Bangladesh's

privileged posi-

tion among the

LDCs is also an

position because

a responsibility

breaks into two

parts: first, she

LDCs have con-

certed their

the honour carries

premium. Her role

has to see that the

positions to yield a

common plank for

negotiations with

Secondly, there

has to be a com-

plete break with

of speaking out

with emotions

facts.

rather than with

the past tradition

the rich countries.

'unenviable'

Founder-Editor: Late S. M. Ali

Dhaka, Friday, February 25, 1999

Vanguarding the LDC Cause

Bangladesh being both a 'typical' and 'model' LDC, has had the unique distinction to be the spokesman for and coordinator of the least developed countries which comprise as much as 80 per cent of the 132-member WTO. The World Trade Organisation is currently engaged, as the replacement of GATT, in a crucial phase of negotiations between the rich and the poor countries, to usher in a consensus and rule-based interdependent world trade

Bangladesh's privileged position among the LDCs is also an 'unenviable' position because the honour carries a responsibility premium. Her role breaks into two parts: first, she has to see that the LDCs have concerted their positions to yield a common plank for negotiations with the rich countries. Secondly, there has to be a complete break with the past tradition of speaking

out with emotions rather than with facts.

There is a crucial need for capacity-building in this area. We. have to develop the knowledge base to be able to meaningfully participate in the discussions where the industrialised countries are seen to figure not merely as tough customers but as knowledgeable customers as well. Their database is superior on the one hand, and on the other, they come out with such interpretations of their financial and commercial laws that we seem hopelessly muted before their 'cast-iron' legal stances. Bangladesh is yet to develop that pool of expertise which will enable her to weigh up various points in the trade laws and practices of the industrial countries that go for and against the interests of LDCs. The WTO Director General Renato Ruggiero who is known as 'a friend of LDCs,' while on a visit to Dhaka the other day, spoke of a plan set up a foundation for giving legal assistance to settle trade disputes. Dhaka has a WTO reference centre to start with. But to all intents and purposes, welcome as these are, they do not by themselves go for enough in equipping the LDCs to protect their world trade interests. Bangladesh's efforts to enhance the negotiating and legal capacities for the LDCs are at best in a state of infancy, evidently requiring to be technically and financially assisted by the WTO under a specific programme.

The upcoming third WTO conference of ministers is going to be a litmus test for the LDCs' negotiating skill because it is there that the world trade agenda for the next 10 to 15 years are likely to be adopted. How prepared are we for that crucial meeting? Bangladesh's demand for zero tariff and non-tariff access for the export products of the LDCs to the market of the industrial world is likely to be received well. Europe has provided zero-tariff access through the GSP; this needs now to be replicated widely.

The WTO Secretary General has made an interesting observation about ways to reduce Bangladesh's trade imbalance with India. We could take heart from the fact that 'the pressure of multi-lateral negotiations' on India under the auspices of the WTO could eventually make her ease the terms of trade with Bangladesh

Bangladesh's import liberalisation is said to have denied a level-playing field to her indigenous industrial entrepreneurs. The point is her exports have increased by five times over the last two decades, so that one has to find out which of the local industries have actually been affected by the lowering of tariff walls. The answer lies in enhancing export capacity through specialisation in such fields as jewelry, doll-making, handicrafts; cut flowers, fruit and vegetable processing and the like which have dramatically increased the export earnings of some South-east Asian countries.

Agricultural subsidy is central to the export of primary products from many LDCs. It is, therefore, heartening to note that the WTO takes a positive view on question, thus marking a difference from the stances taken by the World Bank and IMF.

Between trade and aid, it is the former which advances the development of a country five times more than the latter. We remain focused, therefore, on the prospect of fair international trade.

A City of Graves

nightmare visits me and revisits. A city of grave is Lexpanding its acre. Clouds stop moving and the shadows pause. Trees stop breathing. They are dying as well. wake up and the fear per-

sists, like my own shadow. Do l dare to go out? Do I dare? No. am a prisoner in the solitary cell of my house. So is the mother next door and the children and the neighbourhood and beyond. They say it is for our sake, for the sake of our rights. For the children to grow up free and for me, an old man, to die in free-

stand before my window and watch the sun grow. I hear the distant whirr of an ice-cream van spinning its mechanical tune over and over. Perhaps, the flutter of idle feet running across? But the children chafe behind locked doors and a lonely dozing vendor watches across

road. There is nothing except the sun at the end of the deserted street, nothing but the glare of emptiness and a hot framed between decaying houses and a

file of ash-coloured flies. A distant thunder rumbles. Stale wind smells of gunpowder and shredded bombs. Lighting strikes, sharp and swift like an executioner's knife. Asphalt fumes with a bluish signal of charcoal. The day dies and the mourners begin. Night waits outside the door to come in and the firefly strikes matches. Then the smoke burns into a larger question, one that forms and unforms, till the question

My father lies near the thorngrave and my mother, by a dying

returns.



AZM Obaidullah Khan river. 'Now so many deaths. nothing short of a massacre

Is it a good place to die in? Yet, to my surprise, the daybreak returns. To my surprise and betrayal at once. A squirrel comes to my window-sill. Comes and goes like a question mark. People pour out into streets, nostrils nibbling air. Cowering like a hermit crab, I join. But the fear follows, a dark fear of my

from the wild scythe flailing

friends, flowers and grass.' And

the city of graves expands its

own shadow. At the intersection, near the

traffic light, I crouching child. She is selling flowers. She begs me to buy and

see the smudges of resignation around the cool eyes. Or, is that fatigue? She is tired, she is thirsty. At nightfall she goes back to her mother, sweaty and exhausted. Mother lights up and pounces on her. "How much? How much have you brought?" Listless, the flower-child hands

has no time to pour her a glass of water. The child dozes off. The dusk lengthens its shroud, I come back home. I "recede like a snail flattening its inquiring horns from nervous injuries. I fold like a moth's envelope into the seam of

over the soiled purse. Mother is

busy counting the notes. She

I return to my childhood and remember a far-away rain. I lie face up in bed muffling the thunder of a clouded heart. Outside, blades of leaves rattle like green knives. The rooted rage of the tree-trunk shakes with every gust. The tree dissolves in ruins. I ask the cloud to stop moving because I can feel it

The nightmare returns and the death-spiral. Death by fire and death by knife. A dead squirrel plastered to the windowsill like a grisly stamp; my broken watch lying on top a junk to be thrown out; a dead dove that cooed, by the telephone pole; gravestones with a dead person under everyone.

Fireflies strike matches, darkness fumes and burns. The city of grave expands its acre and the question returns: Is it a good place to live and

Understanding Euro: What is It?

LEVEN currencies of Europe have been convertded into one single currency called euro. After three years, only euro will reign supreme when Mark, Franc, Lira or Kroner etc., and may be even Pound Sterling (UK hasn't joined yet)

will rest in the museum archives. This has been a bold new experiment as the conclusion of a far reaching process of economic integration which began in the 1950s after the end of the second world war. The European economic union, commonly known as EEC, steadily developed from a common market to the common economy of Western Europe over the last 50 years and the latest in the series of ambitious steps is the common currency, euro, introduced in the market with effect from first January, 1999.

Euro means single monetary economy for 11 European countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal and Spain) at the moment. Other West European countries left out so far are likely to join. In addition, as the Common Market expands, the European Monetary Union or EMU is also expected to grow bigger in terms of coverage. It must be noted that Emu is also the name of the bird which cannot fly, although it can run very fast over large areas. Euro, which is the outcome of Emu however deserves an opposite result: it should have a flying start instead of an initial run of the currency.

As a result of the common market, trade among European countries increased enormously since all goods and services produced within the common market territories enjoyed uniform rates of duties and taxes, if any. The single currency euro will mean no cost due to changes of

currencies and no risk associated with exchange rate fluctuations. The trade among these eleven European countries have now become internal trade within a single market where prices can be compared for goods and services across national borders and supplies can be obtained from

the most competitive source. At the moment, the European economic growth have slowed down to only 1.5 per cent from 2 per cent a year earlier and the

rate of unemployment hovering around 10 per cent of the total work force. Euro should promote more trade within eleven these

countries due to reduced transaction cost as well as greater competition. More trade in turn should favourably influence economic growth and at the same time create more jobs.

Euro means one economy and there are definite benefits to be drawn from becoming parts of a large economy. For example, Ireland with 3.7 million inhabitants is now a part of the Europewide economy with 290 million consumers. On the other hand, no single country is too large to dominate the Europe wide economy. The two largest countries, France and Germany will account for 40 per cent of the output which is still not the majority share.

In addition, GDP on a per capita basis is even enough for a highly competitive economy to emerge. The European economy is a conglomerate of equals and five decades of intensive economic cooperation have nurtured a win-win situation for all involved and in the process created a culture of give and take among the neighbouring countries who wish to maintain the economic unity at all cost.

Price uniformity will be another big advantage of the single currency. All over Europe, price of aspirin or mineral water will be fully comparable since it will be all in euro with the same exchange value everywhere. This should augur well for promotion

of trade related economic growth. The investment opportunities

Shahed Latif

Window on Asia

have enormously expanded with the launching of the single currency. Beginning January 4 1999, the first business working day of the year, all stocks and shares in eleven West European countries adopting the single currency, are being quoted in euro. Thus overnight, investors world-wide have a new, second largest stock market of the world. German investors now have the opportunity to get involved in a market which is three and a half times the size of the former domestic market. Increase in size will automatically imply expanded opportunities.

It is expected that the integrated market will attract more resources than the sum total of investments in eleven separate country markets, each with their own currencies and therefore associated risks of exchange rate fluctuations. The monetary union is bound to boost the investment market since various investment related financial costs will be low-

The European bond market in particular will face strong favourable impact. According to Wall Street Journal, "a common currency will result in roughly \$ 6 trillion euro bond market from Europe's current collection of highly balkanised, national bond markets.

Euro is now the world's second most important currency after United States dollar. Given the opportunities it would gener-

ate, its value is likely to go up. A strong euro will call for economic reform. particular, the enormously expanded market size

would intensi-

expose inefficient enterprises as well as prevailing market distortions. Thus efficiency gains will strengthen the euro economy There will be more confidence and the inevitable consequence is likely to be renewed economic

fy competition which in turn will

What are the lessons that we should learn from the latest intensification of European economic union? Its international impact are noteworthy.

First, as the second most important currency of the world (next to the United States dollar) European countries now have a much greater stake in maintaining stability of the global economy, in particular, improving world monetary management. Europe because of its huge single market size, may tend to become isolationist. However, the experts are of the opinion that it has become much more outward looking in matters of international trade. It is likely to open more

to the outside world. EEC is an important trading partner of Bangladesh and given our own domestic political stability, we may also expect growth in our exports to that market due to the single currency and reduced transaction cost of international

Second, euro, dollar and yen - the three dominant currencies of the world - now form a sort of tripartite world currency system which could effectively preside over the global flows of all types. Their cooperation is likely to reduce frequency of turmoil in money markets round the world. Beginning with the crisis of Thailand in mid-1997, there were several such financial breakdowns during the last two years involving other countries of ASEAN, Russia, Brazil and now Mexico. We are now faced with the challenge of a unipolar world which is indeed of a unique kind. The three-currency cooperation is a matter of extreme urgency to evolve the new financial system for the new world order of the 21st century.

Finally euro may emerge as the alternative global currency and in strong competition with the dollar. Therefore instead of cooperation, will it result in trade wars and currency fights across the Atlantic? The answer seems to be NO since half a century of cooperation after the end of the second world war have created a strong common understanding which is not likely to be vitiated even after the end of the Cold

In fact Mr. Henry Kissinger strongly feels about the strong beneficial effects of euro and the birth of a unified Europe: "It is in our interest to deal with a stronger Europe because it is not in our interest to decide everything ourselves".

Letter From America

Impeached, then Acquitted, President Clinton has the Last Laugh

Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed writes from Princeton

Republicans remained deaf to the message that was coming loud and clear: President Clinton did not commit a crime; he committed a sin. What the President did was not "high crime and misdemeanor;" it was low crime with Miss Lewinsky!

PUBLICAN Congress persons learned a painful Lesson — that it is easy to impeach a President in the House of Representative (which requires a simple majority), but extremely difficult to convict him in the Senate (which requires two-thirds majority). Ne ertheless, for once, a contrite Mr. Clinton spoke the absolute truth when in his postacquittal speech he said that it was what he "did and said" that triggered all the harrowing events. Ameen! As President Clinton and his supporters celebrate, "gloat-free," after his acquittal by the Senate on February 12, it is worth taking a second look at the nightmare that descended on the nation for the last thirteen months.

First, a word about impeachment. Earl of Suffolk (Michael de la Pole) was the first person to be impeached in medieval England in 1386. The Earl's offense was not salacious and sexual; it was misuse of public funds. The Earl, like President Clinton, was accused of "high crimes and misdemeanors" -"the first appearance of that vague and contentious phrase in the canon of English law." These famous words, implying betrayal of the public trust, provided the starting point for the Framers of American Constitution four centuries

American President Thomas Jefferson (whose last name President Clinton took as his middle name) had warned the impeachment advocates: "History shows us that in England impeachment has been an engine more of passion than of justice." How prophetic! Ironically, as impeachment was being incorporated into the American constitution in 1787. it was being discontinued in England.

Warren Hastings, the first British Governor General of India, was the last person to stand trial for impeachment in 1788. Hastings was charged with "maladministration, corruption in office and cruelty towards the people of India." After seven years of trial, he was acquitted. Impeachment in Britain was largely "a means of attacking unpopular ministers"

put into office by the King. "Direct attack on King being unthinkable, save by the path that led Charles I to the block. Parliament indulged in the fiction that the King could do no wrong but was misled by ministers." Sounds familiar?

"As soon as the British system evolved into a parliamentary system, impeachment fell away." Growing power of the parliament and the decline of the despotic monarchical rule allowed legislators to remove ministers through confidence votes. In the United States, today impeachment represents a weapon in the perennial battle between the executive and the legislative branches of the government.

Hillary Clinton, who is considering a run for the Senate from New York in 2000, was partially right. There was a conspiracy involving a few rightwingers, although not a "vast right-wing conspiracy," to oust her husband. They had many reasons. First, they hate Clinton. For them, he did not have the right pedigree. They were especially livid because he had defeated a man of true blue blood - son of a Senator, World War II pilot and a millionaire, George Bush. Bill Clinton, the "draft-dodger," was the son of a traveling salesman, who died before Clinton was born. His mother remarried. Clinton took the last name of his stepfather, a violent alcoholic. Raised dirt poor (with mounting legal bills, President Clinton is still not rich), Clinton is a self-made man. His successes - visit to the White House to meet President Kennedy in 1963 as a top High School student in the nation. education Georgetown, Oxford (as a Rhodes Scholar). Yale Law School, Governor of Arkansas. and finally two-term President of the United States - were too

right-wingers. Although he always seems to win at the end, Clinton, a selfdestructive man, made the job of his enemies easy. Cornered, his first instinct is not to tell the truth; although he would couch words in such a way that it could not be "proven" as perjury in a court of law. As the whole

much for the stomach of the

universe now knows, the 52year old President is an adolescent who cannot look at a skirt without getting sexy! Clinton infuriated the

Republicans further by stealing their agenda. He balanced the budget, put 100,000 more policemen on the beat, "mended" affirmative action, replaced welfare with "work fare" and increased defense spending issues Republicans hold dear. Clinton has been extremely good to women, minorities and immigrants - people who do not show up on the Republican radar screen. As the Republican party was being driven right by the very well organized and financed anti-abortion, sociallyconservative Christian right, Clinton steered the Democratic party towards the centre, where most of the American people were. Unable to outsmart the issues Clinton on Americans cared about, the anti-Clintonites went after the person of the President.

Clinton's enemies triggered the appointment of Clintonhater Republican Kenneth Starr to investigate Whitewater, Travelgate, FBI filegate or any other gate, to look for Presidential wrong-doing. Starr came up empty, and wanted to pursue other interests. As they pumped dollars into Paula Jones flimsy sexual harassment case against the President, the right-wingers persuaded Starr to stay. Linda Tripp, the "friend" who taped Monica Lewinsky's phone conversation with her, tipped off Paula Jones' attorney and Starr about President Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinsky. At the Paula Jones' deposition in January, 1998, the President was surprised at the incisive questions about Monica Lewinsky, before the scandal was public. The Jones lawyers, in collusion with Starr, set the President up in a perjury

In their zeal to "get" the President, the Republicans left the American people behind. Even after their unprecedented defeat in the mid-term elections of November, 1998, they refused to be chastened. Against the wishes of the people, in December, 1998, they rammed through the impeachment of the

President in the House of Representatives, on a partisan basis. This after Henry Hyde had earlier vowed that impeachment of the President would have to be bipartisan.

The Republicans believed that after the impeachment, there would be a clamour for the President to resign. Wrong again! Americans believed that he was wrongly impeached, and should not be removed. With a Presidential approval rating of 70 per cent, impeachment and removal was dead on arrival at the Senate. Unlike in the House, in the Senate the President's lawyers mounted a very effective defense, that tore gaping holes in the House case. thirteen House The

Managers, all Republican right-

wingers, foolishly believed that

they would be able to convince at least twelve Democratic Senators to vote to remove the President. They convinced none. On the contrary.. five Republicans joined Democrats to defeat obstruction of justice charge (50-50) and ten Republicans joined the 45 Democrats to defeat the perjury charge (55-45). Instead of the two-thirds majority to remove the President, none of the articles of impeachment received a simple majority. Posterity will judge President Clinton to have been a victim of the Republican vendetta, just as President Andrew Johnson was one hundred years ago. Clinton has not even been censured by the Senate! His acquittal by the Senate took the teeth and taint out of the

The Republican Senators who voted to acquit President Clinton are mostly from the North-East USA, where more highly educated Americans live. Clinton's enemies - Tom DeLay, Newt Gingrich, Bob Livingston, Bob Barr, Asa Hutchinson, Lindsey Graham are all from the South. There is a realignment taking place in American politics. The "redneck" South used to be solidly Democratic, the party of protest and change; and the blacks used to belong to the Republican Party, the party of Abraham Lincoln. (I once asked an American friend to define a

House's impeachment. .

"redneck." "They abuse women, sympathize with the racist Ku Klux Klan and torture animals," he said). President Franklin Roosevelt wooed the blacks to the Democratic Party with his "New Deal." President Lyndon Johnson was the last Democratic President for whom the majority of the Southern whites voted (1964). Starting Ronald Reagan's Presidency (1981), the South has been turning into a solidly Republican territory.

America will have to sort through some inconvenient fallout from the Clinton impeachment-acquittal. The Supreme Court's 1997 decision that a sitting President is not immune from a private civil lawsuits (Paula Jones case), will make all future Presidents vulnerable. The path has been made easy for Presidential enemies: find a plaintiff, pour money into the case, and demand that the President be removed from office. Kenneth Starr succeeded in piercing lawyer-client privilege, demanded that the Secret Service, employed to protect the President, be a relentless prosecutor's spy, and prosecuted anyone who disagreed with his version of the law. The contrast between an amorous Mr Clinton and overzealous Starr can be summed up thus: Mr Clinton can knock at your door late at night and ask to see your daughter; so can Mr Starr. You can say "no" to Mr Clinton; you cannot say "no" to Mr Starr!

Through all the lunacy, the American people remained remarkably sane and consistent. Through 60-70 per cent Presidential approval ratings, they repeatedly told their legislators to move on to the nation's business; that what the President did was wrong, but did not warrant his removal from office. At their future electoral peril, the Republicans remained deaf to the message that was coming loud and clear: President Clinton did not commit a crime; he committed a sin. What the President did was not "high crime and misdemeanor;" it was low crime with Miss Lewinsky!

Friday Mailbox

Breach of election rules Sir, The Prothom Alo on 23rd February published a

news item regarding a report on the Pabna-2 byelection. released in a press conference by FEMA. It was absent in the DS. FEMA complained about serious irregularities in the byelection. The 75 per cent given vote margin smells of malpractice. Normally about 80 people can vote per hour but there the voting rate exceeded 100 per hour. In 6 centres 92.82 per cent votes were cast, 98.93 per cent of which were in favour of the ruling party! In some centres, no voters were seen after mid-day but they reported 85 to 90 per cent

FEMA also revealed serious breach of election rules by two ruling party ministers. Surely no one can accuse FEMA of pro-opposition bias? The partisanship of the present Election Commission is amply demonstrated by many other reports. If one still demands concrete proofs from our intellectually deficient opposition then I must say nothing will convince him.

Shafikur Rahman 1/6 Lalmatia, Bl-A. Dhaka

Truly foreign

Sir. For a small country like Bangladesh the importance of professional diplomacy is paramount. Recent handlings of King Hussein's funeral by our Foreign Ministry proved it once again. It is indeed appalling to know that the all too intricate job of opening a new mission in Jordan have been entrusted to two non-professionals. Both our Ambassador and his Deputy at our newly-opened Jordan mission are new in the world of diplomacy. The Ambassador is a political recruit of the ruling party and his Deputy is a non-Foreign Affairs officer without any training on diplomacy. While the ruling party may pick its own cadre as Head of Mission, the ruling party should have backed him with a professional diplomat

One wonders whether there are such shortage of professionals in our diplomatic hub of Segun Bagicha. Media reports suggest that soon after the ascendancy of Mr Azad to the helm of Segun Bagicha there has been an ongoing process of lateral entry of officers belonging to different cadres by dint of their AL connections.

Asif Raihan

A fish a day might keep the

psychiatrist away
Sir, Like the proverb 'An apple a day keeps the doctor away', a fish a day might keep the psychiatrist away. Mental health researchers are discovering a link between diet and mental illnesses such as depression. bipolar disorder and schizo-phrenia. People who suffer from these illnesses might have low levels of the nutrient Omega-3. Omega-3 is an essential poly-unsaturat ed fatty acid that the body must consume in the diet. It is found primarily in fish and some vegetables. Researchers have found that some mental patients who took fish oil supplements to get more Omega-3s had

some relief from symptoms of their disorders.

According to Jerry Cott, who heads the Adult Psycho-pharmacology Research Program at the US National Institute of Mental Health. Omega-3 fatty acids make up an important part of cells within the nervous system. These are part of the cell walls that are known as cell membranes. The fatty acids have a very important role as a structural component. It is like the bricks and the mortar of the membrane itself. And if the structure of the membrane is not right, then the membrane itself doesn't work properly If the membrane doesn't work properly, the nervous

system can't work properly either. Mr Coft says that researchers are not sure exactly how Omega-3 improves symptoms of mental disorders. And he says, menta patients might need to eat fairly large amounts of Omega-3 to make up for their already low levels of the nutrient. They might find it easier to take supplements of fish oil than to eat a lot of fish every day. Cott further says, the use of fish oil supplements to treat mental illness is a very new subject for research, and it will be some time before the practice will be widespread. For some people, good mental health might be only a filet away. Cott says, healthy, non-deficient people might only need to eat fish once or twice a week to maintain their normal body reserves of Omega-3.

> M A Obaydullah S-8 Park Plaza Apartment 31 Banani, Road 17 Dhaka-1213

But Sachin was not out Sir, As a fair minded Indian. I fully agree with the

title of Syed Mahbub Murshed's view. At least for the next ten years, Eden Gardens should be blacklisted Even after this period, if international cricket is restored at the Gardens, there better be a very good reason. However, I disagree with the views expressed regarding Sachin's dismissal

Here is why — I am pretty disappointed that many of the experts have overlooked a rather straightforward clause in the Run Out Law which gives the batsmen some protection against collisions. Law 38 regarding Run Out is very clear. It states:

Either Batsman shall be out Run Out if in running or at any time while the ball is in play - except in the circumstances described in Law 39. (Stumped) - he is out of his ground and his wicket is put down by the opposite side. If, however, a Batsman in running makes good his ground he shall not be out Run Out, if he subsequently leaves his ground, in order to avoid injury, and the wicket is put down. The last clause is very important. A batsman is NOT run out if he completes a run and is subsequently out of his ground to avoid

Let us examine the two questions that need to be answered according to Law 38. Did Sachin make good his ground? The replays show that he grounded his bat close to the crease. It was impossible to determine if the bat was outside or inside the crease. The benefit of doubt goes to the batsman. Therefore the answer to this question is: Yes, Sachin made his ground. Now, to the second question. Did he leave his

ground to avoid injury? During any collision, whatever action a person takes is with the intention of avoiding (or at least minimising) injury. Often, this happens as reflexive action. Let's face it, if Sachin had steadfastly held his bat to the ground, he might have ended up with a broken wrist. Therefore, there is sufficient reason to believe that the batsmen raised his bat to avoid an injury, in this case, as a reflex action. This is enough to infuse doubt/confusion in the third umpire's mind Going by the golden rule of cricket umpiring, the benefit goes to the batsman. Ergo, SACHIN WAS NOT OUT. Why was he given

out by the third umpire? My contention is that K T Francis completely overlooked the above clause and proceeded to give a decision based purely on whether the bat was grounded when the stumps were broken. It is also possible that umpire Bucknor requested the third umpire just to check if the bat was grounded when the stumps were broken. This would mean that the third umpire didn't really have control over the entire decision but just a part of it. This is one of those instances in sports where several experts got it horribly wrong. The decision, they say, was made according to the rules of the game.

But if the rules had been followed to the entirety, SACHIN SHOULD HAVE BEEN DECLARED NOT OUT. constructed a somewhat different situation to highlight the absurdity of the decision. Let us say A & B are batting. A is the striker. He drops the ball on his feet and takes off for a quick single. B has backed up and comes rushing in. Meanwhile, the ball comes to rest on the crease. The closest fielder is at short point. He charges in to run B out. When the fielder grabs the ball B just makes it. However, the fielder rams into B's hand holding the bat. Remember, none of this is deliberate. B's bat goes flying and B himself, is knocked back. He falls, with his body completely outside the crease. The fielder, in one continuous motion, throws the ball onto the stumps. Is B out?

Ananth Nagarajan

How many more Noor Hossains? Sir, I ask this question to the leaders of Bangladesh: how many sacrificial lambs, more specifically Noor Hossains do you need to satiate your thirst for blood?

Please tell us, how many more you need?

Why you do not use your own children or grand children as your Noor Hossains? Is it because they are in the safe haven and cannot be brought back home or from the posh area of the city where your programmes cannot reach?

Vox Populi

Views expressed in this column are the writers' own. The Editor may or may not subscribe to those views. The Editor reserves the right to decide which letters should be published.