

#PERSPECTIVE

Wearing a teep is my choice

Five decades after independence, it's irrelevant, even undesirable to talk about how women should dress up or carry themselves. There is a push to box people's dress-up, style, movement, and eating habits within some set bounds with the use of various theories.

Recently, the attention has even shifted to a very personal accessory – the teep (a colourful fashion add-on pasted on the forehead also known as bindi). The incident of a police constable questioning the age-old right of women to

constable surprised everyone, and waves of protest arose from all quarters.

It raised protests across generations and countries. Some have written on social media; some have uploaded their photos of wearing a teep on Facebook; others have come out onto the streets. Some men have put on teeps themselves and stood with women. These are the languages of protest. Those who have criticised boys wearing the teep do not understand the language of a protest. I don't think this needs any further explanation.

As a Bengali woman, donning a teep is part of one's culture and tradition. I had seen my mother use the teep as a part of her look in the '60s and '70s. It was not just my mother; many in my family wear the teep. I wear them every day myself, and in my opinion, it has nothing to do with the plight of my piety.

When I went to university in the 1980s, almost all the girls wore teeps with saris. We would dress up in saris, teeps, kajal, and bangles, put flowers in our hair, put henna on our hands, and alta on our feet. We did the same in college. But suddenly, the teep became a matter of shame. There is a rumbling that wearing teeps would lead to dishonour but those who regularly wear the teep think of it as their stylistic statement.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 12

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don a teep in April 2022, is when progressiveness stopped in its tracks. This questionable act by the



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