



Fashion Brand Icons

Business leaders shaping the *fashion* landscape

PART 2



Editor's Note

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As we gear up for the 22nd edition of India Fashion Forum (IFF) in Bengaluru, I am reminded of how we have risen as phoenixes and the strength on which we have built this industry with grit and will continue to do so. The long and dark spell of the pandemic is already behind us. However, the devastation it brought has taught us a hard lesson and helped us prepare for any harsh reality that could catch us by surprise.

It's been a year since the previous IFF, and a few years since we had last crawled out of prolonged isolation. With the past clear in mind, the present more consolidated, and the future ever more hopeful, we look forward to another exciting innings.

I firmly believe that the 22nd edition of IFF will be a much bigger convergence of the industry fraternity. Chaired by industry leader Shailesh Chaturvedi, the forum will witness the presence of the industry's movers and shakers, who will expound their views on some of the industry's pressing issues. I look forward to meeting you.

Amitabh Taneja

Karan & Moin opens exclusive studio in Gurugram



Menswear label Karan & Moin has opened an exclusive studio in Gurugram. The studio is the label's first step towards strengthening its presence in the NCR region.

The studio showcases a range of menswear, featuring celebration wear, corporate dressing and elements for regular men's wardrobe. Spread over 3,300 sq feet, it claims that it is designed with a welcoming atmosphere.

Kabir Karan, Director, Karan & Moin, said, "For the past 30 years, Karan & Moin has been dedicated to helping the Indian male

define his look. While anchored in Delhi, we have operated out of many locations across the country but opening a full-fledged Studio akin to one in Delhi was a first. The Gurugram outlet is a response to the constant ask by our customers who relocated there over the years."

Speaking about the studio, he added, "The studio has been designed per the Karan & Moin values of customer first with an added touch of contemporary to appeal to the new generation. We aim to serve and have an offering that appeals to varying tastes and styles."

Shoppers Stop opens first store in Odisha

Shoppers Stop has opened its first store in Rourkela, Odisha. The new store is located at Plutone Mall.

Speaking on the launch, Venu Nair – Customer Care Associate, MD & CEO, Shoppers Stop Limited says "We are optimistic that our first Shoppers Stop store in Rourkela will enhance our retail offering to the city's fashion-forward residents. Our retail stores are a natural extension of our brand, design quality, and innovation. We curate the product offerings at the store based on consumer preferences in the area, as part of a hyperlocal customer engagement strategy. By increasing our brand's presence and market share in the region, we hope to further reinforce the high customer loyalty and brand recall we have in markets across the country."

The new Shoppers Stop store retails products from over 500 brands spread across multiple categories all under one roof. With this new store, the brand has enhanced its presence across 101 department stores in 49 cities. The store houses key brands such as Jack and Jones, Levis, Celio, Rare Rabbit, AND, Vero Moda, ONLY, JJ Kids, Adidas, Puma, RENNE, HUSH PUPPIES, ONLY KIDS among others. The store will be home to beauty brands like L'Oreal, Maybelline, Sugar, Chambor, My Glamm, Lakme, Colorbar, Burberry, Armani, Bvlgari, Versace, Mont Blanc, Ferragamo, Calvin Klein among others.

"At Shoppers Stop, the vibe is upbeat, and we are really excited about our expansion plans. To suit our clients' demands, we will continue to expand our product line," added Nair.



Brune & Bareskin launches third store in Ludhiana

Brune & Bareskin, the luxury leather brand, has launched its third store in Ludhiana, Punjab.

"We are thrilled with the response we have received from the people of Ludhiana, It is heartening to see so many people appreciate our handcrafted leather products and bespoke service across all categories, including the exotic leather collection which includes genuine ostrich and stingray leathers," said Tabby Bhatia Director of Brune & Bareskin

The new store in Ludhiana, spanning over 2,500 sqft, offers a wide range of products to choose from.



Ed-a-Mamma Expands Portfolio with Infantswear

Actor and investor Alia Bhatt's brand is now expanding its product offerings to launch an infant's collection focusing on the age group of 0-3 years. This new launch takes the brand one step closer to building an 'Ed-a-Mamma' world, where, the brand claims, children (and their mommies) grow up putting the planet first. Ed-a-Mamma has had four new launches in the past four months – with maternity wear, Ed-heads (the teen collection), maternity-nursing wear and now the most recent baby wear.

Ed-a-Mamma's new drop introduces three themes – Jungle Joy, Cute-a-saurus and Woodland Wonders. The collection revolves around the joy and innocence with which babies look at the world – hand drawn doodles from the plant and animal kingdom feature prominently and bring the themes alive. The infants' collection features lightweight, soft and breathable casuals and has a wide range of boys, girls and unisex wear. Key pieces in the collection include pieces such as t-shirts, denims, dresses with bloomers, expandable bodysuits, sleep suits, caps, booties, bibs amongst others.

Speaking about the new launch, Alia Bhatt said, "The decision to launch Infants was a deeply personal one. As a young mother, we want to give our children the best of everything. And so, on my quest to find the best possible clothes for my baby, we embarked on the journey to create this infant wear line, which I am so happy to share with you. Cute and Comfortable, this new line is approved by nature, and by the lil beans themselves."

Iffat Haider Jivan, Business Head, Ed-a-Mamma emphasizes, "I'm really proud of this collection. We pride ourselves on having our ear to the ground, and are in tune with what Mammamas and their lil beans need and want. With the launch of Ed-a-Mamma's Baby Wear, we offer parents expanded product options through a curated line from newborns through toddlers. Staying true to the brand's commitment to responsible sourcing, the entire collection is carefully crafted to provide parents with supreme quality and great designs that are also easy on their pocket."



The Pant Project partners with designer Guido Bertagnolio

India's leading custom-made apparel brand, The Pant Project, has partnered with celebrated Italian designer Guido Bertagnolio to unveil a limited-edition luxury workwear pants range.

The Pant Project's luxury workwear collection is created using merino wool sourced from Australia, mindfully infused with lycra to add stretch and comfort, and recycled polyester to make the fabric durable.

According to Guido, "I have picked core colours for my collection, which are a must-have in an Indian man's wardrobe but in luxurious, unique shades that can be worn year-round to make you more fashionable than everybody else."

The luxurious pants come in solid, textured, and plaid options and are mid-weight, making them ideal to be worn year-round. The thoughtfully designed pants can be paired in

different ways to take them from day to night. With over 60 years of experience designing the choicest fabrics for globally leading fashion brands, Guido has taken a leap of faith in partnering with a young brand like The Pant Project.

The new range is made using fine wool and a blend of polyester to avoid shrinkage and ensure durability. I have tried to make the best pants for the Indian market.

On the partnership with Guido, Dhruv Toshniwal, CEO of The Pant Project, said, "It's truly an honour to have Guido as the design expert at The Pant Project, as we keep inching closer to our dream of transforming the men's fashion industry in India. Under Guido's guidance, we have pushed the boundaries of what's possible in luxury workwear and are proud to unveil this limited-edition collection for our customers."



trueBrowns collaborates with Chitrangda Singh for 'Saadgi' collection

Fashion brand trueBrowns has collaborated with actor Chitrangda Singh for its latest spring summer 2023 collection titled 'Saadgi'.

The new collection includes co-ords, dresses, kurta-pant sets, jacket-blouse-pant sets, kurta-pant dupatta sets, and more ranging across a varied size bracket of 2XS to 6XL.

Commenting on the collection, Singh said, "trueBrowns is a brand that speaks volumes about today's traditional yet modern woman. Co-creating the designs of Saadgi was a beautiful experience as the silhouettes are easy going along with the prints and colours of the fabric, perfect for summer wardrobe needs. I am glad to be associated with such a brand that resonates with my thoughts of being modern yet rooted to our culture."

Udita Bansal, founder of trueBrowns added, "The response we got from our first ever celebrity association with Chitrangda has been overwhelming. It is extremely fortunate that our vision, design aesthetics, and views have been in sync and that is reflected in the collection itself."

Victoria's Secret launches first design collaboration with Naomi Osaka

Victoria's Secret has launched its first-ever design collaboration with tennis champion and activist Naomi Osaka

Dubbed 'Victoria's Secret x Naomi Osaka', the collection features a variety of casual sleepwear pieces, including robes, rompers, sleep shirts and shorts.

"VS x Naomi Osaka beautifully represents the tranquility and happiness that comes when you take a moment to embrace you – I believe everyone should prioritize self-care. I am proud to have collaborated with Victoria's Secret in designing a collection that brings this message to life through dreamlike styles," said Osaka.

"We are honored to have partnered and designed with Naomi on our first-ever collaboration with a collective partner. As a champion of self-love and a true inspiration to women all over the world, Naomi encourages us all to celebrate our dreams through this special collection,"



shared Janie Schaffer, chief design officer for Victoria's Secret. "Designed with dreamy color blends, unique patterns and absolute comfort in mind, each VS X Naomi Osaka piece embodies the beauty and peacefulness of taking time for you, and we look forward to sharing it with everyone."

Skechers collaborates with Diane von Furstenberg

Skechers has announced a new footwear and apparel collaboration with fashion industry icon, Diane von Furstenberg.

The collaboration, Skechers x DVF, promises to blend the designer's signature prints and bold colors with Skechers comfort technology, across several collections.



The collaboration launches with the 'Endless Kisses' capsule featuring the timeless DVF 'Lips' print.

"As a woman on the go and a passionate hiker, I'm excited to launch our collaboration with Skechers, a leader in comfort innovation," said von Furstenberg.

"Featuring the instantly recognizable Diane von Furstenberg aesthetic on our best-selling styles will generate excitement for fashion-minded consumers around the globe," added Kathy Kartalis, senior vice president of global product for Skechers. "This is our first coordinating apparel and footwear collaboration, and our partnership with DVF offers an expressive 'wow factor' that illustrates to women how Skechers has the range to offer a complete and comfortable look that she'll love to wear throughout her busy day."

Fashion Brand Icons

Business leaders shaping *the fashion* landscape

No business can survive for long without a vision; even if it does, it would be susceptible to every disruption and upheaval that generally comes in its business cycle. It needs a leader who has the capacity to translate, create that vision, or make it clearer and turn it into reality. The very essence of leadership is having a vision in the first place. Moreover, as you can't blow an uncertain trumpet, it should be clearly articulated so that they can manage and lead people. A team led by a visionary leader with a clear direction knows what it can achieve and how far it can go.

But before one becomes a leader, growing oneself is the process that eventually translates to success and helping others grow. No leader is born; they are made. Like life, the journey of leadership has a simple beginning; after all, a leader who has never learned to obey cannot be a good commander. Thus, he or she knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way. But at times, people barely know he or she exists, as long as the sea is calm.

They may appear far-fetched or some may say they are protagonists from a work of fiction. But then, fiction is inspired by reality. Who are these leaders who have prevailed when the water is choppy and have built legacy or turned dreams into realities?

We resume from where we left off two months ago to present to you the next batch of leaders who are the brand icons in India's thriving fashion and lifestyle industry. They are the people whose actions and decisions have and continue to have direct bearings on the industry.

“CUSTOMER
EXPERIENCE
WILL DEFINE
THE LONGEVITY
OF ANY RETAIL
BUSINESS.”

- ABHISHEK BAJPAI



ABHISHEK BAJPAI

CEO, **Apparel Group India Pvt.Ltd** | 46

Education

MBA

Career history and experience

Total experience of 23 years in retail.

- Liwa Enterprises - United Arab Emirates, 2000 to 2008 - Management Trainee , Area Manager, Retail Manager
- Al Tayer Group, UAE , 2008 - 2011 - Business Development Manager
- Liwa Enterprises, UAE , 2011 - 2015 - GM and Chief Operating Officer
- Apparel Group, UAE, 2015 - 2018 - General Manager
- Apparel Group, India, 2018 - 2021 - Vice - President
- Apparel Group, India, 2022 - Current - CEO

Role and responsibilities

Managing the entire India business as the CEO. Key responsibilities include:

- P/L management of Apparel Group India business
- Strategic growth
- Business operations
- Partner management

Strengths

- Business operations
- Brand growth
- Talent management

Aspirations you want to fulfill

Creating a high performance organisation which provides growth opportunities for teams and individuals to progress.

Game changing retail technologies according to you

- Data-led personalization
- Open Ai
- Metaverse

Skills that helped you succeed in this industry

- Continuous desire to learn
- Talent management and growth
- Creating high performance culture

Lessons learned over the years

- Focus on sustainable growth.
- Inventory management is key to business operations.
- Customer experience will define the longevity of any retail business.

Your take on the future of industry

In retail, brands with omnichannel set up will continue to grow. Customer Experience is going to be an important differentiating factor for brands, and talent is going to be critical for any retail business to sustain.

Role model

Martin Waters.

Learning from your career

- Talent and high performance culture is key to success for any business.
- Scalability is critical for profitability of business.
- Customer experience defines the growth of brands.

Life mantra

Surround yourself with people that push you to do better.



What's driving the fashion rental market in India

The global market for fashion rental is expected to expand at a CAGR of 11% from 2021 to 2031. With the model gaining popularity among young consumers, India may not be far behind. A peek into what's driving this growth.

Anagha R Ralna

Deepa Kalro turned her unused ethnic garments into a thriving clothes rental business. That was seven years ago and today The Dress Bank rents about 300 dresses in a month. "After my wedding, I noticed the heavy ethnic wear I had were laying around in the wardrobe gathering dust with no occasion to wear it. We have so many waste resources and how can we make the most of these, I thought. This is where the idea came from," shared Deepa Kalro, founder of The Dress Bank, a bridal rental showroom in Bengaluru. Fashion rental business although not new is picking up in India. The recent growth is driven by several factors, including

the rise of social media, the increasing cost of clothing, and the increasing inclination toward sustainability.

Worldwide too, it is a big business that is witnessing healthy growth. The global online clothing rental market was valued at \$1,013 million in 2017 and is estimated to reach \$1,856 million by 2023, registering a CAGR of 10.6% according to a report by ResearchAndMarkets.com.

The concept took off in 2009 when Rent the Runway, a US-based e-commerce platform allowed users to rent, subscribe or buy designer apparel and accessories. Ever since the company has been registering strong

growth. Its revenue for the third quarter of 2022 rose 31% year-over-year, while its active user base increased, with subscribers beginning to use the platform for more than just special events.

Earlier, people used to rent only high-end unaffordable luxury clothing for special occasions. Nowadays, people can rent any clothing items online that complement their everyday wardrobe.

"Renting is a structured way of borrowing clothes where you don't have the awkwardness and you feel like you really own the dress," said



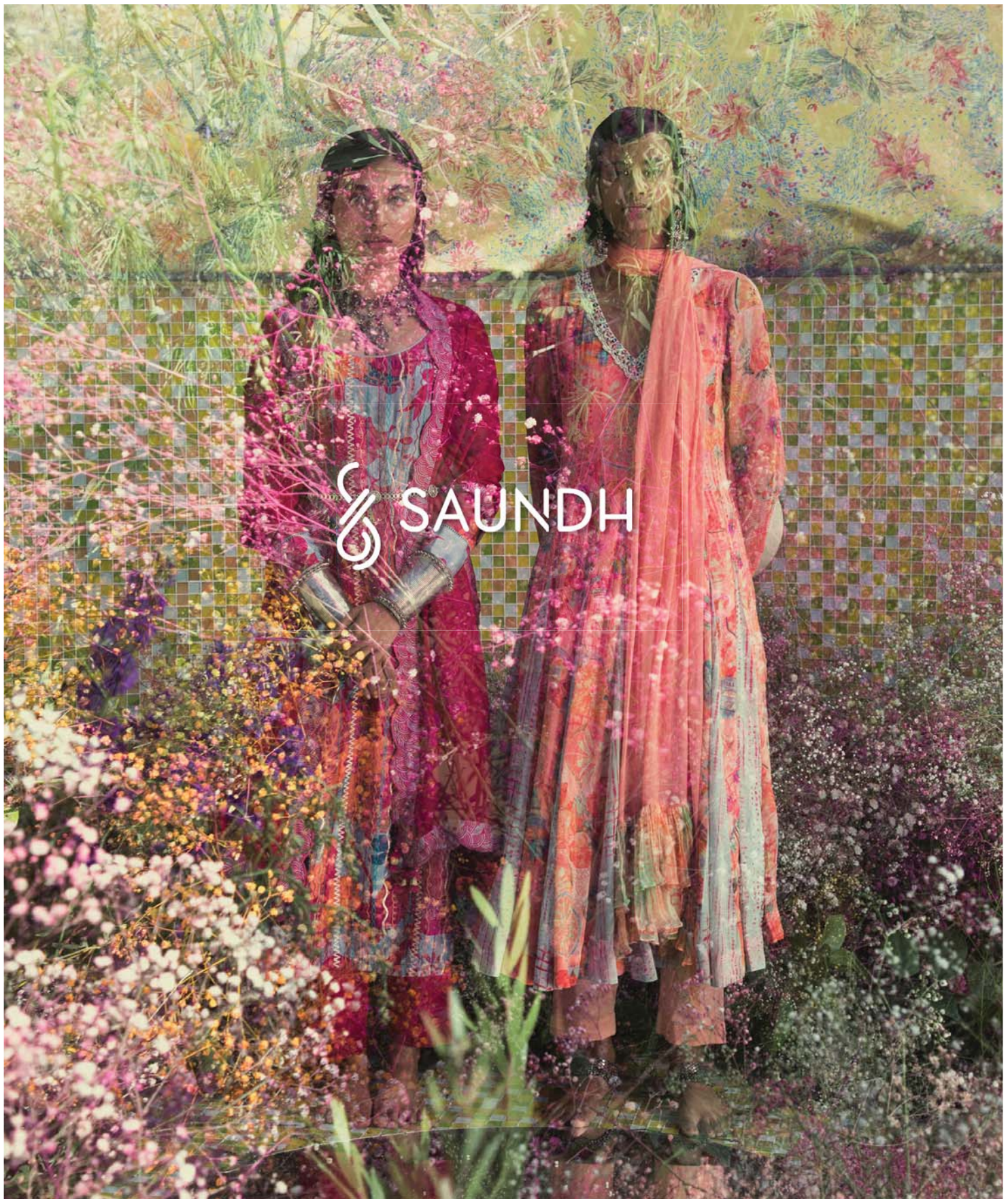
Virgil Abloh:

An African American Man's Journey to the Top of the Fashion World

Jifen Taneja

Today, people know Virgil Abloh for the role he held at Louis Vuitton, his work, parties he Djed and his collaborations with famous brands. But not everyone knows his journey to the top of fashion as an African-American man and how he broke the deep-rooted boundaries in the culture of high fashion...





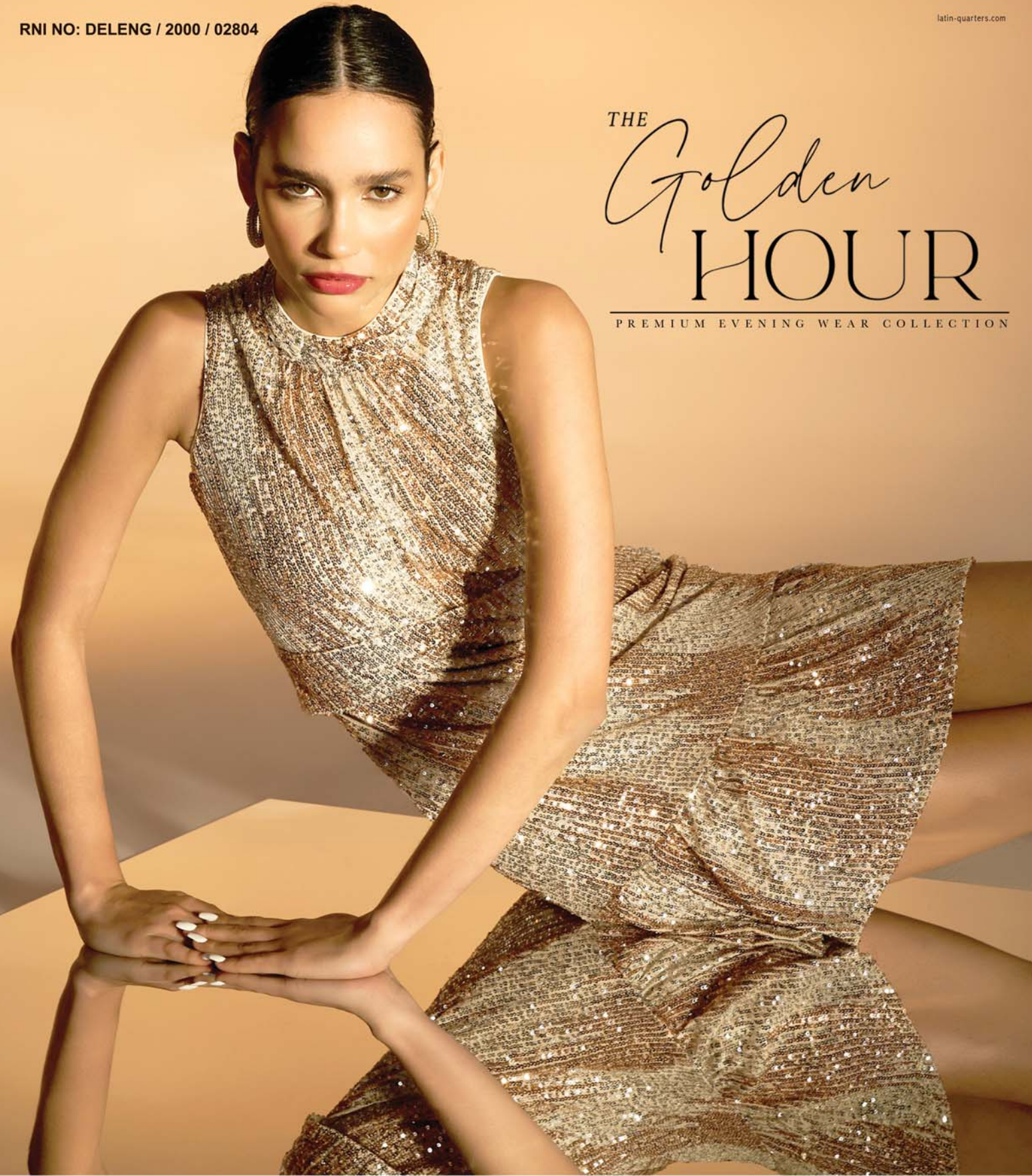
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