

DID YOU KNOW?

HOW THE ISLAMIC CALENDAR WORKS

Every Islamic month begins with the emergence of a new lunar cycle. Traditionally, this is determined by observing the crescent moon (*hila*), which signifies the conclusion of the preceding lunar month and the commencement of the new one.

Hence, it can be said that the Islamic calendar is based on lunar months, which begin when the thin crescent moon is sighted in the western sky after sunset a day or so after new moon. In the Islamic calendar, the commencement of a new month is indicated by the sighting of the new crescent moon. This makes astronomy a key part of Islamic events and festivals, including Ramadan and Eid.

Despite the lunar cycle spanning 29.5 days to complete its phases, allocating half a day to a month is impractical. Hence, in the Islamic calendar, a month can typically have 29 or 30 days. That's why the month of Ramadan is sometimes 29 days long and sometimes 30 days long.

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AZURE

SHEHJREEN AHMED

The sky is the most obscure portion of Earth which can be read with utmost ease. When an inattentive daydreamer like me abandons her pressurising studies for five minutes to gaze out through the glass window dazzling in the noon's shimmering light, she will be stuck observing how the vast stretch of the cerulean sky holds testament to the day's events and emotions within the dusty city below.

I often like to drown in the multi-pitched honks of the traffic and the conspicuous vehicles revving by the bustling street shops, longing to escape into the heart of Dhaka. I want to wander off to somewhere nobody wants to explore intentionally or out of curiosity.

There lies a different embodiment of land well hidden as a ravishing mystery among those endless clouds.

Perhaps Cloud Nine really exists. If you care to let your sixth sense guide you, you might succeed in finding the laws of the blue. The daytimes are so deceiving. The morning sun blazes brighter than ever, usually during the sweaty summers, as golden as the honey in my tea, spreading ichor-like aura throughout the polluted world. It ends up looking like there's nothing called negative. I stare directly at the sun and despite the sharp burn in my eyes, feel that I'm the happiest person alive. Like there's no grief, no trepidation, nothing. All around me, the pale neighbouring buildings, the sickly money plant twisting down to my veranda from the fifth floor, and the sunshine-lit shabby rooftops, each seems to be nurtured with purity. Even the gloom in my bedroom is overshadowed by the entity of pureness, a strange presence killing my recent foreboding.

But it doesn't take long to realise what a sham all this

is. The sun knows the corruption and the fraud. It knows the thieves and assassins lurking in the nooks of ghostly alleyways and is aware of all the vices tainting the place. This, the sun attempts to cover any ounce of darkness fuelling nefariousness, shining on and on. The shower of rays could suppress them at least partially.

The writer is an O level student at Mastermind School.

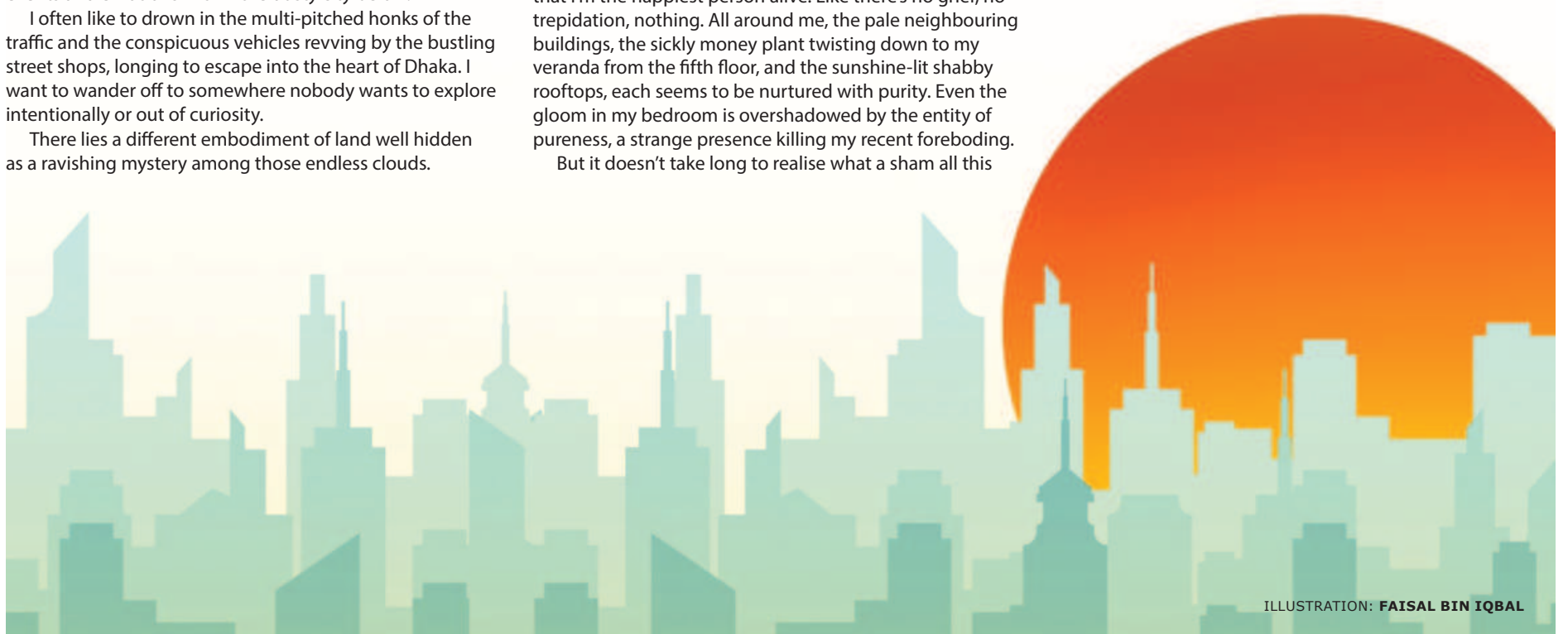


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