chintito

The World Cup Fever is not Catching

(Or am I getting old?)

CHINTITO

It is now 20 years since this column began. That is old times for sure!

We have covered five FIFA World Cups whence Brazil, France, Brazil again, Italy, and Spain emerged champions. Need I to say the previous ones had more heat and fervour? I think Shakira's "La-La-La" opening ceremony anthem was Lo-Lo-Lo and brought down the spirit as much as the boring and predictable proceedings by masked and overdressed humans as mannequins. Such ceremonies have reached a routine that you could pass any opening song and dance and mass display as that of any world cup of any sport, Olympics, summer and winter, Asian Games, Euro championships... Creativity has lost to commercialisation. Some Facebook-ers were of the opinions that we, yes as Bangladeshis, did a better job during the cricket world cup in Dhaka, and I agree. At Arena de Sao Paulo this12 June evening, the humanness of the players was not projected.

Over the past two decades, now that sounds more grandiose, this column has met our readers on nearly seven thousand Fridays, unless some of you got to see *The Star* on a Saturday or later. The pain was more for my editor, as she had to go through every line, or that is what I believe she has been doing other than offering me a hot cup of beverage during my rare but most pleasurable visits to her cluttered desk. Despite the wide grin, I always got the impression I was unwanted distraction, as she had to churn out a an magazine in the following few hours, and so I usually left quickly after draining my cup dry. She got the impression I was busy. Good.

No fault of theirs, but the Brazil match times are so outrageous that one gets the feeling of being on night duty. Some people actually get up to see the 4am match, meaning they found the 10 or 2am one less appealing. Some doze off during the 2 am one and get up at 10 the next morning; match miss, report sick. Unarmed petty thieves operating in the dark and at dawn are not at all happy as their favourites Brazil and Argentina are under-performing; total loss.

During such groggy existence, many children reminded us how every father is the best-est in the world. I am in complete sync with that. But, howsoever we look at the situation, there are basically three types of children – those who believe every day is Father's Day whether they mention it or not, and those who miss their papas every day but mention it only on Father's Day because they live separately owing to their marriage (not necessarily only of the children) or because they live in the same house but are both too busy, and the third group who miss and lament not having spent enough time with them now that they are no more, the fathers.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Obviously the first group of children are the most blessed. The middle group is the most unfortunate. As for the third group, the fathers and children are separated for good, till they meet again in their heavenly abode. But, there is a lesson in it for the second group. Why wait for a particular Day? You can call him up, Skype, Whats App, Twit, go over and see him every week if not every other day even if you are 2-3 hours away, every day if you live in the same building. But many of us wait too long to meet until he is no more. Then they join the third group.

The time to meet your dad (and mom) is now, and not wait for a man-made date to hug him. He (or she) needs no card from you. Your being is their constant greetings card from the Lord Himself. He is blessed because of you. Be blessed because of him.

Talking about the "days"invented by business people so that we may spend money to exchange cards and mobile wishes, buy cakes and ice creams,