

To hit the bull's eye



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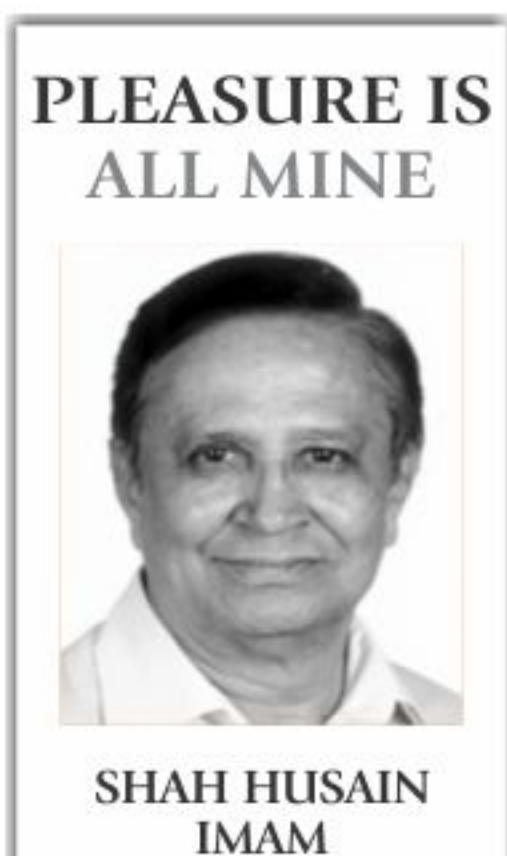
als, iconic figures, professionals, technocrats, experts and cultural personalities. Meritocracy is promised where there is dearth of it across the board. If the BNP's tainted and tarred role between 2001 and 2006 is any measuring criterion then one is looking to a sea change within the fold. Will that be possible?

The AL chief has vigorously launched on an election campaign. She is repeatedly making a plea for a second term to complete her unfinished development agenda. She has asked her party men and officials to publicise all the good work done by her government. But her protagonists must have effective answers to the string of scams attributed to her government. As for the Padma Bridge, we hear of the luxurious transports bought under the project being surreptitiously used by the relatives and favourites of bridge authority officials. Such small infractions, if not nipped in the bud, can snowball into massive corruption.

For Sheikh Hasina to regain some of the lost ground, one strategic move could be to seal some accords with India on the Teesta water sharing, land boundary demarcation and exchange of enclaves that would add 10,000 acres of land to Bangladesh territory. Understandably, the foreign minister and the PM are planning to go to India to have verbal promises of India translated into accords. It won't be easy in the current Indian political scenario of pulls and counter-pulls, but not impossible either.

The bottom line for peace and prosperity though is that the AL and BNP strike a formula for an interim nonpartisan caretaker arrangement to hold the upcoming national elections without ado.

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PLEASURE IS ALL MINE
SHAH HUSAIN IMAM

THREE trends have been watched with concern lately. The first one is the virtual launch of election campaigns by AL and BNP chiefs without having settled their differences over the modalities of the next election. They do not even talk about initiating a dialogue over the CTG issue. In fact, the prospect for a negotiated settlement of the political question has all but vanished awaiting almost an act of God to revive it.

The second phenomenon is an attempted polarisation among the Muslims along theist and atheist lines (agnostics thankfully out of the extremist equations). The overly religious Qawmi Madrasa-based Hefajat-e Islam is trying to rejuvenate itself as a political factor via its retrograde 13-point demand. A silver lining around the cloud is etched by BNP and Awami League, both being on the same page about the unjustified Hefajat's list of demand.

Jamaat-e-Islami, the vanguard of political Islam, with a declining vote bank over the years stands now totally beleaguered. Its top leadership is either in death row or condemned to long sentences in prison. Its repeated *hartal* calls accompanied by rabid terrorism before and during shutdowns have made them way too unpopular beyond repair.

The third trend, now on the wane, consists of attacks on religious sites and temples of the minorities who are thus left with a deep sense of insecurity. Ironically, all

this has happened when Awami League, a party traditionally wedded to non-communalism, has had to take the blame for the untoward incidents. This was clearly the handiwork of saboteurs with a combination of motives including land-grabbing and smearing the image of communal harmony in Bangladesh.

That the likes of Narendra Modi, whose political star is apparently on the rise, did not fiddle with any Hindutva sentiments to start any reprisal in India is a tribute to a change in the complexion of Indo-Bangla relations. Not unsurprisingly though, Amartya Sen, who highly regards Bangladesh for its socio-economic progress, has made it

clear that he doesn't want Modi as Indian prime minister. Thank God, there is no Modi-like leader in Bangladesh.

In the changing mood of politics the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) is behaving as if it is forming the next government. An air of confidence is circulating through party leaders and activists since its victory in five mayoral polls on the trot. The party waxes vociferous in making pledges to various professional groups. It mulls over setting a new trend in politics topped up by introduction of a bicameral legislature. The first House as usual will be made up of hybrid elements dominated by businessmen. The second is envisaged to represent intellectu-

How about the "whether"? Climate change induced uncertainty debate

SANWAR A. SUNNY and JIMMY O. ADEGOKE

WITH the general growth of scientific, industrial and political work across many academic fields, it is hardly surprising that the interrelated issue of depleted resources and climate change, and its possible solutions, have attracted considerable attention around the world in recent years. It is surprising, however, that there is still a significant amount of disagreement on the existence of this global issue, and our collective willingness to attempt to find an acceptable solution.

As a result, there is no universal global, domestic, and regional, industry, or business-level agreement on the degree, cause, and severity of climate change. Regional industries are all highly impacted by climatological change or are subject to likely regulatory and/or policy change, and have to maintain growth simultaneously. Companies may incur costs to comply with the regulation of greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate climate change. Policy makers and regulators make value judgments on how to react to this data in designing the policies and regulations that affect aggregate behaviour and responses. Sectoral and industry leaders, therefore, have to take information from both the climatologists and the policy makers and turn it into corporate practice.

The relationship between these three groups, scientists, businessmen and policymakers, is symbiotic -- there is a necessary give and take of information and data to improve the process of policy making and implementation. This exchange will lead to improved understanding of all facets of decision-making processes for all three groups of climate change constituents. Further research should also aim to bring academic scholars, policy makers, and industry leaders to discuss the state of climate policy, advance the policy-making agendas at the state and regional levels, and design appropriate responses at the industry and individual company levels.

To date, however, evidence and climate change data have been globally based while the impacts of climate variability and mitigation strategies are always local in nature. The framework for vulnerability assessments due to global climate change should therefore be place-based, and have a bottom-up perspective, in contrast to the Global Climate Model (GCM)-focus which is a top-down approach from a global perspective. Place based research can now examine the premise of vulnerabilities and opportunities in the municipal area, and adopt a sector by sector approach that includes studying the pros and cons of a local food supply, potential evolution of transportation patterns, health impacts, water impacts, energy impacts, potential evolution of land use



The ultimate goal is to identify, from the perspectives of the citizen stakeholders and local business owners and managers, the short and longer-term mitigation potentials such as a more locally-self-sufficient and resilient delivery of goods and services, development of mass transportation options, and the evolution of urban and suburban settlement patterns.

patterns, impacts on the public sector, and systemic vulnerabilities in relation to past climate variability and future anticipated shifts in the climate regime.

With this bottom-up perspective, the distribution of regional impacts can be assessed, and objectively confirmed, as a more accurate assessment of the local impacts. It should then become possible to gain policy-relevant insights to the fundamental question of seeking ways to mitigate and/or adapt to the threats to these local resources. This is a more societally beneficial approach than seeking to downscale to the local region from a global climate model. Climate scientists are increasingly using a variety of diagnostic and climate modeling systems to study climate patterns and processes across a range of spatial and temporal scales. Solutions to human-caused acceleration of climate changes must therefore be locally based -- driven by local organisations and individuals.

A cardinal objective of future work should be to refine our knowledge about risk and uncertainty so that decision makers can better understand the immediate and local consequences of climate variability and policy adaptations. Potential stressors can be considered in the proposed assessment framework which may include population growth, increasingly imbalanced wealth distribution, skyrocketing oil cost and

reduced availability, continued sprawl and disintegration of community, cataclysmic weather events producing large population displacements, and economic collapse. The ultimate goal is to identify, from the perspectives of the citizen stakeholders and local business owners and managers, the short and longer-term mitigation potentials such as a more locally-self-sufficient and resilient delivery of goods and services, development of mass transportation options, and the evolution of urban and suburban settlement patterns.

A broad, far-reaching, and multi-faceted outreach is needed to help explain the condition and the urgency of taking action. Additionally, a narrative of scenario specific risks, perceived opportunities, cost of living imperatives and public policy implications shaped by environmental justice and climate impact mitigation strategies is also needed. The risks and strategies inherent in each scenario should be assessed across sectors with scenarios suggested as likely potentials relative to regional weather variability, projection of societal reactions to climate related disruption and local momentum to address this issue.

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Bangladeshi? Shoot first!

HUMOROUSLY YOURS



NAVEED MAHBUB

ALL eyes are glued to the courtroom, be it following the George Zimmerman or the War Crimes trials. Every other news falls below the radar. Have a confession to make? Now is the time. It will surely go unnoticed.

But here's a piece of news that must be pulled out of the cracks. BSF compensates Beauty Khatun with Rs.5 lacs three years after her husband is killed by them. Turning over a new leaf? Not so fast. A few days later, BSF picks up three Bangladeshi cattle traders.

What really makes BSF tick? BSF, the 'Border Shooting Forces'? Or is it 'Bangladeshi? Shoot First!' Maybe it's BSE, 'The Guards (Darwans) of the Border' -- following Darwan's Theory of Persecution? Or perhaps BSE, 'Securing Peace at the Border' (actual results may vary).

Is it a sporting entity striving to maintain a strong shooting average? Or is it a profit maximising business with targets (no pun intended) to meet and projections to pursue? "In the fourth quarter, BSF is expected to be bullish on beating analyst expectations on its kill rate."

Or is it plain wrath for losing cows to Bangladesh? Perhaps BSF is under the notion that the Indian ice cream industry is taking a hit as Bangladesh milks Indian cows and directly gets ice cream (chocolate ice cream from the brown cows) -- especially evident during the past frigid January. What follows is a surge in BSF shootings.

The statistics indicate that it is perhaps the Bovine Theory that drives the BSF. My fellow comedian Shammi Huda proposes a win-win solution -- BSF stops shooting cattle traders. There's a tsunami of cows entering Bangladesh. The carnivores here eat all the beef that most in India would not have eaten anyway. Bangladeshis clog their arteries. Then go to India for medical treatment. Boost the Indian economy.

Note, no hilsa smugglers are shot at. Who wants to shoot down the prospect of getting cheap, fresh (sorry, cannot guarantee formalin free) 'eellesh'?

But the powers-that-be have taken heed. In 2011, the Indian home minister said: "The message [to not shoot] has gone down to the last jawan."

All at BSF hear this loud and clear. The only problem -- the 'Last Jawan' is deaf.

So, the BSF continues to maintain a positive attitude about its destructive habits.

Remember when BSF tortures a Bangladeshi for not having a mobile phone and Rs.1,000 when demanded? That raised hopes -- traveling to India would simply mean taking a mobile phone, Rs.1,000 and just showing up at any BSF check post. Surely an easier alternative to waiting for three weeks to get an appointment at the Indian Consulate in Dhaka for a visa.

But BSF commanders claim that complaints are drastically down. That's part of the new programme called 'There's No Use Complaining.'

Let's be fair. It's not that BSF has never helped Bangladesh. Cyclone Mahasen first aims for Chennai then veers off towards West Bengal, fearing Rajinikanth. The BSF field commander barks: "Mahasen is coming!" The 'Last Jawan' hears "Mohsen is coming" and starts firing. A weak Mahasen then makes a benign landfall in Bangladesh. Thank you.

Here's a PR suggestion. How about a BSF Facebook page? Maybe not a good idea. Facebook still has no 'Dislike' button. Till Facebook gets a facelift, BSF will continue to see Bangladesh as a Corridor -- whether it be Teen Bigha or Teen Koti Bigha.

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CROSSWORD clues and solutions. Includes 'ACROSS' and 'DOWN' sections with numbered clues and their corresponding answers.

CRYPTOQUIP puzzle. A grid of letters with a key provided below. Includes 'Yesterday's Cryptoquip' and 'Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals D'.

BEETLE BAILY comic strip. A cartoon by Mort Walker featuring Beetle Baily and other characters in military uniforms. Includes dialogue bubbles and a signature 'GREG + MORT WALKER'.

HENRY comic strip. A cartoon by Don Trachte featuring Henry and other characters. Includes dialogue bubbles and a signature '©2011 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.'

QUOTABLE Quotes section. Features a quote by Nelson Mandela: "If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner."