One Off



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This Eid that was



It was with a kind of mixed feeling that I remember having celebrated the Eid this year. I thought Eid meant wearing new shoes, new set of clothes, going for Eid visits to near and dear ones or receiving visitors at home, paying respects to the elders, receiving 'eidee' from them and eating, eating and eating until you could eat no more. Such was the gaiety and intensity of it that everything else stopped that day. I distinctly remember the children at home would wear their new shoes and walk on the bed lest the shoes got spoilt. Things have changed since those good old days. Is it a change for the better? It could be. Because the quality of life, as people say, has improved in all respects.

Well, one good thing that has happened is the fact that I do not have to be reminded every now and then that someone has come to pay me respects as an older person because visiting people seems to have become an obsolete activity. And because of that, at least, I do not have to feel antiquated. Reverting back to the subject of "mixed feeling", I felt that I missed the Eid days of the past, the days that wore all the apparels of delight as I have described above. With the change of time newer and more techno-driven means of pleasure have taken over. In the past people used to go visiting their near and dear ones and also friends. Occasionally, they used to go to the cinema halls on the second or the third day of Eid, often with their girlfriends described conveniently as 'cousins'. These days multiple channels churning out packaged entertainment, factory made and easily obtainable have taken over. Reason why people do not seem to pay much attention to them unless pre-advertised stars of their liking have taken part in those programmes. The TV goes on; people talk or involve themselves in various other chores; once in a while casually glancing at the screen.

This year we saw people were into the trend of giving gifts to others more than any of the previous Eids. The gifts were given not only to the family members but to outsiders as well. These may have been on business considerations or on grounds of friendship. But gifts were exchanged profusely. The families parted with a lot of cash for their various members. On such occasions as Eid those who could afford always spent money, but this time the extent of extravagance and the number of people indulging in it has increased manifold. Designer Punjabis or Shalwar-Kameez sets at incredible prices were sold like hot cakes. I really do not mind. It is good for those who have decided to effect change in the fashion industry in the country. How refreshing was it to see that we did not even bother with the fact that most advanced economies were shivering in their pants for fear of impending collapses. The BBCs or the CNNs of the world