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Groom Rajin Saleh to become team captain



PHOTO: AFP

Rajin Saleh was the most successful Bangladeshi player in the recently concluded Pakistan cricket tour. At the age of 20, he showed his maturity, determination, patience, stamina and excellent stroke play in his Test and ODI debut series. Besides being an excellent batsman, he is a tough athletic fielder and a successful occasional bowler.

If injury is avoided, he would have 15-16 years to play cricket at top international levels. I suggest to include Rajin Saleh in the shortlist of the players expected to be the captain of the Bangladesh team in the next World Cup 2007, as Grahme Smith of South Africa

was made captain at the age of 22. He then can get enough time to get familiar with players of the World Cup circle.

I like to quote what Indian cricketer Ajay Jadeja said: "Kapil Paaji once told me 'work hard, be sincere and don't worry about the rest'. That perhaps sums up everything. You can fool others, but not yourself".

My advice for Rajin: please handle your success wisely, both on and off the field. Welcome back home, Rajin, and good luck for the coming home series against England.

Saadullah M. Feroz
Kalwalapara, Mirpur, Dhaka

After the liberation war as a third world country we were faced with many tribulations such as poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy, human rights abuse and lack of shelter, etc. Sometimes we succeeded but most of the time we failed to improve our conditions due to the lack of political consensus. We'd prepared several education policies but none of them were implemented. The policy of one government is denied by the next one. Every government tries to write history according to its own impulse.

As a result, our young generation is deprived of knowing our glorious olden times. When BNP speaks against hartal, it forgets that while in the opposition during Awami League's rule, they called hartal countless times.

However, Sheikh Hasina promised to the nation that she or her party will never call Hartal even if she is in the opposition party. But what happened in reality? Hartal is called again and again and it is destroying our economy. Similarly when BNP was in opposition, current Prime Minister Khaleda Zia said that they are ready to donate their blood in exchange of gas but never will they permit to export gas. Now the BNP government is planning to export our gas. If all our political party would have a national consensus, it would be easy to take sound resolutions in national issues.

Ms. Zillur Rahaman
MSS Economics, BB Hall, DU

'Muslims and the media'

This is in response to 'Muslim and the media' written by SNM, Dhaka (22 DS, September, 2003). The Holy Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam and it is a compulsory ritual to perform at least once in a life time.

This is for every adult Muslim, male or female, who are physically fit and financially sound. For past fourteen hundred years, the Muslims around the world are participating in this annual ritual with much fervour and dedication. In this holy congregation, the Muslims have the opportunity to inter-exchange their own learning and experiences - spiritual as well as the practical aspects of their existing condition and the Islamic way of living.

During the Hajj, the reputed Hazrat Mohammad (SM) preached that one Muslim is brother of another Muslim -- which is 'Sunnah'. The Holy Qur'an teaches us to fight back only when we undergo exploitation, repression, torture, killing and eviction from our homes for practising Islam and leading a Muslim way of life.

Today, the biggest question confronting every Muslim around the world is whether to follow the prescriptions of the World Bank and IMF, or strive to change our fate because Almighty Allah helps those who help themselves! When every OIC countries will become developed and every Muslims around the world will be united, we will be able to get honourable and prestigious coverage in the press and media across the globe.

Golam Ashraf
DOHS Baridhara, Dhaka

English is an international language, without which we cannot communicate with the world concerning any matter. We are Bangladeshis by birth and the Bengali is the language through which we express our thoughts. But as we are the citizens of a developing country, we should not pose a linguistically nationalistic in our approach. We should be liberal in learning foreign language to enrich our mother tongue although all our students may not be able to learn it properly. There are many reasons why most students in Bangladesh fail in English.

Firstly, few students are strongly motivated to learn English. They consider it unnecessary; as a result, those students lack proficiency in English language. They write their answers in incorrect English.

Secondly, most teachers, who teach English at school level, are not good at the language. They do not also know the correct method of English teaching.

Thirdly, there are innumerable junior school and high school in our country. The managing committees of those schools do not have educated persons except in government schools. They appoint their own relatives as English teacher, who have no knowledge of English and others are hired on bribery.

Fourthly, the textbooks, which

English Teacher, Shaheed Mannan Line
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"Proposal for flyover at Banani rail crossing"

It is a matter of satisfaction and consolation to see that the long-awaited construction of the Mohakhali flyover is progressing at a smooth rate. This flyover undoubtedly will remove the congestion of traffic at Mohakhali junction and facilitate unhindered flow of traffic from the city centre to Banani, Gulshan, Baridhara as well as to Zia International Airport and Uttara Model Town.

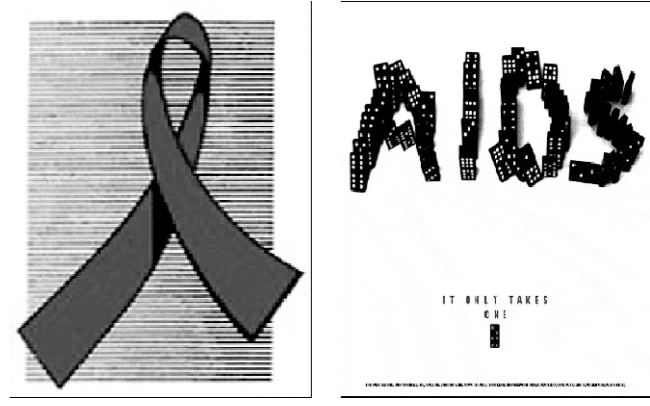
The road to the Zia International Airport is basically the only main arterial road leading the flow of traffic from urban city centre to the Northern suburb of Dhaka. However, the benefit of having unhindered flow at Mohakhali chocking point will be impeded and hampered due to another railway level crossing in between cantonment and Banani. It is therefore suggested that the endeavour which was made previously and for which feasibility study was done, may now be taken afresh to remove this bottleneck.

In order to achieve a tangible outcome, the implementation of the project for construction of a flyover at this point is urgent. Hope, concerned government agencies will pay proper attention to this.

SH Kaiser
Dhanmondi R/A
Dhaka

Victory in defeat

Bangladesh cricket team has just concluded a tour, which will go down, as a successful one although the score line vividly shows big zero against the name of our country. Yet I think the overall performance was good. One can wonder whether the score line really bears semblance of the impressive showing of Bangladesh. Dav Whatmore, the Bangladesh coach, is primarily focused on one issue i.e. whether with every match Bangladesh is improving or not. The victory is a consequential effect of good performance and



Sex education at school level

With the progress of civilisation, many new problems surface. It could be disease, war or pestilence. At present, the disease HIV/AIDS is posing as something dangerous for the whole world. We all feel threatened by this fatal disease. As HIV/AIDS is still considered a social taboo, no one is willing to discuss about it openly. But the time has come to face the reality and educate more people about the epidemic's danger.

In Bangladesh, the number of HIV/AIDS patients is meagre. But in India it crossed 4.6 millions already, mostly in the Maharashtra, Andraprodesh, Cornatak, Tamil Nadu and Manipur regions. For this reason, after 30 years, the West Bengal authority decided to include sex education in SSC level text books.

The name of this book is 'For us'. This book will have many important information about matters that are directly and indirectly related to sex: such as birth secret, adolescence (physical change, mental change), marital issues, sexual demand and how to prevent the peer pressure and develop the capability to say, 'No' to illicit proposals. This book will be taught through group discussions.

In Bangladesh, opinions about the issue differ. Some have positive notions and the others speak against it. But, in my opinion, the issue will not make any negative influence on the youths; rather school related sex education will create positive influence. On becoming an adolescent, every youth develops sexual affinity.

When a child turns an adolescent, curiosity develops concerning physical changes. It is a matter of great concern that globally the youths who are in the age bracket of 15-25 are the most infected, because they are not aware about HIV/AIDS.

So the time has come to discuss and disclose this matter. In West Bengal they have realised the importance of sex education, and are trying to solve it by publishing sex related books for the students of class nine and ten. My recommendation is to take necessary steps to inform our adolescents about sexually transmitted diseases.

Dr. Mustafa Abdur Rahim
Director, Samajik Shasthya Kedra
Mirpur, Dhaka

Both parties are reaping what they sowed

I have read the commentary by Mahfuz Anam on BNP (BNP reaping what it sowed, September 23, DS). I agree with your conclusion that BNP is acting arrogantly. However, I must also say you have been hard hitting on the BNP and your choice of words like "arrogant mindset" do indicate your bias against the BNP.

Politics is like the swing of a pendulum. A lot of what you blamed the BNP for is the result of what the AL did during its tenure. The AL swung the pendulum so much the one way, that, it is illogical to expect the BNP to stop it at the centre where your writing expects the BNP to position itself.

Even after the elections, the AL has done little on its part to accommodate with the Treasury. Start with the elections and see what the AL has done. It has told the country and the world that the alliance came to power fraudulently; blamed it for communalism, terrorism and wanton murders. It has stayed out of the parliament for silly reasons and called hartals for equally flimsy reasons.

I agree with you relating the mistakes of the BNP with regard to the CPA. The inclusion of only two members from the AL in the steering committee of the conference, and then including the two non-parliament members who are political secretaries of the PM, were inappropriate and politically incorrect.

But then, the AL decision to stay away from the CPA entails repercussions that will affect the country more. The arrogance of the BNP notwithstanding, Bangladesh is emerging as a liberal democratic country and for our future it is absolutely critical that we don't give such divisive looks to foreign observers.

The politics of the BNP is no different from the politics of the AL when it was in power. It is therefore just illogical to assume that Bangladesh is more democratic when the AL is in power (say, between 1971-

75 and 1996-2001). And, for the rest of the period of our history, we're governed by dictatorships, as the AL seems to suggest.

The AL claims to be patriotic. It claims sole credit for our war of independence. But then, it is the AL that has done us the most serious harm by identifying Bangladesh as a communal and fundamentalist country. If it stays away from the CPA, it will add more shame to its records of non-cooperation in national matters.

(DS: If you'd read with care, the commentary does deal with all our concerns over the efficacy of our democratic system, irrespective of who to blame for the mess.)

Shahjahan Ahmed
Dhanmandi,
Dhaka

Loan default: Catch big fishes first

For the last few weeks, I have noticed that the amount of money has decreased regarding bank loans payment through defaulters' property auction in small districts. What is surprising is that the loan amounts in most cases do not exceed Tk. 3 lakh. In some cases it is even below Tk. 1 lakh. If the banks are in a hurry to show recovery activity, it is good, but if they want to show that this low-income group is prone to pouncing, then I must oppose it.

Why not catch big fishes and auction their properties from where millions could be collected? Why not publish decrees against defaulters whom the whole country knows?

I would request the prime minister to look into this kind of show making activities by certain banks of the country and compel them to take action against all defaulters, big or small, irrespective of they being bureaucrat, big fishes or politicians. It will then be considered as a just, bold and honest step by the banks.

Engr. Mohammed Alauddin
Dhaka

India's River Diversifi-

cation plan and our freedom

The river diversification plan by India may completely destroy our country. Now we are heavily dependent on India in many ways. Even the onions are being imported from India as the current production does not meet our country's demand.

There is a huge trade gap that already exists between Bangladesh and India and it is broadening day by day as we see more and more Indian-made taxis and CNG scooters plying in our roads, despite we having all the necessary arrangements to build them here. If this condition prevails there will be no way to stop India from implementing the river diversification plan and we will end up trading gas for water.

We must do something before that happens.

Mohammad Mohiuddin
Outer Circular Road, Dhaka

Post of MLSS

Perhaps the designation MLSS first started in the British period. The term was being used during Pakistan period too. After the liberation of Bangladesh, it is still in use. But the irony is, the elaboration of the term is so hard that maximum number of educated people do not know, even the administrative personnel of many government and non-government offices do not know what does it stand for.

The person who belongs to and carries the designation is too in the dark about its real connotation. Due to lack of knowledge, the officer concerned also does not wish to let other person know the real meaning of MLSS.

Therefore, can we change the term to an easy one like 'Office peon', 'Service peon' etc. Ultimately, we have to switch over to modern terminology ignoring the old ones.

Ms. Saquee Hussain
Dy. Manager (Admin), TSP Complex Ltd., Patengla, Chittagong.

Political consensus

Ulemas observe some wrongdoings and try to explain correct ways of practising the rituals of Islam according to the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah. This could be an Islamic scholar hailing from the desert of former Nejd i.e. in the present central Saudi Arabia, Rector of Al-Azhar University, Egypt or Mudarress of Madrasas from the Indian Sub-Continent!

are used in our school, are unsuitable. Fifthly, the students depend on their tutors and coaching centres for success, they do not read textbooks. They only focus on answers of some important questions.

Finally, Those who set questions in public examinations are not familiar with the modern methods of language teaching.

Vehicle misuse worsens traffic jam

Very often pictures of traffic jam in Dhaka city appear in newspapers. Various reasons are attributed to this problem. One of the important factors is not mentioned. This is the indiscriminate use of vehicles of government and autonomous bodies. Government vehicles are provided for official use. But it is found that the vehicles are used for schools, colleges, universities and marketing of the family members.

In the past, the government and autonomous bodies' vehicles had number - plates of red and blue colours. This was, probably, abolished in the year 1987 citing danger from street agitators. Now -a- days, all types of vehicles become victims of the agitators. The government's and autonomous bodies' vehicles should have special markings for identifications.

This will reduce traffic jam to a great extent. The common public will be relieved of the burden of extra expenditures on the fuel and other operational cost. I hope concerned authorities will take appropriate action.

Ms. Sadeque
Halishahar Housing Estate
Chittagong

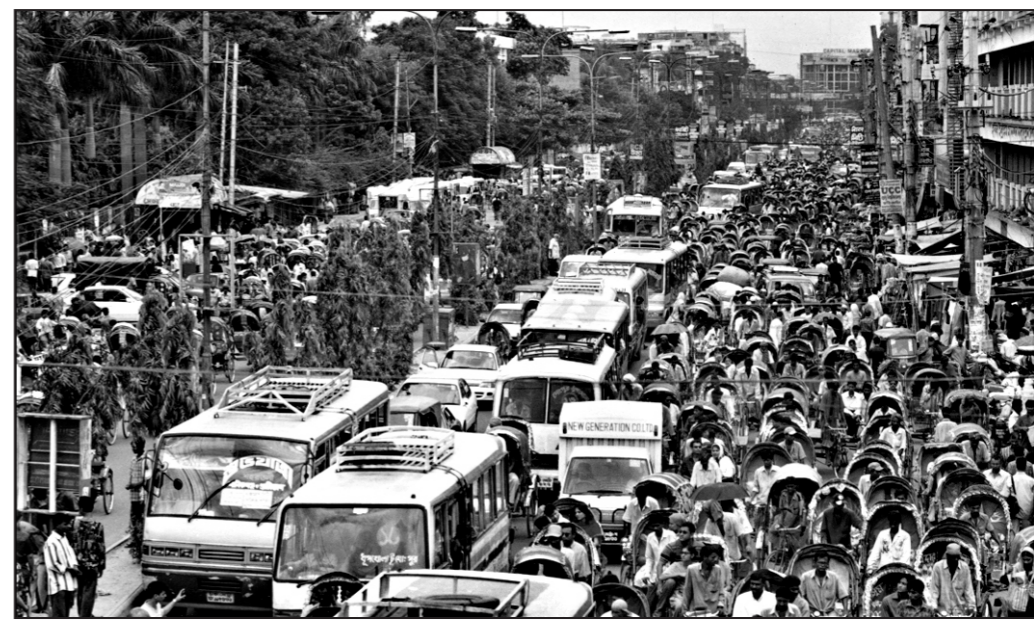


PHOTO: STEED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

indeed we have watched how victory eluded Bangladesh not only once but twice. Bangladesh played very poorly only in the first Test and the first one-day. The rest matches were played more or less in line with international standard. The brilliant batting by Habibul Bashar and Rajin Saleh (also Alok Kapali in the one dayers) on one side and on the other Rafique's methodical

bowling deserves special attention. I reckon among the youngsters played in both the teams Rajin Saleh has made his presence felt very loudly in the international cricket. I also feel that the quality of wicket keeping by Khaled Masud is truly of international standard. He sparkled in two sharp stumpings in the last one-day and on the whole he was very consistent. The

ground fielding had been good with occasional shade of brilliance equivalent to top class. However, there are still lot to be improved and as a matter of fact those are the factors posed as a deterrent between victory and defeat. Catching in the slip area continues to be a problem while inability to hit the spinners playing down the wicket proved to be a handicap. In the one dayers Bangladeshi Batsmen tend to score runs more by hitting boundaries instead of relying on singles or twos which is the prime mover in one day-game. This had been noticed in Habibul Bashar's batting. Rafique although was very accurate but he too needs to learn how to bowl when attacked as he came under in the last one day game.

By the yardstick of performance Khaled Mahmud, the captain definitely doesn't earn much accolade. But his determination and grit and also to some extent fighting spirit calls for admiration given the present circumstances of Bangladesh cricket. He tried his best within his limitation and tried to instil inspiration. But again he was erratic on certain moments, which can be excused for the end result. In cricket there is a philosophy not to disturb a winning combination. But it is indeed a paradoxical situation for Bangladesh Cricket that the defeats can easily be interpreted as victory. Therefore the combination, albeit a losing one, should carry on.

Abul Moqsood
Dhanmondi,
Dhaka

Then, as expected, Halliburton and Bechtel were awarded the lucrative contracts on a plater without any rival bid; this is simply part of the war booty. All these substantiate the view that oil was a factor in this war but not necessarily a primary one. No wonder Iraqi guerrillas chose to make oil pipelines their primary targets..

Yamin Zakaria, UK, London

Reconstruct Iraq with reparation



PHOTO: AFP

It is now official that the nation of Iraq is literally up for sale. Iraq's economy is now open to foreign investors in every industry but oil. The US appointed Iraqi Finance Minister Kamel al-Keylani announced the news on behalf of the foreign invaders.

Since ordinary Iraqis did not elect Mr al-Keylani, should an authority without legitimacy be allowed to make such a decision on behalf of all Iraqis? Or, is this what the Bush and his cohorts (Neo-Cons) meant when the vouched to establish "Democracy" and "return Iraq to the Iraqis"?

Perhaps "democracy" means to prepare Iraq to be devoured by the multinationals and other corporations. It's not a coincidence that those companies happen to provide a lot of "funding" (bribes) to the occupation powers' political parties. The news was announced on Sunday in a meeting held in Dubai, organised by the International Monetary fund (IMF), where other leading financiers like the World Bank, G7 countries and a host of private institutions were present. It was a real Capitalist bazaar of some sort.

This perhaps marks the beginning of the process of mortgaging Iraq to those financial institutions and multinationals to create international debt against Iraqi wealth and infrastructure.

Something similar was already tabled earlier, the idea of reconstructing Iraq with its vast oil resources. The catch being that the financial world would loan with interests the money to multinational oil companies. Most of the bidders have good connections to the members of the US State department and the Pentagon. For example, the Bechtel, Chevron and Halliburton are too close to power in Washington DC.

As far as foreign investment is concerned, the scheme will allow a net outflow of the resources from the country since the profit ulti-