

The Milestone that Reads:

**CHITTAGONG-86-KM**  
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A luxury night coach was speeding for Chittagong. It was two O'clock in the morning and everything was quiet along the Dhaka-Chittagong highway. The scene inside the coach was quite different from the usual scenes inside night coaches. At two O'clock in the morning, most of the thirty-six passengers are sound asleep. Usually a single dim light bulb is switched on and music sets are turned off. Every sort of attention is provided to assist the passengers to sleep through the journey. But in this night coach, every sort of attention was being provided to prevent the passengers from falling asleep: all the bulbs inside the bus were switched on, heavy-metal music was being played and hot tea was being served. Moreover, there were four security guards among the sixteen passengers. Two-thirds of the seats were empty tonight. Any one who had read about the bus lootings on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway would clearly understand the reason behind all the precautions obtained by the night coach.

by Tanzir Latif

The atmosphere grew tense as the bus crossed the milestone that read: 'Chittagong-87 kilometres'. Only one more kilometre to go. The bus slowed down to cross a speedbrake before a damaged bridge. It entered into the damaged bridge and then, everyone fell sound asleep.

The bus was recovered by the police, parked beside the milestone that read: 'Chittagong-86 kilometres'. The twelve but one passengers, the four security-guards, the driver, the helper—all of them were sound asleep. All the luggages, bags, watches, the guards' rifles were missing. Farhan's camera was also missing. Three other coaches were looted that night. One passenger from every single bus was missing.

The police thoroughly searched that area but nothing was found. Most of bus owners stopped the night-service in fear of the looters. Farhan and Zillur placed their report on the incident:

**"Four more night coaches were looted the night before yesterday.**

**Police combed that area but failed to recover anything.**

**Some important facts were uncovered and disclosed to police. These facts might help the police to trace the**

police and the BDR thanked the reporters for their assistance. After all it was their idea to carry out such an operation. Zillur's hidden micro cassette recorder had provided all the necessary information. They disclosed it to the police and asked for their help. The police and the BDR came on a joint mission in order to put an end to all these lootings. Zillur had overpowered the looter's accomplice in the bus, and Farhan had taken pictures of the whole mission with his new camera. The chapter of the bus lootings was thus over. Farhan and Zillur placed their final report to the Chief Editor of the Dhaka Tribune. It was printed on the next day's paper.

The Milestone that read: 'Chittagong-86 kilometres'.

**"The mystery of the bus lootings on the Dhaka-Chittagong was solved at last. After looting three night coaches on**

**the first night, eight on the second, and four on the third, the looters were caught while looting on the fourth night. Thirteen looters were caught and most**

**of the looted goods were recovered. The police and the**

**BDR went on a joint mission to catch the looters. The bus owners have been**



buses on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway. They had already placed their initial report about the incident and it was printed in yesterday's newspaper. Farhan was having a look at it:

"Several night coaches were looted on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway over a space of two days. Three coaches were looted on the first night, and eight were looted on the second. It was learned that all the

people in those eleven buses were sound asleep when found by the police. None of the passengers, drivers or helpers could recall how they had fallen asleep. The looters were not yet traced when this report was being written. The most interesting fact uncovered is that all those eleven buses were found parked beside

a milestone that read: 'Chittagong-86 kilometres'. The

police combed that area today but failed to recover anything. All vehicles using that route at night are advised to be on alert. The police has asked

for the assistance of the inhabitants of that area in order to catch the looters. A reward of Taka 10,000/-

has been declared on any correct information on the looters. Cases have been filed in relation to this incident. Informers of the whereabouts of the looters

are requested to call at (02) 7257295-9".

Farhan folded the newspaper and kept it inside his bag. Zillur was sitting next to him. He was reading Robin Cook's latest bestseller. Farhan looked through the window beside his seat. The bus had just crossed the milestone that read: 'Chittagong-89 kilometres'. An old man among the passengers started reciting verses from the Holy Quran. The helper started checking the doors and the windows of the bus. A middle-aged man locked his briefcase and kept it under his seat. The security-guards checked their cartridges, and the driver stepped on the accelerator. Farhan took his camera out and Zillur switched on the cassette recorder hidden inside his

looters. Some other things were also uncovered but they cannot be disclosed to the public. The reward has

been increased from Taka 10,000/- to Taka 50,000/-.

Informers are requested to call at (02) 7257295-9 and (031) 9163026. Night coaches are advised not to use that route before further notice. Cases have been

filed in accordance to this incident."

The looters had taken every costly possession they could find. They had even taken off costly shoes! But they had missed the most important thing: The Panasonic micro cassette recorder in Zillur's sock. Farhan and Zillur had all the answers to the 'looting mystery'.

A luxury night coach was heading towards the milestone that read: 'Chittagong-86 kilometres'. Out of the thirty-six passengers, six were security guards, two were Zillur and Farhan, and the rest twenty-eight were original travellers. The bus was now only one kilometre away from the milestone. A contingent of the police force was guarding the whole area, unseen by anyone. BDR trucks were following the night coach from a safe distance. Farhan and Zillur were sitting at the back seats. They were dressed as women, wearing veils and hezabs. As soon as the bus stopped to cross the speedbrake before the damaged bridge, they wore on their gas masks. The bus entered into the bridge and everyone except a man and the two reporters fell asleep.

Farhan and Zillur pretended to be asleep. The other man, who was also wearing a gas mask, got up from his seat and quickly took the control of the bus. He stopped the bus out of the bridge and opened its doors. About twelve armed looters came of nearby buses and were just entering into the bus when the two BDR (Bangladesh Rifles) trucks came and stopped beside the bus. The BDR jawans jumped out of the trucks with their rifles, and the policemen, hidden in that area, also charged with their 303s and shotguns. The looters had only three firearms and as they were outnumbered by the ratio 1:7, they had to surrender. The thirteen notorious looters were handcuffed and taken away. The officer-in-command of the

relieved after a three night long anxiety. The whole plan of operation of the bus looters were quite simple. The looters chose luxury night coaches because most of its passengers are usually well off. They picked the coaches they wanted to loot and one of their accomplices boarded the bus as a passenger.

As soon as the bus driver slowed down the bus to cross the speedbrake before the damaged bridge, the accomplice, usually sitting at the back seats, wore

on a gas mask and discharged a powerful smoke bomb which could ensleep people at an instant.

The man used to get up quickly from his seat and take control of the bus. He then would cross the damaged bridge and park the bus near

the milestone that read: 'Chittagong-86 kilometres'. The looters would come out of the buses and take away all the costly goods. The accomplice would also escape with the looters. This was the reason

as to why one passenger was always missing from the fifteen buses looted. The looters had chosen the milestone that read: 'Chittagong-86 kilometres' as the place of action for

several favourable reasons. This area was usually empty. There were no houses or police check points

nearby. They could hide in the nearby bamboo bush fields, and escape quickly through that area. The speedbrake before the damaged bridge made the buses slow down and this enabled the accomplice to take over the control of the bus easily. There was a small road behind the bush and they could escape easily after loading a small lorry with the looted goods. A police check-point will be established at the

notorious milestone that read: 'Chittagong-86 kilometres'.

Star Photo

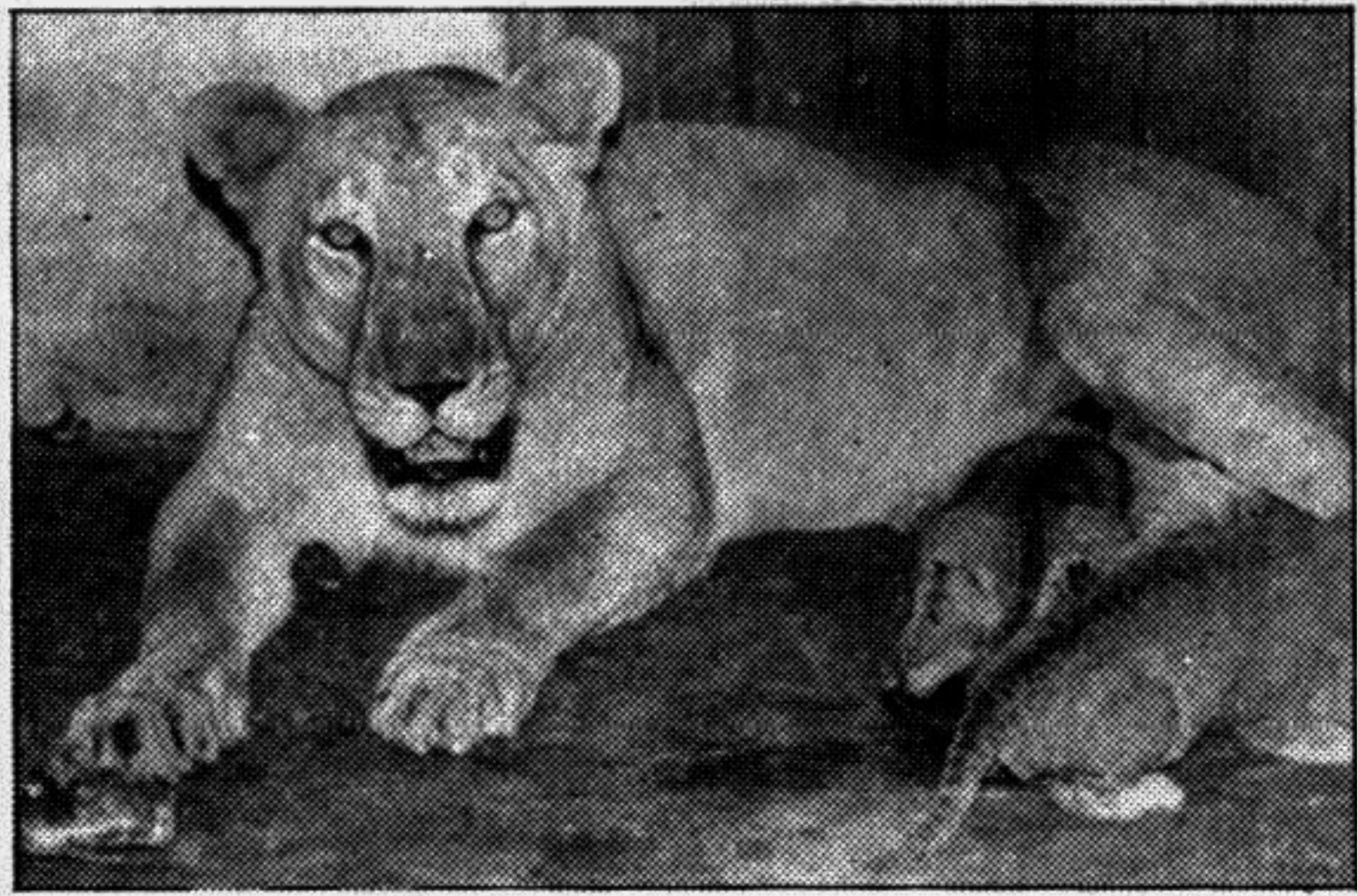
We lock these animals up in cages for people to come and see and enjoy. We don't even want to know that they are starving for freedom. Even when we lock them up in cages we don't look after them properly. Just look at the incident that occurred at the Mirpur Zoo in Dhaka. The animals had to suffer to death because of personal grudge between the staff there. Talk about human rights, abolishing all animal rights! How can we call ourselves just kind and so thoughtful after this. We have these animals behind bars and even after locking them up we are not satisfied. We have to make them suffer for our stupidity. The staff in the zoo was appointed only to look after the animals. Instead, look what they did. These people have no respect towards the animals (no doubt), nor towards their jobs.

The zoo is like a prison to these animals. They haven't done anything wrong in being animals, have they? Then why take their freedom away? Why not give them the right they owe to us? Why don't we let them live in what ever way they choose?

This world is not only for the humans. This world is for the animals too. They are a part of this biological world just as we are. Lets give them the right they deserve.

**What's Wrong in BEING AN ANIMAL**

by Rezwana Mazumder



We all know that animals form an important part of this world. They add to the beauty of mother nature and make it more colourful and beautiful. Like human beings they have almost all the things necessary for normal life. And like human beings they have the right to live here, on this planet. Yet, we do not give them that right.

The only difference that makes animals 'inferior' to us is that they do not have any of those wonderful brains we have. But that doesn't really give us the right to torture them. We don't want to consider the fact or rather think about the fact that life and freedom are as valuable to them as they are to us. We just point the gun at the animals and shoot, without giving a single thought to its feelings. We take care of human beings, then what's wrong with taking care of animals. The animals don't even demand that, they just want us to leave them alone.

Most commonly, (these days) hunting and killing are meant for showing how powerful and skillful we are. We kick the street dogs, we beat them just because they're dogs? Does this indicate we are powerful people? Well, of course... we are powerful and merciless.

We lock these animals up in cages for people to come and see and enjoy. We don't even want to know that they are starving for freedom. Even when we lock them up in cages we don't look after them properly. Just look at the incident that occurred at the Mirpur Zoo in Dhaka. The animals had to suffer to death because of personal grudge between the staff there. Talk about human rights, abolishing all animal rights! How can we call ourselves just kind and so thoughtful after this. We have these animals behind bars and even after locking them up we are not satisfied. We have to make them suffer for our stupidity. The staff in the zoo was appointed only to look after the animals. Instead, look what they did. These people have no respect towards the animals (no doubt), nor towards their jobs.

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**The ICEMAN**

by Ahmed Khaled Rashid

HE has been called 'a street fighter', 'a fulminating maniac', 'a cheater' and what not. Controversy has followed him throughout his career. He has been fined on numerous occasions for showing dissent and using abusive language.

Yes, he is Steve Waugh, the 'ice-man' of the Aussie Cricket team. Steve Waugh has showed to us that cricket is not just a game of technical and physical abilities but there is also a mental and psychological aspect in it, and you will find very few players, if any, in the world cricket today who has the fierce determination, mental toughness and fighting qualities that Steve Waugh has.

Throughout Steve Waugh's career some critics have said that his style of batting is awkward and uncouth. The fact was out that he couldn't play short pitched stuff. But these things didn't bother Steve; he worked hard on his game and developed a unique style entirely of his own. Fast bowlers throughout the world have pestered him with short bowling but he is prepared to hang about and take a few blows on the body. There can be no better example that his courageous 200 (in) in Kingston, Jamaica, where he was impervious against the hostile West Indian attack.

With the bowl in his hand Steve is also brilliant. He doesn't have the pace of Waqar or Danald but bowls some swingers and cutters and always chips in with wickets. He was the first bowler who introduced and perfected the slow ball in one day cricket. He will have a word or two to the batsman to upset his concentration. How many times we have seen him getting after the batsman in this way and eventually picking up the wicket.

Steve Waugh is a pugnacious character who will not flinch from having a go at the opponents. He will do anything (well, almost anything) to get the job done. He doesn't seem to have a defensive love for his body. His belligerence on the field is very much typical of the Australian cricketers of the past and present. But it is also true that, whatever he may be on the field, off the field, he is a very amiable and affable guy, which is a testimony of his professionalism, if nothing else.

It is always pleasure to watch Steve Waugh in the middle; the way he looks, eyes full of calmness, determination, and intense concentration. He has gone from strength to strength and has now become one of the leading all rounders of world cricket today and one can be assured of the fact that wherever, whenever he plays cricket, he will play the only way he knows how to play—the hard way.



**Keep YOUR FINGERS CROSSED**

by Ishrak Ahmed Siddiky

IT is for the sixth time that we are participating in the ICC, to earn a place in the World Cup. On the last five occasions miserably failed to capitalize our good fortune. We failed because of our own faults and we have no one to blame for it. Bangladeshi players have tremendous vitality but cannot show their worth at the right moment. As we are getting one day status, soon it is extremely important that we qualify for the World Cup.

The ICC tournament has already started; we have qualified for the second round as expected. In fact there is no reason why Bangladesh cannot go to the semifinals. Bangladesh became the only unbeaten team in their group, and easily made to the second round. One aspect which I observed is the fact that our players are behaving like professionals for the first time and they are playing positive cricket, which they should have done earlier. They made a Shaky start by beating Argentina, but in their other matches they played exceptionally well. Our batting was however not upto the mark. They batted well, but could not manage a score which they could have had. They have lack of application, as coach Greenidge pointed out, and they must improve on it. The day the openers gave their country a good start, the middle order totally collapsed, and the day the openers played bad, the middle order succeeded. Infact consis-

tency must prevail, if Bangladesh face against good teams. They have to do well in every department.

Their bowling and fielding has definitely improved, but there is a scope for more improvement. We must remember one thing that is, in the first round we played against teams that are not of our standard, but in the second round we will face stiff challenge from the other teams, like Holland and Kenya, who are good cricketing sides. Kenya will also be a problem though they are not in Bangladesh's group. In my opinion Bangladesh's batting should improve. I do not have any idea why their batting has gone down. We could not bat comfortably in any of the first round matches except the one against East Africa. Against Holland and Kenya if Bangladesh cannot score above 220, then they will have problem. Their fielding has definitely improved but they should practice hitting the stumps more of ten, which they are weak in.

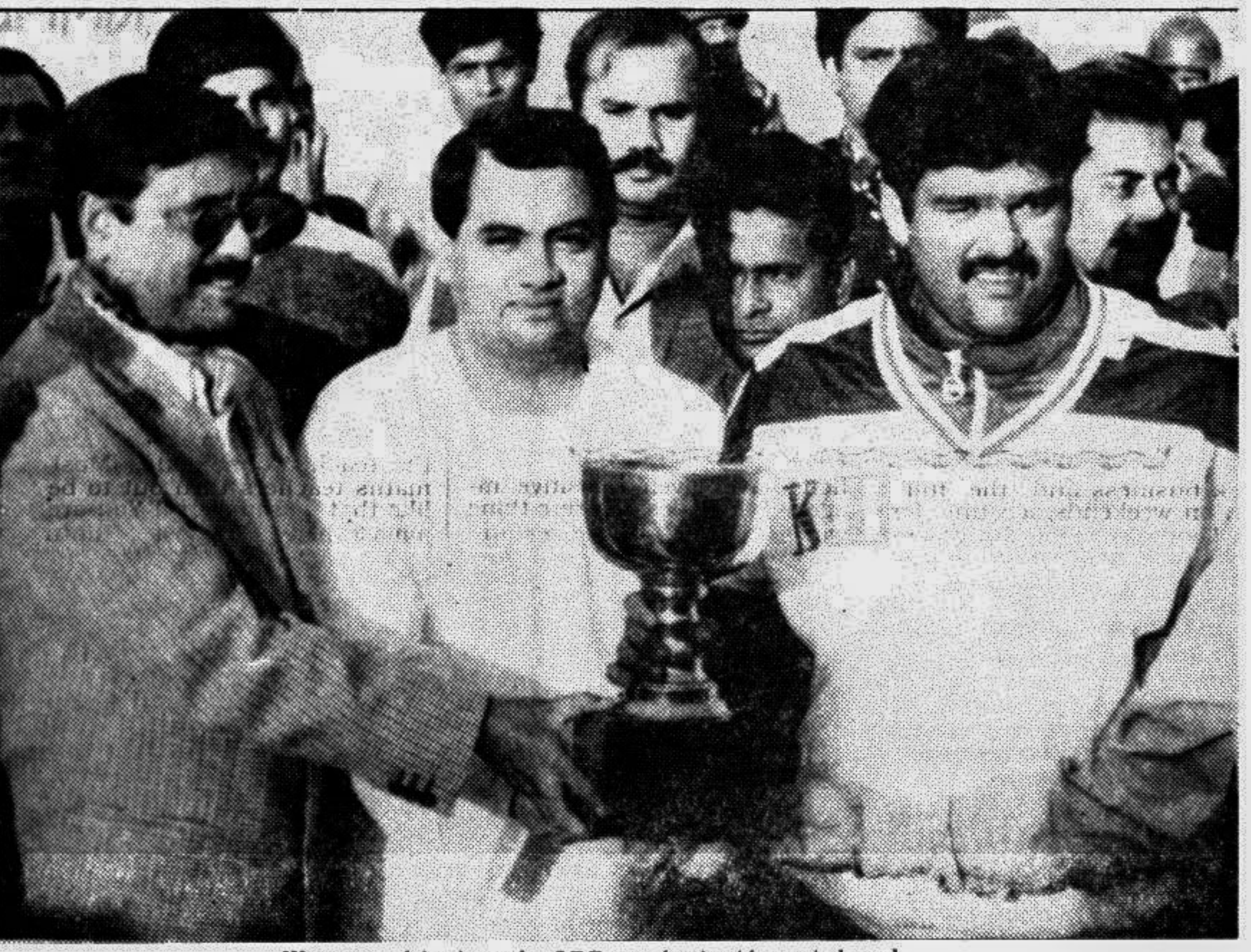
In my opinion four teams will go to the semi-finals. Kenya, Bangladesh, Holland and Scotland. If Bangladesh can become Champion in their group, they will most probably face Scotland, and can move into the finals, while Kenya, will face Holland. If my equation is right, Bangladesh and Kenya are supposed to meet in the final, in Kenya on April 12th. Now let us focus on the other three teams.

In the fifth ICC, Kenya became champions and got a place to play in the World Cup. They are a good side and has the capability to turn the game around. Let us not forget that they beat West Indies in the World Cup. Last month they arranged four nation trophy which gave them a lot of experience. All the players who played in the last World Cup, are playing in the ICC.

Holland is one of the favourites to win the ICC trophy this year. Though half of the team those played in the last World Cup are absent. They still have a good prospect to qualify. In the fourth ICC trophy they became runners-up. They have some good players who are responsible for their success in the past.

Scotland in my opinion will qualify up to the semi-finals. They have a long cricket heritage of playing cricket and has improved a lot. Most of their players play in the country which makes them experience.

Twelve crore people's eyes are focused in Kuala Lumpur. They have a dream that their team will play in the World Cup. The last five times they were deprived of seeing Bangladesh in the World Cup. Cricketers my earnest request don't let them down. We know you can do it. Oh God! Please give us a good fortune. Let nothing stop us this time. Our heads will rise high when we will hear the tune of 'Sonar Bangla' in Lords. Let us hope for the best. God bless our Cricketers!



We want this time the ICC trophy in Akram's hand.

**The Unloved**

by Shehzin Mozammel

ON a misty morning, high up on a cliff, there she stands. Hurt, alone, depressed, tears embred her eyes, and flow quickly down the smooth contours of her face.

For a moment it seems, that she shakes her fists at the heavens in fury, as if claiming to take revenge. She calls out to her beloved, no reply.

She calls again, still unnoticed but an echo. She sighs.

Distressed, she slowly makes her way to the edge of the cliff, and looks down. The blue water below is unusually calm, as if it were in a deep slumber. She glances at the sky once more, and grins... she jumps...



**The Life is Good**

by Zenith T Ahmed

The Life is good. But some people are sick. Those people who are sick. Know the life is bad. For that reason they have to sleep on the bed. And can't have fun. But some of the people know how to come back strong. A child is sick in winter. But gives the fault to herself. Also those who know A word of goodness To eat healthy food: eggs and milk. To be used as medicine For them, the life is good!

**short STORIES**

by Naureen Rahman with Daulat Ara Begum

DOCTORS were always making me do exercises. They also told me how great I was doing. I was lying there thinking.

Great! I haven't done anything but endure the ride. I'm just lying here. I can't move anything. Every morning I woke up hoping to recover more and more. I was miraculously recovering day by day.

**Life is a blessing**

I came back to my home after staying 14 days in hospital. Then after staying one day in Dhaka, I came back to Sylhet by aeroplane. From the airport I went home by an ambulance. The ambulance siren was screaming as we pulled up to our house.

Everyday lots of people came to my house to see me. At home, I got around under my own strength as much as possible. I was struggling every waking hour to take back my body. That was the focus of my life now; that and my love for my family and my faith in the Lord. I had no doubt I was going to get through it. Time for me was measured not by days anymore but by moments that meant something to my body. Day by day, slowly I started to sit on my own. My father, mother and brother was always beside me. They were encouraging me to recover. Days went, weeks went and then months. Each day it seemed God was blessing me with gifts.

The doctors were right about the fact that I had a long way to go. It had been 54 days since my injury. I had lost 10 pounds. At last my dream partially turned into reality. The day was a memorable one. The doctor opened my plaster and told me that I could start walking after a week or so. I was eagerly waiting for that day when I would be able to walk. I recall every detail of the time I took my first shower. The feeling of that cool glorious stream of water running down my face was one of the most delicious sensations I'd ever felt.

At last my dream turned into reality. I started to walk. When I

put my feet down on the floor, I was so scared. My heart was pounding. My father, mother and brother helped me to walk. It was painful and also painstaking. My family was anxious that I might fall down 'cause I couldn't balance my body properly.

My dream did turn into reality. The dream which I'd thought about countless times as I had lain down in hospital beds staring up at the ceiling.

When I went to my dentist and he opened all the wires from my mouth. He also removed the metal plate. I was fully all right. It has all been so unreal. Today as I sometimes stand in my verandah, watching birds flying in the sky, seeing the breeze bend the trees above me, I wonder: Has all this really happened to me?

As proofs I've a scar on my leg, where there was a fracture, and there are scars where the screws went in, through my jaw. They'll be there forever, I guess.

For a long time, I didn't think about the fact that I'd never be like before, that part of my life was behind me. I sometimes see photographs of mine where I was running, jumping and doing skillful activities. I look at the pictures recalling about each of those moments and all they meant to me.

I know now it was a kind of mourning, a stage I had to go through before I could truly leave those times behind, and go about the business of moving on.

People want to know if I ever ask: Why me? When I look back and remind myself of where I've been of where I was only a matter of months ago, where I was years ago, and all the blessings I've received throughout my life, with so much life still ahead of me, how could I ask: Why Me?

If I've learned anything from my experience, it's that the Lord is with us if we falter. He is with us if we fall. He is with us when we break, and He can help make us whole.

I've also learned that all of life is a blessing. That realization has been a real miracle for me.