

## Touch of silk

# Namma Mysore Silk makes it to the skies

**MYSURU:** The eponymous Mysore Silk has finally made it to the skies.

Soon, the passengers on board Air India flights would get to see the flight attendants draped in Mysore silk sarees.

Karnataka Silk Industries Corporation (KSIC), the State-owned enterprise has supplied 6,000 sarees to air hostesses working for Air India.

Karnataka Silk Industries Corporation Chairman D Basavaraj told reporters here on Wednesday, "In all, 6,000 sarees in reddish maroon were dispatched to the flight operator.

"Another 4,000 sarees (in blue) will be sent for ground staff of the airlines in the second phase." To a specific query, Basavaraj said, "The sarees supplied to the flight operator were priced at Rs 6,450 each, while the market price of the sarees is Rs 12,000. The second batch of sarees were finalised after the authorities concerned approved the design.

"The silk factory in Mysuru, manufactures sarees with a

price tag of Rs 2.65 lakh."

Also, the KSIC is trying to woo corporate companies to buy sarees to promote the traditional garment.

The KSIC is holding talks with the Karnataka State Electronics Development Corporation Limited (Keonics), to supply the sarees to around 500 of its employees.

### Good revenue

Basavaraj said, the home-grown saree manufacturer has 300 designs, with around 72,000 sarees sold per annum. Second sale (sales of damaged sarees) is also fetching a good revenue. About 1,600 sarees sold in second sale annually.

The thrust is on quality, with the best of the cocoon and silk used in making the garment, that has transcended boundaries. The Corporation has recently launched the on-line booking of sarees. The service is yet to gain momentum. A total of 160 sarees have been sold online, added Basavaraj.

**DH News Service**

## **Plan to develop apparel cluster along Yamuna Expressway**

**PLANS** are on the anvil to develop an apparel cluster on the Yamuna Expressway in Noida, near Delhi, which will create lakhs of jobs. "We had recently approached UP chief minister Akhilesh Yadav for land. We expect the land to be allotted within two months. The overall investment will be around ₹300 crore. More than 100 factories will be set up in the land cluster spanning 200 acres. Every factory is expected to employ around 5,000-6,000 workers, more than half of which would be women," Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) member Lalit Thukral said.

## **FDCI extends tieup with Amazon**

The Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) announced on Thursday that it will extend its partnership with Amazon.in for India Couture Week 2015.



# पर्यटन मानचित्र पर चमकता फरीदाबाद

● सूरजकुंड मेले ने बनाई अंतरराष्ट्रीय पहचान ● मेले में शिरकत करते हैं दर्जनों देश

हरेंद्र नागर, फरीदाबाद

जहांगीर के खजांची बाबा शेख फरीद द्वारा 1607 ई. में बसाया गया यह शहर एशिया के मानचित्र पर पहले से ही अपना वर्चस्व रखता है। यहां के शासकों ने 1857 के स्वतंत्रता संग्राम में बलिदान दिया। उनके बनाए महल, छतरी व कुंड उनकी गौरव गाथा के चिह्न हैं और यही आज जिले के पर्यटन का आधार भी हैं। एक समय यह उपेक्षा का शिकार होकर आकर्षण खो रहे थे, लेकिन सरकार ने इनकी अहमियत समझी और संरक्षण की दिशा में काम शुरू किया। इनके अलावा शहर में कई निजी व सरकारी होटल बने हैं, पर्यटन को बढ़ावा देने में इनकी भूमिका को नकारा नहीं जा सकता।

## सूरजकुंड मेला पर्यटन का आधार

सूरजकुंड मेला सही मायने में फरीदाबाद के पर्यटन का आधार स्तंभ है। ढाई दशक से आयोजित हो रहे सूरजकुंड मेले की लोकप्रियता के साथ ही इसका दायरा भी बढ़ता गया। मेले ने हस्तशिल्पी और हथकरघा कारीगरों के कुंभ का स्वरूप ले लिया है। मेला अब विविध अंचलों की वस्त्र परंपरा, लोक कला, लोक व्यंजनों के अतिरिक्त लोक संगीत और लोक नृत्यों का भी संगम बन गया है। हर साल 1 से 15 फरवरी तक लगने वाले इस मेले में बड़ी संख्या में विदेशी पर्यटक होते हैं। यहां स्टालों की संख्या 500 तक पहुंच गई है।

## प्रसिद्ध है राजा नाहर सिंह महल

वास्तुकला के लिए प्रसिद्ध राजा नाहरसिंह महल 18वीं सदी का प्राचीन महल है। इसे राजा नाहरसिंह के उत्तराधिकारियों ने स्थापित किया। राजा नाहरसिंह ने स्वतन्त्रता



सूरजकुंड मेले में नृत्य करती विदेशी कलाकार। फाइल फोटो।

संग्राम में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई थी। एक समय यह महल उपेक्षा का शिकार होकर खंडहर में तब्दील हो गया था। 1994 में बल्लभगढ़ ब्यूटीफिकेशन सोसायटी का गठन हुआ। तत्कालीन उपायुक्त जालान उसके चेयरमैन बनाए गए और तत्कालीन विधायक राजेंद्र बीसला वाइस चेयरमैन। इस सोसायटी ने महल का जीर्णोद्धार कराया। राजा नाहर सिंह के इस महल को अंतरराष्ट्रीय पहचान देने के लिए 1996 में कार्तिक उत्सव की

शुरुआत हुई। इस उत्सव को केंद्रीय पर्यटन मंत्रालय, केंद्रीय युवा मामले मंत्रालय, हरियाणा पर्यटन विभाग, हरियाणा सांस्कृतिक विभाग व बल्लभगढ़ ब्यूटीफिकेशन सोसायटी मिलकर आयोजित करते थे। यह उत्सव वर्ष 2000 तक चला। बाद में महल को हेरिटेज होटल में बदल दिया गया और कार्तिक उत्सव बंद हो गया। आज यह राजसी महल बड़ी संख्या में पर्यटकों को आकर्षित करता है। आए दिन यहां पर्यटकों

की भीड़ जुटी रहती है।

## फन-फूड सेंटर बनेगा रानी की छतरी

राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग के किनारे बनी रानी की छतरी भी ऐतिहासिक इमारत है। इसके साथ शाही तालाब बना हुआ है। करीब पांच साल पहले इसके जीर्णोद्धार का काम शुरू हुआ। पर्यटन विभाग की यहां फन फूड सेंटर बनाने की योजना है, ताकि दिल्ली से आगरा जाने वाले पर्यटक यहां रुककर जाएं।

## इंदिरा को भी था बड़खल झील से प्यार

बड़खल झील इंदिरा गांधी की पसंदीदा झील रही है। वह यहां अक्सर घूमने आया करती थीं। बड़खल झील को भरने के लिए बड़े स्तर पर प्रयास किए जा रहे हैं। खुद मुख्यमंत्री मनोहर लाल ने बड़खल विधानसभा क्षेत्र में रैली के दौरान झील को गुलजार करने के लिए प्रतिबद्धता जताई है। बड़खल झील में पानी भरने के लिए जिला प्रशासन योजना बना रहा है।

## Dress code

# Employees asked to wear khadi in Bihar

**PATNA, PTI:** In a bid to promote the home-spun fabric, state government employees have been instructed by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to wear khadi clothes to work at least twice a week, Bihar minister Shyam Rajak said on Thursday.

The state government wanted to promote use of khadi clothes in every household, the Food and Industries minister said after inaugurating "Rashtriya Khadi Saras mahotsav" here. This would improve the economic condition of people involved in manufacturing khadi clothes, Rajak said, according to a statement released by the minister.

"Mahatama Gandhi had tried to uplift the country which was facing economic crisis at that time through use

of khadi. Economic condition of the nation could be strengthened even today by treading the path shown by the Father of the Nation," Rajak said. The minister said in order to promote sale of khadi and handicraft, the state government was building "Gram haat" at three places.

Addressing the gathering, Principal Secretary, Industries, Tripurari Sharan said "Khadi is part of our heritage which needs to be promoted."

People linked with khadi industries from Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Tripura, Odisha, Haryana and Delhi besides Bihar are participating in the fortnight-long Khadi festival being held here from July 15 to 30.



● Fast forward

# Fashion rides high on e-commerce bandwagon

Some years back, though not too long ago, prominent Indian fashion brands thought in terms of strategies, site locations and finding right 'franchisee' partners to expand their business in tier-II and tier-III cities. They knew these cities were a melting point for fashion aspirations, but the complexities involved in logistics and implementation invariably derailed the process of products reaching consumers on time.

"The wait used to be long, very long," recalls Parul Sharma, a Jammu resident. "I have just ordered a dress from an online portal. I plan to wear it on my farewell party. I never thought I would have so many choices and the ease to shop from home. It is a blessing, isn't it?" she asks animatedly.

The freedom of choosing while sitting at home was never an option, till the giant rise of e-commerce captured the fancy of businessmen who daringly chartered this unknown territory and invested in giving consumers the comfort and ease of browsing, exchanging and engaging by spoiling them with a range of options to choose from. The rule of 'touch-and-feeling' the garment is now a thing of past: it is all about zooming in, knowing your size and clicking the 'confirm' button to order anything online.

"We work very closely with the brands to present an overall compelling brand experience to the customers, and not just product experience. To achieve that, we use multiple mediums – online and offline to simplify fashion for our consumers," Vikas Purohit, head, Amazon Fashion, India, tells *Metrolife*.

"There is rich content, images and videos to bring out the right look and feel of products online. We have also made significant investments

in studios and creative teams who enable us to put out interesting trend guides, look-books and style guides."

For fashion brands, the idea of investment has shifted from brick-and-mortar stores to having an online presence – to reach out to a larger audience. But this change in mindset and business pattern has a lot to do with the Internet penetration in India, and accessibility and affordability of smart phones and tablets. A testimony of this successful courtship reflects in a Google report that says "India is expected to generate \$100 billion online retail revenue by 2020, out of which \$35 billion will be through fashion e-commerce."

"Accessibility to designer la-

bels, premium brands on online platforms is certainly seeing great response from Indian customers as the online luxury market in India is also evolving," Praveen Sinha, managing director and co-founder, *Jabong*, an online retailer, tells *Metrolife*.

"A strong plus point of the online world is that we don't have to open up a high-end physical infrastructure. So, you don't have high rentals and high operation costs. These factors allow us to have savings which we give out to customers as discounts."

No one would disagree with the role "raining discounts" play in increasing the traffic of online portals. It is a win-win situation for everyone, but it also leads to cut-throat competition in the virtual market and hence allows room for



“We are deconstructing fashion so that customers are more aware while making their fashion choices.”

Narendra Kumar

new developments that make this market equally exciting.

In a first, *Amazon India* roped in veteran designer Narendra Kumar as creative director "to provide a more creative vision to the

fashion store". "We are deconstructing fashion for customers so that they are more involved and aware while making their fashion choices and thus, make informed purchase decisions," points out

Purohit.

But Kumar is not new to experimentation. He was the founding fashion editor of *Elle India* when international fashion magazines were trying to gain footprint in India, and though he believes fashion has evolved tremendously, Kumar candidly tells *Metrolife* that "online fashion market is still in its nascent age."

"We have seen fashion as something that was occasion-based. However, now as you must have noticed, fashion is more like an everyday element attached with you. You want to look trendy and fashionable when at work, party, beach, or lunch. It is no longer restricted to only special days," he says.

"With the growing e-commerce industry, the marriage of content and technology is changing the way people consume information about fashion – and how they shop for fashion," he adds.

Fashion weeks have always been synonymous with glamour and glitz of the fashion world. It is a perfect breeding ground to build brand visibility, and offer space to renowned and young designers to showcase their talent. Last year, when India's first shop-able fashion event 'Jabong Online Fashion Week' was announced, it got on board the best names from the fashion world, including Bollywood.

"We aspired to target the discerning and fashion forward consumer through this fashion week," points out Sinha, adding, the idea was and has always been to make fashion accessible to a large audience and not restrict it to a particular metropolitan city.

These developments hint at work opportunities the online fashion industry alone would be offering to the young fashionistas in making.

Shilpa Raina



PROMISING The online fashion industry assures better opportunities for budding fashionistas.

## Maha to allot 10,000 houses to mill workers

**MPOST BUREAU**

**MUMBAI:** The Maharashtra government would initiate the process of allotting 10,000 houses to mill workers by December this year, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said on Thursday.

He added an additional 8,710 houses would also be allotted to the mill workers.

Making a statement in the Lower House, Fadnavis said the mill workers are entitled to get houses of 225 square feet under the scheme for mill worker's housing.



Devendra Fadnavis

"About 6,925 houses were built under the scheme and 5,644 have already been transferred to eligible applicants. 6,794 new houses are under construction and the third phase would involve construction of 2,911 houses," he said.

Apart from these houses developed by Maharashtra

Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA), the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) would provide 4,800 houses under the scheme. Thus a total of 10,000 houses would be available for distribution by this year, the Chief Minister said.

MMRDA would provide for additional 8,710 houses which will be available by December 2016, Fadnavis said.

There had been 1,48,067 applications when lottery was drawn for the first phase in 2012.



# Cloud-Mobile Blend Can Be an Answer to Global Skills Gap

ET By Invite



AJAY KELA

There is a deep fracture in the global talent supply chain. In 2013, countries from the US to Canada, Australia and nations in Europe, were reporting their inability to fill skilled trades as their top problem. Globally, the skills category had topped the rankings for six of seven years till 2014 as being the most difficult to fill.

Nasscom in India says only 25% of graduates working in information technology are readily employable and the India outsourcing industry is already spending more than \$1 billion a year on retraining these graduates for work.

Where can world leaders find a solution for a skilling system for entry-level mid-skills jobs that can produce a turnaround at scale and do so expeditiously? This is a question that hounds policy planners. The emerging scenario in India tells us how important it is to find the right answers — because by 2020, 60% of India's population of 1.3 billion will be in the working age group of 15-59 years.

Even existing industry-linked vocational training programmes like the ones in Germany and South Korea that have shown success are limited by the scale they can be deployed on.

In addition, market conditions demand a revamp of the old models because:

■ Industry needs have become increasingly dynamic, calling for an on-demand update of training

programmes and associated teacher training and distribution

■ Job competencies are getting globalised, calling for global skilling standards

■ Better focus is required towards entry level mid-skill jobs where demand is significant

Systems that use affordable open source and cloud technologies are providing the necessary scale. In this model, textbooks are replaced by cheap, digital cloud-based immersive and engaging multimedia content.

The content can be in the form of videos, animation, gaming and can be self-paced and need-based, freeing up time for family obligations, part-time jobs and other pursuits.

## EASY ACCESS

**Systems that use open source and cloud technologies are providing scale. Textbooks are replaced by cheap, cloud-based engaging multimedia content**

We have seen some successful cloud-based models such as the Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). An example is of the Khan Academy for high school math and science education. But the need is for a blended model that goes a step ahead.

This model combines classrooms with online learning. Skills Development Network for mid-skilled workers created by the Wadhvani Foundations follows this model which falls neatly between the MOOCs platform and a traditional classroom.

Skills Development Network has been piloted in India using ex-

isting infrastructure at over 1000 Indian high schools and post-secondary institutes, and in Community Colleges in the US.

The programmes are a result of collaboration with industry and academia experts such as the Bangalore-based Narayana Health and Healthcare Consortium for nursing and patient care, the Zuri Hotels for hospitality, Café Coffee Day for retail café operations, Dusters Total Solutions Services for facility management, Anne Arundel Community College for Cybersecurity and Borough of Manhattan Community College for Medical Assistant Specialist curriculum.

Importantly, this model blends online and classroom instruction. Using cloud technology, mobile networks, video and open source, courses and training can be distributed at will, in practically any language and geography. The content can be changed on demand without loss of standards or relevance.

There is substantial proof the model works. At the Narayana Health and Healthcare Consortium the programme has reached 5,000 nurses and assistants across 20 centres in the past year.

Narayana Health has plans to expand from its existing 5,000 beds to 30,000 beds in the next two years. It has chosen the technology-backed, blended, learner-centric model over its traditional teacher-driven courses to scale and ensure standards for care quality are maintained.

The blended learning model primarily enabled by cloud and mobile technology is fast becoming the foundation for a low-cost solution to address the skills gap. With demonstrated success in two extreme markets — India and the US — it could stand the litmus test of practically any socioeconomic context.

*The writer is president and CEO of the Wadhvani Foundations*



## एडिडास ने एफडीआई की अनुमति मांगी

नई दिल्ली। जर्मन स्पोर्ट्सवियर कंपनी एडिडास ग्रुप ने भारत में कंपनी स्वामित्व वाले स्टोर के परिचालन में 100 प्रतिशत प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश (एफडीआई) की अनुमति देने के लिए सरकार से संपर्क किया है। कंपनी ने अपनी विस्तार योजनाओं के तहत यह कदम उठाया है।