

Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

Whither Bangladesh cricket?



The way BD lost to Sri Lanka on 18 Sep in the 20/20 quarterfinals is pathetic; but predictable. The ad hoc mentality of the batsmen. Our bowlers are more professional. It is a great headache for the international coaches to change the mentality of the boys. Dave Whatmore spent several years in grooming batches of our young men, but the inbuilt psychological barriers remain. The BCCB has to be reinforced with professionals; not politically motivated guest appointees enjoying a holiday. If you don't know how to improve the game, get out and make room for others. And don't interfere-- no bureaucracy and red-tapism.

Get rid of the danda-gulli cavalier style of batting. Get behind the ball and drive it along the ground; don't lift it high in the sky. Too much nibbling around the off stump; and too many pull shots. Why remove your body away from the ball just to score a few runs? Why BD elected to field after winning the toss?

Elections

As a 51 year old concerned citizen of Bangladesh I would like to write the following:
The caretaker government has carried out excellent work in rounding up some of the most corrupt people from all walks of life. It will no doubt have a long-term effect on the day to day affairs of the country. However, its methodologies, partisanship and lack of transparency are highly questionable. This needs to be attended to. The judiciary has not been separated from the administration!

One cannot deny that this government is military backed. Delay in installing an elected government through free and fair elections will result in suffocating the democracy

Facing a good total is rather unnerving to the boys?

The occasional high profile wins were unpredictable. A professional approach is needed for steady progress and improvement. Don't be flashy; and don't try to show off. Need not play to win--play BETTER! Don't try--if you are ready, it would happen. The masters are effortless--minimum movement and use of energy.

Our cricket development and culture look like an imitation of our miserable political culture -- steady failure for three decades. Get rid of the vicious circle, and get out of the mental rut. One weakness of this young nation is the lust for office-bearership! Our fondness for seminars is endemic--the gift of the gab.

We have the talent; but the organisers need to be strict--first with themselves. No khatir [patronisation], and favouritism. There is a reason for this--the highest density of population per sq km

in the world; leaving no elbow room for relaxing and additional footprints.

Our current regime [CTG] is now involved in the exercises indicated above. Lend a helping hand; for a bright future. We have myopic visions. Smash subjectivity and self-sympathy. Look at the Australian cricketers; dehumanized (!) robots on a mission! Why Japan sank economically? No human touch in foreign policy -- it is not enough to be a nation of shopkeepers (the decline of the British Empire). You have to give, before you are entitled to ask. Ambition is a hurdle; compared to dedication. Have no goals-- just serve, without seeking returns.

The future of Bangladesh cricket depends on those outside the field. Don't pull the wrong strings at the wrong time.

Alif Zabr, Dhaka

hungry people of Bangladesh. This suffocation can only be sustained for a limited period of time.

I therefore urge the CTG to move forward with reforms swiftly and to consider the timing of the elections based on the conditions prevailing in Bangladesh currently, and not to be influenced by any external forces.

Ahmad Faruq
Cambridge, UK

An appeal to NBR chairman

The NBR has extended the date for filing income tax returns but has said that it would not extend the date for declaring undisclosed or undeclared money. As a banker I can say with impunity that the bulk

of money deposited in banks by stakeholders in the form of certificates and fixed deposits have not been declared as it is time consuming and cumbersome. If they had done so there would have been a run on the banks.

The NBR should at least give the stakeholders enough time till the filing of income tax returns next year in 2008 to whiten the money still remaining undeclared. We just cannot change our culture overnight. The money deposited as FDs and savings certificates have been instruments for the middle and upper middle classes to earn a living for ages. Many of the depositors are still in the dark and do not know what to do. The NBR also has not orchestrated its cause in a polite and non-intimidating manner. The NBR should publicise the matter more forcibly in public media more often and regain the confidence of the depositors. If it can project itself as a friend of the depositors instead of being a demonising foe, I am sure by 2008 most of our valued customers will declare their undeclared assets and the NBR will be able to get its levy on it without any coercion or instilling of the fear and intimidation factor. The banks too could be approached to persuade the customers and make the taxation procedure easier for them. I believe, this monumental task would take an enormous amount of effort, both on an institutional and individual level against the president himself.

I would particularly like to draw your attention to the misinformation being spewed by the Western media. I believe there has never been a time for vigilance and unity among the Islamic nations as today. Dr. Ahmadinejad and his government's foreign policy are actively working towards unifying the two major sects of Islam. I believe, this monumental task would take an enormous amount of effort, both on an institutional and individual level.

Many of the bank customers who have accumulated money over decades through inheritance, sale of land and other genuine sources may not also be able to produce proper documents. On top of that billions of taka has been whitened by giving a seven percent penalty by defaulters of the past 2001-2006 BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami government.

Reforms in any sector have to be a smooth ongoing process under the supervision of an elected democratic government. Reforms cannot be pushed down one's throat forcibly under emergency powers. It might then be regurgitated if changes brought under an undemocratic government is challenged in a court of law after the return of democracy.

Finally, I would request the Honourable Chairman of the NBR to extend the deadline at least till the end of July, 2008.

I am sure by doing so the NBR's bold and commendable initiative to bring discipline, accountability and transparency in the financial sector through the ongoing reform process will enhance our image abroad and instill confidence and self-responsibility amongst the valued customers in the banking sector. This I am sure will be highly praised and taken forward by the next elected government.

Mirza Ghalib
One-mail

TO THE EDITOR

The following is the leading headline of DS Internet Edition of September 27, 2007:

"Dhaka improves on its graft

area at practically zero pressure (gauge): how can mud and slime go into Wasa water?

This defies logic and common sense! The real reason most likely is damage of Wasa's deep well filters, and the resulting accumulation of slime and mud in Wasa's overhead

tanks and pipelines. Are Wasa's tube-wells cleaned periodically? Are the wells drawn out and filter nets renewed at regular intervals? These do get damaged with the net surface chocked and the negative suction pressure inside the net wall when pumps are running.

This is a fact of life, and wells need regular backwash and filter repair after lifting the well casing. One wonders if this is done strictly by Wasa.

When I was working with a food processing industry (private sector) we did this regularly, and the water quality off the pump delivery and the overhead tank outlet was analysed on daily basis. This was important as random samples of our products both by us and the overseas makers (whose process was used in manufacture) for hygiene and biological purity! Why does not Wasa adopt this method and have the same process done by

NSU, is a huge loss to our country. So is the CNG driver, and the Ad farm official, and so is Ahmed Tarek Newaz, and many more. With Dewan Rahat, it is a matter of great regret that we have lost a university teacher just because our law enforcing authorities could never actually wipe out crime in Dhaka city. We have lost him because our law enforcers are not serious about protecting lives of law abiding citizens.

Police and other law enforcers claim that the law and order situation has improved only because they look at statistics. But a university teacher is not a mere statistic. A month ago they launched a heavy drive to arrest muggers and they did arrest many....why on earth did they stop?? With the cat and mouse game of police and muggers, many lives are lost and all the family gets a report in the newspaper. Why suddenly during Ramadan and with Eid to follow soon, newspapers have to report that these muggers have become very active? Can't our police "anticipate"....don't they have informers and information? They are creating database....that is technology....where the common sense? Our police and law enforcers always have to wait for a push....and the push is always at the cost of valuable lives. When will we have a strategic precautionary drive and we can claim that Dhaka is a mugging and looting free city? We do not want to hear anymore statistics from police and law enforcers. We agree they have a difficult job to do, we respect their efforts; but we cannot accept statistical interpretation of a law and order situation. Besides, the way they are doing their job is not making life easier.

I think the government should be more serious about protecting civilian lives. They have shown some success in arresting top criminals but their job doesn't stop there. They have not shown any success whatsoever in controlling such crimes in metropolitan cities, neither they have shown any promise. This is not a political government which suffers from local pressures in conducting anti-crime drives. This is an active government and only if they prioritise, they can totally stop such crimes as mugging, looting, hooliganism, organised robbery and murders. Many countries have done it and they have achieved success through the cold turkey policy. If the government and the law enforcers still cannot feel the pain of the families who have lost their children because of such crimes, I am afraid I am not interested to know how many politicians they are arresting and how many cases they are filing against them. I am not interested anymore to read about the ACC and its notices. There is a limit to tolerance.....and I think the government is underestimating civilians in testing their tolerance. For an average civilian the ACC notices and graft cases against politicians make no sense if tomorrow is uncertain in streets!

Anonymous
UK

Wasa & water

Kamol's write-up on WASA water (Sept:26) along with the two vivid pictures depicting the horrifying quality of Wasa water is really beyond words. What is Wasa supplying and getting paid for it too! Has the CTG, while catching all other wrongdoers, allowed Wasa to indiscriminately pollute the water as well as spread diseases to all its customers and get away with it? It is a sad story again of poor governance; more so where it is needed most!

The statement of MODS Zone 6, is only partially true. I keep my underground tank regularly cleaned at three or four months intervals. Add alum twice weekly; yet the amount of slime that piles up is unbelievable. This is the WASA water quality in Gulshan residential area with no slums or dirty areas all over. The idea of leakage of water is a bit off logic. With the Wasa water line at some positive pressure (gauge); and the surrounding

area at practically zero pressure (gauge): how can mud and slime go into Wasa water?

This defies logic and common sense! The real reason most likely is damage of Wasa's deep well filters, and the resulting accumulation of slime and mud in Wasa's overhead

tanks and pipelines. Are Wasa's tube-wells cleaned periodically? Are the wells drawn out and filter nets renewed at regular intervals? These do get damaged with the net surface chocked and the negative suction pressure inside the net wall when pumps are running.

stiff opposition whenever the circumstances warranted. One fine instance could be cited here.

Musharraf told the US to keep its limits within its national interest and not to indulge in anti-Pakistan rhetoric unnecessarily. In September 2006, President Gen. Musharraf warned that the West would be "brought to its knees" without his country's co-operation in the so-called war on terror. "If we were not with you, you won't be able to manage anything," said Musharraf in a BBC Radio 4 interview. He said the Taliban, not al-Qaeda, was now the focus of the struggle against militancy in the region. "The greatest danger today if the Taliban movement gets converted into a people's movement," he warned.

Though the US always gets what it expects of Pakistan in Afghanistan, it has been the habit to routinely accuse Pakistan of slackness in "operations". Musharraf has thus acted very firmly to advance Pakistan's legitimate interests. Now it should be amply clear to the Pakistani leaders who slam Musharraf for what is not his "salt" that Benazir and Sharif are only eagerly waiting for the presidential chair -- not to serve Pakistan but to loot it as quickly as possible.

Musharraf should initiate a firm anti-corruption drive to combat illegal wealth making in Pakistan. Dr. Abdul Ruff Colachal
Delhi

Castro and Guevara

Ernesto Guevara de la Serna commonly known as Che Guevara was born on June 14, 1928 in Argentina and he was known as the Marxist revolutionary and a great political figure. He was also known as the leader of Cuban and internationalist guerrillas. Che Guevara had travelled a lot throughout South America and during that he had seen the miserable condition of the people and he came to the conclusion that these inequalities could only be removed by revolution. After his death Che Guevara became an icon of socialist revolutionary movements.

In Mexico 1956, Che Guevara came in contact with Fidel Castro, another revolutionist and the present president of Cuba. Fidel Alejandro Castro was born on August 13, 1926. Castro became the first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba in 1955. The opposition called Castro a dictator and his supporters treated him as a charismatic liberator. After the failure in the Moncada Barracks, Castro moved to Mexico and started the guerrilla invasion.

From there Castro and Guevara started working with each other.

They were the revolutionists who the world can never forget. They fought against violation of human rights.

S. Chowdhury
Uttara, Dhaka

Without patriots?

It is demoralising to see that the same people of the same political parties are organising themselves in the name of so-called reforms and are trying to reappear in the political scene of Bangladesh.

But how can we trust them? Are they not the people who directly or indirectly participated and supported the previous corrupt governments with two Begums in power in alternate succession? Isn't it like putting the same "vinegar" in a new bottle? And instead of getting better in quality it becomes rotten.

Where are the real men? What are they waiting for? This is the unique occasion that we have after so many years of mismanagement to rise and come forward and work for the country selflessly. Are we to believe that we have no such honest and decent patriots?

N.G. Chaudhury
Luxembourg

Tourism in Bangladesh



My attention was drawn to an op ed article by Mr. Farooque Hasan published in The Daily Star on 9/27/07. He mentioned that Bangladesh received only 200,000 foreign tourists compared to 1 million by Cambodia. In my opinion the actual number of real tourists in Bangladesh in 2006 was far less. Anybody entering Bangladesh on a tourist visa is counted as a tourist. Unfortunately, the vast majority of these so called tourists are actually native born Bangladeshis holding foreign passports and visiting their relatives. Very few of them actually visit a tourist spot or spend money like a tourist when in Bangladesh. The inflated number of tourists only makes the Ministry of Tourism look good which has no economic impact on the country. I visit Bangladesh every two years on a tourist visa and I don't consider myself a tourist in the conventional sense.

The million tourists received by Cambodia do not go there only to see the Angkor Wat. The vast majority of these tourists go to Cambodia for a reason that can't be discussed in a family newspaper. Bangladesh is better off without this type of tourists.

A lot needs to be done to attract real tourists to come to Bangladesh. First and foremost is the image of the country. A country that was crowned as the most corrupt country for five years in a row does not help. Indiscriminate hooliganism and vandalism of public and private property is common in Bangladesh which scares tourists off. Fortunately, the CTG has started to clean up the mess left behind by the looters and plunderers.

Good infrastructure, road network and personal safety are much more important than all the tourist sites combined. Then comes the hard part of selling Bangladesh as a tourist destination. Advertisement in world class Travel Magazines and sleek TV spots can be used to entice tourists to come to Bangladesh. Free tour packages can be donated to Travel Magazine Editors, Tour Organizers, and Travel Agents who will promote Bangladesh. Bangladesh has the largest white sandy beach in the world. Why not build Golf Courses up and down this beach along with top-notch hotels? Japanese golfers fly to Singapore to play golf and fly right back to Japan for less than what it would cost them to play golf in Japan. Bangladesh can provide the same experience for a lot less. For this to happen, the Cox's Bazar airport has to be developed into an international airport with direct flights from Singapore and Dubai. Nobody in their right mind will fly into Dhaka and take a connecting flight to Cox's Bazar. Family oriented tourism does not require western style night life. Most elderly tourists want a safe and clean hotel that will serve good foods.

Eco-tourism in the Sundarbans, Chittagong Hill Tracts and Hymchhari can be another avenue to explore. Again, the main emphasis should be on safety, security and a decent place to sleep and eat. Eco Tourists normally

are not looking for a Five Star Hotel.

Cottages made of renewable material such as bamboo will be attractive to this crowd.

People who run Parjatan probably have never spent a day as a real tourist in a tourist friendly country. What is to be expected from this bunch of bureaucrats? Tourism is a tricky business.

Siraj Haque
Houston, Texas, USA

