

PHOTO: STAR FILE

Commercialisation of Eid

As the year progresses towards the festival of Eid, the whole country begins to light up with excitement and expectations. Apart from shopping malls and individual stores, small home boutiques are also quite in demand during Eid. Ladies from various localities of the city set small home boutiques or exhibition only for the occasion of Eid. They simply rearrange the furniture in their houses to make space for displaying their items. Though the idea seems quite bizarre to me, it is recently turning into a widespread trend in Dhaka. Surprisingly, most women who set up boutiques during Eid end up making some profit or the other. Even if there are numerous sales in a neighbourhood, none of them will be excluded from the rush of crowd willing to purchase as much as they can for the biggest festival of the year. This shows that apart from the exploding population of our country with growing needs and wants, people nowadays are willing to spend more money and time on materialistic things instead of devoting their focus on the spiritual aspect of Ramadan and Eid. Buying several clothes to celebrate Eid might be considered to be a part of our culture but I believe it to be wastage of money. Many of us are still content with just a bowl of "shemaai" on the day of Eid.

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Indomitable Spirit

I caught a glimpse of a young man trying to work out on his own while working out in a gym one day. He was sweating profusely and was having a hard time catching his breath. His form was sloppy, his back was arched awkwardly and his hands were shaking violently like he was about to drop down on his face any moment. I went up to him and asked him to stop and take pause. We don't have conventional trainers at our gym and so the veteran members tune up the fresh ones by taking them as spotters. After his failed attempts to do push ups, it was time for him to do some bench presses. I could easily gauge his level of strength, so I unloaded all the weights from the Olympic bar and told him to press it. The bar itself weighs 22 kgs. To my utter surprise, he called for my support at the first set itself. After the workout we had a little chat and I found out that he is a student of class 10 and he weighs around 39 kgs. The most shocking information he gave me was that he suffered from asthma. I did not ask him why he had decided to join the gym. He was probably being bullied at school or wanted to impress a girl. But I was quite sure that I had seen the last of him on that day. But he proved me wrong by visiting the gym the very next day. It's been two weeks after my first encounter with him and he still struggles with every set of work out but there is no sign of him giving up. I see lots of young men loitering around and passing their idle time smoking, gossiping and checking out girls. This boy put his energy to use and continued to work to develop his body despite his physical weakness. To me, that young boy's indomitable spirit outshined us all at the gym.

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