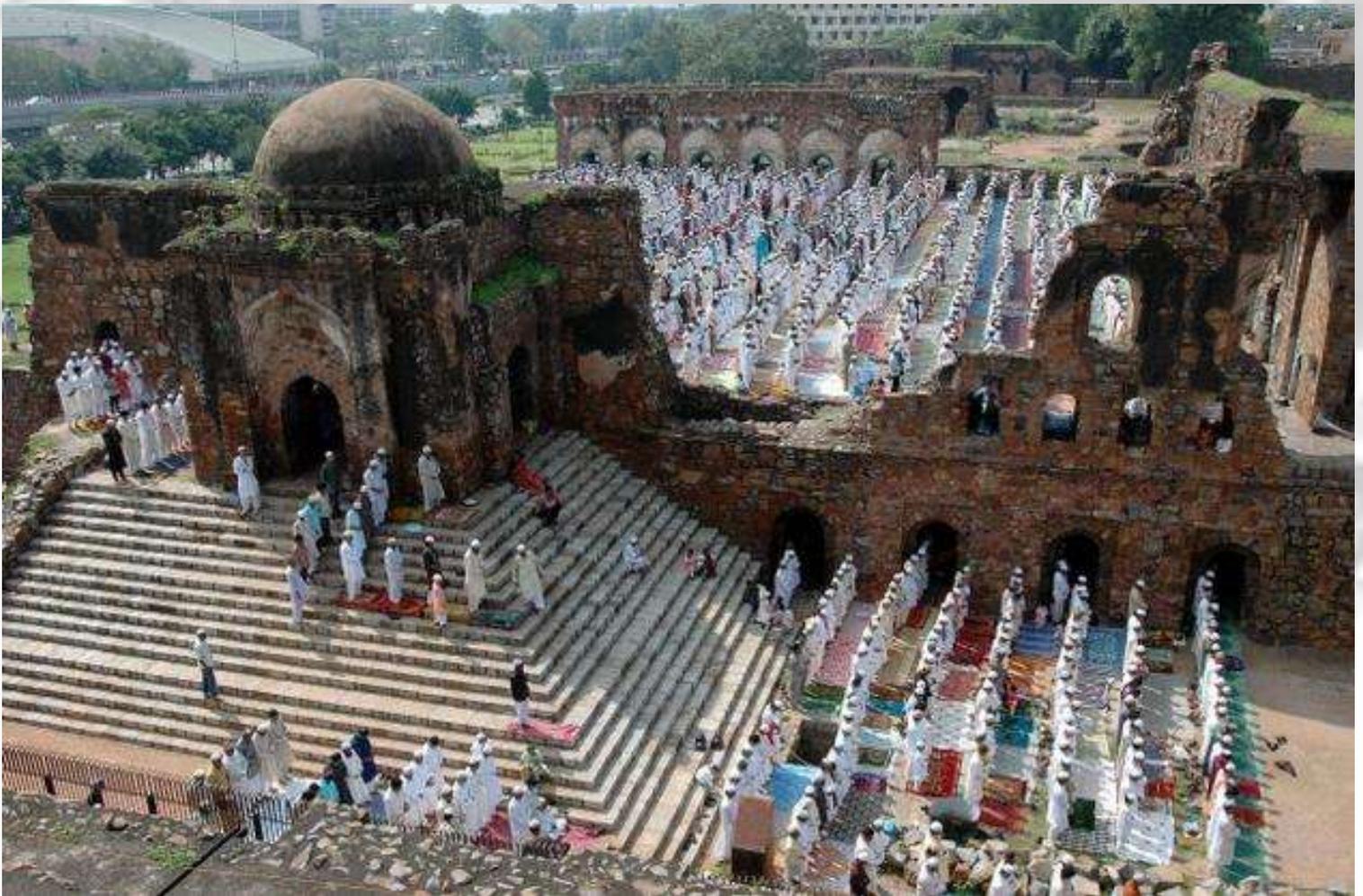


FRIDAY WRAP

#2.34.1

'A Glimpse of Humour'

2 September 2011



People offer prayers at the Feroz Shah Kotla in New Delhi on the occasion of Eid. Photo: Sandeep Saxena

Wrap

- ~ Rap -- to talk., *conversation*.
- ~ a piece of thin, flat bread *that can contain anything* eaten as a sandwich.
- ~ Signaling the end (*ie of a week*)
- ~ Under wraps – *secret*.

At the End of the Blessings

Yup. Ramadaan 2011. Finished.

Eid-ul Fitr 2011. Finished.

I hope you had a great day and you do not require Eno, Alka Seltzer or Brooklax.

I think I regained all the weight I lost in Ramadaan yesterday.

I am still feeling a little green around the gills but I will survive.

Baking

Eid-ul Fitr does not start on the morning. No. Eid-ul Fitr actually starts a day or two before Eid. All the baking and food preparation starts a day or two before time. And the pace get speeded up as soon as the moon is sighted

It is prerequisite that there must be more than 5 kinds of biscuits and various kinds of cake.

Every year we lament about the amount of food we make for Labarang but every year we repeat everything we did the previous year. So this year we had 1.6kg prawns (on special at Foodlovers Market for R100, all the Slumse in the know had this on their table), leg of lamb (a must), roast beef (the leg of lamb look so small according to my wife), 'soutvleis' (not the same as roast beef I was told) and cooked



Eid Salah at Masjidul Aqsa Jerusalem

tongue. The latter two was for breakfast. And seafood rice with seafood mix and shrimps. Bang, the entire month's meat budget spent on one day. No we are not lamb breyani people, no siree, that we leave to the local Slumse.

A prerequisite.

My wife made x, y and z. And Johnson specials (Lamingtons to some) fruit cake and an unsuccessful strawberry flan. The strawberries survived to be eaten another day.

Then the steak pie and a chicken and mushroom pie for breakfast on Eid. Or rather 'pastei' as we call it here in Cape Town. Why two different kinds? Because my son doesn't eat chicken pie and my daughter don't eat steak pie. Make one pie I said, the people in Somalia is starving. Okay, no Somalia jokes.

The baking all started the Monday before Eid and carried on till 0100 Wednesday morning. And there were still some apple and meringue tartlets to be

baked at 0500 Wednesday morning. Oh yes, and the rolls for breakfast.

Morning

So by the time we woke up at 0600 all the breakfassy stuff was ready and waiting.

I'm clever. I learnt. I just have some Jungle Oats for early breakfast. A couple of years ago overindulging in too much rich steak pie very early in the morning left very green around the gills the whole day. Nausea and heaving bend double over the toilet was how I spent most of that Eid.

The local Mosques started at 0745 less than an hour after Morning Prayer. We got there early and got a place in the main prayer hall.

It was storming, really storming during the night and the day started wet and cold so the prospect of sitting outside was not a good.

The Mosque filled up real quick.

We had the Director of the college giving the sermon and the Imam giving the Gutba in Arabic and leading the prayers. The sermon was interesting.

This was the first time in this Mosque for Eid as we use to frequent the other local Mosque for the last ten years. We swapped Mosques this year for personal reasons.

Though I would not criticize any mosque or Imam I can say that the committees leave a lot to be desired. Sometime decisions get made by the committee for personal reasons rather than for good of the community. Let just leave it at that.

By 0810 we were done. And the long walk to our shoes started. Though the Mosque have a big main entrance and eight other exits only the main doors are open for this huge gathering and it takes up to twenty minutes to get to your shoes and exit as only eight people can exit at the same time. Is it that some committees need a lot of education and lack wisdom or is it just me?

We finally got home at 0835.

Breakfast II

Then it was time for the breakfast number two. This is where 'soutvleis', cooked tongue and fresh warm rolls and all the 'pastei' come into play. I kept the 'pastei' and after a month of fasting you can really put it away.

With breakfast just over we started on lunch which was my job. And it started with the defrosting and cleaning of 1.6kg of prawns. That was my job too. Damn. I realized half way through that job that next time we will have lamb breyani because I love lamb breyani and it does not take a lot of preparation. But I endured. And cleaned and cooked and cooked and clean. All we had for accompaniment to this meal was some sweet and sour baby carrots. We learnt not to have too much accompaniment.

We must still learn not to cook for thirty people when we only going to have eleven. We will probably never learn and we must most probably not cook on an empty stomach.

And all morning the neighbours came to visit; all coming to say Selamat and staying for a chat. This has become an institution of Labarang morning and I

get to take photos of all the neighbourhood children. Likewise our



children go to all the neighbours. This is a ritual of time immemorial; of all the children going to wish all the people in the neighbourhood and they get a stipend for their trouble. We try to uphold this tradition as much as possible; even if we give the stipend a day or two after Eid.

By 1200 I was hard busy doing lunch. Fried prawns cannot be fried way before the time and by 1300 everything was ready bar the dessert which my daughter was preparing; fruit salad and some fancy dessert with boudoir biscuits, strawberries and cream.

By 1345 we were on our way to my sister's house.

We, my sister and I, and our extended family and my mother eat together every Eid for the last 27 years. Once or twice we ate at home but it was never the same.

It was a lot of greeting and oohing and aahing over the food and very soon we sat own to eat.

First was the starters; fried mushrooms, chicken strips and deep fried jalapeño with cheese and various dips. Good. Lekker. No further food required.



Then it was the second course; my sister also had prawns so we 3 different prawn dishes and seafood rice. More oohing and aahing. Nice. Very nice.



Third course was 2 legs of lamb and roast beef. Both my sister and I had a leg of lamb prepared differently. Mine is fairly rare and hers is cooked off the bone. And it was good.



For the entire time I did not move from my chair, I was a little bit scared that if I moved I would just fall down on my face.

By now it was past three a we still had to do dessert. Tea, various cakes, Pavlova with fruit, fruit salad and my daughter boudoir strawberries. And it was good.



We could spend hours just sitting around and chatting but the day was still very long and we still had places to go.

But first, it was photo time. All the children and family get to have their photo taken. And every year there are more of them. I enjoy this part; the interactions with all the children.



Ali and Hanaan, my youngest models and my sister's grandchildren

Then we were on our way as we had visitors on their way.

Lunch was done.

Friends came over and we got to spend some good quality time with close friends. Okay, okay. The husband and I are buddies but the wife and children he can leave at home. Yes, I told him that. Yes I told her that too. But okay, the children are my friend too.

Later after late evening prayer we were on our way to my wife's side of the family for a late supper sort of as we had to bring our own food. Joking, there is always food but we bring food along too. 'Selamat for Labarang' was the call of the day.

And I heard that some Moulana said that there is no word like 'Selamat'. Of course there is! It is derived from Indonesian or Malaysian meaning 'Congratulations' and 'Safe' respectively. So you either wish someone 'Congratulations for Eid' or a 'Safe Eid'. We are not descendant from Arab. Neither are we descendant from Indian. Okay I am. But here in Cape Town we should work on retaining our

roots. Not go to Arabia for a year then think you are an Arab like people I know.

Anyway.

Then we got to spend a long evening in the company of close family and the occasional friend popping in. nice.

And so another Eid came to an end. A day filled with good food and excellent company with family and friends. It is a long tiring day but a day that is that is one of the most satisfying days in the year.

After a very long month spent fasting this was a perfect way to celebrate the end.

And we are not the only ones. The whole Muslim world celebrate the end of Ramadaan with Eid-ul-Fitr; all in different ways but I love the way we do it here in Cape Town with close family and friends and good food.

Now, post Ramadaan, we will go back to normal and peanut butter and bread will fast be our staple diet during the day.

I miss Ramadaan already.



Thousands of Bangladeshis wait for trains at the airport railway terminal as they rush home to be with their families in remote villages before the Muslim Eid festival on the outskirts of Dhaka on August 30, 2011. (NationalPost.com)

Eid Celebrations Around the World

One of the most joyous Muslim occasions, Eid-ul-Fitr is widely celebrated in all those nations wherever there is a presence of a Muslim community.

United Arab Emirates (UAE)

Eid-ul-Fitr being a Muslim festival, it is predominantly celebrated in the Islamic countries. In the UAE, it is observed with the greatest fanfare.

During the holiday, adult men as well as young boys dress themselves up in traditional white dresses complete with the long white traditional thoub and the "Ogal", which is a check patterned scarf attached with a black ring like turban, and offer prayers in the mosque.

All over the country, special festive fairs are organised that are thronged by excited celebrants along with their dear ones. Women have a merry time painting their hands with traditional "henna". It is a highly entertaining time for children as they enjoy the performances of clowns and jugglers.

Gift-giving is an inseparable tradition of Eid.

While adults gift new clothes, sweets and other gift items to one another, children also receive small sums of money (known as "Eidi") from their elders.

Iran

In Iran, Eid is better known as "Eyde Fetr". Most of the Iran population happen to be Shiaites and hence, the festival is celebrated in each household in a much personal way.

But public observances are of course, very much there. The occasion witnesses prayer services being held in every mosque in the country and even in public places. After the strict Ramadan time with all its austerities, Eid-ul-Fitr is a time for grand feasts and celebrations.

Meat is enjoyed during this time and often a young lamb or calf is sacrificed for the occasion, a custom known as "Qurbani" which is practiced mainly in affluent households. But the festive mood in no way overshadows the religious spirit, which is kept alive



Eid Salah, Egypt (NationalPost.com)

through charitable acts. Traditionally, each Muslim family gives food to needy persons during this time. The payment of "fitrah" or "fetriye" is obligatory for each Muslim.

Turkey

Here Eid-ul-Fitr is known as Seker Bayrami ("Bayram of Sweets") or Ramazan Bayrami ("Ramadan Bayram") and is observed as a public holiday.

Educational institutions and government offices are generally closed during the entire time of the celebrations.

In the whole of Turkey, people dress up in "Bayramlik" (clothes specially bought for the Eid festivities) and attend prayer services, visit their friends, relatives and loved ones and proceed to cemeteries to pay their respects to the departed souls.

An important Eid custom is kissing the right hand of elderly citizens and placing it on one's forehead while expressing wishes like "Bayraminiz Kutlu Olsun" ("May Your Bayram Be Celebrated"), "Mutlu Bayramlar" ("Happy Bayram"), or "Bayraminiz Mubarek Olsun" (May Your Bayram Be Holy).

This is done as a mark of respect towards old age. The occasion sees little kids going from house to house and wishing everyone a happy festive time in return for which they are presented with small sums of money or little treats like chocolates, candies or traditional sweets such as "Baklava" and "Turkish Delight".

India

With around 16 percent of the Indian population constituting of Muslims, it is natural that India celebrates the festival with great enthusiasm. In India, Eid is considered as a national holiday. The centre of the celebrations is undoubtedly the great mosque Jama Masjid in New Delhi which is thronged by thousands of Muslims during Eid-ul-Fitr, all eager to offer their prayers.

Various sweets and special delicacies, particularly the special Eid dish 'Siwaiyaan'(a dish of fine, toasted sweet vermicelli noodles with milk & dried fruit), are available in different forms and colors in markets, especially those in the Muslim areas, to make Eid sweeter for its celebrants.



And lest we forget ~ a newly displaced Somali Mother cradles her severely malnourished child at a feeding centre in Doolow, south western Somalia.