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## **Ex-Sequoia-India Investor Raises \$3M for AĪZA by Amaani from Peak XV's Surge to Build Beauty Brands from the Middle East**



*Shubham Poddar, Founder and CEO, Amaani. Image courtesy: Amaani*

**Dubai, UAE - September 16, 2025** - Amaani, a new-age consumer company reimagining beauty and wellness from the Middle East, has raised \$3M in seed funding for its debut Arab beauty brand AĪZA. The round was led by Peak XV's Surge (formerly Sequoia Capital India & SEA), marking their first consumer and seed investment in the MENA region.

Founded by **Shubham Poddar**, a former Sequoia India investor who helped drive its expansion in the Middle East with investments across fintech, foodtech, and proptech, Amaani is built on a bold vision to create global beauty brands from Arabia.

*"For decades, the Middle East has fueled the success of global brands. But the world is now looking toward the Middle East – not just for inspiration, but for innovation. Amaani is our way of answering that call,"* said **Shubham Poddar, Founder & CEO of Amaani**. *"Amaani means 'wishes and aspirations' in Arabic, and that's exactly what we're building: brands that capture the spirit of a rising region and speak to the world. With the region boasting among the highest per capita beauty spend globally, growing online penetration, and an increasing demand for local relevance, Amaani is poised to meet a generational shift in how consumers shop and what they seek: brands that reflect their identity, values, and aspirations."*

Launched online in May 2025, AĪZA blends Arab heritage with global innovation, using regional ingredients like dates, black seed, and bakhour, combined with clinical actives, and crafted in leading labs in Korea, Japan, and Italy. Its hero products include Sukkar Rush, a high-shine lip treatment with date and honey; Scent Storm, a bakhour & rose hair mist inspired by Arab fragrance rituals; and Date Setter, a brow & lash serum with date seed and castor oil. In just three months of marketing launch, AĪZA has surpassed **\$2M in annualized revenue**, fueled by strong consumer traction in UAE & Saudi Arabia.

*“The GCC beauty and personal care market is already a \$12B industry, growing at over 12% annually, with some of the highest per capita spends globally,”* said **GV Ravishankar, Managing Director at Peak XV**. *“We believe the region is now primed to produce the next wave of culturally resonant, globally admired consumer brands. Amaani is well positioned to lead this movement.”*

AĪZA’s formulations are vegan, cruelty-free, alcohol-free, and meet “Clean at Sephora” standards, while championing Arab culture and storytelling for a global audience. Led by a strong team from leading consumer companies such as Huda Beauty, Lenskart, Giving Movement, and Careem, the brand has already hosted a pop-up in Dubai Mall and been featured in publications like Vogue, Elle, Cosmopolitan, Hia and Laha.

Amaani plans to scale AĪZA across the region and globally, both online and through retail, while also developing a portfolio of future brands that continue to celebrate and reimagine Modern Arabia for the world.

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### **About Amaani**

Founded by Shubham Poddar, Amaani is a Dubai-based company on a mission to build new-age consumer brands from the Middle East, backed by Peak XV’s Surge (formerly Sequoia Capital India & SEA). It’s debut brand AĪZA is a premium skincare and haircare brand inspired by the rich heritage, ingredients, and rituals of Arabia – reimagined for the modern world. Each product is crafted with powerful regional superfoods, blended with proven clinical actives and produced in leading global labs. With values rooted in being Past Forward, Proud, Real, and Positive, AĪZA brings the spirit of modern Arab beauty to the global stage.

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