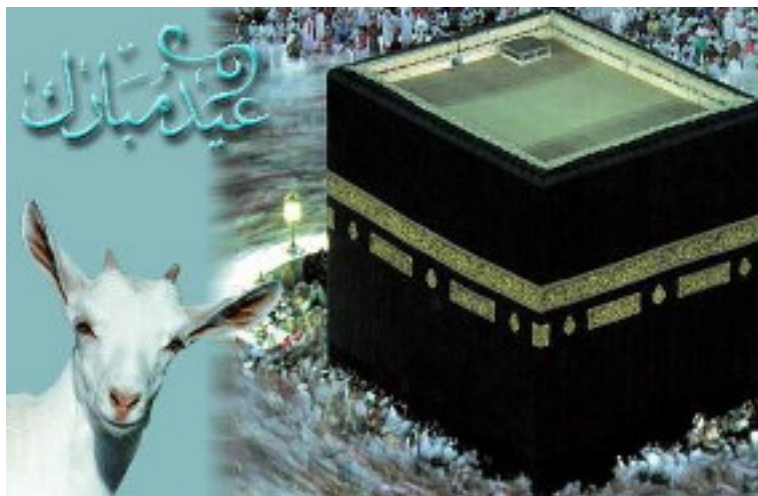


The spirit of Eid ul-Adha (Festival of Sacrifice)

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Sunday, 06 November 2011 09:34 - Last Updated Wednesday, 09 November 2011 23:45



The Urdu and Persian word Qurbani (sacrificial slaughter) is derived from the Arabic word Qurban. Lexically, it means that which brings you closer to the Creator. The word includes all acts of charity fulfilled as a means of seeking Allah's pleasure.

The sacrifice of an animal has always been treated as a recognised form of worship in all religious orders originating from a divine book.

In Islam, the sacrifice of an animal has been recognised as a form of worship only during three days of Dhul-Hijjah (Muslim holy month of pilgrimage to Makkah), namely the 10th, 11th and 12th of the month. This is to commemorate the unparalleled sacrifice offered by Prophet Ibrahim (pbuh) when he, in pursuance of a command of Allah conveyed to him in a dream, prepared himself to slaughter his beloved son, Prophet Isma`il (pbuh). Allah Almighty, after testing his submission, sent down a ram and saved Isma`il (pbuh) from the logical fate of slaughter.

It is from that time onwards that the sacrifice of an animal became an obligatory duty to be performed by every Muslim, male and female, possessing the *nisab of Zakah* (that is, the minimum amount in one's possession that renders one liable to pay *Zakah* or Compulsory Charity).

Qurbani is thus a demonstration of total submission to Allah and a proof of complete obedience to Allah's will or command.

- The team at 'Indians in Africa' wishes all our Muslim readers a blessed Eid ul-Adha.