



# Eid-ul-Fitr



## A Happy Eid with a Difference

OUR national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, the great humanist who transcends all barriers of caste and creed and sings the majesty of man, has given us a very fine Eid carol:

"After a month of fasting has come happy Eid. Give away your pelf and self, which is Heaven's bid. Those who fast everyday and always have to starve provide them with all they need."

This is the spirit of Eid-ul-Fitr — reaching out to others, caring and sharing, spreading kindness and happiness, taking away all the sadness, filling the lives of others with love and laughter and making them feel complete.

Eid-ul-Fitr is the greatest Muslim festival. But in practice greater attention is paid to ceremonial observance of the

ritual than fulfilling the spiritual and social obligations. Manifestly, it is just a ritual for many at the bottom of the economic ladder and a festival for only a few at the top. As an economic proposition, Eid of the rich is not the same as Eid of the poor. Market determines the difference between the happiness of the two. For instance, the happiness of a beggar woman clad in a cheap, coarse Jakat cloth bears no comparison to the vanity of a lady dressed in a 21 thousand worth of what is known as a behanga saree.

When Eid comes the seller's happiness, like the sowing prices, knows no bound. His happiness can be measured by a reference to his cash register. It is said that the way to stop financial 'joy-riding' is to arrest the chauffeur,

by Obaidul Huq

not the automobile. But on the occasion of Eid it is the passenger who is made to pay dearly for the riding and both the chauffeur and the automobile are allowed to get away with it. Despite official warnings against price manipulation, the Eid market gets wilder. The unscrupulous market unmanipulators care little for the cautionary signal that their uncontrolled greed will lead to an inclement economic weather as a result of which the consumer and the business community will suffer alike. They are in a jolly mood to take the cash and let the credit go.

This is the kind of business that obviously flourishes at the time of Eid-ul-Fitr. After all, business is the thing.

President Woodrow Wilson rightly said, "Business underlies everything in our national life, including our spiritual life. Witness the fact that in the Lord's Prayer the first petition is for daily bread. No one can worship God or love his neighbour on an empty stomach". On the auspicious occasion of the hold Eid most business people make a business of religion and worship an all-powerful Taka for Eid-ul-Fitr comes only once a year and they must make hay while the sun shines.

ON the Eid day a gorgeously clad kid and a half-naked 'Toka' present a sad spectacle, not a happy one

The affluent parents of the former naturally try to make their little darling happy and proud.

But no Santa Claus comes carrying a cloth bag full of gifts for the street children. Alas, we have no Santa Claus who appear at the door to make glad the heart of childhood. A happy Eid, indeed!

THIS year there is another problem on the national front. Eid-ul-Fitr is witnessing an unhappy situation which threatens to pollute the social climate and turn the prospect of peace into a certain conflict and fill every heart yearning for happiness with avoidable sadness. Fear grips all which may become a reality if discretion is not rightly exercised leading to wrong judgement and painful consequence. This usually happens when those who can make or unmake things tend to forget that along with independence the nation has also inherited a revolution. And the nation has demonstrated again and again that it is good at it. But none in his senses can contemplate a situation that will cause indescribable human sufferings. The best way to avert the threatening crisis, I agree with the Daily Star Editor S M Ali, is to try the hardest for national consensus. It is our fond hope that some political Santa Clauses will succeed in bringing about this national consensus, and then we will be able to celebrate a really happy Eid, a Happy Eid with a difference.

### I Have Not Forgotten You, Ranjita

Original Bengali by: Shamsur Rahman

Translation by: Abu Taher Salahuddin Ahmed

At all times in the psychic mind of mine, you Ranjita, keep ringing continuously and automatically even after long time.

Do you recall Ranjita, in one summer noon Nine years back we met each other in Calcutta At the brightly decorous assemblage of poets?

There, you came and sat beside me in your usual comely manner.

Ranjita, I no longer pine to clad you with jems From the immense treasury of my poetic fame and name. My mind only longs to say that never has it seen a pair of Peerless eyes like yours.

"What an unbearable hot," saying so — I recall— You would fan me flapping your blue note-book. And that air like a series of stars would keep spreading Affection merely. If I were Ramendrasundar Tribedi, I would say then: "Oh girl, This is Bengalism!"

But the poet of this age remained silent! Being bewitched he saw in you a full-blown slim girl that resembled thin-bodied trees, sailed boats, lotus-ponds, and homely festivals of the city. Ranjita, the very intimacy gives birth to enchanting pictograms

of the finest order. It shows the neck of the dream. Perhaps, that is why after drinking the wine of your closeness I sensed within myself as if

I was stood so close to you wherefrom I could really feel your intoxicating hot-breath emitting out from the soft pinky heart of yours.

And with that imagination engraved deeply in my heart We both walked side by side in afternoon amid the magical crowd of the College Street

Where on the foot paths there bloomed jasmine, tagar, and malika. Whereas in you heart there are awoken my poems with eyes where

I found hundreds of suns were setting in. Ranjita, will we again meet in one afternoon at the bride-choosing function, or at any gathering of the poets or even at the foot paths?

Ranjita, I keep calling you over and over again. I keep calling you within my own cavity! Don't you think the helpless voice of mine will get lost

amid the terrifying noises of this earth? Ranjita, how will we both stand eyeball to eyeball in the Nether world of alienation? How will we both kiss each other amid the shadows of the killers of different races hiding in disguise? And how will we both tread through the path infested with nuclear garbages?

Politics is excessively a nasty maze. Ranjita, We fall into the pit of it repeatedly. We get ourselves digressed from our goals and lose our paths again and again.

We embrace ideologies of which we make ourselves the prisoners! Ranjita, the land where your predecessors were born now has become a poisonous land!!

And I do not foresee even the shadow of future for our next generation!!!

Perhaps never will I visit Calcutta. And you, too, perhaps, will never come to Dhaka. Then where will we meet again?

Will we meet again on the crossing of an unknown path? For sure, we will meet neither in Peking nor in Washington nor in Bangkok nor in Jakarta nor in Jeddah nor in Istanbul nor in Hamburg — nowhere.

Perhaps we will meet once again in a bright capital absolutely unknown to us before. And we will call it humanity

As the parents joyfully call their new-born baby.

### Not In One Life

Original Bengali by: Abu Hena Mustafa Kamal

Translated by: Abu Taher Salahuddin Ahmed

When everyone shuts the door on my face I come back, feigning as if nothing wrong has happened to me. I know, I've neither any heritage of aristocracy nor have I any Ministerial power

nor am I a piper of such an order who would enthrall someone simply playing on flute.

Yet I merely go to you countless times and do knock at the closed-door of yours like a wounded soldier, and childly

I keep on rapping again and again at the door hoping to have a shelter into your bosom. But my hands smear with blood languidness laps the body and no shelter get I!

Even don't think I'll go back empty-hand in one life: Never cherish such an idea in your mind Arundhati!!

### The Night of Doom is here

Written and translated by: Zillur Rahman Siddiqui

The night of doom is here. With hushed breath We wait. Any moment now, the knock On the door we fear, and down the stairs We go, we don't know where we go, never to return

As many time as the night's returned This blind darkness has swallowed me They were brothers all, yours and mine And they have left this heritage of void

The night of doom is here, we hear the footfall Even now, the stench of blood in the air And the evil shadows move close by us And the sharpening of Shimar's knife goes on

They were brothers all, yours and mine. They looked for a daybreak after the deluge. The beginnings of life's business After the tilling done, the sowing And harvesting then.

And endless dreamings of a tomorrow: All the howlings of jungle-beasts will stop Weight of stone will be lifted from hearts The ice of death will thaw and melt away.

By a magic touch the bolted doors will open Under the mild winter sun, the mustard-field is covered by a yellow carpet. Footfall at a distance... Those who left us will come and sit down on the patios On this winter morning in the ploughman's cottage.

In the evenings, join the music-sessions. In the nights, in their own rooms. The monsoon showers will fondle them. On their yards, caressed by the sun...

And they will hum a tune by themselves And the east wind will carry the tune far And may be, as the sun declines, the tune will move homeward

Without notice, to the music session Or stealthily to his own couch

The night of doom is here, all doors Are bolted, in all the houses, in this town. Anxious eyes are wide awake Who are those, climbing the stairs? Do you hear the footfall of those men? (Translated by himself)

### TALSONAPUR

Original Bengali by: Ashraf Siddiqui

Translated by: Dr Afia Dil

Talsonapur sits and weeps like a bereaved mother. The anklets of the bride of this village do not seem to jingle anymore in the waves of Atlas! The village shepherd here While grazing the cattle Does not seem to sing the bhatali anymore.

Where is that shepherd, alas! Where is that bride?

Thirteen festivals in twelve months, the puja, the eid, the muharram. Why don't they come, why don't they laugh, why don't they sing anymore? Where has Sita, Janak's daughter, been exiled? The weapon of which Yazid has broken Sakina's heart? Alas! Where is Qasem, the groom on the wedding day?

Talsonapur sits and weeps The sound of that weeping makes the blue water of Atlas more blue.

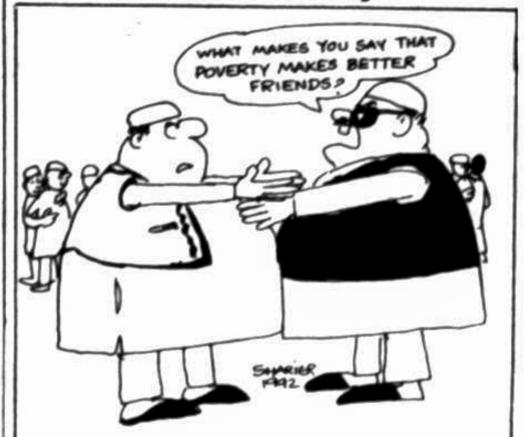
But even then, sometimes, O, you traveller at midnight If you listen you will hear in the gentle voice of the breeze

Somebody whispering: There comes the big storm — Humanity is immortal — The evil Dussasan is bound to be destroyed.

And in that tune Hark, you will see in a great big ocean of green A continuous stretch of green paddy, mango, berry, tamal, and hintal.

They go on whispering for ever. Talsonapur dreams that dream And when it wakes up it will smile in the sun like a baby.

### Eid with a Laugh



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## HOPE

by Gazi Sadeq

I shall come to you, she said, when the sun is setting ... Caress your brow, make you sleep ... and slowly, slowly slip away.

When sleep evades you, and you toss in your lonely bed ... I shall come to you like the wind ... hiding from everybody ... Caress your brow, make you sleep ... and slowly, slowly slip away ...

The sun has set ... still I await!

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## WINDS FROM THE NORTH

Original by: Shamsul Islam

Translated by: Alfaz Tarafder

When I turn to a tree, it passes me on to its shade; and to seek refuge in the shade I see agony one more again— venomous ants biting me all over.

There's no comfort in the south, while winds from the north chills my hair.