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PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

Fenchuganj power plant

The news item published in The Daily Star on August 9, 2004, under the heading "Fenchuganj Power Plant, Canadian Senator censures government move for re-tender" attracted my attention and the contents made me unhappy and muse about our government's lack of prudence.

The government's decision to invite fresh tenders for the Fenchuganj power plant ignoring a Canadian company's offer is an unwise move. It is unthinkable displeasing the Canadian Senator, who had lobbied for removal of quotas and tariff on Bangladeshi exports to Canada.

Nur Jahan, Chittagong

A cell-phone user's thought

I have found the Grameen Phone advertisement in The Daily Star describing the harms of missed calls. Good.

To me „missed call mane 'Kemon achhotumi?'

-Missed call mane 'Bhalo achhi'.

So, I appreciate missed calls at the personal level. A single missed call signifies so many things without any cost. So, it is normal to make missed calls. In our neighbouring countries the rate is very low in telecommunications. But that is not true about our context!

Palash Debnath, Dhaka

RAB image

This refers to a news item published in your esteemed Daily of 11 August under the caption "Deaths Darken Rab Image".

A soon as I read the report, the following images appeared in my mind's screen: RAB seems to have immense similarity with that of the Rakhi Bahini of the first Awami League government. Incidentally, the abbreviated nomenclature RAB could also pass for Rakhi Bahini.

The RAB operations seem to have a similarity with operation Clean Heart carried out earlier by the government. Pakistan who carried out a genocide in the then East Pakistan seem to have learnt some lessons from that experience, but not Bangladesh. Today the common people of the country are as much scared of the police and members of the various law enforcing agencies as they were with the very sight of the militia or the occupation forces in the then East Pakistan.

Shamsher Chowdhury, Dhaka

Kabul scene

President Hamid Karzai surprised many in Kabul by entering the October presidential race with the brother of a

martyred hero as his choice for vice-president, rather than his powerful defence minister. Karzai's decision to drop the defence minister, Marshal Muhammad Qasim Fahim, showed the growing divide within the government over the persistence of armed private militias, which the president has called the greatest threat to the country's nascent democracy. Fahim has the support of many of the powerful warlords and regional commanders in the north who have felt increasingly unhappy with efforts to disarm them and to reduce their power in the central government.

Karzai's action was hailed by diplomats as a bold move and a message to all of the warlords to disarm and work in favour of elections. But it also showed his political vulnerabilities. Karzai's new vice-presidential nominee, Ahmed Zia Massoud, is a younger brother of Ahmed Shah Massoud, the commander of the Northern Alliance who was killed by suicide bombers on September 9, 2001, just two days before the 9/11 attack that prompted the US to invade Afghanistan. He has been serving for the past few years, however, as Afghan ambassador to Russia. The decision came after intense negotiations and heightened tension in the capital in recent days as Fahim, the defence minister, pressed hard to retain his other position as first vice-president.

Immediately after Karzai's announcement, the education minister, Yunus Qanooni, announced his candidacy for president and said he was resigning from the government. He said he had the support of Fahim; the foreign minister, Abdullah Abdullah; and Massoud's younger brother, Ahmed Wali Massoud, who represent the core of the Panjshiri group, which has until now played a dominant role in Karzai's transitional administration. **Sirajul Islam** *Social sciences researcher and consultant Pisciculture Housing Society, Shyamoli, Dhaka*

Crisis of credibility

It seems the more you write editorials such as Crisis of Credibility (August 10th) and reflect across the board public opinion, the more this government becomes determined not to acknowledge that the problems you reflect upon with such wisdom and tenacity even exist.

Torture or death in custody is considered the worst that a government that wants to be considered civilised can commit. Even the mighty US has been all but floored for the tortures it committed at Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad and the Bush administration has been humiliated

by such tortures more than anything else with its invasion of Iraq. I cannot recollect the verse but in the Holy Koran the responsibility of authority for the up keeping of those in custody is given the utmost importance.

Yet, here we have a government that has been allowing its law enforcement agencies to commit such heinous acts without any concern at all. In fact, this government should earn itself another top recognition like being the most corrupt in the world if there was a prize going for the country with the worst record for treatment of

Neglected forests

I will not talk like a poet or a historian that Bangladesh is a country of lush green, but in fact it has only 6 per cent forest coverage compared to total land. According to ecologists, about 25 per cent forest is highly desirable for country's 'ecological balance'.

We all read and learn it, but don't realise it. In most countries, nature conservation, forest protection have been turned into a political issue. The forest department is in charge of looking after the forests. Do they nurse the forests or destroy them? A burning question.

Ronju Ahammad
Forestry Hostel
Chittagong University

ceremony at Dhaka Recourse Maiden when the Pakistani occupation forces were compelled to surrender to our valiant freedom fighters. The Bengalee nation achieved independence at the cost of millions of lives 33 years ago.

In an independent state like ours people are desperately looking forward to an exploitation and terrorism free society, equality of treatment and protection of Constitutional and Human Rights. If the state cannot ensure the democratic rights and economic emancipation of the people, the hard earned independence is bound to be useless.

So the first thing we have to ensure is separation of the judiciary from the executive in order to establish the rule of law in society without further delay.

Some unfortunate incidents in the higher judiciary caused serious disappointment among the people of the country. However, separation of the judiciary will solve the problem of executive control in an effective way. **Advocate MM Mujibur Rahman Khulna**

Sweeping allegations

Our attention was drawn to your staff correspondent's coverage of a seminar on 'Participatory assessment of problems of private universities' organised by BUISS. While we appreciate such highlighting of the problems of the private universities and constructive suggestions, we nonetheless take exception to such sweeping remarks as '.....none of the country's 52 private universities fulfill all the criteria required for registration under the Private University Act'. We beg to point out that it was not at all based on facts when Mr. Arifur

Tigers will roar soon!



PHOTO: AFP

This letter is to appreciate and share the views of Mohammed Fahim Hara, Universal Tutorial, New Eskaton, Dhaka, who has written the letter "Tigers do take time" (DS, August 9).

I was truly a layman in cricket

before watching the World Cup 1999, where Bangladesh got a victory against the mighty Pakistanis. Afterwards, I became a cricket lover.

I would like to ask a few questions to those who have lost

their hopes.

Being Bangladeshis should not we feel happy even for a moment to see our boys posing threat to the boys coming from such countries like the UK and Australia?

Does any developed country

consider us as a competitor in any sector like industry, agriculture, IT, garments etc?

Can we afford to throw our cricket players out, those who are at least fighting for bringing pride to this nation?

Those days are not far away when our boys would no longer be the minnows. The Tigers will roar soon.

Tamjid
First Security Bank, Dhaka

When they win, we applause and praise but when they are defeated we pour our wrath on the coach and players. Yes, I am talking about our consistently inconsistent national cricket team and our ever-optimistic mind. Their dismal performance in Asia Cup broke our hearts once again and raised many questions. We have never received any frank statement from our captain as far as our batting technique is concerned. However, you don't need to be a cricket guru to detect our batsmen's over-shuffling tendency which enhances the possibility of LBW. Moreover, Faisal Hossain, whose domestic

batting average is over 40(!), has awesome feet-movement (does they move at all?) and it unfolds the huge difference in quality between domestic and international cricket. Even after providing adequate facilities, economic security and good coaching-training stuff, the situation has not changed at all. Our scoreboard is still shuttling between 160 to 180 like 15-20 years ago. But why? Our captain doesn't know the answer.

The answer is, if you appoint the best tutor for a dull student, who doesn't have minimum ability or quality to learn, he will never be getting A+. Our cricket team is like a bad student of cricket under a good teacher. In an interview the former Sri Lankan captain, Arjuna Ranatunga, who has the experience of playing in Dhaka League, expressed his concern over our present cricket players' ability and performance. So, it's time we looked after our domestic cricket structure so that we can get players in future with real ability to learn from defeat and experience.

In response to the letter of Md. Fahim Hara (DS 9th August, 2004),

I want to make the point that though New Zealand took nearly 18-20 years to win their first Test match, they got very few chances of playing Test cricket unlike Bangladesh has been getting under ICC's home-and-away system. Yes, some 20 years back Sri Lanka was in no position to win the Asia Cup Tournament, but they had some quality players like Arvinde De Silva, Ranatunga, Dilip Mendis, Ashoka De Silva, etc.

But where are our counterparts? When Ranjit Fernando was asked to compare present Bangladesh and Sri Lanka of twenty years ago, he told that Sri Lanka had the capability of putting up stiff resistance in every match at that time but that is not true about Bangladesh.

Another point that I want to make is Whatmore's multi-skill theory. There is no doubt that it needs a match winner (quality cricket player) to win a match. Mini all-rounders' jack of all trades, master of none may play some face-saving cricket but will never be match winners.

Abir Rahman
Dept. of CSE, DU

people in custody. **Shahjahan Ahmed**
Dhanmondi RA, Dhaka

Brittle middle-order

After the Bangladesh cricket team's dismal performance in the Asia Cup, a lot of issues came forward. Our top order ones again failed to deliver. One of the main reasons for this consistent batting failure is the lack of genuine middle order batsmen in the

void. Local clubs should nurture local talents in the middle order so that they can play the same role Akram and Bulbul did over a decade. **Mohibul**
Dhaka

Accountability of judges

Bangladesh emerged as an independent country on 26 March '71 but, in fact, the glorious victory was achieved on 16 December '71 in a

Rahman of Unnayan Samannay in his keynote paper said, 'All the private universities are yet to construct their own campuses.' Through your daily we want to inform all concerned that Sylhet International University (SIU) since its inception on 24.11.2001 has been functioning on its own campus of 5.4 acres of land and an academic building of 15,000 sq. ft. floor space situated in Sylhet city.

We therefore seek to point out that along with criticism there should be acknowledgement of achievements of the private universities.

Registrar
Sylhet International University

Terrorism

The nests of terrorism are spreading day by day all over the world. Now, their main focus is on increasing their financial strength by means of activities such as money laundering, bank looting, women and child trafficking and abduction of family members of wealthy people etc. They are so well equipped that they can do anything. In respect of our country, terrorism is a social malady like corruption. They run parallel. Terrorists have their presence everywhere. They exercise their terrorist activities in a polling centre, tender dealing room, construction site etc. They do not hesitate to chop off people's hands, gouge out their eyes, or even kill them. Unfortunately, these terrorists have the so called political leaders as their godfathers. They are supplied with arms and money.

These terrorists are extorting money in the name of toll. The businessmen are the common victims. It is in the interest of the country that terrorism should not be allowed to thrive. Until and unless we

get rid of terrorism, we cannot think of peace and prosperity. **Md. Mostafizur Rahman**
Sadaat College
Karatia, Tangail

Mr. Jinnah's intended radio broadcast

In his column, 'Between the Lines' (Pakistan and Indian Muslims, 7 August 2004) Kuldip Nayyar has made some observations about Mr. Jinnah. Mr. Nayyar writes, Jinnah thought that in Pakistan, "Politics would not be mixed with religion. He even promised more. But the custodians of Pakistan did not allow his words to be broadcast over the radio, lest what they had in mind should get jeopardized."

Does anyone, amongst your readers, knows what Mr. Jinnah wanted to say? Could anyone refer to any source about this particular statement of Mr. Kuldip Nayyar? I would even request Mr. Nayyar, through your paper, to elaborate on this point and quote some reference about Mr. Jinnah's intended broadcast and how that was not allowed to go on the air. **AZM Abdul Ali**
Uttara, Dhaka

English medium schools

I have gone through the interview of British Council Country Examinations Manager. Mark Bartholomew, with Tahmina Shafique published in The Daily Star on 25 July, 2004. In the interview, he has projected a total picture of English medium schools in Bangladesh. He has criticised our educational system and environment in the institutions. He has emphasized the need for playing and travelling as far as students are

concerned.

I think the points raised by Mr. Bartholomew deserve close attention. **Md. Shafique**
Sadat college, Tangail

Cricket and life

There is a definite philosophy of cricket, but it is difficult to pin it down on paper. Many are curious what type of cricket our politicians play. Here are some reflections on the approach to this game of gentlemen.

The first precaution is to be mentally prepared for glorious uncertainty of cricket it is like the very game of life. Anything which can be accurately predicted is boring, because the interest is time bound. God's sense of humour must be appreciated through humble thanksgiving you do not know what will happen during the next five minutes, hours, days, or years. Plan and plan, re-plan, change and amend, revise and devise it is a never ending process, which keep Homo sapiens busy from morning till night. Had you known even a micro bit of the future, you would have lost your peace of mind and money cannot undo it. Ignorance on the future this communication gap-is a divine blessing.

If you have nothing else to do, watch cricket. If life is chasing you too hard, take hold of a bat and slug away. Get it out of the system, the tension, the pent up aggression, the nagging frustration. Try a late cut, cover drive, half volley, glide, pull or create a lofted rainbow of a glorious sixer, Sending a round ball to the boundary through a square cut is good for the health if you care to remember the definition of indigestion,' which is: trying to put a square meal into a round stomach.

We all start the morning in the

routine manner; and by the afternoon the tension pile up. Good cricket is an emotional purgative, if not tonic. By the way, you can play platonic cricket at home, alone, either with the bat or with the ball, not both. Imagination was bestowed on the humans for temporary escape. Can the other living creatures indulge in such imagination?

Cricket is like predicting the weather: there are too many variable factors (occurring within milliseconds in four dimensions) to be taken into consideration. The computer can calculate, but how to, and who will feed the machine fast enough to compute the outcome? it is one person batting against eleven opponents; plus the possible misjudgment with the batting partner passive at the other end.

What is the difference between the philosophy of cricket and life? Not much. Sunshine, some good harvests, adversities, the highs and the lows, some nasty bouts of weather and storms, floods; some smooth rides, and the time to laze in the sun (while fielding, meditating reflectively but alert). Cricket (or life) is continuous monitoring of different types of feedback's all the time. Cannot relax till the last bowl (or life) is bowled.

The relationship between the bat and the ball is not hostile. It is effortless which wins—the sing of a master artist. The aim is to play better, regardless of the result. The Japanese martial arts are not based on hostility or enmity. The ball is coming to caress the bat it is the mother-child relationship. Nothing could be simpler. The right stroke leaves the fielders standing. That is the beginning of art.

AMM Abad
Dhaka



PHOTO: AFP

Indian democracy

India, a big, strong, stable democracy, peacefully conducted the elections. It is not the only election India has managed in a democratic atmosphere. Previously, a number of elections to the legislative bodies were held.

India has been practising democracy without any hindrance for 57 years after the British left the country. It has become customary in India that political parties respect other political parties and they expect the same from their rivals, although a few exceptions are there, but with no eventual effect on the total democratic picture of India.

We have the caretaker government system in Bangladesh. But has any one really noticed that the system is the result of mutual distrust? And that goes against the basic principles of democracy.

Mehdi Mamoon
Pallabi, Dhaka