models walked in heavily-embellished lehengas and saris. It was a colour splash of fuschia, florescent green, vibrant reds, bright yellows and gold with intricate zardosi, beading and crystal work. "I've tried to create the old world charm and glamour of palaces and monuments. So it has



A model walks the ramp for Satya Paul on Friday night. — ASIAN AGE

a very nizam feel to it," she said. Showstopper Ileana D' Cruz looked splendid in a hand dyed, organza pink leheriya lehenga with tulle work, and an intricate zardosi border. It was teamed with a heavily-embellished gold blouse. "This is the second time I'm walking for Anushree. I love this creation. Makes me feel like a princess," the actress said. Kanika, who was wearing a high-waisted sea green organza skirt and a floral print crop top, said, "I've walked on the ramp before but this is the first time I've sung on the ramp. And I've been to the palaces of Hyderabad, so I know where Anushree is coming from."

Among other shows Rimi Nayak's "Trail Tales" took

a detour from the royal route. Inspired by the cartographic art, she synced that with the Bengali typeface to create some radical prints that simply owned the ramp. Royalty was back in focus with Payal Singhal's Sheesh Mahal-inspired line, "Palace of Mirrors". Fabrics used were dupioni silk, cotton mul and tul. The designer recreated the palatial work in her zardozi embroidery, mirror work, nakshi and pita work. She also used the colour grey cleverly and gave it a royal facelift. Tamanna was her showstopper.

The sundown shows were a starry affair, with Nishka Lulla kicking it off with a collection for the free-spirited women travel.

European curbs may play spoilsport for leather exporters

BILAL ABDI

NEW DELHI | MARCH 21

EVEN as the cut in excise duty on leather footwear announced in Budget 2015-16 could offer a fillip to the domestic leather industry, the impending restrictions by the European Commission on leather products with higher than permissible levels of hexavalent Chromium (Cr VI) could be a major dampener for exporters in the sector.

While bigger players in the largely unorganised leather business claim to be geared up for meeting the challenges that arise from the

Eurozone restriction, which will be effective from May 1 this year, experts point to these restrictions potentially disrupting India's leather exports, considering that 42.25 per cent of the country's leather exports are headed to the European Union. The total export value amounted to \$2.49 billion for the year 2013-14.

While around the world, trivalent Chromium (Cr III) containing substances are used in 80-85 per cent of leather production as tanning agents, exposure to sunlight or changes in the 'ph' levels oxidises the trivalent Chromium to toxic Cr VI. In

Falls short of targets			
Year	Export target	Actual Export	Percentage Achievement
2011-12	4.7	4.8	103.04
2012-13	5.8	5	85.73
2013-14	7.3	5.9	80.67

(Figures in billion dollars)

(Source: Membership records of CLE)

January 2012, Danish authorities had submitted a dossier to the EU, stating that Cr VI is known to cause strong allergic reactions in humans. Based on this, the EU issued regulation EU 301/2014, which effectively stipulated that articles with leather parts that come into contact with

the human skin should not contain 3 mg/kg or more of Cr VI. Germany was first to restrict the presence of Cr VI under the Germany Ordinance on Commodities in 2010. Incidentally, Germany is the largest importer of Indian leather products from the EU and accounted for \$763.55

million in imports during fiscal 2013-14.

Many domestic players are of the view that this regulation could increase the cost of production. "There has been a 10 per cent increase in our cost of production due to this regulation," said KG Sharma, partner at FYNA, a small leather exporting firm. "Now we have to dry the leather in heating chambers as opposed to drying it out in the sunlight, which was more convenient for us," he added. Muhammad Sohail, managing partner at New Decent Footwear Industries echoed the same concern, "Our costs have gone up by 7 per cent

and the frequent tests we have to undertake to check the Chromium levels gets expensive and tedious."

Tests undertaken for detecting Cr VI and other substances on the restricted list are costly and time-consuming. "It takes 4-5 working days to complete Restricted Substance List (RSL) tests and another 2-3 days if physical tests are to be done. Even though the cost depends on the nature of the test ... RSL testing is expensive," said Amit Kumar, deputy manager of Leather and Footwear divisions at certification services firm Bureau Veritas. *(The reporter is a student of EXIMS)*