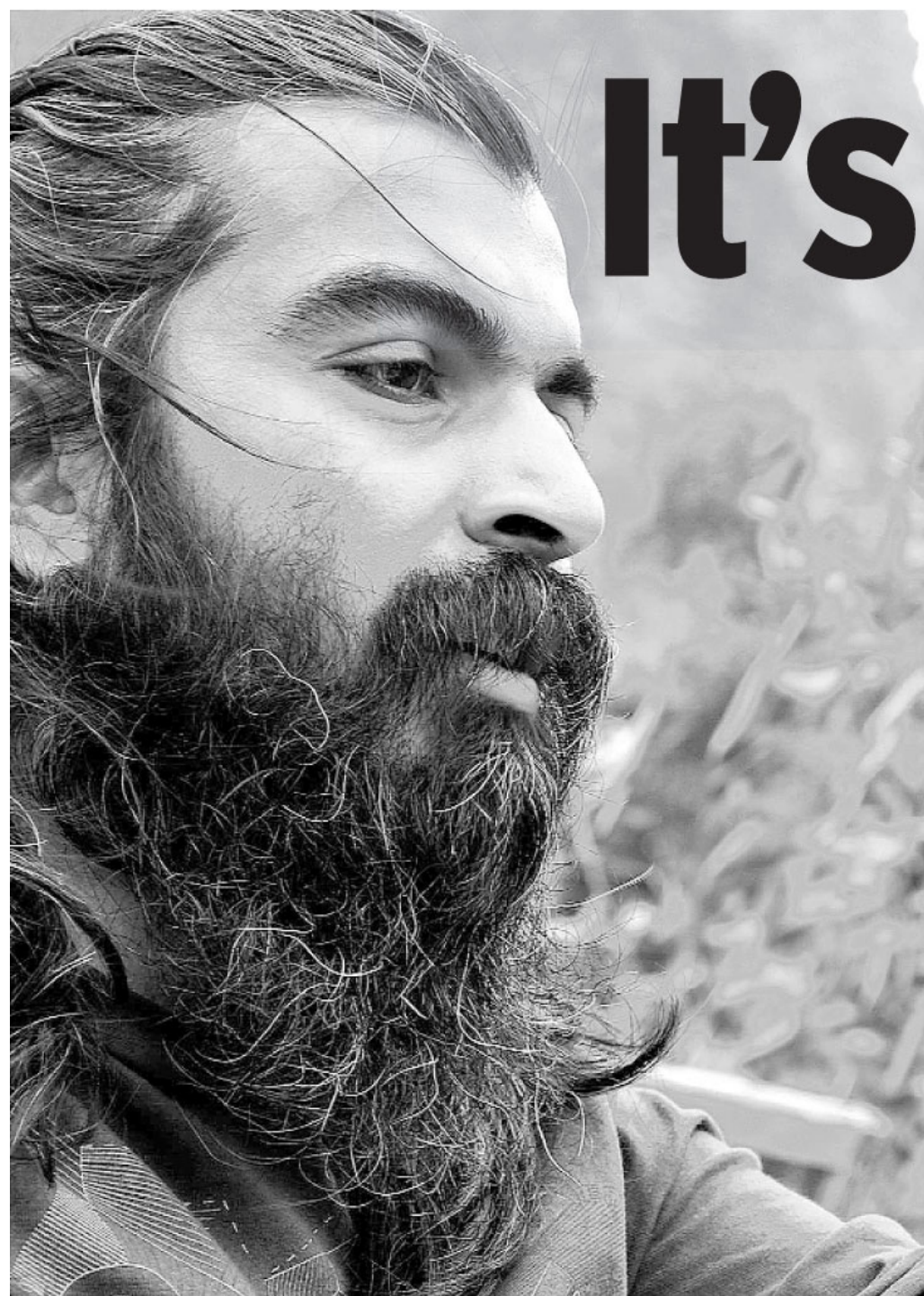




# It's Dhir-ish!

If your quest is attaining Zen-like simplicity in clothes and accessories, then New Delhi-based menswear designer Suket Dhir's label may just put an end to your journey, says **P S BHAVANA**

He gives two clients as examples: Music band Indian Ocean's bass guitarist Rahul Ram, who is also a social activist and music composer; and lifestyle photographer Pranoy Sarkar, who has worked with the likes of Tarun Tahiliani, Rajesh Pratap Singh, Manish Arora and Gaurav J Gupta. Suket convinced Rahul to step out of his 'jhalla' (casual or floppy-ish) dressing style and flaunt Suket's comfort-fit clothing. Rahul today is a hardcore fan of it. Pranoy, on the other hand shoots for Suket, but also buys out most of his clothes in a jiffy, everytime!

The brand's story started in October 2011 when Suket decided to let go of his corporate design life. "It is 'one fine day...' sort of a thing," he says. "I was working with a denim brand in Bengaluru and I designed this tee for them. People loved it a lot. But when I saw this person wearing it on the street, I wanted credit for it. Everybody lives for

tas. They are very cool and elegant with a sense of calm and power. I always recall Magudi Days—bespoke jacket, dhoti and simplicity—and suggest my clients to do the same."

This effortlessness seeps into his personal day and evening wear too. There is this sense of innate confidence and comfort in whatever he wears. "Daily dressing completely depends on my moods. I never dress to the occasion," he says. "For instance, on a good day... it could be a beautiful shirt, jacket and a dhoti, or a casual shirt and pants. One thing I ensure that I am not an eye sore. And I like to blend in."

He believes that a man must have a few things in his wardrobe to beat extreme heat.

"A comfortable white cotton or linen shirt worn with (Aligarhi-like) pyjamas, which could be a classic pair from Zara or any other brand. But



**Y**es. It is old-world Western. Nah. It is Indo-chic. Oh, well, maybe it is both. Delhi dude Suket Dhir's design sensibility, even in something as basic as a shirt when turned into a bullet shirt kurta, is a wonderful mix of characteristic subtleties from both worlds. He follows a reverse take—man make the clothes not 'clothes make the man'—and trusts the 'less is more' dictum. His clothes and accessories—shirts, pants, pajamas, tunics, bandis, Nehru jackets, scarves, and what have you—are made for men with an native sense of fashion.

The forms may look super simple at a glance and seem a tad pricey to some, but if you go closer you are bound to spot precisely-engineered constructional details, which justify their price tags. The blink-and-you-miss tailored fascinatons in his designs are placed strategically (and sometimes concealed)—contrast-coloured cuffs or its linings, pocket add-ons, interesting placket trims, surface textures, subdued umbrellas or parrots as tonal prints, and decorative running stitch lines.

Besides details, the use of sustainable fabrics—cotton, linen, silk, hemp, pineapple, bamboo, wool and the like—in banal (kind of Normcore) ways is key in Suket's much-loved blue print. He either buys them directly, gets them woven, or customises them when needed. This aspect of juxtaposing easy fabrics with natural shapes that can be worn with an air of formality or class is what makes his label lie a notch above the others in the rung.

"For me, lack of design is design itself," he says. "So, I believe in simplicity and focus on detail. Whenever I design, the process of elimination (not addition) becomes very important to me. The state of mind inspires me to work... be it mine or the client's. I feel I should connect and get into the client's head before designing."



Stating his reason for it, he says, "Men do not want to be noticed for what they are wearing. They want to look chic and sharp. What I have observed is men love details and if they (the details) are hidden it is better. If men understand them, then they would experiment with design further. In fact, then they would go to any length to look different."

something. I live for appreciation. And whenever I went out to buy plain, white shirt or tee, the logo on the buttons, near the pocket or on the hem disturbed me. That is when I thought of my label."

Then to take the brand further, Suket started designing by taking bits from the past and Indian-ness (he still does). "I have lived in India all my life. So, even though my silhouette is very

western, the feel is rooted. Indian dressing, no matter how colourful or loud always has a sense of class. Think dhotis and crisp kur-

instead of a pair with drawstring, pick one with a zipper, side pockets, or front pleats. It should look like a pair of trousers, but feel like a pyjama. Next, a nice and quirky hat like a bowler, Vietnamese or Panama, and finally, a pair of Peshawari chappals." He stresses on wearing cotton socks with shoes and suggests avoiding everything synthetic. "There is something about polyester and nylon that causes body odor," he states.

Prices start at ₹4,000. Sizes are small, medium and large. Available at Suket Dhir's Studio; F-574/B2; Lado Sarai; Anuvrat Marg; New Delhi; Good Earth; Benaras (ION Orchard), Singapore;

Pernia's Pop Up Shop (online). And we also spotted him at Taj Khazana stores. For more information, check [suketdhir.com](http://suketdhir.com)

