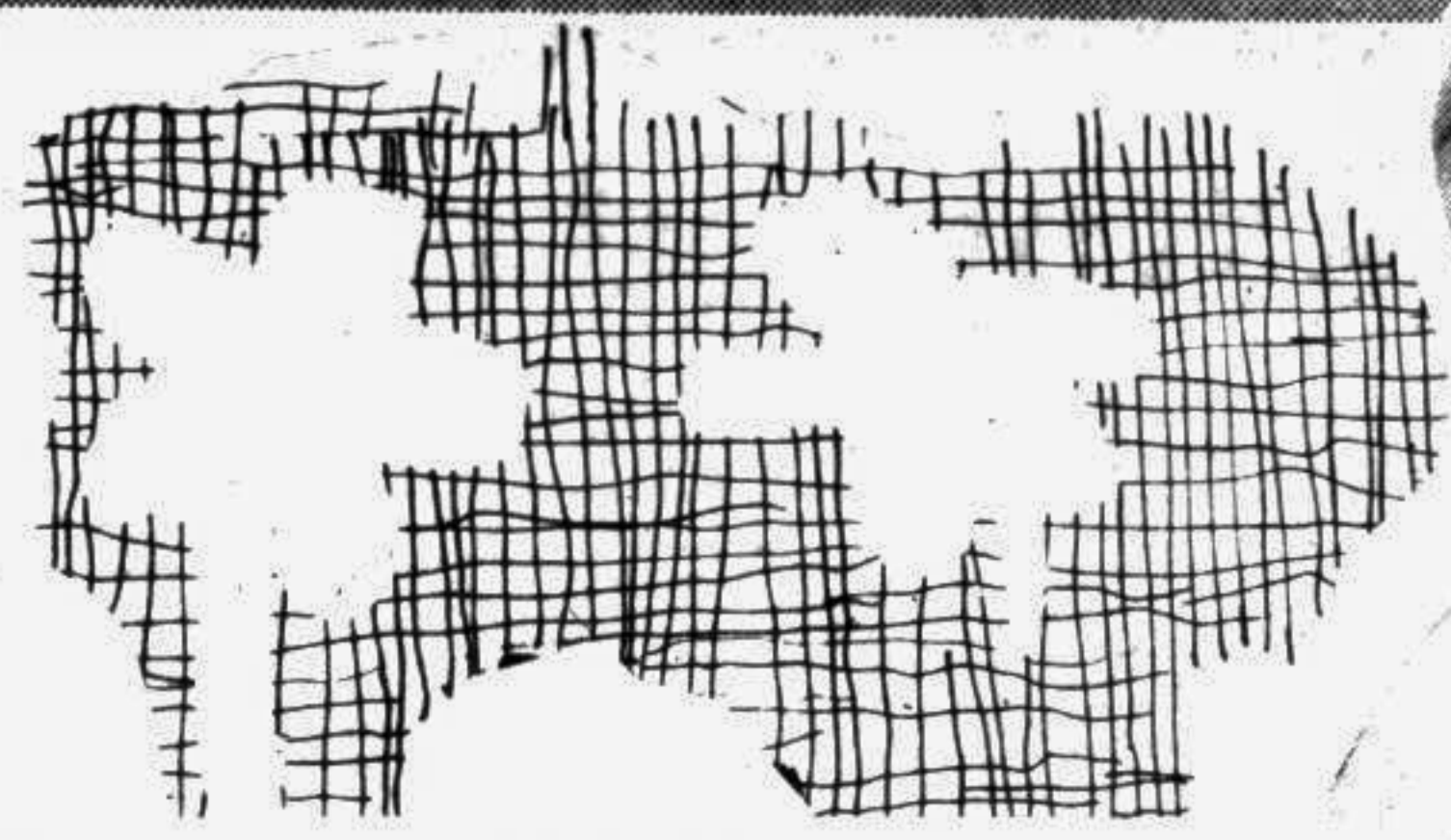




# Eid-ul Azha



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## THOUGHTS ON EID-UL AZHA

Sharmini Abbasi

**F**ESTIVALS come in the life of every nation. Our religious festivals are only two — Eid-ul Fitr comes after 30 days of fasting and Eid-ul Azha which reminds us about the sacred sacrifice of Ibrahim (Ra) of his own son in submission to God's will — is ensuring. We all love and long for this precious day to come, as it is a day of festival; by slaughtering cows and sheep in God's name, taking special foods, and having social and family unions we join in the festivity. Even if the people are poor and the living standards are going down with the growth of population beyond all proportions making this world's most densely populated area, the festival time is indeed different. We tend to forget for a day, of our poverty.

Young and old, rich and poor all try to swing in the air of festivity. Therefore, the words of caution, and the words of dismay raised by philosophic pandits are not heeded by many. One of such question raised at the time of animal sacrifice each year in the death of sacrificial quality animals in the context of Bangladesh. Tk 880 million spent annually for import of powdered milk is the other result of indiscriminate elimination of cattle wealth by calamities and man-made calamity, which is sacrifice during festival of Eid-ul-Azha. This year also the cows and goats will be sacrificed, probably, by fewer number, and then this would be replenished by smuggling low quality animals from across the border. Main point to ponder at this

time seriously is more of philosophy than of commerce. The sacrifice we make each year is only symbolic in nature. At least that is the way it was designed by Allah. After all, how many of us can think of sacrificing our own child whom nourish just like a sapling, feed it and educate it? But God's view is rather different from our's "As they are not your children, they are the sons and daughters of lives longing for itself. They came through you, but not from you." So by ordering Ibrahim (Ra) to slaughter his own son, God made it crystal clear that His love for us is deeper and more significant than a parent's love for this child. Therefore it is a day which teaches us to rely the will of God. Another significance of the day is that, nothing that you

own, really belongs to you. Neither your body nor your soul, let alone your wife, children and material wealth. Do we really sacrifice anything from amongst our sins, our behaviour patterns, our wrong ways of life? Can we give up, for instance, smoking, drinking, speaking ill of others, doing harm or thinking harm of neighbours, stealing, taking bribes and so on? This is the sacrifice God wants from us. Not only to slaughter a cow or goat in God's name but to burn the evil inside us and to seek holy the spirit by remembering Ibrahim's sacrifice. It is said that you give but little when you give a part of your possessions, but it is when you give yourself, that you truly give. The blood of animals or its meat does not reach Allah. It

may fill the appetite of some of us, but it does not benefit our souls. It is said that poor people can have the taste of meat at least once in a year but the distribution system is such that it ends up in the deep fridge of the wealthy for the remaining year. The skin of slaughtered animals is also allowed to deteriorate in many cases. My suggestion would be mainly to myself: May Allah grant me the understanding to appreciate the true significance of this great festival, the sacrifice of Ibrahim (Ra) of his son Ismail at the instance of God, in a dream. We must be prepared to accept God's will as the final goal, of our life.

## Beijing Muslims Await Eid

Nasrin Sobhan

**E**ID is a special time for all Muslims, and the estimated 17.8 million Muslims who live in China are no exception. The 200,000 Chinese Muslims of Beijing will be celebrating Eid along with their Muslim brethren all over the world, in a few day's time. Although there are small communities of Muslims from Xinjiang in Beijing, the majority are Muslims of Chinese extraction called the Hui Min, who are probably descendants of those Chinese who converted to Islam when it came to China in the seventh century. The Niujie mosque is the centre of the Muslim quarter in Beijing and most of the Hui Min live here. The shops in the area are predominantly Muslim, and have Arabic names side by side with the Chinese. They all sell halal food, while halal meat is on sale every Friday outside the mosques for the people who come for prayer.

Eid is an official holiday for the Muslims. The Eid prayers at the mosque are a popular ritual. There is a festive atmosphere at the mosques, where the prayers are attended not only by Chinese Muslims but by the expatriate Muslim population. Students, visitors and diplomats from 29 Islamic countries congregate with the Hui Min for prayers, mainly at the Niujie Mosque. The 1000 year-old Niujie in the centre of the city is one of the most ancient and beautiful mosques in China. The interior is decorated in the traditionally ornate Chinese style in red and gold interspersed with Arabic calligraphy. The Niujie has a fine collection of Korans from various Islamic countries, some of which are very old. In the compound are the graves of the two Muslim saints who brought Islam to Beijing. The Imam of Niujie Mosque is an eminent personality who receives scores of Muslim overseas visitors each month. After Eid prayers the custom of the Hui Min is to call on friends and neighbours, carrying gifts of sweet and salty pancakes and doughnuts for each other. All the members of the family traditionally get new clothes, while the children re-

ceive extra gifts of money and toys. All the rituals of Islam are faithfully observed by the Hui Min. The Hui Min have Muslim names along with their Chinese names. Young children receive religious instruction from their elders, usually their grandparents, at an early age. When the children are about six years old they may begin to attend religious classes at the schools attached to the mosques. They learn orally, by listening and recitation. When they are older they may opt to become Imams or religious teachers in which case they join the institutions of Islamic studies. Otherwise they may just study Chinese translations of the Koran if they wish. Although young and old people alike are religious, the young have less time for prayer because of their work schedules. However, the important occasions in a Muslim's life are still marked by Islamic ritual. When young people marry, they have the traditional Islamic ceremony as well as the official civil ceremony. Newborn babies are brought to the Imam for blessings when they are a few days old. Even the funeral rituals in a country which now favours cremation, are carried out in the Islamic way. Namz-e-janazas are held regularly at the mosque. All Muslims who can afford to do so, try to go on pilgrimage if they can. Approximately 1500 to 2000 Chinese pilgrims go on Hajj annually. Formerly, the bulk of the pilgrim traffic consisted of the elderly but of late the pilgrims include many young people, both men and women. For the last two years CAAC has introduced direct flights to Jeddah for Chinese pilgrims. Chinese Muslims take great pride in their religion and its traditions. They are always happy to receive visitors, especially during the holy month of Ramadan. A visit to any of the 2400 mosques in China will testify to the fact that Islam is well and flourishing in China. The author is a free lance writer who lives in Beijing with her diplomat husband. She is a regular contributor to The Daily Star.

## Kurbani — a Symbol of Sacrifice

**F**ROM the beginning of the creation, God has, through his messengers defined the code of life in true perspective. If we trace the history of Islam, we shall find that from Hazrat Adam down to the last Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SM) — religion of all the Prophets was Islam. In Islam, God is one, Holy Book is one and race is one. The Holy sacrifice, which is customary,

after performance of the Hajj is just an institutional ceremony having deep and under-rooted essence and significance. As a Muslim, we know that Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) was blessed with his noble son Hazrat Ismail (AS) at the age of 86, generally an age when people become too old, to be tested of his unflinching faith and spirit of sacrifice for God.

Fazlul Quader Quaderi

When God ordered Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) to rebuild the 'Kaba Sharif,' his son Hazrat Ismail (AS) grew up, and Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) engaged himself and his son Hazrat Ismail (AS) to the task of rebuilding the 'Kaba Sharif.' Under scorching heat of the sun, young Ismail developed wound on shoulder.

For carrying stones from distance. Seeing the condition of his beloved son, Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) advised him to use a piece of cloth on the shoulder so that he would feel ease. It was quite natural on the part of a loving father. At this, God put Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) to the greatest test of sacrifice in history. When the rebuilding work of 'Kaba Sharif' was over, Hazrat Ibrahim had dream in three consecutive nights to sacrifice his dearest one for the sake of God. As Hazrat Ismail (AS) was the dearest of all to Hazrat Ibrahim (AS), he got prepared to sacrifice him at the altar of God. When Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) narrated the dream to his son, he readily agreed to be sacrificed at the altar of God.

develop in him. Thirdly, the poor, who can not afford to buy meat and eat, can get opportunity of eating meat of the sacrificial animal by the well-to-do people, as one-third of the total meat of the sacrificed animal is distributed among the poor and close relatives and neighbours who have no ability to participate in this holy festival of sacrifice. Fourthly, it offers a unique chance of fellow-feeling and co-operation among the neighbours by way of inter-changing of meat of the sacrificed animals. Fifthly, killing of animals indirectly, inspire people to rear and breed the animal for future so that the process of sacrificing of animals may continue. Lastly, the act of distribution of meat of the sacrificed animal brings smile in the face of the poor and destitutes. Sacrifice for the sake of others' happiness and pleasure is the keynote of animal killing. This custom of holy sacrifice is unique and divine example of one's love to God. Islam preaches the spirit of sacrifice and love; which is embodied in this custom. No other religion has taught and reached such unique spirit of supreme sacrifice. If we can realise the essence of the holy sacrifice, we shall be able to rise above all petty-self, and temptation, of course, it is difficult to overcome worldly love, affection for children, hearth and home, but God wants that one should rise above all these and devote himself fully to the love of the eternal world. God has given 'Na's under strict control and rise above all as Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) could do, even by sacrificing his beloved son. His love for son was an unconsidered trifling matter as against his love for God. In a nutshell, man's spirit of sacrifice is tested in this holy custom of animal sacrifice — 'Kurbani'.



Buying clothes for the dear ones is an essential part of the festivity.

**Test passed** Though Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) physically and mentally was prepared to sacrifice his son, he made him blind-folded, lest the sight of blood might make him shaky. After having so done, when he pierced the knife through the throat of his son God sent a 'ram' which was slaughtered in his place. After opening the eyes, and to his astonishment, he found his loving son Ismail standing laughing by his side. Hazrat Ibrahim was aggrieved and lamented to God for his folly. But God said, "Oh! Ibrahim, you have performed your duty and passed the test." This was the incident which had led to the festival of Sacrifice (Eid-ul-Azha). Thus the custom of holy sacrifice has come in vogue in Islam.

This custom of holy sacrifice is nothing but a testimony of man's self-sacrifice and humble submission to the will of God; his implicit faith and belief in Him, his determination and courage to bear the burden of sacrifice. The last Prophet, after performing the Hajj, introduced the system of holy sacrifice; it is just semblance of the sacrifice made some hundred years ago by Hazrat Ibrahim (AS). The unparalleled spirit of sacrifice set by Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) is the basic teaching of the present-day animal sacrifice. — 'Kurbani'.

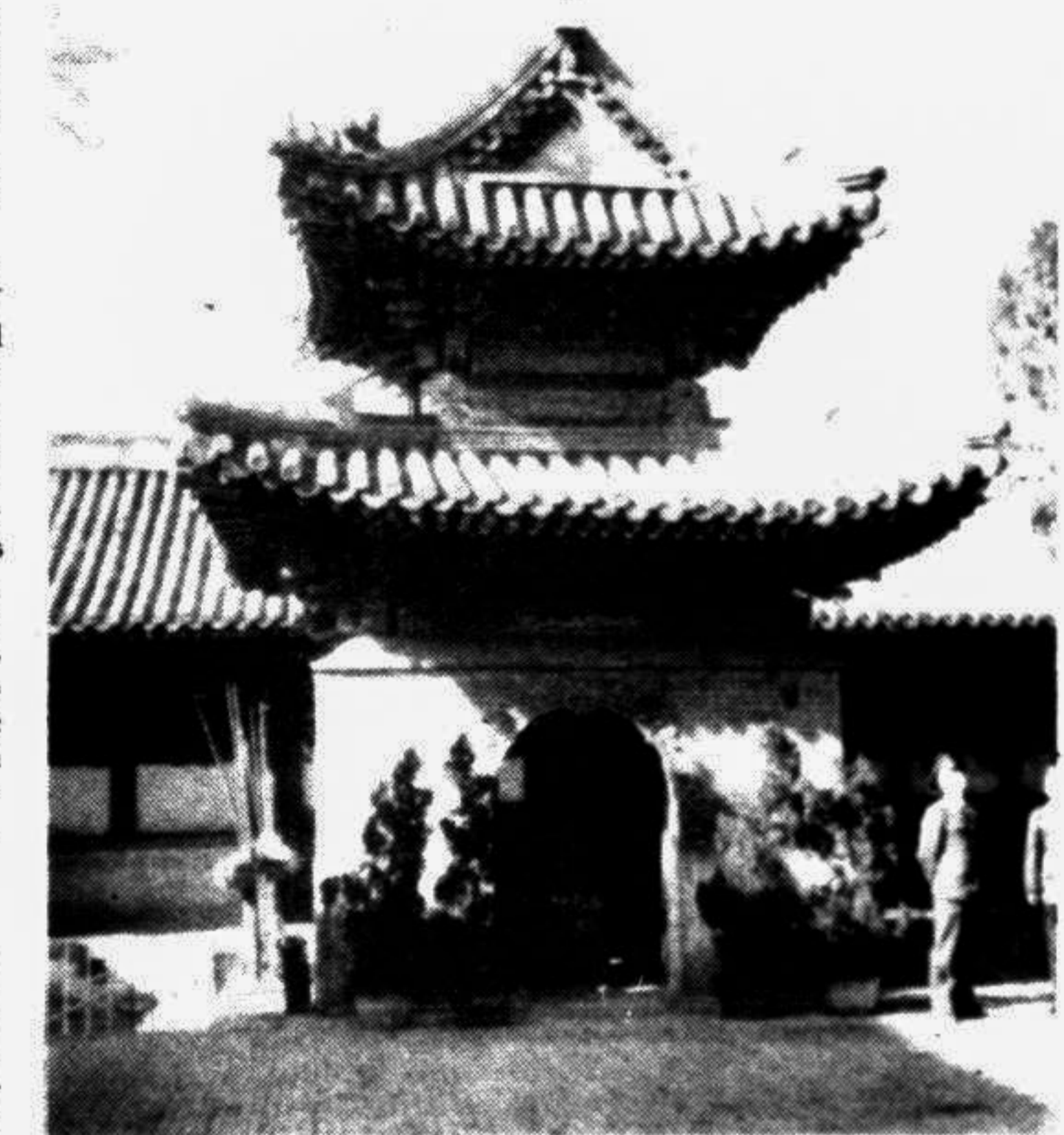
Question may arise, how slaughtering of a dumb innocent animal can be an act of piety? The Holy Quran has clearly stated that God said: "Flesh and blood of the animal do not reach God, only the spirit of humble obedience and sacrifice of the person concern reach Him." In Islam, no ceremony is baseless and meaningless. It has its essence and significance hidden in it. The practice of animal sacrifice which has become customary and a part of the religious rites has, many implications.

**Many implications**

First, it gives a person a rare chance, once in a year, to show his gratification to God, of his wealthy by spending a portion of his hard-earned money in an honest way. He does show his love to God more than his love for money. Secondly, it is symbolic with the killing of animals and one kills his animality in him and wild passion. He develops a feeling that he should not be like an animal being killed or slaughtered. A humane feeling

develop in him. Thirdly, the poor, who can not afford to buy meat and eat, can get opportunity of eating meat of the sacrificial animal by the well-to-do people, as one-third of the total meat of the sacrificed animal is distributed among the poor and close relatives and neighbours who have no ability to participate in this holy festival of sacrifice. Fourthly, it offers a unique chance of fellow-feeling and co-operation among the neighbours by way of inter-changing of meat of the sacrificed animals. Fifthly, killing of animals indirectly, inspire people to rear and breed the animal for future so that the process of sacrificing of animals may continue. Lastly, the act of distribution of meat of the sacrificed animal brings smile in the face of the poor and destitutes. Sacrifice for the sake of others' happiness and pleasure is the keynote of animal killing. This custom of holy sacrifice is unique and divine example of one's love to God. Islam preaches the spirit of sacrifice and love; which is embodied in this custom. No other religion has taught and reached such unique spirit of supreme sacrifice. If we can realise the essence of the holy sacrifice, we shall be able to rise above all petty-self, and temptation, of course, it is difficult to overcome worldly love, affection for children, hearth and home, but God wants that one should rise above all these and devote himself fully to the love of the eternal world. God has given 'Na's under strict control and rise above all as Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) could do, even by sacrificing his beloved son. His love for son was an unconsidered trifling matter as against his love for God. In a nutshell, man's spirit of sacrifice is tested in this holy custom of animal sacrifice — 'Kurbani'.

**Humble submission** People should not pursue their lives after worldly gains, they should realise the eternal world. In his each and every act, he should prove his belief, faith, love and humble submission as have been prescribed in the Hadith and the Holy Quran. This disciplined life, spirit of self-sacrifice, unconditional surrender to God, bear the real essence of the holy sacrifice and the brightest example of the dedicated soul as ordained in the Holy Quran and the Hadith. We, as Muslims are performing Hajj and holy sacrifice every year. It has become a custom, which has lost its very essence and spirit. We do not realise the basic teaching of the sacrifice. We do not try to inculcate the spirit and example set by the Holy Prophet (SM). Religion should not be interpreted according to our own convenience and personal gains because Islam is a complete code of life. It should not be construed politically or in other way to suit one's own purpose. The custom of holy sacrifice has a far-reaching effect in the society. It teaches universal brotherhood, love, fellow-feeling for each other — which we have completely forgotten.



Inner courtyard of Niujie mosque in Beijing

## আপন দায়িত্ববোধ থেকে...

সকালে গরম চায়ের সাথে খবরের কাগজের তাজা খবরে চোখ বুলাতে বুলাতে নতুন উদ্দীপনা নিয়ে আমার জন্য শুরু হয় আরেকটি কর্মব্যস্ত দিন। ব্যবসায়ী ও পরিবারিক জীবনে আমার এই উদ্দীপনার পেছনে কাজ করছে দৃঢ় মনোবল ও সঞ্চয়ের জ্যোত্স। সঞ্চয়ের একমাত্র লক্ষ্য মুদ্রাফা অর্জন নয়। আমার পেন্সাকে যে মাধ্যম উদ্দীপিত করে, আমাকে বহুবিধ সুযোগ সুবিধা এনে দেয়, দেশ সেবার সুযোগ দেয় সেই সঞ্চয় মাধ্যমকে আমি বেছে নিয়েছি। আর এই সঞ্চয় মাধ্যমটি আর কিছু নয় — প্রতিরক্ষা সঞ্চয়পত্র।

**প্রতিরক্ষা সঞ্চয়পত্র :**

লাভ গড়ে ২১% | ৮ বছর মেয়াদী | মেয়াদপূর্তির আগেও আনুপাতিক হারে আভসহ ভাঙানো যায় | ১০০ টাকা মেয়াদান্তে বৃদ্ধিপেয়ে ২৬৮ টাকা হয়।

**অন্যান্য সুবিধা :**

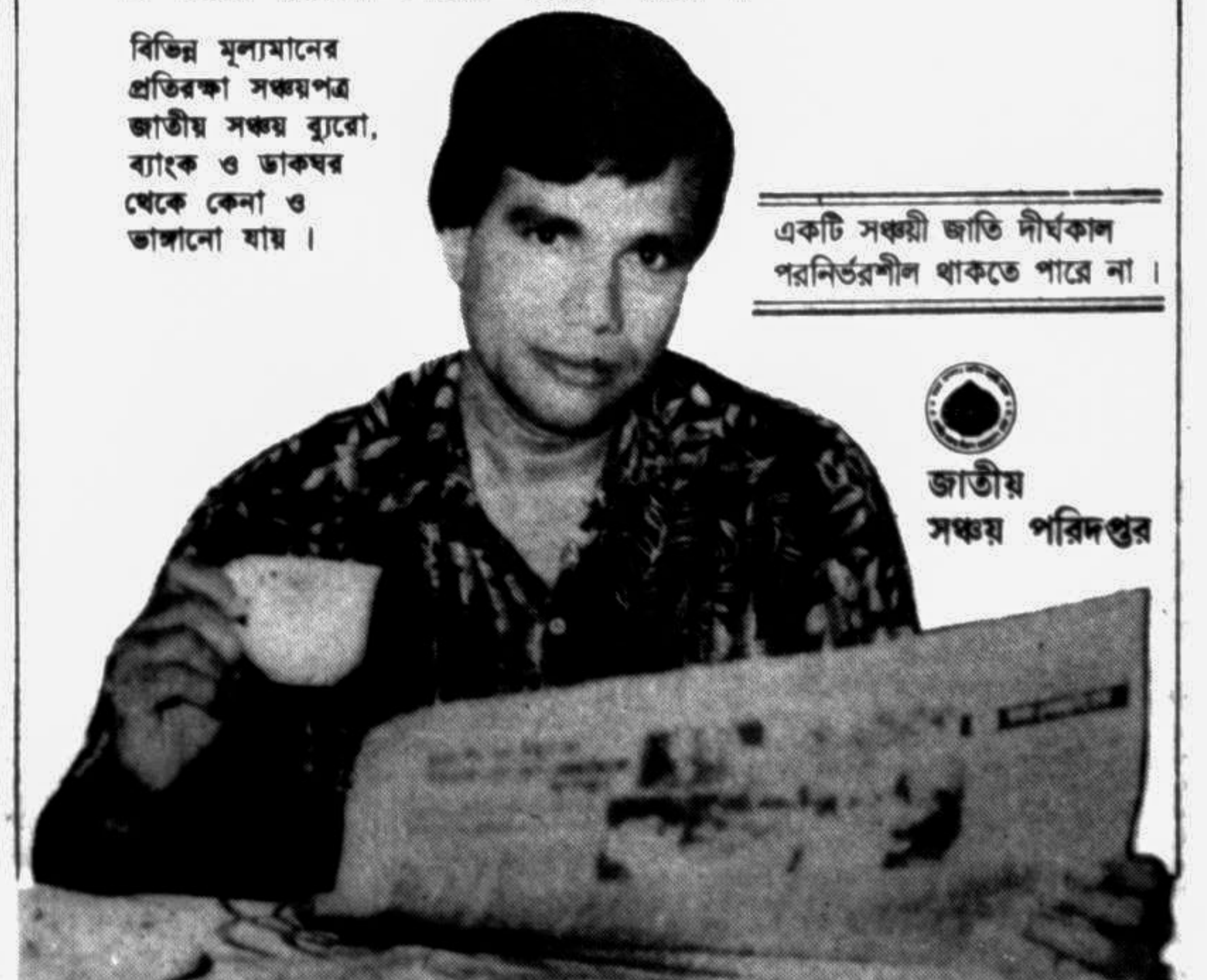
- লাভ সম্পূর্ণ আয়করমুক্ত। ● আয়কর রেয়াত পাওয়া যায়।
- নগদ জামানত হিসাবেও গৃহীত হয়ে থাকে।
- ব্যক্তির ক্ষেত্রে কোন বিনিয়োগসীমা নেই।
- ক্রেতা নোমিনী নিয়োগ করতে পারেন।

বিভিন্ন মূল্যমানের প্রতিরক্ষা সঞ্চয়পত্র জাতীয় সঞ্চয় ব্যুরো, ব্যাংক ও ডাকঘর থেকে কেনা ও ভাঙানো যায়।

একটি সঞ্চয়ী জাতি দীর্ঘকাল পরনির্ভরশীল থাকতে পারে না।



জাতীয় সঞ্চয় পরিদপ্তর



পবিত্র ঈদ উল আযহা উপলক্ষে ব্যাংকের সম্মানিত গ্রাহক, পৃষ্ঠপোষক, শুভানুধ্যায়ী ও শেয়ার হোল্ডারদেরকে জানাচ্ছি -

### তান্ত্রিক শুভেচ্ছা

সময়মত ঋণ পরিশোধ করে ব্যাংকের ঋণদান কর্মসূচিকে অব্যাহত রাখতে সহায়তা করুন

**রূপালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**  
উত্তম সেবার নিশ্চয়তা