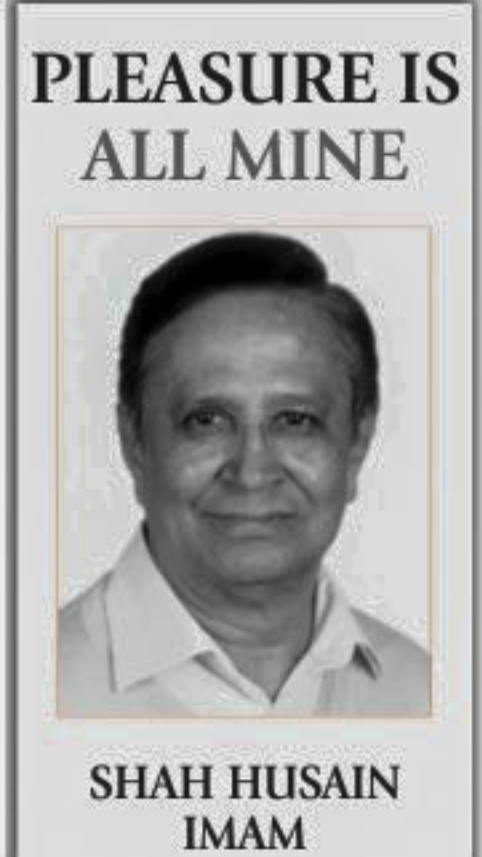


Reinvent Bangladesh on age-old wisdom



SHAH HUSAIN IMAM

PLEASURE IS ALL MINE

WAR-time British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill 'mobilised the English language and sent it into battle', so said American journalist Ed Murrow. Churchill in a major address to the House of Commons

quoted Alexander the Great as saying, "Why the Asians were slaves? It is because they have not learnt to say 'no'."

Adding, Churchill said, 'I don't want that epitaph for Britain.' He was inspiring the Britons to stand up to the tyrannical Hitlerite blitzkrieg on London at an extremely crucial phase of World War II. Although Alexander's remark was demeaning to Asia, going back to around 300 B.C when the native rulers were quarrelsome, the Asians were to give a much better account of themselves as history bore out subsequently.

But politicians in Bangladesh have not just learnt to say 'no' but also chant it with religious regularity as though singing a hymn under the magnetic mentoring of some superior being. No distinction between major and minor issues or right and wrong, just react

negatively to your opponent's viewpoint even if it merits consideration.

English poet Rudyard Kipling has words of wisdom for us. Said he, "To treat a disaster as a triumph is akin to having achieved a triumph itself, whilst a triumph may become a disaster if it is achieved through morally questionable means, or should it give rise to arrogance." So he implores, "If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster and treat those two imposters just the same you will never have to experience the misfortune of disappointment again." He successfully demonstrates that 'the outcomes of situations are entirely dependent on their interpretations.'

Kipling's words had been used by Churchill in the context of wartime Britain. But how true they ring about Bangladesh! They find an instant resonance in our current political situation, gems popping out from a less hoary past than in the case of Alexander the Great.

That said, we turn to the Positive Experience Index prepared by US-based research firm Gallup in 2014 termed Bangladesh as the third most depressing country in the world. Emotions of nationals belonging to 143 countries were measured to reach such a conclusion for Bangladesh. The questions had to do with cataloguing the feel good factors, such as "Did you feel well-rested? Did you feel respected all day? Did you smile or laugh a lot?"

Compared with 19th position from the bottom in 2013 report, we have dropped off to the third most

depressing country of the world in a matter of a year. Given the burning and blood-spilling orgies that accompanied unrelenting blockade and hartal, giving a licence to kill, you have the horror-stricken faces and tearful grieving families zooming in on you. How can they feel 'rested', far less 'respected' or be cheerful in such dire circumstances?

But the Happy Planet Index (HPI) 2012 compiled by New Economics Foundation (NEF) placed Bangladesh

soared the elasticity of satiety has shrunk.

There may be questions about the probing effectiveness of the criteria and thrust areas of evaluation of the relative positions of the countries surveyed, even perhaps room for perfection. All the same, such rankings alert a country to the variability of its status from time to time thereby helping it to flesh out on the bones wherever required.

One final point. We work ourselves into desperate situations and then either band-aid a wound or clutch at straws like

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at 11th in the overall prosperity ranking among 151 countries. HPI took into account life expectancy, experienced well-being and ecological footprint (per capita) of the countries surveyed.

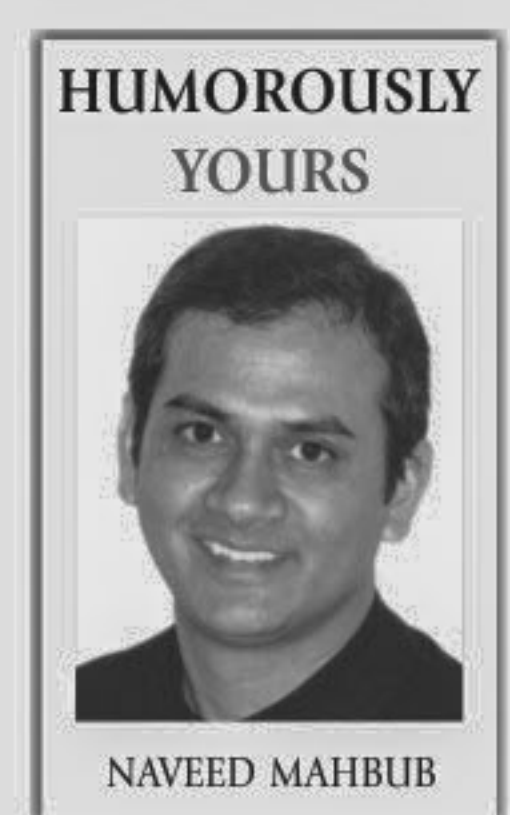
In two years, our happiness ranking has dropped quite drastically to the third from the bottom. But at one point in time Bangladesh was regarded as the most happy country because of people's simple expectations from life.

While the range of aspiration has

Khaleda and Hasina making Eid wishes to each other or Hasina offering condolences at Koko's death or indeed the potential olive branch sneaking out of the forthcoming DCC polls. Some showmanship or one-upmanship would be attempted without making any serious bid to build confidence into the political atmosphere, a fundamental prerequisite for untying the longstanding Gordian knot.

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Anatomy of Rohit Sharma



NAVEED MAHBUB

HUMOROUSLY YOURS

NO Teesta, no Tipaimukh, no Farakka, No Man's Land and now, no ball... Add the catch-out of Mahmudullah right at the boundary, and you have a perfect agenda for the Bangladesh-India boundary talks.

Cricket IS a game of luck - depends on the wicket, bowling, batting, the waist line and umpiring, with its occasional cricket equivalent of

Diego Maradona's 'Hand of God'.

Thank goodness hospitals don't make decisions the way the no ball call is made during the Bangladesh-India quarter final, otherwise a hip replacement can end up with a knee replacement or Elvis Presley's knee swinging moves can be interpreted as belly dancing...

Anyway, those few inches may still have the only Pakistani umpire left in the IPL.

Ok, my narrative as a subjective Tigers fan and a mere mortal are below the waist - just as were the ball and the decision of the umpires, the latter, also mere mortals. And Mr President of the ICC, calm down - you can do more for the game than being outside of what you call the Indian Cricket Council.

The CEO of ICC refutes: "In the spirit of the game, a 50-50 call goes in favor of the umpires." Agree, IF it is a 50-50 call. But what has been seen cannot be unseen...

The day begins perfectly with two Tagore written anthems playing one after the other at the MCG. Had England not colonized Australia, the latter would have looked like that day's MCG - all brown. The stands - Bangladeshis on one side, Indians on the other, with no need for the BSF in the middle.

The game starts. Harsha Bhogle shows genuine respect and enthusiasm at the Tigers' roars, though I'm sure that's like smiling during the worst constipation.

And then, the roar is reduced to a meek *meeow* with the felines having lost the privilege to a review against a no ball. Below the waist seems to spell disaster for Rubel, on or off the field. It is a waste, or rather, a waist of a wicket...Rohit Sharma gets his lifeline from *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* (yeah, I wonder who) after which he is on MSG at the MCG. India crosses 300 on Bangladesh's 300th ODI.

To win, the Tigers need a rifle, to be precise, a three-naught-three. But the EQ has already been frazzled.

An umpire is a human, standing there for hours, devoid of emotions or bias. At a fateful moment of the game, he may sneeze, shoot a furtive glance at the stands, have a bug in the eye or be a victim of air drops from seagulls. It's ok. That is why technology is there to help him remain a human. Besides, we're not talking about putting an LED belt or a camera on the batsman's waist, or a ball leaving tracers for a visible trajectory, or even a camera on the ball. We simply ask that a review be migrated from being a privilege to a right, independent of the outcome of the previous one.

Hey, the ICC can even make a few extra bucks by charging the appealing team premium dollars for each appeal for a review. After all, appealing at the appellate court is not free. This is really Howzat-2.0. Come on guys, we're already 14 years beyond 2001: *A Space Odyssey*...

Too radical? Ok, then why not use the sundial for timing, Morse Code for scoring, pigeons for reporting or have test match world championships resulting in everyone becoming the champion by way of draws. Oh, and by the time the tournament is over, it's time for the next world cup.

Cricket takes its own time that makes the boiling frog syndrome seem like a Ferrari. There is many a heart break before the third umpire is introduced (and we still get bad calls), many a manhood destroyed before the guard is introduced (should be called the guard of honor) and then another 100 years pass before the helmet is introduced, thus showing where the head stands in the food chain after the crotch (and we still have the Phillip Hughes tragedy).

For now, cricket is as is, with fate choosing a billion over 160 million fans (same goes with dollars and sense) to dole out happiness. That's fine - Bangladesh will win the World Cup...in installments.

The writer is an engineer & CEO turned comedian (by choice), the host of NTV's *The Naveed Mahbub Show* and the founder of *Naveed's Comedy Club*. E-mail: naveed@naveedmahbub.com



FREEDOM IN THE OFFING

Let me tell it once again

Here we publish an excerpt from Belal Muhammad's article on Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra. He was the key figure behind setting up the radio centre that was the first-ever organised war effort in the Liberation struggle.



Belal Muhammad (1936-2013)

BELAL MUHAMMAD

WHAT I am telling now is literally an eye-witness account -- one that I have kept telling and retelling since 1972. (...) My topic is the *Swadhin Bangla (Biplabi) Betar Kendra* [Free Bengal (Revolutionary) Radio Station], whose auspicious commencement was on March 26, 1971 at 7:40pm in Kalurghat (Chittagong) Broadcasting Center with the aid of 10 KW medium wave transmitter. Indeed in the wee hours of the great Liberation War, this radio broadcast was the first-ever organised war effort. The principal organisation of the war -- the *Mukti Bahini* [Liberation Army] -- was not formed yet, rather it was from the Free Bengal (Revolutionary) Radio Station that formation of the Liberation Army was first urged. The broadcasting operations were initiated, of course, by none other than us -- the professional radio officials with a strong sense of national identity. In addition, the politicians and the military officers came forth with necessary support and protection respectively for the broadcasting centre. The radio officials were -- government employees as they were -- non-political individuals. (...) Even Dr. Muhammad Shafi and Begum Mushtari Shafi -- the residents of Mushtari Lodge which was the birthplace of the Free Bengal Radio Station -- were also not political party activists.

However, at that point of time, all of us joined in a consensus under the auspices of a single national leadership. That leadership was of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. (...) At the dawn of March 26, announcements were made through mikes across the main streets of the Chittagong city: "Fellow brothers, our great leader, the apple of the eye of Bengal Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has declared the independence of Bangladesh. Victory to Bengal!"

At noon, a small leaflet came to my hand, carrying a piece of text in the flowing handwriting of Dr. Anwar Ali and printed in Gestetner Machine: the official

declaration of independence of Bangladesh in the words of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. At that time, word spread in Chittagong which went like this: at midnight all of a sudden the Pakistani troops assailed the Rajarbagh Police Line and various other important areas of the metropolis. Many people were killed and wounded. At that point Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had declared the independence. The Awami League leaders of Chittagong received Bangabandhu's declaration by wireless transmission, and the leaflet was the Bengali translation of that message.

On March 26, it was this message which was broadcast from the Free Bengal Radio Station read out in our different voices again and again. Due to the wartime confidentiality requirements the names of the announcers were not mentioned. In that session, local Awami League leader M.A. Hannan read out a written announcement in light of Bangabandhu's declaration. Senior poet Abdus Salam also delivered a speech. The names of these two individuals were also not announced. It goes without saying that at such a moment putting together a cue sheet for programmes was out of question.

It may be mentioned that naming the station as Free Bengal Radio Station was my doing. At the suggestion of Abul Kashem Sandwip, I added 'revolutionary'

to the name. Later, at the order of Major Zia on March 28, the word 'revolutionary' had to be dropped. I went to Patiya on March 27 and brought Zia along with his 150 soldiers. They were deployed for round-the-clock guarding of the Kalurghat broadcasting centre. I actually asked EPR Captain Rafiqul Islam -- who was then staying in the Railway Building hills -- for security of the radio station at noon of March 26. He gave me promises but subsequently took no steps for such an arrangement. M.A. Hannan of Awami League did not pay much attention to this matter either. After March 26, he did not set foot even once in Kalurghat till March 30 when it was aerielly bombed -- nor did any other political leader, for that matter, show up in Kalurghat. Only two young men Mr. Sekandar Hayat Khan and Harunur Rashid Khan -- both from Mohara -- kept at our side all through the hauling of the 1 KW transmitter to the truck on March 31, moving to Patiya up till then, on April 3, we -- 10 radio activists -- moved to the Ramgarh border.

In any case, on the midnight following the day of March 26, Taher Sobhan of Chandanpura informed me over telephone about some Major (name not known yet) staying in Patiya. When I reached Patiya Thana on a transport rented by Mahmud Hossain, I came to know that the name of the Major was Ziaur Rahman. When I made my request to him, he immediately had his accompanying troops set out on three lorries to Kalurghat, and in no time himself along with some Captains set out for Kalurghat. (...)

On the evening session of March 27, the text of the declaration of independence of Bangabandhu, which we got in leaflets, was broadcast in the voices of different radio personnel. A new voice was Kazi Habibuddin Ahmed Moni. I told Major Zia: "You are the only 'Major' here, all the rest of us are 'minors'. Would you broadcast something in your own voice?"

Major Zia replied in a serious tone: "Well but could you suggest what I should say!" With an instant decision based on his discussion with me, the

following text of the declaration (although recalling from memory may make slightest changes in wording) was prepared:

"I, Major Zia on behalf of our great national leader Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman do hereby declare independence of Bangladesh. Punjabis are using so and so... arms and ammunitions. We will take not more than two or three days to crush them... victory is ours. Khuda Hafez, Joi Bangla."

It was announced twice beforehand that in a few minutes Major Zia would deliver an important speech. Then Major Zia read out the speech and immediately afterwards my instant Bengali translation was read out by Abdullah-Al-Faruque. Right before leaving office and entering the studio, I had the translation reviewed by Professor Momtazuddin Ahmed.

In the brief news bulletin on March 27, Abul Kashem Sandwip mentioned the important speech by Major Zia on behalf of the great leader Bangabandhu. Indeed, at that moment the speech by Major Zia on behalf of Bangabandhu was much more timely and effective than the declaration of independence in Bangabandhu's words read out by anonymous announcers. The people -- cornered and surrounded by the occupying army -- were reassured listening to the voice of a Bengali Major that Bangabandhu, viz. the Bengalis have got their own military force. Three decades after the incident, I still congratulate myself as the civilian who arranged for the radio declaration of Major Zia. On May 28 and 29, Major Zia broadcast two speeches in English urging the people to join the Liberation War and affirming his full allegiance to the leadership of Bangabandhu. The latter speech was recorded in a cassette recorder by Osman Ghani, an inhabitant of Chandgaon. In 1972, he supplied a copy of the cassette via our revolutionary colleague Aminur Rahman, and it is now preserved in the Transmission Service of Bangladesh Betar.

Translated by: M. Habib. He is a researcher. Source: *Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra'r Itihas*, Edited by Dr. Zahid Hussain, Published by Ittadi Grantho Prokashoni in December 2005.

QUOTABLE Quote

Wisdom is knowing what to do next; virtue is doing it.

David Star Jordan

CROSSWORD by Thomas Joseph

ACROSS

- Bother
- Lose traction
- Drop in
- Needle sources
- Laughable
- Namely, in Latin
- Yard event
- Through
- Tavern quaff
- Book genre
- Inferior
- Mine Yield
- Nonsense
- High point
- Cellist Pablo
- Prying tool
- Last letter
- Massage
- Crimson Tide's Home
- Blockhead
- Series Test
- Search deeply
- Perfect places
- Have a novel experience?
- Afternoon socials

DOWN

- Closing number
- Customs
- Confession list
- Clambake clam
- Cloak-and-dagger types
- Child
- Cry of indignation
- Craving
- Crucial
- Collar inserts
- Low digits
- Rhapsodic
- Fort feature
- Bitter
- Dangling
- Refined art
- Honeysuckle's cousin
- Bar stock
- Plane count
- Restrained
- Await
- Some gametes

CRYPTOQUOTE

QLBK YIUK PIRKD JBGKQYC, MCQSIBQ XHVVKLD IL ZY HDSGVA YGASQD. GZ CIB SKHL XKYYD, AKQ CIBL KHLD PSKPFKO.

-- KLGPS DKAHY

YESTERDAY'S CRYPTOQUOTE:

LOVE UNLOCKS DOORS AND OPENS WINDOWS THAT WEREN'T EVEN THERE BEFORE. -- MIGNON MCLAUGHLIN

Yesterday's answer

ECON CABBS
MOTEL ACRES
BUTTE PHILO
EGO GREETER
DAMAGES ICE
RATED SSTS
NOD OOH
STEM TUNER
MOM GETSMAD
APPAREL PIE
SHINE ASIDE
HARTE WIRED
TEEN XERS

A XYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker

WHICH WAY IS THE WIND BLOWING?

TOSS SOME GRASS IN THE AIR

I MEANT JUST A FEW BLADES WILL DO!!

HENRY by Don Trachte

Comic strip panels showing a boy with a dog and a wheel.