

## **ABFRL launches Innovation Challenge to find alternatives to plastic packaging in collaboration with Circular Apparel Innovation Factory**

*~The Innovation Challenge seeks non-pollutant alternatives and systems to cut down single-use plastic~*

**Mumbai, November 29, 2019:** Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd. (ABFRL) has launched a first-of-its-kind open Innovation Challenge with Circular Apparel Innovation Factory (CAIF) to spearhead a change in packaging and find innovative alternatives to plastics.

According to an estimate by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), India generates almost 26,000 tonnes of plastic waste daily. Approximately 43% of manufactured plastic in the country is used for packaging purposes, most of which is single-use plastic waste, as the apparel and textile industry is struggling with plastic waste; the Innovation Challenge aims to find solutions to one of the industry's biggest challenges.

*"At ABFRL, we aim to use 100% sustainable packaging material by eliminating any type of pollutant. Going forward, we will be exploring innovative packaging solutions to reduce our carbon footprint. We are pleased to partner with CAIF for this initiative. We endeavor to lead industry practices around sustainability and platforms such as these enable us to bring forth ideas and innovations that accelerate the adoption of sustainable fashion."* said **Mr. Ashish Dikshit, Managing Director, ABFRL at the launch.**

He further added "We are hoping to find solutions to one of the industry's biggest challenge of reducing the usage of single-use plastic packaging. We are confident that the Innovation Challenge initiative will help the industry to transition to circular business practices".

**Dr. Naresh Tyagi, Chief Sustainability Officer, ABFRL,** *"In 2013, ABFRL began a unique Sustainability Program called 'ReEarth' which addresses the most significant economic, environmental and social issues that humanity faces today, and since then we have done pioneering work in sustainable and circular fashion. This initiative is another step forward in that journey. We are delighted to partner with CAIF and are certain that innovators and startups present here will be able to leverage this opportunity to come up with eco-friendly alternatives to plastic."*

Circular Apparel Innovation Factory is an industry-led initiative with Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail and The DOEN Foundation as anchor partners and driven by Intellectap with a vision to make India's textile and apparel industry circular through building the capabilities and ecosystem needed for this transition. Open innovation challenges are one way by which CAIF addresses the discovery gap and helps its industry members to identify opportunities for change and possible partners for collaboration to make circular business practices a reality.

**Vikas Bali, CEO Intellectap,** *"We know that 'business as usual' will not help solving the size of the problem India and the world is witnessing with regard to plastic waste. We are proud to help ABFRL as an industry pioneer in its journey to finding ways to rethink current approaches to packaging"*.

CAIF Conclave, a first of its kind industry conclave was hosted by Intellectap in partnership with ABFRL and The DOEN Foundation. The conclave focused on the need for change towards circular business

practices and showcasing some of the industry's most forward-thinking efforts towards a circular economy.

The conclave, which happened as part of this year's Sankalp Forum saw the participation of 300+ industry participants and some of the country's most innovative circular fashion startups.

**Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd.:**

ABFRL is a part of USD 48.3 billion Aditya Birla Group. With revenue of Rs. 8,118 cr. spanning retail space of 7.5 million sq. ft. (as on March 31, 2019), it is India's first billion-dollar pure-play fashion powerhouse with an elegant bouquet of leading fashion brands and retail formats.

As a fashion conglomerate, ABFRL has a strong network of 2,714 brand stores across 750 cities in the country. It is present across 18,000+ multi-brand outlets and 5,000+ point of sales in department stores across India. It has a repertoire of leading brands such as Louis Philippe, Van Heusen, Allen Solly and Peter England established for over 25 years.

Pantaloons is one of India's largest fast fashion store brand. The International Brands portfolio boasts of - The Collective, India's largest multi-brand retailer of international brands and select mono-brands such as Ted Baker, Ralph Lauren, American Eagle and Simon Carter.

**For more details:**

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