



Congrats, Shane Warne!

Congratulations to the magician spinner Shane Warne on his achieving the unique landmark of picking up 700 Test wickets! Shane Warne has been spinning the ball around the batsmen on the cricket pitch with an amazing prowess and skill that left many great batsmen awestruck! He is the icon of world cricket magician of spin who has reached a milestone in the history of world cricket. Cricketers of his essence are a rarity.

On his getting the record number of wickets, 700(!), we salute him. On his decision of bidding goodbye to international cricket, though a sad reality, we salute him again! He will be living through his fans across the globe!

Three cheers to the wizard --- long live Shane!
Rafiqul Islam Rime
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Culture and career

It's a very good initiative taken by the Transparency International Bangladesh involving the youths to form a corruption free society. It organised the "concert against corruption" at the Gulshan Youth Club on December 29. As a youth I'm declaring my whole-hearted support for it. The idea is really laudable but there is some 'buts' about the youths of our society. I will write later on about the 'buts'; now let's focus on the initiative. Some international organisations that work to reduce poverty arrange a concert ' Make Poverty History'. But it's the ill fortune of the poor that they are poor and the History is that they would remain poor. The developed countries will not make us rich because they will not get cheap labour and they will not keep us in starvation because they will not get cheap labour. We ourselves have to change our fate. How can we change that? Work, work and work...

You may ask me whether we don't work! Of course we work but not as much as a garment worker does. That's why only garment and textile sectors are supplying us a huge chunk of foreign exchange because they are lucky to have hard workers. And here are the 'buts' coming. In our society, now a very common slang term is 'garment worker'; I mean we apply it in indicating as low status people. No one gets proper respect from the society if he/she discloses that he/she is a garment worker. That means we still have some cultural barriers that obstruct our development as a modern nation. Only for this culture that a graduate spends as much as 5 to 7 years in seeking a government job, though a plenty of options he can avail by doing other things such as farming etc.... Within 5 to 7 years he can be rich by investing a small amount but he won't do this because a) it requires a lot of work, b) it's a long time process c) there are some risks d) society will not accept it as his ideal profession, they would call him a "Chasha"(farmer).

We need to break the cultural barrier and encourage the young generation to do any work without wasting time. I agree that we don't have enough jobs for our active people but you have to agree that we have enough options. We always desire to have flexible jobs and government job is perfect for that--no pressure and no risk. You can't expect a work done by government officials within your expected time without spending some money. In recent times a song has gained popularity like "Ami sarkari officer, ami ekaler jamider..." (I'm a government officer, I'm the landlord of present age...) and it's perfectly depicting the style of a government officer.

We talk about Japan, which is the richest country of Asia, but we don't think about their work. I think if their economy were like ours they would have worked without taking even a day off.

After becoming independent we have passed 36 years but still we have



to think about our infrastructure that means so many years was not enough for building the country! Why? We were inactive and didn't consider doing many important works. We fought for change but we didn't change ourselves. Political instability is of course a key factor but culture is not far away from that. I'm proud of my Bangladeshi culture but I also feel helpless when I see my culture is encouraging only official work and discouraging any manual activity. Here again we have to take lessons from garment workers.

We should not count everything from the urban perspective only. Young people living in village can change our economy also. We should prepare them mentally and physically for work. You will see hundreds of thousands of youths just gathering in tea-stalls or roadsides or near cinema halls when it's peak hour for work and they have loads of work to do; if you ask them, when they will finish their work, they would answer 'tomorrow'.

Change is coming, but at a very slow pace. If it goes like that we have to spend another 35 years to catch the mainstream of globalisation and by that time others will go too far ahead.

So what TIB is doing is a good start but not enough. Awareness of good governance will not be effective when youths have no work to do.

Md. Asaduzzaman
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The national flag

In these days of political turmoil it is shocking to observe that some political parties are using the national flag of Bangladesh in their processions. The national flag is our pride. It is the symbol of our identity as a sovereign nation. Political parties can use their own party flags while demonstrating, but not the national flag.

As it is the symbol of our unity and discipline, everyone should respect it.

Amzad Hossain
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Signs of failing

The last few days were full of news and views of unbridled police atrocities. When the western press was finding signs of failure in Bangladesh, the Bangladeshi press forcefully rejected that as a hoax.

Probably now is the time to rethink what's going on in the country.

Fazle Rabbani
One e-mail

A man's worth

How would you judge a man's worth? Would you judge him by what he has made of himself in his lifetime? Or by his academic and professional accomplishments? Or does his value lie in how his loved ones remember him, how they cherish his memory? A man can do every single thing correctly but still feel like a failure. He can take all the steps, make all the right decisions but still he cannot avoid the unlimited improbabilities of life. Life is too open-ended. The odds are that he will fail to solve the equation one lifetime may not be enough.

So what's the use of going through all the trouble of living, if in the end, too many overpowering elements restrain us from reaching one ultimate endgame. The world around us simply does not allow our ambition of cosmic proportions to be fulfilled. What's the way to a happy death? Must we all go away frustrated and trying till the last breath escapes our system? People eventually will die. They will cease to exist. At one point or another, a man's cardiac muscle will miss a beat or two and eventually stop beating. Or maybe his nerve impulses will become disoriented by a sudden loss of blood flow to the brain, paralyzing him until the moment comes when the rest of his body cannot take it anymore.

After his death people will attend his ceremonies, they will shed tears. They will lament until the point comes where they have to push his thoughts out of their daily lives and move on in order to get on with their own lives. So what was his life worth? All he gets are some manifestations of surface tension. How many people even looked deep enough to understand what he lived for? What were his sources of happiness, what were his unfulfilled dreams?

All these thoughts lie at the back of our subconscious. We constantly fail to allocate any attention towards

these paradoxes to make sure we do not lose focus over the sane and rational way of doing things. We cannot make life meaningful by always looking at the half full side of the glass and by avoiding the questions that haunt us and drive our sleep away. We have to embrace the fact that life being impossible to be planned is okay. Life being messy is the way to live.

Life can be worth living without it being a big ultimate extravaganza. What a man's life is made of depends on the checkpoints. What define his worth are his first steps, the times he cried tears of joy, the moment he knew that he has fallen in love, the time he learnt to share his love and truly understand what a big responsibility loving someone is, the phase where he decided to raise a family of his own, when he decided to become a father, every time someone told him how important he was, every time he has made a difference in someone's life, and basically every time he felt the slightest agony and heartache. How he might die is just one moment it is insignificant. People fail to acknowledge the more significant milestones the way he lived his life.

The worth of a man lies not in the few days of tears after his death but in the years of joy and happiness he has brought to the world around him during his lifetime.

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