

Cricket's marketing apparatus

Rebranding a firebrand

NAJMUN NOOR

ONE are the days of cricketers donning flannels or sipping light liquor in tiresome evenings. Convention, tradition and do-good gestures now hastily make way for limitless gusto and time-released enthusiasm.

Administrations bicker about change yet cricketers quickly adapt to it. There is no new proverb that replaces the old one: live and let live. There is a new order, though... of commercialisation and rebranding of what appeared to be a dying sport. But there are no arcane, hush-hush insinuations, either. Either way, cricket will never be the same again.

Given the twists and turns, everything has to be out in the open. Commercialisation of cricket assumed newer dimensions during the World Cup. Fans, administrators, players, umpires, business surroundings tailored and customised their roles per new needs. If discretion is the better part of valour, cricket, as the vehicle that carries the modern day baton, just became its latest mismatch.

In hindsight, though, it also makes pure economic and business sense. And it's not only about the banality and excessive boredom in day-long matches with an expensive lunch, a tea of sorts and two drink sessions in between. Adding woe to misery, it's not always the result, either, that mattered most, least of all for instant gratification.

Quite like trappings of made-for-TV soccer and American football, basketball tournaments or wrestling, cricket's rebranding is a new entrant in the amphitheatre. Stadiums and HD screens both feature multicoloured gladiators, nail biting finishes, build-ups leading to the game, cheerleaders extolling the spice, and a badmouthing frenzy afterwards. Sure enough, euphoria surrounding



the game is made to last. Cricket is only its product and by-product at the same time.

The final product is the output of the interplay of economic forces. Surprised? Don't be. Take, for instance, the unsuitability of Australian cricket pitches that would NOT be fair game for all participating teams. Conditions ideal only for the home team(s) was not practical proposition. But whose might is it that calls the shots? "Acquiesce", says the big bad (and brown?) wolf from the half continent afar... or risk the tournament not breaking even. And acquiesce they did.

The hype, hysteria, histrionics, sensationalism that is the key to the perpetual razzmatazz is all factored in ---and not without reason. Either break tradition or don't break even. It's not only emotions and enthusiasm that weigh in. The fanfare,

euphoria, the make believe ability to shape the destiny of the teams or even a near perverted glee blown out of proportion is part and parcel of the business apparatus.

Regulatory bodies have allowed the marketing blitz to overtake the gentle nature of the game by storm. Newer roles by men of both action and auction also partake in negotiations to call the shots more off the field than on it.

So what if betting is a punishable offence. All else is fair game. A plethora of greenback earning turnover ploys are still left to be employed. The media loves cricket and cricketers and the advertising, marketing and publicity machinery thrive on them.

Clubs look forward to gala repeat events as do cities, nations, and international schedules that

are aligned to fast track business. Newer, shorter versions of cricket may be decried as the overly innovative approach. But, it's business impetus that rings the register.

If India wields craftily its economic standing and business, Bangladesh also has a model that comes strong with new terrain: *fait accompli* is its name and it makes cherry picking superfluous. Joining in the bandwagon looks to be the natural, correction, obvious choice. Take it with a pinch of salt if you have to, but damned if you do, damned if you don't.

Amidst the hullabaloo of drop-in pitches or an imbroglia fast-tracked by substandard umpiring or even painting the administrator Srinivasan as demon's zenith, or fall guy Kamal a matinee, thumbs up to Bangladesh for playing out both gambit and end game remarkably well.

How so? Like India, our economic growth resonates enough to draw parallels. The product and mass appeal is on an even keel and we're beginning to replicate both personality and product marketing in cricket with fervour. A Nobel Laureate from India gives us high marks on the gender platform. Women's team, please note. This is another metaphor for Bangladesh to rejoice and check the box in.

Bangladesh has what it takes to push the marketing and business approach to enviable lengths. Given that 2021 is the year we might reach the milestone as Middle Income Nation, could we also be close to achieving greatness in a sport? If business is robust, couldn't our exuberance on the field be thicker than dogma?

Hey, you never know! We may not be another Big Bad (Brown?) Wolf. But we're no little Red Riding Hood either.

The writer is an airline marketing executive.

Bangladesh has what it takes to push the marketing and business approach to enviable lengths. Given that 2021 is the year we might reach the milestone as Middle Income Nation, could we also be close to achieving greatness in a sport?

Buy one get one free

ANAM A CHOUDHURY

HILLARY Rodham Clinton entered the presidential race saying that everyday Americans need a champion and she wants to be that champion. She then outlined an actual vision of her candidacy. If successful, she would become the first female nominee from either party, with a serious chance to become the first woman to be elected

have found it rather impossible to do what Hillary Clinton is trying to do - succeed a President from the political party that has hold the White House for eight long years.

Some Republican candidates are already arguing that a Hillary Clinton victory would mean a third Obama term. Her challenge will be to distance herself from Obama enough to represent change but not too far that it will alienate black and liberal voters.

available in the White House for Hilary Clinton as a Ready Reckoner. As a two term senator from New York, her eight years as First Lady, an active participant during her husband's tenure at the White House and also as President Obama's Secretary of State in his first term, Clinton has added wide-ranging experience to her portfolio.

Beijing is now ready to use its wealth and strength to try to fundamentally alter the balance of power in Asia. It was Napoleon Bonaparte who prophesied that, "When China awakes she will shake the world." Many political analysts, on both sides of the Pacific puzzle anew over the scale and intent of Beijing's global ambition. China is trying to redraw the map with a goal of replacing the U.S. in the maritime East Asia. On the other hand, the relations between Benjamin Netanyahu's government and Obama's administration are quite cold. The Middle East is thus sitting on a political time bomb. The United States of America needs a safe pair of hands to deal with such situations.

At this point in time it appears that the Democratic Party lacks compelling alternatives. Hilary Clinton is the only credible option and she is ready to run. Question is, are the voters ready for her? Hilary Clinton's campaign message is based on the values and priorities of the middle class. Her appeal stands in part from her ability to articulate the concerns and aspirations of the working people of the United States. Moreover, when you can get two experienced, strong leaders at the White House, there's little reason to miss such an opportunity!

The writer is a former Investment Banker and contributor of *The Daily Star*.

At this point in time it appears that the Democratic Party lacks compelling alternatives. Hilary Clinton is the only credible option and she is ready to run. Question is, are the voters ready for her?

president of the United States of America.

Generally after two terms under one party, the nation elects the other party. Thus in theory it can be assumed that it's Republicans' turn in 2016. It is difficult for any political party to hang on to the White House for 12 years, it is a long road. A political party won three straight elections only once. It happened in 1988, the year Republican nominee, Vice President George H. W. Bush, won and replaced Roland Reagan. Otherwise, a string of candidates

Republicans are hungry to get back into White House. They have many bright, energetic and accomplished candidates and they believe their country needs a leader who understands the future and has an agenda for that future. Most of the Republican candidates are relatively young such as Ted Cruz, Texas Senator, 41, Rand Paul, Kentucky Senator, 52 and Marco Rubio, Florida Senator, 43. However, none of them can match Hilary Clinton's political acumen and in-depth experience. Moreover, former president Bill Clinton would always be

A Woman's Musings on Sexual Assault

IBTESSAM KHAN

I quietly walked into the room just as a popular Bengali talk show highlighted Facebook comments on the latest incident of sexual assault on the Bengali New Year. My ears burned as I heard accusations hurled at women for bringing the assault upon themselves; the victims were labeled as immodest as they had not been governed with a heavy hand at home. Simultaneously, in a twisted bid for justice, commentators outraged by the attack suggested that the female family members of the perpetrators should undergo the same abuse.

The Pahela Baishakh incident is not an isolated event. While I do not intend to belittle the gravity of what has occurred, it is not uncommon to find similar stories of sexual assault neatly tucked away in dull columns across various newspapers. The victims in those news reports also deserve to make national headlines. After all, we cannot argue that one woman's sense of dignity is worth less than that of another woman. In Bangladesh, however, the term "dignity" will possibly take a backseat to "family honour"; women—particularly unmarried virgins-- are seen as "pure" and often toe the line to ensure that they bring no shame upon their families.

Given the nature of this episode, on a national level, there will be renewed questions about a woman's place in Bangladeshi society. In personal spheres, however, the victims will be tied to the stigma of becoming "impure" and having brought shame upon their families rather than having their personal rights violated. To me, this view

was reinforced when a Facebook commentator bizarrely compared women to honey. Like honey, women should not be left "out in the open" as it will attract unwanted attention; if they are violated or "tasted", they will become "spoiled".

I cannot help but wonder at the various sentiments expressed by insensitive commentators. On one hand, I cannot lightly waive off the unforgiving attitude expressed towards the assaulted women. I question what a ten-year-old child or any of the other woman could have done to deserve such trauma. Unfortunately, it is not limited to the mindset of a few anonymous individuals who lashed out on the Internet. More importantly, I cannot lay the blame only on the men's shoulders. Sadly, women also point fingers at their female companions and are harsh critics in the aftermath of such events. On the other hand, I cannot tolerate counsels to subject the criminals' female relatives to the same abuse. I am horrified to think that people feel justified in using a woman's sense of self-respect as a tool to primarily hurt others.

No woman would want to find herself trapped in such a catch-22 situation. Following this incident, I sincerely hope that we do not carry on with business as usual and allow the hue and cry over sexual assault to settle down. More importantly, let us refrain from turning women into the scapegoat on all such occasions. Instead of associating sexual assault simply with the shame brought upon women and their families, let us actively reframe the issue as a severe violation of women's personal rights.

The writer is a contributor of *The Daily Star*.

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker
COME ON, SARGE! GIVE ME A PASS!
I'LL DO ANYTHING FOR A PASS!
ANYTHING?
SURE, AS LONG AS IT CAN BE PUT OFF INDEFINITELY.
GREG+MORT WALKER

HENRY by Don Trachte
I CHALLENGE BUTCH TO A FIST FIGHT!
I CHALLENGE BUTCH TO A FIST FIGHT SIGNED HERMAN

QUOTABLE Quote
After all is said and done, a lot more will have been said than done.
Author unknown

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Jose's home
- 5 Car part
- 9 Glorify
- 11 Bookplate name
- 13 Casual eatery
- 14 Tick off
- 15 Hobbit helper
- 16 Improved
- 18 Kid's racer
- 20 Onassis nickname
- 21 Spring sign
- 22 Not natural, in a way
- 23 German article
- 24 Aunt, in Acapulco
- 25 Ship pole
- 27 Ship poles

DOWN

- 1 Gives over
- 2 Underarm
- 3 Norman Lear sitcom
- 4 Brewpub product
- 5 Drug addict
- 6 Luke Wilson's brother
- 7 Norman Lear sitcom
- 8 Historic rider
- 10 Shipping inquiry
- 12 Made over
- 17 Graduate degs.
- 19 Stratrum
- 22 Treat rudely, in slang
- 24 Built for two
- 25 Rough guesses
- 26 Party target
- 27 Avril follower
- 28 Nova-
- 30 Valentine's gift
- 31 Aptitude
- 33 Monthly bill
- 37 Bigwig, for short

Yesterday's answer

CAST JAPAN
EDUCES OVINE
HULAS NOLTE
AIR DOGWOOD
POPLAR TIE
RUDE AIDE
GENE DANA
ALEX LINDEN
SEQUOIA OLE
LAURA CAPOS
ISAAK SLEYES
TELLS AYES

শেল্টেক্ বৈশাখী অফার ২০১৫

শেখুর্টেক্ বীথিকা
নান্দনিক অ্যাপার্টমেন্ট প্রকল্প
বেখানে থাকছে
● জিনেসিয়াম
● নামাজের স্থান
● ফোয়ারা
● সুইমিংপুল
● সূ-প্রশস্ত
ওয়াকওয়ে
মনোরম ল্যান্ডস্কেপ
● রেইন ওয়াটার
হাভেস্টিং ● স্ট্যান্ডবাই
জেনারেলের ● সুয়েজ ট্রেটমেন্ট
প্ল্যান্ট ● পাব্লিক-এ পি.এ. সিস্টেম ● ৫০%
উনুক জায়গা ● নিজস্ব ওয়াটার পাম্পে
সার্বক্ষণিক পানি সরবরাহ ● বাচ্চাদের খেলার
জায়গা ● অগ্নিনির্বাপণ ব্যবস্থা ● ক্রোজ
সার্কিট ক্যামেরা ও সার্বক্ষণিক নিরাপত্তা ব্যবস্থা
এছাড়া আরো অনেক কিছু...!

১৫-৩০ এপ্রিল ২০১৫
(সময় : সকাল ৯টা থেকে ৫টা পর্যন্ত)

স্থান : শেখুর্টেক্ বীথিকা
১১৪/১ দ্বিতীয় কলোনী
মাজার রোড, নিরপুর্, ঢাকা।

প্রকল্প দেখে অ্যাপার্টমেন্ট বুকিং দিন
সাইজ : ১০৪০-১৫৭৫ বর্গফুট

শেখুর্টেক্ SHELTECH Since 1988
01713-091704, 01713-091708, 01713-091724

এছাড়াও রয়েছে বিভিন্ন মাপের বাণিজ্যিক স্পেস!!!