

# On to a stand apart Eid

**PLEASURE IS ALL MINE**  
E ID has always been a special occasion. But this time it stands apart from the Eids in recent years. The rather unique backdrop to the festival is as much carved out by our cricketing success as it is riddled with despicable acts of inhumanity.

SHAH HUSAIN IMAM

The joy of ODI series victory against South Africa, a highly rated national side is the pinnacle of glory in an unbroken chain of wins against Zimbabwe, Pakistan and India. As an emotional people we are truly over the moon in greeting the Eid-ul-Fitr with added enthusiasm and a huge sense of self-worth. United in our joy with a stronger sense of belonging, we feel the spirit of nationalism has been renewed.

Even Mark Twain once said, 'I can't stand prosperity. I mean yours.' Possibly, given his literary stature it was not meant to be a reflection on his persona; rather he was making a joke of the jealous side of human nature.

Our cricketing prosperity may not be received as well as it merits. Perhaps who had said something adverse in the past over a 'minnow' scampering up to inch ahead and not quite making it wouldn't change their opinion overnight. They are likely to stress the home advantage and dare our team to win on foreign soil. Of course, on test side and the issue of doing equally better in matches hosted by other countries we have to prove ourselves.

Nevertheless, we have defeated Australia, England, India and Pakistan on matches played out of Bangladesh. Excelling in sports and games can give a new dimension to a country's image and by God, cricket has a huge magnetism. Just think of Ashes, England having been defeated by Australia at the Oval on August 29, 1882, a sport journal wrote an obituary on the demise of English cricket. So intensely had the emotions welled up among the disappointed English cricket fans. The legend goes that a wooden ball would be subsequently burned to ashes and

severe questioning. Martin Luther King said, 'I follow conscience because it is safe and right'. Conscience is right as it is a moral voice from within urging us to perform good acts, at least not to abet in inhuman acts under human guise. That following conscience is 'safe' is an obvious thing to say and a practical rule of behaviour as well. If you follow conscience you save yourself and anyone you might have targeted as a victim from the consequences of your action by pulling out of it in time. Some people fail both tests. They not only commit blatant



encased in an urn. That made the trophy which to this day changes hands between Australia and England.

That said, are we with a clear conscience going to celebrate the greatest festival of the Islamic calendar that enjoys universal appeal across faiths? We cannot say 'yes' with hands on our chest in affirmation. When contemptible crimes are committed against helpless children the whole community's role comes under

crimes but are dammingly unmindful of the dire consequences they face.

Just recall the Rajon murder and its aftermath, you conjure up a spokes-of-a-wheel involvement, directly or indirectly, of so many persons – it simply boggles the mind. Those involved in video recording, putting it on the YouTube, witnesses to the medieval cruelty, the police who tried to sweep it under the carpet and helped send a perpetrator out

of the country, are all accomplices in the crime. They were just enjoying the barbaric act; though any one of them could have stopped it by sending a word around. This means that individuals are not merely devoid of conscience, the whole society has stooped to a degraded state of losing its conscience.

Within a few days of beating Rajon to death, two girls in Barisal orphanage were whiplashed by a staff in all the 20 minutes of the video clip. As the victims' bodies coiled up in pain and cries for help rent the air nobody came to their aid. Why, because the orphanage administration has been applying such corporal punishment against what they alleged as attempted 'truculence' of the girls!

We are adept in the art of expressing public outrages after something has happened and not showing the flair in a preventative sense. Expression of anger, shock and protests means blowing some hot air and then cooling off before another barbarity comes to haunt us.

In the past, we used to say, 'Every secret crime has its reporter. There is no den in the wide world to hide a rogue; commit a crime and the earth is made of glass.' Now we say, there are video recording enthusiasts with small devices whose pastime it is to capture the images of a crime being committed rather than standing up against it with social commitment. Today, it is another person, tomorrow it might be one of our own.

So, listen to what the publicists say, 'You yourself are guilty of crime when you don't punish crime.'

So long as we do not hand down the stiffest of punishment to a social offender, the impunity culture will feed on itself as an all devouring monster.

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# Animal Planet

**HUMOROUSLY YOURS**



NAVEED MAHBUB

HERE is ecstasy upon discovering the ancient boat in Kutubdia, immediately followed by agony. The vessel is already DoA – Dead on Arrival. Sigh! Ok guys, drop the sticks and machetes and go home. Party's over.

We are luckier with the rare dolphin though. It even smiles as we beat it to death. And then all pose in front of it – the poor man's version of the black and

white photo of the British Raj posing in front of the freshly shot tiger.

This is our idea of entertainment. After all, we grow up kicking the dog which was minding its own business, pouring hot water onto it to enjoy the instant yelping, taunting while stoning the entangled, enamoured pair of quadrupeds engaged in procreating.

But does it mean that we're inherently cruel to animals? Definitely not. The whole country is one big animal shelter, providing a safe shelter for all the animals who are *Amused to Death* at the notion of inflicting slow death onto a 13 year old. Then again, one shouldn't call these people animals – doing so is an insult to animals.

Nevertheless, the benevolent shelter provides the additional service, albeit not quite free of cost, of enabling one in the pack to travel from Sylhet to Jeddah in record time.

It is also in record time that the sick minded stick wielder is apprehended, thanks to the Bangladeshi in Jeddah who get from us nothing but the rough end of the stick.

Never underestimate the power of social media...

Neither did the killers of Rajon. They upload the video of their version of a scene from National Geographic in Masai Mara, hoping to have this video be out-viewed compared to the one by the hunter from Down Under in Chittagong shooting his pet deer at close range and then slaughtering it (ISIS, you got competition). I'm sure the producers have regrets from not capturing any selfies. After all, the hands were busy beating up Rajon with a stick. Or, maybe it was the selfie stick that was being used to 'pose' the boy.

The mark of a man! And others need to know about it too to boost the ego. In the digital age, the manifestation of this age old desire is to go viral online with acts of one's own prowess. The high comes in seeing the high number of 'thumbs up's or 'views' of the videos. Who cares if there are as many number of 'thumbs down's.

The bragging rights also give social media vigilantes their bragging rights to bring the bragging blights to justice. After all, each upload is evidence etched in stone and everybody online is CNN's iReporter.

The Rajon incident is lynching in its true form. However, we don't use this word which makes us otherwise picture a lone, helpless black boy up against a full local chapter of the Ku Klux Klan. Instead, we have novocaine the word 'lynching' to 'gonoputni', which sounds playful, even adorable. Hence, 'chor petano' is a popular sport, not of being innocent until proven guilty, but rather, of being guilty as soon as a passerby makes a passing remark, literally, until proven dead.

"Yes, I saw him do it." What follows is the instant, synchronised and highly enthusiastic collective: "Chor! Chor!!"

We may not even move our lazy behinds to fetch a glass of water for ourselves, but this Pied Piper like electrifying beckoning gets us to spring up and sprint down to home in on the one lone target, usually someone not our own size. Hey, we don't want to be left out of the evening *adda* on how many punches we were able to land on the perpetrator.

It's like a scene from *Animal Planet* as the leopard toys around with the terrified gazelle that he has caught before going in for the kill. The camera zooms in and the narrator whispers, "Oh, what a beauty!"

The not-so-lucky, who are unable to partake in the sport, are relegated to the stands to chant "Ole!" at every bodily strike.

'Steal' (if at all) a pint, and we merrily lynch. Steal Meryl Lynch and we kiss on till eternity that area of the anatomy of the mastermind which sees no sunlight. *Shabash Bangladesh!*

Then again, it is this very Bangladesh where we can defy gravity as even the most complex job gets done quickly once it is escalated. For the sake of Rajon, let us collectively levitate, so that once and for all, we see an end to all such tragedies...

The writer is an engineer at Ford & Qualcomm USA and CEO of IBM & Nokia Siemens Networks Bangladesh turned comedian (by choice), the host of NTV's *The Naveed Mahbub Show* and the founder of Naveed's Comedy Club.

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by Mort Walker

## BEETLE BAILEY



OLD AGE

GREG & MORT WALKER

I MEAN, I GIVE 110% EVERY SINGLE DAY!

LET'S FOCUS ON ME, MOM.

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