

## Fashion weeks to take place March, July

The Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) has finally announced the dates for the upcoming edition of India Fashion Week and the country's first Men's Fashion Week (MFW).

While India Fashion Week will be held March 20-24, the MFW is scheduled for July 10-12, ensuring a considerable gap between the two events.

'After many discussions and suggestions, we have formally decided to hold the MFW in July as we all felt February was too early and not the right month to do such a major event,' FDCI president Sunil Sethi told IANS Monday.

'We do not want to dilute the importance of MFS - this should be a separate event as men's buyers are separate buyers. After all, this is the happening for the first time in India,' he said.

Earlier, the board had planned to hold the MFW at the beginning or end of the India Fashion Week or run it simultaneously at an adjacent location, but it did not work out.

'There was lot of confusion about the timings of the MFW but the board finally decided to have it as a separate event, based on requests from various fashion designers and experts,' Sethi said.

'Designers wanted to concentrate more on their prêt line for the India Fashion Week. They are really enthusiastic about MFW and they want to take it to an international level and this requires time and effort, which would not have been possible if the two fashion weeks were merged or run parallel,' he added.

Designer Rajvi Mohan, who designs exclusively for men, is very happy with this initiative and said: 'I'm not a member of FDCI, so the first thing I want to do is to apply for its membership to be a part of this wonderful initiative. I'm looking forward to it.'

Though the dates are out, discussions are still on for the sponsors as the three-year contract with Wills Lifestyle has expired.

'It will take a week for us to decide about the sponsors as we have got good offers from different sponsors,' Sethi said.

'We are very happy with all our sponsors and are looking forward to tie up with those who are willing to take Indian fashion forward. Our association with the Wills Lifestyle was an excellent one and we have grown together as a powerful team,' he added.

Over a span of three years, the brand value of Wills Lifestyle has witnessed an increase of up to 10-15 percent, thanks to its association with the fashion week.

'It is a fact that that our sales increased by 10-15 percent after we joined hands with FDCI. The lifestyle market is still in its nascent stage so we have to think of ideas to promote our product and create a market for our designs,' said Atul Chand, Wills Lifestyle's divisional chief executive.

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