



# The nostalgic allure of Eid cards



PHOTOS: ORCHID CHAKMA

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Growing up, the colourful paper cards adorned with handwritten wishes, prayers, and heartfelt messages were part of some of the fondest memories I had. Today, these simple, tangible forms of greeting have become a nostalgic reminder of a time that felt more personal and slow-paced.

A few days before Eid, my father would take us with him to purchase these Eid cards. Often, they would come in the

shapes of the crescent moon and stars, as well as mosques and lanterns. But my favourite ones were rectangular shaped and included Tom and Jerry illustrations of the two titular characters wearing *tupis*.

Long before digital messages on WhatsApp became the norm, Eid cards were a cherished part of the celebration. There was a time when Eid card stalls were propped up in alleyways across the country. My sister and I would sift through these stacks of cards in search of the perfect one.

The experience of putting together the perfect Eid card wasn't limited to just buying it. The next step also mattered: writing a message inside that felt personal. We would sit down with a pen, time on our hands, and put in the thought. At times, we would copy short poems and scribble inside the cards, or simply wish our loved ones happiness and prosperity.

Eid also meant a long holiday. So, on the last day of school, my friends and I would exchange Eid cards until we met again. During art class, my classmates and I used to sit with our art supplies and draw each other with moons, stars, and shimmering smiley stickers pasted on top.

"Eid Mubarak", we would write in bold, filling them with vibrant colours. Each card used to be unique, received by a friend that we held close to our hearts. To this day, I have safely tucked away the many Eid cards my best friend has given me since the age of nine.

Over time, like many things, this tradition began to fade. With the rise of smartphones and social media, our communication methods have transformed. Eid greetings now reach our friends and family through a few taps on our phone screens, and rarely carry the same personal touch as a handwritten card.

Despite the shift, this year I observed people attempting to revive the lost tradition of Eid cards. Most notably, I came across a post on Instagram where the photos displayed a stall of Eid cards on the streets of Mirpur. I immediately zoomed in on the cards, hoping they would resemble the ones my sister and I bought as kids. While the stalls don't display the ones that belonged to my childhood, they are a sign of the nostalgia of what once was, sharing the same purpose of spreading the joy of Eid with others.

For many of us, the Eid cards continue to carry a special warmth, serving as a reminder of the crowded markets, the colourful stalls, and the quiet moments we spent writing the messages at night. The nostalgia lingers of the times we spent writing the perfect wishes, evoking memories of days when joy emanated from the fold of a paper card.

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