



Drape of the deities

"For we women are not only the deities of the household fire, but the flame of the soul itself."

In an ekpaech sari, our poets must have dreamed of their women. Catalysts of pieces de resistance, the women of our bards command powerful imagery, befitting them of their modesty yet draping them in desire. Within the folds and gathers of the ekpaech sari traverse their yearnings, bringing to life the mystique of their muses and immortalising them in a love untainted. It is on this horizon of Bangla's literary landscape that theekpaech sari imprints one of its finest and earliest legacies, and it is there that it shall remain for eons yet to come.

In the defiant strength of the women of our yester years, the ekpaech sari solidifies its appeal. The chosen attire of zamindar-bibis, it speaks of a genteel feminine spirit, but one that perseveres. Secret keepers of the feudal lords, silent witnesses to the reign of men in power, the appeal of the ekpaechesari is as enduring as its wearers. Testament to a time forgotten, the ekpaech sari is symbolic of the quiet mettle of the woman who was consigned to live behind her veil, and yet it was she who was also responsible for perpetuating bloodlines, inspiring the arts and kindling revolutions.

In the grace of a flushing bride-to-be does theekpaech sari prove its resilience – holding on to its legacy as that ultimate embodiment of the Bengali woman. As she stands on the cusp of a bittersweet beginning and waits to embrace all the

relationships that will now define her, the quintessential Bengali bride chooses to drape herself in the most conventional of ways. She foregoes her pleats as generations have before her as her friends and family infuse in her the glow of turmeric and celebrate her one last night before giving her away. It is in anekpaech sari that she stands firm in her heritage, calm and chaotic, patient yet petrified.

In the ekpaech sari do we continue to invent and reinvent ourselves; aching for a bygone era eternally romanticised in our cultural references. In the ekpaech sari do modern brides continue to pay homage to the countless before them who have also embarked on this journey and in the ekpaech sari do we find an identity that has resisted transformation across decades and held on to its inherent Bengali essence.

This week Star Lifestyle celebrates the cultural



powerhouse of the ekpaechesari with inspiration from the recently released feature film Kadambari. Borrow from the costume design and wardrobe of the title character and rediscover the nostalgia of the 19th century. Recreate the era of unspoken romances through themed get-togethers or era-inspired holuds. Revive the spirit of the 1800s, because it is then that our cultural awakening was at its premium.

By Subhi Shama

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