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THE DIGITAL EID EXPERIENCE

AAQIB HASIB

There are some traditions which we just cannot leave behind. Our Eid day routine is just one of many traditions that need to be maintained, irrespective of what's going on in the world outside.

But, wait. Hold on to your horses, before you jump into your car and drive over to the shopping malls. Because that's not what I am talking about, and by now we can all agree that wasteful shopping should be a no-no in general.

However, what I am talking about is the classic Eid day, and there's plenty of ways to go about it without endangering anyone's lives, and all the while, still preserving the overall spirit of the occasion.

Eid Breakfast

Truly, there isn't anything like it. Family members congregate at the relative's house closest to the location of the *Eid er jamaat*. Or, in some cases, everyone goes over to the place of whoever makes the best breakfast, your chicken roast with *porota*, *payesh*, *mutton rezala*. Sorry I'm getting a bit dreamy just thinking about it.

This time around, though, while you can't have grandma's famous roast, you can still greet the whole family in a group video call. Just get on WhatsApp, Viber, Messenger, whichever app has all of your family on, and you can wish each other "Eid Mubarak" as face-to-face as possible.

Plus, this way you can mute any annoying relatives who keep bringing up their kid's results or the myriad academic achievements that just ruins the vibe of the conversation.

Natok Time

Watching the Eid TV programs throughout the day is a way for the older family members to reconnect. They sit there, sipping their Coke and eating the second dessert, usually *shemai* and just

watching some drama or comedy which features some of their favourite actors, occasionally gossiping about their lives in between commercial breaks.

Well, I'm here to tell you that is still possible. There are countless ways to organise an online watch party, whether through Discord, Kast, or the variety of similar services available out there. I'd suggest that family members with enough technical knowledge run a trial of their options the night before, so everything functions smoothly on the big day.

Extra bonus because this keeps your parents off your backs for the rest of the day.

Salami (not the meat) Time

I'm sure all of you have been waiting for this one. For those of you who are lucky enough to still be graced with this classic Eid tradition, don't be dismayed. We live in a digital world, and just because your chacha isn't going to be able to hand you crisp 500 taka notes, doesn't mean he can't give you something.

Prepare your digital wallets. Send your wallet numbers, QR codes, bank account number, whatever it is you have.

Now, fair warning, there will be a few of your older relatives who will refuse to budge. The core ritual of performing the *salam* by touching their feet is crucial to them. How else will they know if you're worthy?

There is, however, a way to circumvent this. Two words: feet pics. Ask them to send you pictures of their feet, take a printout and video yourself performing the *salam*, and then send it back to cash it in, boys and girls. You gotta do what you gotta do.

Finally, don't forget to appreciate all the Eids from the past when you didn't have the restrictions of quarantine around, and try to make the most of this one. After all, Eid only comes every so often.





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