

Muslims across Rwanda joined others around the world on Wednesday to mark Eid al-Adha, the Festival of Sacrifice, one of Islam's most important holidays.

At Kigali Pele Stadium, national Eid prayers began early in the morning and drew worshippers from across the country. Mosques and open prayer grounds were also filled with believers gathered in worship, reflection and celebration.

Eid al-Adha commemorates the willingness of Prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his son, Ismail, in obedience to God's command. According to Islamic tradition, as Ibrahim prepared to carry out the act, God provided a ram to be sacrificed instead.

Sheikh Musa Sindayigaya the Mufti of Rwanda, said the story underscores obedience, patience and compassion.

"Eid is a time to remember those around us and strengthen our relationships with one another," he said.



*Sheikh Musa Sindayigaya the Mufti of Rwanda during the prayers*

He said the ritual sacrifice of animals such as goats, sheep and cattle reflects this tradition, with meat shared among family, neighbours and people in need. He encouraged Muslims to use the occasion to strengthen family ties and support vulnerable groups, including widows and orphans.

Sindayigaya said slaughtering begins after Eid prayers and continues for four days, including the day of Eid and the three days that follow. He added that the Rwanda Muslim Community, working with partners, prepared cows, goats and sheep for this year's celebrations.

He also highlighted the ongoing Hajj pilgrimage in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, where 72 Rwandan pilgrims traveled on May 17 and are expected to return June 6.

Religious leaders said Eid al-Adha is closely tied to Hajj rituals, including observances on the Day of Arafat and the symbolic reenactment of Hajar's search for water between the hills of Safa and Marwa, which, according to Islamic tradition, led to the discovery of the Zamzam well.

The celebration also recalls the rebuilding of the Kaaba in Mecca by Ibrahim and his

son Ismail as a center of monotheistic worship.

Across Rwanda, Muslims marked the holiday with acts of charity and communal sharing.

“I slaughter a goat and share the meat with my neighbors. I also take food to hospitals because Eid is about making sure no one feels forgotten,” said a Muslim resident in Kigali who attended celebrations.

At Kisementi, Bazivamo Moses said visiting patients and vulnerable people during Eid has become a valued tradition.

“It reflects the true spirit of Eid — compassion, generosity and sharing joy with others,” he said.

Religious leaders urged Muslims to use the holiday to strengthen relationships with relatives, neighbors and vulnerable members of society.

University student Aisha Mutesi said Eid serves as a reminder of submission to God and an opportunity to reconnect with both Muslim and non-Muslim friends. Saidi Rwivanga said he began the day with prayers before sharing meals and engaging in charitable acts.

Eid al-Adha is observed on the 10th day of Dhul Hijjah, the 12th month of the Islamic lunar calendar, following the Day of Arafat. It is marked by prayers, animal sacrifice, family visits and charity.

In many Muslim communities, the holiday lasts three to four days. Meat from sacrificed animals is traditionally divided into three parts: one for the family, one for neighbors and one for those in need.

The festival is also known as Eid al-Kabir, or the “Great Eid,” in parts of West and North Africa.