

Costly livestock dampen Idd mood

Idd-ul-Adhuha will fall on Wednesday, May 27, and lasts four days as per the Islamic norms.

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Muslim humanitarian organisations have expressed preparedness to mark this year's Idd-ul-Adhuha festivities.

However, unlike previous years, fewer animals will be slaughtered, which is partly blamed on hiked prices of livestock and rising transport costs.

Idd-ul-Adhuha will fall on Wednesday, May 27, and lasts four days as per the Islamic norms.

According to Ms Shaniah Kigozi, the country director of One Ummah Uganda, her organisation plans to slaughter at least 400 head of cattle, 90 goats and 50 sheep.

"The high cost of animals at the farm and rising fuel prices have in one way or the other affected the number of animals we had planned to slaughter. For example, a cow which was costing Shs1.5 million last year, now costs Shs2 million," she said during an interview yesterday.

As a result, the demand for animals to slaughter on Idd day has also caused a hike in prices of beef in urban centres, with a kilogramme going for between Shs20,000 and Shs23,000, up from Shs18,000 six months ago.

Mr Gibril Sekasi, who operates a butchery in Kinaawa-Kyengera in Wakiso District, said during festivities like Idd, some butchers sell a kilo of meat at Shs25,000. He added that a cow they used to buy at Shs2 million now costs Shs2.5 million.

Dr Idd Sirajuddin Menya, the chairperson of Social Humanitarian Aid Delivery - Uganda (SHADU), said they have faced numerous challenges while sourcing livestock for Idd.

"Outbreaks of animal diseases have led to huge losses due to limited access



Some of the animals which Social Humanitarian Aid Delivery Uganda is planning to slaughter during Idd-ul-Adhuha festivities slated for Wednesday in Kotido District. COURTESY PHOTO

to veterinary services in some regions. Rising fuel costs have equally increased transportation expenses, while market prices for healthy animals have risen compared to previous years," he said.

Dr Menya said his organisation plans to slaughter 2,500 cows.

"Only 1,000 sheep have been procured, down from 5,000 slaughtered last year," he said.

Last year, SHADU slaughtered 2,500 head of cattle compared to 1,200 in 2024. A total of 5,000 sheep was slaughtered last year, up from 2,000 in 2024.

Mr Habib Wasige, a liaison officer at Sena Foundation, said they are going to slaughter only 400 cows and distribute the meat in the districts of Kotido, Luweero, Kitgum and Wakiso.

He, however, said animals are few this year due to high prices of livestock compared to last year.

"For instance, a cow in Karamoja, which weighs about 120kg costs Shs1.7 million and the prices vary depending on the region. Prices in the central region are very high," he said.

Sheikh Ahmad Ssentamu Walakira, the programmes coordinator at Humanitarian Efforts And Relief Organisation - Uganda, said the organisation had received only 482 cows from their partners, Islamic Relief Netherlands and Islamitische Gemeenschap Milli Görüş Zuid Nederland, with the latter expected to donate more 100 cows before Idd day.

He said the beef will be distributed to needy people at mosques, orphanage

centres, prisons, hospitals and police stations in the districts of Luweero, Wakiso, Butambala, and Kampala City.

However, some organisations are likely not to slaughter animals this time round, citing the wars in the Middle East that have affected their donors.

"There are individuals and organisations who facilitate our programmes. But when there are wars in their countries, their focus shifts to needy people in their local communities," said Issa Katungulu, the coordinator of Muslim humanitarian agencies.

Mr Issa Kirarira, the executive director of the Nile Humanitarian Agency, said they are yet to decide the exact number of animals to be slaughtered.

"We shall be able to know the total

number of animals to be slaughtered by Tuesday evening," he said.

Ashiraf Zziwa, the spokesperson of Uganda Muslim Supreme Council (UM-SC), said: "In collaboration with brotherly organisations including the Turkish community, we will slaughter cows, goats and sheep. We also encourage individual Muslims who have the means to slaughter animals and donate to the needy."

"We advise all Muslims to strictly observe the standard operating procedures as guided by the Ministry of Health, in a bid to control the spread of Ebola disease that has claimed several lives in neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo," he added.

Idd-ul-Adhuha, one of the most significant Islamic festivals, commemorates the willingness of Prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his son, Prophet Ismael, in obedience to Allah before a ram was provided as a substitute.

It is different from Idd-ul-Fitr, which was celebrated on March 20 at the end of the holy month of Ramadhan.

Unlike Idd-ul-Fitr, this Wednesday's Idd prayer is performed early in the day to enable those with intention to slaughter animals to have meat for lunch and traditionally lasts for four days – meaning the festivities will continue up to May 30.

The Muslim faithful are supposed to leave home without a meal until after the completion of the prayers.

ABOUT IDD DAY

Idd-ul-Adhuha, one of the most significant Islamic festivals, commemorates the willingness of Prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his son, Prophet Ismael, in obedience to Allah before a ram was provided as a substitute. Idd prayer is performed early in the day, but festivities for four days continue up to May 30.