

Designer Abdul Halder empowers underprivileged women

Designer Abdul Halder says he is immensely pleased with the manner in which he has been able to empower underprivileged women by encouraging them to come out of their shells and become a part of the mainstream.

Toward this end, he hired a group of underprivileged women who worked with him on creating an array of outfits that were showcased here over the weekend.

Talking about his association with this noble cause, Halder said: 'Show director Tridib Raman approached me and told me that this show will not be a commercial success but it will surely give you some good name. It was there that I decided that money is not everything so I took up this challenge.'

Titled Mission Sanitation, the show was promoted by the UN-NGO-IRENE Network and Sulabh Social Service Organization to promote awareness about sanitation issues.

Saturday evening saw top models like Sheetal Mallhar, Jessie Randhawa, Indrani Dasgupta, Carol Gracious, Rahul Dev, Sahil Shroff, Aryan Vaid and Sudhanshu Pandey sashaying on the ramp in Halder's pristine collection.

'It took four months to design these clothes with all embellishments. They have worked hard and done a fairly good job,' Halder told IANS.

'I have used silk, satin, nets and cotton with embellishments for this collection. All clothes are designed by me and these women have done the stitching and embroidery part,' he added.

Halder had used bold and bright colours like green, yellow, red, purple and fuchsia for his collection.

It was an eight-sequenced show with 104 ensembles and was choreographed by Marc Robinson. Each sequence had different themes like - sophistication, evening gowns, men luxury, women empowerment and wedding gowns.

Sulabh movement founder, Bindeshwar Pathak, who has also been associated with the cause for the past 40 years, said: 'Initially convincing these women to come out of social apprehensions was a very difficult task. They were hated by the people for their menial job but Nai Disha has given them a direction to feel good about themselves.'

Pathak gives credit to Raman for coming up with this unique idea saying: 'Raman came with the idea. He knew Halder and thought that this could be a very good platform for these women to give them the exposure and respect.'

Pathak added: 'I have shown the way to people. Now it is up to them to follow the path and make their lives. Rather than blaming the government for not working for the lower strata of society, people should take the initiative and work for such causes.'

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