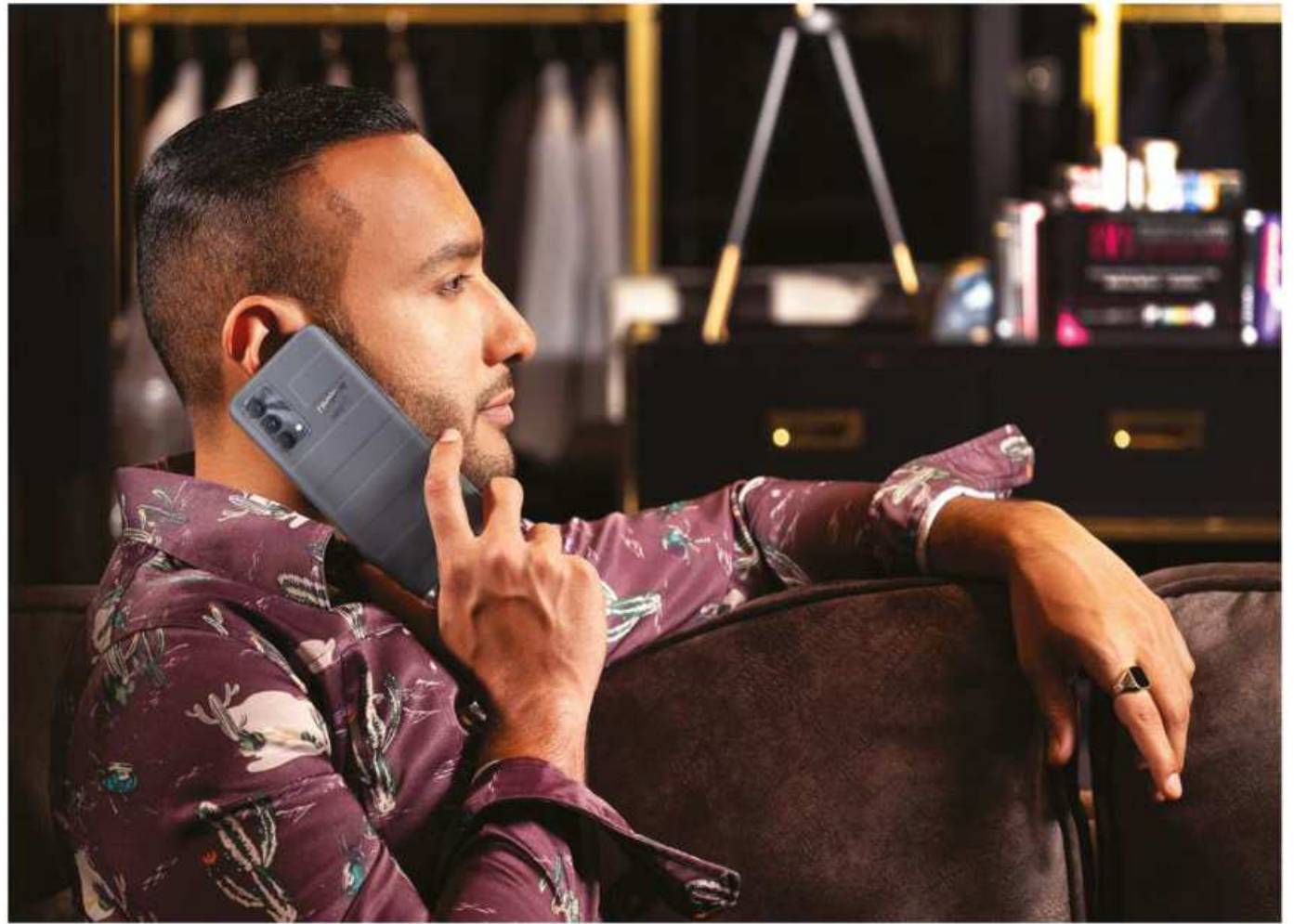


'Smartphone couture': Where technology meets fashion

Around the 1860s, Levi Strauss invented the 'blue jeans' made of indigo-painted canvas that he had bought for making tents. Later on, copper rivets were added to reinforce the stress points in strategic places, for instance, the pocket corners. Such examples of coalescing fashion and technology have existed throughout the history in many forms. Fashion and technology, both have been at the forefront of innovation, and today, they are growing and merging at a much faster pace.



It is no surprise that in the fast-developing digital environment, fashion holds a great deal of importance in our daily lives.

Smartphones, for example, have been an essential trendsetter tool that conveys a statement about users' personalities. From old mobile phones being used as collector's items to changing phone covers to match outfits, smartphones have become an inseparable element of fashion and an integral part of our lifestyles.

Even the fashion designers and smartphone brands know it. That's why they are putting emphasis on this. Mehruz Munir, Creative Director and Founder of Zurhem, said, "I think smartphones are an integral part of our lives and our lifestyles." Coming from a family with no one in the creative field, Mehruz knew at a very early age that he wanted to pursue fashion designing. That is when he took a leap of faith and enrolled into London College of Fashion, learned everything, came back to Bangladesh and I started his own fashion label called Zurhem.

The design of smartphones undoubtedly holds enormous amount of significance in the current digital world. Hence, mobile manufacturers have started incorporating fashion elements into these devices. Fashion trends are taken as inspiration every now and then for designing smartphones. Such as, realme GT Master Edition is a unique smartphone that was designed by the acclaimed Japanese industrial design master Naoto Fukasawa. Made of exquisite environment-friendly vegan leather, the smartphone replicates

the horizontal grid lines of suitcases.

The realme GT Master Edition comes with two color options- Voyager Grey and Daybreak Blue. The back shell of the GT Master Edition in Voyager Grey symbolizes the joys of traveling. Whereas Daybreak Blue have been created using the unique landscape of the earth as the design concept, inspired by Naoto Fukasawa's concept of travel.

Inspired by the most illustrative aspect of traveling- suitcases, Naoto Fukasawa took inspiration from life so that people can recall their travel stories. In addition, the use of low saturation and high tolerance gray color makes people feel comfortable and tranquil at a glance. "I think that it is interesting when brands like realme focus on their design and elevate their appearance. I was looking at this particular phone from realme, which had this 3D, vegan leather touch to it. It is not just the design that they can work with; rather, I think that they truly paid attention to the consumers of today when it came to producing and designing their smartphones.", said Mehruz Munir regarding the design pattern of realme's new masterpiece.

Smartphones are not just devices; instead, they define our style statement. Once that used to be a necessity, smartphones have transformed into fashion accessories that enrich those who carry it. This means the usage of phones are not limited to talking, but they are also a means to communicate symbolically about oneself. Currently, fashion and

trend-conscious people are equally concerned about the look and design of their phones as they are about its features. In fact, the design factor shapes up majority of the consumers' decision-making process while purchasing smartphones.

So, smartphone brands must take inspiration from fashion, play with colors, customize the designs and incorporate them into the devices. "I feel mobile manufacturers can customize the phones a little bit with the use of accessories. Not just with cases, but with other lifestyle accessories. They can maybe use a pouch or a belt pad or something like that. The smartphone designers can come up with a way to change the look of the phone really easily. I remember a couple of years ago you could change the back cover effortlessly. If you felt like you wanted to go with yellow today, then you go with a yellow cover or maybe go with a black cover. I feel that you can elevate on that and allow more flexibility for customization, which is something missing these days.", said Mehruz Munir when asked about what more can mobile phone designers do to merge fashion into smartphones.

In the fast-changing fashion environment of the modern world, technology has been adopted as accessories that demonstrate our style and personalities. The way people choose and purchase smartphones according to their requirements is an excellent example of how fashion and technology keep growing together.

