

## Muslim American turned the biggest shopping day to a non-shopping day

Written by Ahmed Tharwat/ Host BelAhdan  
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On Black Friday where thousands of Americans headed to Mall of America for the biggest shopping day of the year to get an early head start on their Christmas shopping. At the same day, thousands of American Muslims here in Minnesota went to the Shopping Mecca of the world to celebrated their biggest religious festival; "Eid Aladha", the scarifies feast commemorating the saving of Abraham son by the sheep. A timely celebration for Muslim Americans who had a rough few weeks full of bad news, from Major Nidal Islamic motive of going postal, to the trial of Sheikh Mohammed the master mind of 9/11, and the execution of Washington sniper John Muhammad; the people of Muhammad are behaving badly.

Our Eid celebration started as in Thanksgiving where millions go to hunt for the right turkey to bring home. Muslims start their Eid ritual by going hunting for the right sheep to bring home to scarify. Early morning Muslims dress up their kids with traditional clothe and they rushed to the Eid Prayer at a nearby Mosque; In the segregated prayer room, they joined the loud chanting of god's greatness ...

"Allah Akbar, Allah Akber" hoping that the American neighbors hold off their patriotic duty for a few hours and not calling homeland security. Inside the makeshift mosque, the Imam gave the usual long boring sermon that made a few prayers question their logic of coming to the Mosque from the first place. At social hour, after warm kissing and hugging, a few traditional Eid cookies were exchanged hands. Then parents presented "Elediah"- a few new fresh dollar bills- to their elated eager kids.

Then they all head to of all places to Mall of America, the shopping Mecca of the world the consumers' cathedral to worship their cultural icons; Calvin, Liz, Loren, Tommy and Victoria. As millions of Muslims headed to Mecca for their pilgrimage, here in Minnesota thousands of American Muslims of all ethnicities, nationalities, races and creeds went to the world biggest Mall to celebrate their native customs and identities. Next to Caribou coffee, a few Egyptian men consumed in a deep conversation of their latest lose in world cub; briefly interrupted by cracking the latest political jokes in Egypt.

Several Somali women watch nervously as their kids vanish into the maze at indoor playground. Not too far distant, a group of Afghanis with their Taliban dress enjoyed a rare peaceful moment by the indoor garden, while some men are kneeling down in the corner getting ready for the noon prayer. Next to them, a cluster of young Pakistani men are listening to their iPods and exchange numbers on their iPhones. By the Rainforest Café, some West Africans in crisp white robes and hats seem unmoved by the strange artificial noises coming from the theme restaurant. On the rollercoaster young Somali boys sharing the ride with Somali girls laughing as their headscarves; hijab, flying over their faces above the overly concerned Americans shoppers, and in the middle of the mall a few Muslim women, cloaked with their traditional black dress Berkas, walking together with an African rhythm.

Their moving black unified bodies eclipse the front window of Victoria's Secret, oblivious to its window undressing displays. They aren't shopping, just celebrating, no bags to carry, just their kids, no culture idol to worship except their "Allah" god ... No fashion trends to follow, only their traditions. It's Christmas without the shopping craze. Every year thousands of Muslims in Minnesota turn the biggest shopping center in the world to a cultural sanctuary, and the biggest

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shopping day of the year was turned to a non-shopping day. Happy Eid Everyone.

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