

**STARTUP CORNER**

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# Find your fashion statement in khadi

EDI student Priyanshi Jariwala started 'The Khadi Cult' to make the humble khadi fashionably appealing to youths

**E**ntrepreneurship Development Institute (EDI) student Priyanshi Jariwala always dreamt of starting her own venture, however, the one question that always posed a challenge for her was the choice of fabric she would wish to promote. Already aware of India's love for cotton and linen, backed by centuries of tradition, Jariwala wanted to promote a fabric more indigenous in nature.

She zeroed in on the handspun and hand-woven khadi and hit on the idea to start the venture, the khadi Cult, six months ago while she was still taking lessons on entrepreneurship.

"I started researching for fabrics and ended up finalising khadi given its inbuilt properties. Cool in summer and warm in winter, khadi is a versatile fabric. Surprisingly people do not readily take a liking for the fabric. Khadi had been always associated with the Gandhian ideology, hence its current customers mostly include politicians and foreigners. Another notion is that the fabric is expensive, which is not the fact. Nonetheless, once considered as not-so-glamorous, the fabric is gradually becoming a favourite among fashion enthusiasts," she said.

"To be doubly sure about my attempt to promote khadi, I started searching for available products in the market, such as Khadi bhandars, certain designers and individual players. I found that what Khadi bhandars offer are extremely basic products, while what professional designers offer are ethnic items. My idea was to bring a synergy between the contemporary and ethnic elements that is quirky and youth appealing. So, I finally used creative design elements and infused quirk in khadi garments through digital printing," she added.

"Youngsters constantly crave for something out of the box and unique. Moreover, the demand towards eco and body-friendly garments is

cal garmenting," Jariwala stated.

This young business woman's team includes freelancer designers, tailors and printers. According to her, the biggest challenge she faced was the perception of the fabric and limited knowledge behind its customer base and market penetration. "I have been trying to alter the perception with the help of our quirky design elements and youth-centric approach. We aim to become from a fashion brand from a fashion line," she said.

Jariwala's customer base significantly varies between the age group of four and 45 years. "This is because of absolute customisation facility, quality and product variants we offer to our customers in making the fabric design as per their requirement," she said.



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