



A stunning victory



The golden sons of Bangladesh again played wonderful cricket. They performed with great confidence and elegant style. We as Bangladeshis feel proud of their outstanding display of enthralling cricket. We have not seen such flaut for a long time. Our Tigers roared at the right time. They, we could observe, never went on the back-foot, though the opposition was one of the strongest teams in the world. Bangladesh played in the whole match without any fear of playing against a top team.

Earlier, Bangladesh won against

Australia which was, everybody acknowledges, a historic event. Ashraful, the paramount contributor that time, is again the architect of victory. At that time they did not look so valiant, vigorous, positive and determined as they looked on the day they smashed the South Africans.

Bangladesh must retain this form with the belief that they can beat all the strong teams.

Mohammad Shafiqul Islam
Lecturer, Department of English
Metropolitan University, Sylhet

What a performance!
After being beaten in two super eights matches against two mighty sides, at last Bangladesh found their real form in the third match at Guyana. The superb win against South Africa proved that our win in the match against India was no miracle. Bangladesh showed their full potential.

We believe more victories await us. Kudos to all Bangladeshi cricketers!

Saumitra Sarder Piklu
London University

Tigers roar

Warmest felicitations and heartiest congratulations to the members of Bangladesh cricket team for beating South Africa— ICC ranking no-1. Thanks must go to Mohammad Ashraful.

As a cricket fan, I expect stiff competition not victory over the world class teams, as we are totally new in international cricket. Watching the match I was absolutely delighted.

Bangladeshi bowlers gave a brilliant account of themselves.

Bazlur Rahman
Executive, Research and Development Department
Dhaka Stock Exchange Limited.

Let the boys play!!

On April 04, you published an article "Where does Bangladesh cricket actually stand?" Just what did the article want to say? That the display given by the boys over the years is

purely by chance? That the steepest and quickest growth that Bangladesh has shown in cricket compared to any other cricketing nation in the world is not true?

The write-up was full of depressing conjectures and sound bites that have bedeviled cricketers. Time and time again over the decades, confrontational articles and rhetoric have questioned the rationale of playing the game in the country. Yet time and time again, cricketers' prowess has shown us their unfailing ability to learn from experience, make amends and move on to greener pastures. I remember the first Bangladesh team in 1979 almost stealthily slipped out to play in the ICC trophy to avoid unpleasant questions that rendered the future of the game 'doubtful' and money spent a waste.

We are all aware which game in the country today is the most buoyant and abundant in finance. And there have gigantic leaps of development over the decades in the same game that was dismissed as superfluous investment.

I shudder to think what if the author of the article was a South African sports writer. He probably would have deemed fit to bury South African cricket in the Caribbean after the defeat to Bangladesh.

Could we stop rubbing it in when our boy nurse their wound in times of defeat? Could we stop the rhetoric and encourage the boys in their endeavours? They have done the

right thing.

Our family members, well-wishers and we are in great anxiety

Ban hartal



I have been cherishing a dream for a long time in my mind, that is, a hartal-free Bangladesh. I think it would be a brave decision if the government takes the initiative to ban hartals, strikes.

We the general people call upon the interim govt. to pass a law to ban hartal.

Md. Zakir Hossain

Student of Bift

and apprehension. We want justice.

Dr. Ishaq Ahmed (Faisal)

Dhaka

Rejoinder

We would like to draw your attention to the following two news items published on March 30, 2007 in The Daily Star.

"Telenor offered to cede control of GrameenPhone"

In this article wrong information was quoted: "Grameen Telecom is a division of Grameen Bank". Grameen Telecom is an independent organisation created under the company act. Grameen Bank (GB) is an independent bank working with micro-credit for the poor.

"Dr Yunus and the future of Bangladesh"

There is confusing and incorrect information in this article: "Much has been made by the detractors of Dr. Yunus of World Bank's loan of \$100 million to Grameen Bank given in 1996; such loans from multi-lateral lending agencies constitute less than 5% of Grameen Bank's assets" will mislead the readers and affect the reputation of GB. GB never borrowed from the World Bank. So, there is no question of borrowing \$100 million from World Bank.

It was also implying "The Grameen Bank is part of the larger effort of the NGO...". Grameen Bank is not an NGO. GB is a specialised bank working for the poor and owned by the poor created by a special ordinance in 1983. Grameen Bank is regulated by Bangladesh Bank, just like other banks.

Dipal Chandra Barua
Deputy Managing Director
Grameen Bank

Roads & Highways department

I see news of many investigations, reports, and newspaper articles concerning corruption. However, I do not see any investigative report on corruption in Roads & Highways Department. As an engineer and based on my discussions with fellow engineers both in Bangladesh and abroad, it is my firm belief that the Roads & Highways Department is one of the most corrupt organisations in Bangladesh. This organisation always had major budgets and projects funded through both internal and external sources (such as ADB, WB). Most of the engineers from subdivision to chief engineer level are known to be corrupt.

The Daily Star would do a great service to the nation by focusing on this department. Special attention should be given to individuals at the top level of this organisation in the last 15 years, especially chief engineers.

Iqbal Mahmood, PhD
Associate Engineer
Petra Geotechnical, Inc.

Corruption

The remarkable courage and zest that the caretaker government is showing in chasing the corrupt politicians is to be highly commended. But as one with similar experiences of martial law in 1958, makes me wonder whether this is another of those 'high drama' stunts that will fizzle out after a while, without making any differences to the current economic picture of the country. Arrests, well they are good newspaper material, trials, well, they are rather dramatic, and who wins or loses depends very much on who has more dough to give out to the lawyers, witnesses and officials. So the conventional path to justice is perhaps very predictable and probably well scripted by now.

Besides, the end to this high drama has probably already started, if we look at the illegal baby tax stand in Khulna city. It was removed a few weeks ago when the purge started, but since it reportedly generates revenues for those in power in Khulna City Corporation, it has been moved back to its illegal location - a repeat of 1958 perhaps?

So how do you take care of these super-rich, super-powerful people who had nothing a few years ago but now they are owners of huge wealth because of their recent positions close to the government. You know they are guilty yet you have to go through the long, laborious, frustrating process of that illusive word called the 'law' and the very process can kill off any zest in anyone.

Hazra Awal
Cambridge, UK

Campus politics

We welcome the decision of the government to ban campus politics which impedes the normal functioning of colleges and universities.

Anonymous

On e-mail

Role of the armed forces

The armed forces have done an

excellent job by saving the country from the brink of disaster. And they are doing another excellent job right now. In one Bangladeshi newspaper, a reporter wrote, "The so-called politicians are gang-raping our motherland..." and I could not agree less. Now, all these politicians want a quick election. It's not difficult to understand why they are in such a hurry. A quick reform is not possible and we the Bangladeshi are in no hurry to see the same politicians coming back to power. Simply because they are useless leaders.

I support Gen. Moeen 100%. He is right on the track. We need a controlled or modified democracy. The British brand is not suited to Bangladesh.

You are worried about Army in Politics. What can the Army do, when the civilians totally destroyed politics? Do you want politics of violence to return? And if the situation goes out of control, well the Army is there to protect you!

So, I say, Gen. Moeen, keep doing what you are doing. The vast majority is solidly behind the government.

Mohammad Yusuf
On e-mail

An analysis

"Poll campaign, EC for ban on use of national leaders' portraits"

Referring to the above news, I appreciate the Election Commission's decision to ban the use of names and portraits of national leaders as propaganda tools in any candidate's election campaign. The ban will eliminate unnecessary controversy and debates which sometimes end in violence. It is a positive step and will have far reaching effects on the minds of our citizens and election code of conducts.

Referring to another headline: "Nation has failed to recognise father of the nation: Gen Moeen"

There are so many successful nations in the world who do not have a preserved title for an individual as 'Father of the Nation', yet they give due respect to their national heroes who have dedicated their lives and made supreme sacrifices. In the context of Bangladesh, most of the people who support Awami League would prefer to see Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as the 'Father of the Nation' whilst another major party BNP, does not agree with that view. The BNP prefers to promote President Ziaur Rahman as the undisputed national leader of Bangladesh to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Both the groups have their own convictions, arguments and justifications to support their respective leaders and their view points. There is a third group who would prefer A. K. Fazlul Huq or Moulana Bhashani to hold that title. But majority individuals do not bother about who is nominated for the title of the 'Father of the Nation'. This group argues that the promoters of the two big political parties who have wasted the nation's time and money for the past 36 years are only interested in the issue due to their very personal close relations with the two respective national leaders. These two particular groups go on squabbling and bickering with each other over the issue based on their political affiliations.

The citizens have witnessed many public arguments that use historical references in this context related to individual leaders and their personal achievements and failures. Time has come for us to learn how to look forward, and not backwards any more to waste millions of man hours in futile arguments and divide ourselves even further apart.

S. Hussain

A retired IT & Management Consultant
U.K.

Comments on commentary

Your views reflected in the deliberation on "General Moeen goes public on politics--how can national interest be served best?" deserve some comments. I fully agree with you that the General should not have gone public to speak on politics and political reforms and framework in the presence of the President of the country. Nonetheless, the spirit and philosophy of General Moeen certainly deserve a high level of appreciation and respect.

Especially, I fully appreciate his candid expression that the nation, even after 36 years of independence, has totally failed to recognise the "Father of the Nation" Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Equally, we have failed to give due honor and respect to all the brave freedom fighters and sector commanders. We all know our political practices have been highly controversial and full of mistrust and disrespect, but the political system still can immensely contribute towards the fulfillment of hopes and aspirations of the com-

mon people at large. Gen Moeen's views on the political reforms for a corruption-free society, good governance, and accountability are praiseworthy. Since, the country is running through the State of Emergency declared by the President, it would have been much better to keep the statement above all controversy, if it would have been made public formally by the government.

You have rightly pointed out that our armed forces have recovered from ignominy and gained tremendous momentum in projecting their high image and reputation pertaining to professionalism, dedication, discipline and commitment globally. These qualities must be upheld and maintained. Our armed forces have shown tremendous loyalty to upholding democratic culture, rights and duties by keeping themselves out of politics. We should bear in mind that the present drive for eliminating all sorts of political, social and financial corruption is an opportunity bestowed on us that must not be wasted.

Dr. Aftab Alam Khan

Professor, Department of Geology
Dhaka University

It was a credible commentary. It conveyed a clear message to the General.

"The emergency and the armed forces behind it enjoy public support simply because people see them as a force for good, implementing the reform agenda. Any deviation from it, and widening of objectives or changing of direction will cause an immediate evaporation of public support."

And again, "We strongly feel our armed forces should not involve themselves in politics. They have a mission behind which there is popular support, which they should accomplish and return to their barracks."

ACitizen

On e-mail

Thanks to the General

It was a very courageous step for the Army Chief to recognise our father of the nation in a gathering of freedom fighters. It was our heartiest desire which was reflected in his comment and also the subsequent response from the Law Adviser.

We also appreciate the caretaker government for their role on the eve of 26 March in setting the history of the liberation war right. But I was astonished to see the date of Zia's announcement of our independence. We believe it could be a human error and will be clarified immediately to uphold the true history. We want to see the recognition of other national heroes including first acting president and prime

ties should be lifted as soon as possible. Of course, disruptive programmes like Hartal and Aborodh should not be allowed, but in all other respects, our people should get back all their political and other rights. The government should be tolerant to opinions expressed by the politicians in public. Only through such open and free discourse our nation will be fully prepared to choose the right persons for the 9th Parliament in the next elections. It is only through this process the parties can choose their leadership and public opinion can be formed for any constitutional amendment to be enacted by the next Parliament.

A period of two years to



entering politics? I was in Dhaka 2 weeks ago and got hold of Dr. Yunus' biography, 'Banker to the Poor'. I have just started reading it and I am amazed by the striking similarity between Dr. Yunus and Mahathir (ex-Prime Minister of Malaysia). The reader would recall that he transformed Malaysia from a dire economic situation (worse than Bangladesh 30 years ago) into a tiger nation by having a vision. He integrated Malaysia into the global network and at the same time infused Islamic values amongst the people in order to unite them regardless of race or religion. He was well known for proving the World Bank wrong when he resolved the Asian currency crisis in 1997 without their help. Yunus also has a vision, he has proven the World Bank wrong in relation to loans and has demonstrated success in lifting people out of poverty.

The debate about Yunus entering politics should end and the task of rebuilding the nation and achieving prosperity for people should begin.

Hasan Ali Imam
A member of the Conservative Party (UK)

Commentary

I felt that there is someone in the country who has the courage to tell the right thing during this emergency. When the army chief made his comment on Bangabandhu, I was so disappointed as this is a matter not to be dealt with by a public servant.

The army or army-backed rule destroyed the possibility of having democratic political institutions in Bangladesh from 1975 to 1991. And the absence of these strong institutions allowed a class of people to loot the country since 1991.

Fazlul Kader
On e-mail

No garbage disposal

We are residents of Paikpara under Mirpur PS. Our location is the eastern side of Kalyanpur Bazaar. There are some rickshaw garages here. The pullers wait for passengers, keeping their rickshaws on the road causing jam and discomfort for pedestrians.

The shop-owners do not clear the wastes from the road. And City Corporation garbage collectors never come to this place.

Is there anybody to solve our problems?
Haji Abdul Gafur
Amir Hossain
Paikpara