

The million ants' migration

OSAMA RAHMAN

It was supposed to be a match made in heaven. Until international politics came to the fore.

Jhim Jhim, 23, of the Cattle Lover State fell in love with cow trader Abdul Quader, 28, while the latter was bringing in cattle from his No Cattle Trading State.

POLITICS

While grazing his cows in no-man's land, the area where only women are allowed, he was stopped by Jhim Jhim. She reprimanded him for breaking age-old rules and asked him to leave the area immediately.

Abdul Quader, the man from the country where "no" can mean a hundred different things

apparently, fell in love right then and there.

What followed was a whirlwind of wooing and persuading. Much like movies which say stalking leads to love, Abdul Quader finally won Jhim Jhim over by giving her six cows. His father maintains that those were not given as dowry.

Fast forward four years – since that is how long it takes to plan a wedding in the country – and Jhim Jhim and Abdul Quader tied the knot. And that is the day when the trouble began.

Jhim Jhim had brought one hundred packets of sweets from her country, which she said was a better sweetmeat maker. Unfortunately, with the sweets came the ants.

When the remaining sweets were taken back to Jhim Jhim's home country, an ant migration took place, this

time from the Cattle Lover State to the No Cattle Trading State.

And the Cattle Lover State ants never returned. Worse, as Cattle Lover State ants are known to do, they also began to breed in large numbers.

"We fear soon we will lose our own ants to these ants," No Cattle Trading State Foreign Minister Nimbar Shetty said. "We should never have opened our borders in this way. Now they are all leaving their own country for ours."

At first experts were perplexed as to why this mass migration was taking place. But a female scientist may have discovered the reason.

"Ants may have a death wish. I noticed this when an ant swam into my soda drink for no apparent reason and drowned," Nasa scientist Lubnan said.

"Ants also generally go where there will be less people soon. Given that the No Cattle Trading State is about to throw out millions of people, or lock them up in brand new 'learning centres', the ants

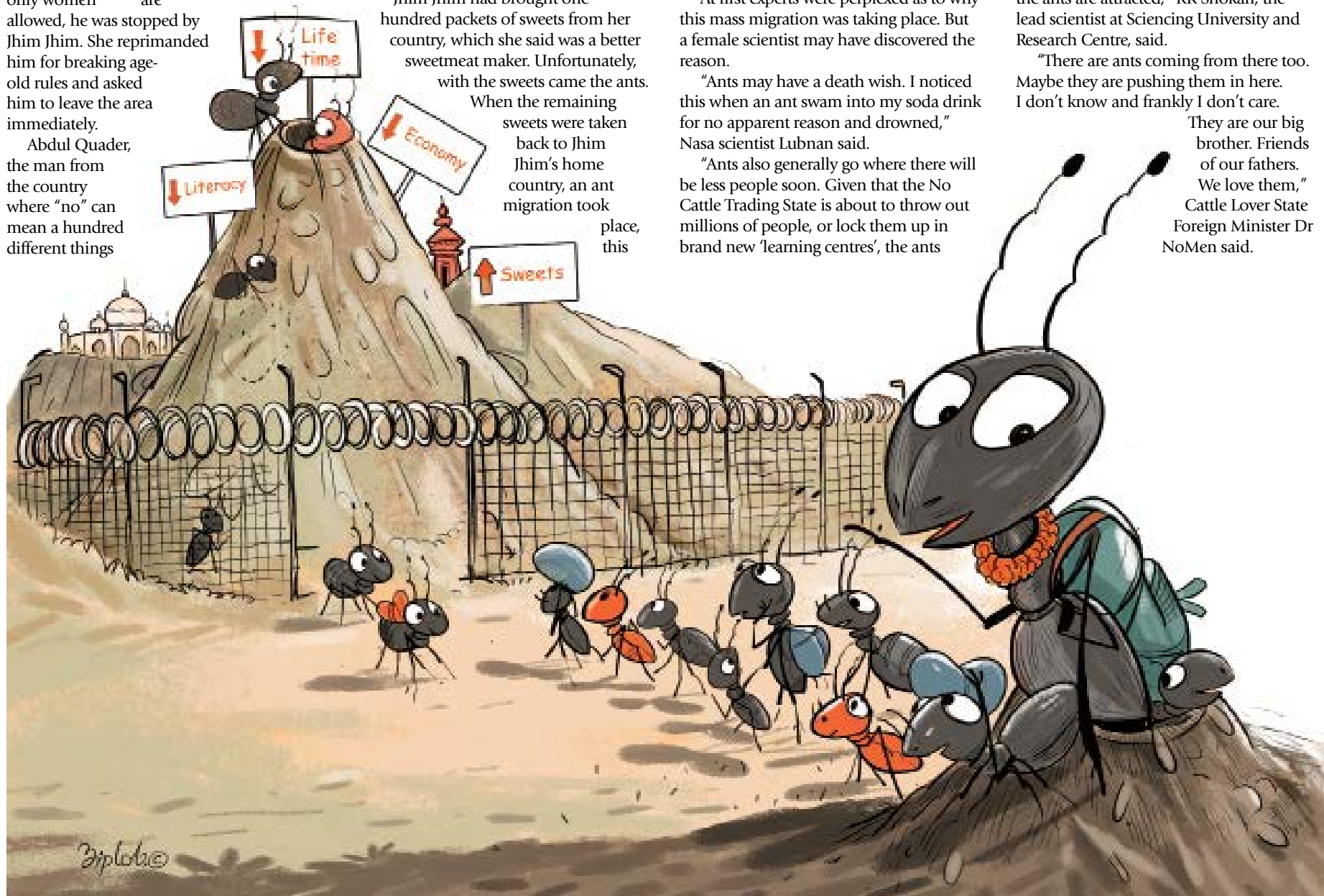
probably believe they will have plenty of space to start brand new colonies," she said.

Another expert opined that the migration may have something to do with the ant's love for the "hive mind".

"Indeed, there is also hive mind in this state, but the hive mind there appears to be greater. Their collective outrage over everything is also greater. Plus, think about it, there are like a billion people in their hive mind. They are the biggest democracy in the world. So many opinions! Of course the ants are attracted," KK Shokan, the lead scientist at Sciencing University and Research Centre, said.

"There are ants coming from there too. Maybe they are pushing them in here. I don't know and frankly I don't care."

They are our big brother. Friends of our fathers. We love them," Cattle Lover State Foreign Minister Dr NoMen said.



At 70, cricketer says he may retire soon

SPORTS REPORTER

Chapastan captain Shraver Von Maver yesterday shocked the nation by implying that he may soon be hanging it up. The country's greatest ODI captain in living memory, who led the side to wins over Outnia, Sinisberg and North Antarctica 38 years ago, said he was feeling tired.

The 70-year-old Shraver, unsurprisingly the oldest player in the world, who has been known to play through injuries and has had 16 hip replacements and 18 concussions (all after age 50), was speaking after guiding his team to a win in the ICC 2054 seventh-tier league game against Greenland yesterday.

"I love the game, but it takes me too long to bowl an over now, and the recovery period after each game is getting longer," he told reporters after the game, where he bowled two overs for 70 runs and made his highest score, 12, in a decade.

While the Chapastan Cricket Board (CCB) is empowered to appoint or sack captains and the selectors take the decision to pick or drop players, in Shraver's case it was different.

In the early days of the millennium, Shraver had put in heroic performances with the bat and ball and lifted Chapastan cricket from mediocrity to its apex in the second decade. He assumed mythic status and was seen as a national treasure. At one stage in the late 2010s, Chapastan was the seventh best side in the world. It was then, in his late 30s, that murmurs about his retirement were doing the rounds as his performances waned. Then ensued a long string of ambivalent exchanges between him and the board.

Then CCB President Donald Haash, always aware of public sentiment, implied that the series against Chad would be his last as captain, without actually saying the words.

"If he is fit and performing, he can play," Haash had said, at his corporate office which he soon converted into a television studio.

Shraver, with the champion's mentality of his best form just being around the corner, then turned in a stellar performance against Chad. CCB and its chief were vilified on social media for even suggesting that Shraver's time was up.

"I have always said that there can never be a replacement for Shraver. And of course, as you all know, I do not like to interfere with cricketing matters," was Haash's attempt at damage control.

But those words were too little too late. Haash's political and business careers were ruined. Shraver was reinstated, the nation rejoiced, CCB sighed relief. And there has been no talk of his retirement since. Until yesterday.

He was asked yesterday whether he would like to set a date for the retirement.

"Soon, I have to talk to my children and grandchildren, and also the board," he mumbled and went back to sleep.

International Social Media Celeb Fair begins today

USELESS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

The International Social Media Celebrity Fair kicked off at the Greatest Convention Centre in the World (GCCW) in the capital today.

The fair hosts stalls set up by those social media stars who get at least 100 likes on each post.

"Social media stars have begun to dominate all fairs, eclipsing the professionals certain fairs were meant for. Their great pull overshadowed everyone else and made people feel insecure, so we decided to hold an exclusive fair just for the social media stars," Pinku Pinkmaker, the event organiser, said.

The fair will have sections exclusively dedicated to categories popularised by social media stars. The giants of



motivational talks, for instance, will be given one pavilion, while the machines behind creating enduring brands will get another. Funny tik-tok celebs will also get a dedicated venue.

"I am selling boats because my popularity is based on my thoughts on the upcoming cataclysmic global warming and climate change, which are two different things by the way," Agaz Bhai said. Asked about his expertise on the topics, he said he once read a New Yorker article on the matter.

The Don, another huge social media star, will be using his stall to hold talks with another people. "My draw has always been to tell stories about my life to people. That is my skill. Most people write diaries, but I have taken it up a notch. Now, I will use drawing people to talk to other people about their life, while I keep staring at my phone or interrupting them," he said.

Unfortunately, the International Fair will not have any international stars.

The first day of the fair drew a crowd of thousands of people. "I came here because I have nowhere else to go in Dhaka city. This is as good as anything else," Muhaimen Hashim, a visitor, said. Asked if he knew anyone at the fair, he replied in the affirmative. "I get sponsored videos from them all the time."

The fair will last for three days, because that is a generous estimate of how long it will get people to tire of the celebs.

French-Canadian Detergent Bangladesh hosts "Happiness" workshop

NONE-OF-YOUR-BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

The country's leading fast moving consumer goods company French-Canadian Detergent Bangladesh hosted a workshop on happiness yesterday at their office premises in Goolshan.

The workshop focused on teaching the employees techniques to be happy at work.

"A study recently done shows that happy employees are 20% more productive than unhappy ones. It's imperative that every organisation focus its efforts on keeping their employees happy," said Soleimani Qon, a happiness trainer-cum-motivational speaker.

At the event, Qon addressed the crowd saying, "Happiness is infectious. Even if you are feeling down, it's just you and your mindset. Mindset is everything!" he punctuated the last bit with a shout before adding, "Smile at your colleague and make his day better. Maybe someone else will smile at you and change your day. We make a lot of things go viral,



let's make smiling viral!"

Soon after, the trainer engaged the employees in happiness building exercises such as shaking each other's hands and patting themselves on the back after saying they did a good job.

"Employee happiness has been a concern for us over the last few years. We have had many meetings and discussions but the root cause of this workplace depression has

been impossible to find. We were at our wits end until [Soleimani] Qon offered us this fantastic solution," said B Deschi, FCDB's Italian CMO.

While most of the employees appeared to have enjoyed the session, one gentleman had a lot to say on condition of anonymity.

"Why wouldn't I be unhappy? I enter work at 9am every day and stay till 10 pm. I live in Jatribari, man. It's been three years since I had a kid but my own son refuses to open the door at night and goes running to his mom saying 'Uncle ashche'. Oh and weekends? There's always a field visit on the weekends or some silly concert at a faraway university. Instead of wasting money teaching us how to be happy, the office should maybe hire more people and..." the man broke off into a long stream of expletives that could not be printed.

To celebrate its new chapter in happiness, French-Canadian Detergent Bangladesh employees released seven doves from their smoking zone balcony.

