

Id-ul-Fitr/ Eid-ul-Fitr dates		
5/12/2002	25/11/2003	14/11/2004
Thursday	Tuesday	Sunday
1423	1424	1425

Lunar months are shorter than solar months. The Common Era (CE) and Before the Common Era (BCE) calendar is solar whereas the Islamic calendar is lunar. Hinduism has lunar months too. Thus Islamic months arrive more quickly than Solar months, and move back along the year each year.

Id-ul-Fitr is also known as Id-ul-Saghir - the Lesser Id - and Sheker Bayram (Turkish) - sugar feast. This is a celebration that ends the Ramadan fast. Id-ul-Fitr comes on the first day of the lunar month of Shawwal, the tenth Islamic month. A beautiful moon comes out.

Muhammad (Salla-llahu alaihi wa sallam/ Peace be upon him) said, "For every people there is a feast and this is our feast." (al-Bukhari)

Id-ul-Fitr is thanksgiving. Id means a recurring event. It is believed to be an immediate reward by Allah for those who spent Ramadan fasting and in worship. There can be six (voluntary) fasts after Id-ul-Fitr but fasting forbidden on this day.

Salat (prayer) at Id-ul-Fitr is part of the Muslims' road to Paradise. This is their day to seek forgiveness for sins. Muslims celebrate but should not spend too much money. People also send Id cards and say Id Mubarak - Happy Id. They decorate their houses with brightly coloured lights. Muslim women decorate their hands and feet with intricate patterns. People wash well, put on best clothes, make up and perfumes. The Id prayer in a mosque, park or special area can be performed any time between sunrise and noon, but is delayed for giving out zakat. Khutbah (sermon) is not compulsory and follows the Id prayer. It's best to go to the mosque one way and come back another.

Muslims visit friends and extended family giving sweets and money to the children. Special foods are cooked. Sweet foods are often served to suggest that life is sweet. In some countries there are special fairs, parades or camel-racing.

Questions:

Why does the Islamic calendar move faster than the calendar marking the common era?

On what date of which Islamic month does Id-ul-Fitr fall and when is it this year in the solar calendar?

What month does Id-ul-Fitr follow and what happened in that month?

What activities do Muslims do at Id-ul-Fitr in order to celebrate?

What alternative names are there for Id-ul-Fitr?

Later...

Make a card to send to friends. Include a greeting and some textual and/ or graphic design that includes a word or two expressing celebration. Remember that no images of people or animals should go on to the card.