India’s Aditya Birla Fashion to buy 51% of high-end Sabyasachi

27 January 2021

India’s Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd said on Wednesday it would buy a 51% stake in the Sabyasachi brand, best known for high-end wedding wear favoured by Bollywood celebrities and rich business families.

The deal will see ABFRL inject 3.98 billion rupees ($54.53 million) into Sabyasachi Couture for the stake, ABFRL said in a statement to Indian stock exchanges.
The investment will allow ABFRL to strengthen its position in the largest and one of the fastest-growing fashion segments in the country, allowing it to tap into the luxury markets of clothing, jewellery and accessories, it said.

Sabyasachi Mukherjee, the brand’s founder, is one of India’s most-famous fashion designers whose intricate and bespoke designs have often been the top wedding-wear choice of movie stars like Priyanka Chopra and the family of Mukesh Ambani, India’s richest man.

Sabyasachi’s designs - though highly priced and out of reach of most middle-class Indians - are often copied and sold at deep discounts in local markets. The Vogue website on Wednesday listed one particular Sabyasachi wedding outfit’s price at 395,000 rupees ($5,407).

ABFRL’s statement quoted Mukherjee as saying the deal followed his efforts to find the right partner to “ensure continuity and long-term sustainable growth”.

ABFRL - which operates more than 3,000 stores in India - also manufactures famous Indian apparel brands and owns a retail chain named Pantaloons. It owns the rights to sell Forever 21, American Eagle Outfitters and Ralph Lauren branded clothes in India.