

# Shopping for other people during Eid



WASIQUE HASAN

I'm sure you all know how much we Bangladeshis enjoy shopping. The roads being full to the brim with clusters of people should be a good enough indicator of that fact. Not all of the things we buy are for ourselves, however. In fact, a significant portion of our shopping time is spent seeking out gifts for relatives and friends. This poses a unique set of struggles, some of which are highlighted below.

## THE ONE TIME SIZE DOES MATTER

When it comes to assigning sizes to clothing, shops prefer to use methods to ensure no one knows what size a label actually stands for. Nothing is fixed, and the variation between brands is enormous. Others are more scientific and use number scales ranging from 20 to 50 (usually). Sometimes they use ages instead of sizes when referring to kids' attire. Eventually I'm sure Egyptian hieroglyphics will be adopted as the universal indicator for sizes, and we'll need to hire historians to make sense of what fits who. Because let's face it, that is the most convenient method.

## SCHRODINGER'S TASTE

Most if not all of us take certain liberties when picking out clothes for people who are absent. Perhaps we're a little more extravagant with our choices than if we'd be buying for ourselves. For example, I'm sure your fifty year old uncle, wouldn't wear a hot pink *panjabi*, embroidered with pearls, which spell out

*Despacito*. But then again, you can never be sure until he definitively says no. Therefore, when you buy it he must be both pleased and offended by your choice. You'll never know.

## ALL THE GIRAFFES AND HOBBITS

Not everyone is the same height, and there's no shame in that. However, some people are outside the standard range of heights and stand taller than six feet or shorter than five. These people should be incredibly ashamed of themselves, because picking out clothes for them is a nightmare. For tall people, getting them an XL makes them look malnourished because they have acres of fabric lying limply on both sides. Four people could fit into one XL shirt, with room to hide a small puppy inside as well.

It's even worse for my horizontally challenged friends, since most adult brands just don't make clothes that small. In those cases, you have to explain to them why their gift has pictures of Doraemon on it. It's not my fault kids' clothing lacks variety.

In the end, however, the very act of giving to the ones you care about makes the experience special. Regardless of what troubles you face. Here's to hoping that we all get the right sizes before they run out. Good luck, and Eid Mubarak.

*With a heart of trash and a PC of potato, Wasique Hasan could use some help. Send help:*

*facebook.com/hasique.wasan*



# WHEN A HERMIT GOES EID SHOPPING

FARAH MASUD

Being a hermit for the most part of your life, you have always preferred your little cramped bat-cave over proper dose of vitamin D. But let's be real, you still step out of your safe haven once in a while for the purpose of being human. One fine, scorching day during Ramadan, an idea strikes you, which soon turns out to be a terrible one. And for once in your life, you feel brave enough to go for it.

You decide to go Eid shopping for the few people in your life who still bother to put up with your nuisance. To make sure you spend the least amount of time outside of your sanctuary, you sketch out a full-proof plan. Thanks to Google Maps, you find the shortest possible route to the closest mall, make a list of all the items you're going to buy for each family member and even prioritise them according to which one of them love you more.

Now that you're fully equipped, you head out. But fate has a cruel sense of humour. You forget to take into account the biggest hindrance to the Bengali life - yes, it's the dreaded Dhaka traffic.

After what feels like an eternity, you finally reach your destination. It's not a pretty sight, but you are ready for this - swarms of humans scurrying in and out of stores, pulling and shoving each other on their way. As if moving

through them wasn't difficult enough, yet another challenge awaits you. You curse Google maps under your breath for not helping you navigate through the labyrinth of suffering, which is the mall itself. There are literally hundreds of shops here, how are you supposed to know which of them have your desired items and at an affordable price? Fearing for your sanity, you take a leap of faith and push your way into the very first shop you find and immediately get to work.

But the universe has a different plan for you. While you're trying to mind your own business, the over friendly salespeople come over to assist you, all the while shoving clothes and bags and *panjabis* into your arms that you don't even want. When you finally manage to get rid of them, and pick something that you like, another customer who had been watching you all along like a hawk, snatches it out of your hand and runs for the cash counter.

Tired and frustrated with your predicament, you trudge back home with a solemn face, and promise to yourself that next time, you'll buy your Eid gifts two months prior to Ramadan, or maybe online.

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