



THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE

THE cow, we were told in primary school, is a domestic animal, has four legs and a tail, with a tuft of hair at the end of its tail. What better occasion to test the truth of that statement than go visiting the many animal markets set up across the city, indeed all over the country on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha? Observe the oval shaped image, one that gives you a fair idea of a presence in the universal scheme of things, and wonder. A split second on, you realize it is an Eid cattle market at your very own Gabtali here in the city. Shift your focus, until your eyes zero in on the proud camel which, unknowingly, waits at the altar of sacrifice. Similar is the tale of the goats tethered nearby. On the way to the market, some cows get indisposed, which leaves their caretakers in a quandary. On Eid, beside the cows, the sight of beaming children is a generational affair. It has been happening for decades together. Observe the excitement captured in the innocence of these very young people. And then reflect on the thoughts that might be coursing through the minds of these cows as the boat carries them down the placid waters of the river. Where lies journey's end? And what is sacrifice?

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