

The answer is with us

PLEASURE IS ALL MINE



SHAH HUSAIN IMAM

Frankly, who is not mentally carrying a travel advisory of his or her own seems to be the question today.

RABINDRANATH'S fabled poem Juta Aabishkar (footwear invention) at last had solved a kingly dilemma between covering the whole world or covering one's two feet to avoid getting soiled.

The message is sharp, pointed and directional in today's serious law and order situation: concentrate on what you can do yourself, and you will find a commonsensical solution to an apparently intractable problem!

Lately, in a series of attacks on the police, constable Mukul Hossain was fatally hacked on November 4 and assistant sub-inspector of police was stabbed to death at Gabtoli police check-post two weeks ago. In the latest incident five cops on duty had Chinese rifles, but they didn't fire a shot at the motorcycle riding killers scurrying off! Now they have been ordered to act in self-defence, a pro forma requirement in police manual.

In fact had they acted proactively in the specific incidents, maybe the harm done could have been averted, or in the least reduced. On top of it, there was a real chance of overpowering the culprits and capturing them.

Based on a BBC report, if I recall it correctly, 21 policemen have died on the line of duty since before the end of last year. None of the killers have been tracked down, far less punished.

If all these are happening with the police then a chilling sense of insecurity cannot but stalk citizens' footsteps. Frankly, who is not mentally carrying a travel advisory of his or her own seems to be the question today.

It is the primary responsibility of the

police to provide security to a law-abiding citizen, especially, a threatened individual, who had informed the former of having received threat calls. But this does not absolve the community of its moral responsibility to tip off the police of any brewing danger they may have sniffed because of their proximity to people in general. When an incident occurs, seldom anyone at hand would raise a hue and cry or create a group dynamic to freeze the killers in their tracks. The answer lies in a sensitisation campaign with business establishments ramping up their respective security arrangements. We want to see functioning and analysable CCTV cameras.

It is sad to note though, that the police lack a counter-terrorism team. One only hopes that there will be a full-fledged one in the likeness of what other countries with similar challenges already have. In this context, it is important that Western countries avoid any selective sharing of information with us, something that a New York Times article has hinted at.

The extremist elements have not dropped down on the earth from nowhere. They mingle and operate in society as social beings, have their parents, siblings, relatives, friends and acquaintances to be in touch with. Besides, Bangladesh is a densely populated country where nothing can be kept hidden for a long time.

The recipe may sound a little simplistic to experts who tend to suspect that 'homegrown cells were eager to form affiliations.' All the same, it's not a mission impossible to contain them given the busting of terror networks with caches of weapons by our law enforcers from time to time.

There is one positive signal beaming through clouds that were hovering unnecessarily over our home series in international cricket. The Zimbabwean national side is in our midst promising competitive encounters for our cricketers and

the cricket-loving people of Bangladesh.

Unfortunately South African women's cricket team, after some hopeful signs of visiting our country, has withdrawn from the Bangladesh series. They did not cite any security reason categorically, instead parried it on the ground that some players have had examination schedule issues.

Interestingly, after Dean Jones, legendary Australian cricketer Shane Warne told a press conference in New York that he is at a loss to understand why the Australian cricket team suddenly postponed its trip to Bangladesh. He spurned the concern over security adding that it was uncalled for. He even termed the Australian Board's decision as ridiculous and pointed out that it has raised a storm of criticism in Australia itself. Many thought, "He added that Australian cricket being now in a delicate situation was perhaps afraid of playing Bangladesh." But he was quick to point out that he was not one of them. However, he advised Australia to make a trip to Bangladesh to silence the critics on this score.

The Under-19 World Cup Cricket scheduled to be held in January in Bangladesh is very much on, according to ICC assurances. Between now and then we must collectively strive to make this important international tournament happen in our country. For, we must do everything possible to avoid being bracketed with a national side looking for a third country to stage our cricket series with other competing nations.

With our safety ranking high in the region for cricket, we are in a comfort zone but discretion is the better part of valour.

The final word is, of necessity, Albert Einstein's: "The state is made for man, not man for the state." The state's obligation to protect its citizens is of paramount importance in the social contract that binds the government to the people.

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The Three Thousand Stooges

HUMOROUSLY YOURS



NAVEED MAHBUB

MANUFACTURING

Ming China decides to double its production capacity by upgrading to a Two Child policy. And when it comes to production efficiency, no one comes close to the Chinese. So, the stock market reacts instantly. With a sudden drop in demand, share prices of male contraceptives plummet. Maybe China can look into the prospect of exporting these to Syria where there is a surge in the use of contraceptive bombs as slow-moving SAMs (surface to air missiles) against Russian supersonic Sukhoi fighter jets. Russia, you are screwed.

So as not to be blamed for war profiteering, Chinese authorities quickly clarify that the new Two Child Policy will kick in from March 2016, NOT now. Oh boy! NOW you're telling! Ok people, simmer down...

But who is to be blamed for coming up with the idea of this novel SAM? Must be the Palestinians, at least according to Benjamin Netanyahu. After all, the Israeli Prime Minister blames the Palestinians for giving the idea of the Holocaust to Adolf Hitler, who otherwise would have deported the Jews. We can deduce from Bibi's Theory that it was the Palestinians who are responsible for the extinction of the dinosaur, for coming up with the iceberg that sunk the Titanic, for the depletion of the ozone layer, for the rise in sea levels and for the earthquake in Nepal. And from the depths of hell, Hitler sends a big thank you to Netanyahu for singlehandedly vindicating the Fuhrer and rehabilitating his stature.

Hmmm. If the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem yielded so much influence over Hitler, the Allied Forces could have recruited him to convince Hitler to surrender.

Amidst being busy with the blame game, Netanyahu hasn't yet heard of the World War II bomb found at Dusseldorf (Germany) Airport. Please hurry up and blame the Palestinians for encouraging Hitler to keep it there for World War III, otherwise, Muslims will be retroactively blamed.

It's called blame game, all for a reason, as it is indeed a game, not of chance, but of pure predictability where Moe predictably blames Curly from among the Three Stooges, no matter what. Therefore, whenever in Bangladesh there is an unusual death (something that is predictable), there is always the predictable mouths opening with predictable statements aimed at predictable people or entities. That is hardly a solace for the families whose loved ones are silenced forever, all in the name of some ideology.

Wonder whether we can learn from Tony Blair. After 14 years, hundreds of thousands of deaths and trillions of dollars spent on war machines, he realises that the only WMD in Iraq is Waiting for Mass Destruction. He 'apologises'. Good. At this rate of assessing each theater of conflict, Britain will apologise to the Indian Sub-Continent for the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy in the year 4097.

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SAVING FOOTBALL

CLEAR AS MUD



AHMED HUSSAIN

AMIDST the political uncertainty and apparent "terrorist attacks" that have given Bangladesh some bad press, prompting two foreign cricket teams to cancel

their tour to the country, this week something positive has happened to the local sports, especially to its beleaguered footballing scene. Chittagong Abahani (CA) has successfully hosted Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup and has witnessed the local boys lift the trophy. Participated by eight teams from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, the tournament has attracted capacity crowd in the port city's MA Aziz Stadium and has opened a new chapter for football in Chittagong. The CA organisers, along with their Bangladesh Football Federation counterparts, have hosted the tournament well, which, as far as the participation of the teams are concerned, is the South Asian equivalent of UEFA Champions League. In the semifinal, the CA had beaten Afghanistan Premier League champion De Spin Ghar Bazan 3-1, which gave the boys in sky blue a much needed boost, for the Afghan side that comes from the southern part of the country has fielded some big names of the Central Asian region. The final of the tournament has also seen the local boys trouncing Indian giant East Bengal 3-1. Given that the East Bengal is one of the top teams in the Indian national league (later called I-League), Chittagong Abahani's victory is a big day for Bangladesh football.

But make no mistake. The glory days of Bangladesh football are yet to return. Gone are the days when local football used to represent the heartbeat of the nation, a time the rivalry between Abahani and Mohammedan would draw crowds from not only in and around the capital but spectators from Chittagong, Sylhet and other faraway districts.

Bangladesh's victory against much fancied regional giant Thailand now belongs to a distant past. In the FIFA ranking Bangladesh



Players of Chittagong Abahani

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

now stands 5th in South Asia, behind Afghanistan, India, Bhutan, Pakistan and Maldives. When it comes to world rankings, Bangladesh is 192nd, one up from its worst ever standing in the FIFA tally. In a short span of six years, Bangladesh have changed coaches 12 times since January, 2006. While it aptly portrays the lackadaisical mind of our sport organisers, footballing infrastructure in the country is still at its infancy. Save for Yugoslavia, Bosnia Herzegovina, and Sudan, Bangladesh have never played any non-AFC team. The exposure that a team needs to play well with bigger teams is absent. The situation is no different for the clubs which are heavily dependent on foreign players, especially those from Africa.

Building a footballing infrastructure in the present Bangladesh is difficult, if not impossible. Most of the private schools do not have their own field; the public and community spaces are taken over by the ever-growing demands of the divisional towns' burgeoning needs. Shopping malls and other commercial establishments are being built in small private lands in big cities where children were once allowed to play. As capitalism in our collective psyche are seeping in fast, cricket, which generates

more profit because of its worldwide commercialisation, attracts today's youth more. Traditional Bangladeshi sports like kabaddi is tottering on the brink of extinction. In the last two Asian Games (Guangzhou and Incheon) Bangladesh did not win any medal. If it is the case of the national sport, there is no denying that when it comes to football, Bangladesh badly needs to start from the scratch. A timid step towards that giant long March can start from regularly holding U-13, 16 and 19 tournaments that can give the clubs and the district sides a regular supply of footballers. Because of their age-limit, these competitions should be participated by school and college teams and they can start through intra-school college tournaments.

The country's topography allows football to be played all year round, which not many games can enjoy. Football should seize this opportunity and make use of it to spread the game in every walk of life. Bangladesh also needs to incorporate sports in its national curriculum, especially at the secondary and higher secondary levels. More sport academies like that of BKSP should be established and their area of studies

should include science and commerce subjects so that the students of these institutions do not fall behind in studies and can compete in the job market. Along with this, office football league can be institutionalised; it can comprise of state-owned mills and companies, other autonomous and private business establishments so that footballers can have a regular job and can also concentrate on honing their talent.

There are reasons that Bangladesh is the most populous country in the world to never have won an Olympic medal. Even after 44 years of independence, save for cricket, we have not been able to make our mark in the sporting world. This is indeed sad for a nation that is brimming with youthful energy. It is time that we channel it towards building a healthy society. Chittagong Abahani's victory in the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup along with the enthusiasm it has generated is a gentle reminder to us that football in our country is alive, albeit at its death throes. It is high time that we saved it to build a bright and healthy country.

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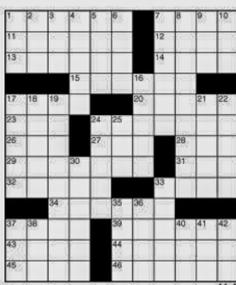
CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Lurch
- 7 Regarding
- 11 Broad street
- 12 Go around
- 13 Leave
- 14 Freshener scent
- 15 Vast
- 17 Tag info
- 20 Provinces
- 23 Femur's upper end
- 24 Terse bad review
- 26 Quarter-back manning
- 27 Lamb's mother
- 28 Take a stab at
- 29 Fastens down
- 31 Long swimmer
- 32 Market direction
- 33 Store in the hold
- 34 Craving
- 37 "Very funny!"
- 39 Some Louvre paintings
- 43 Sighed word
- 44 First
- 45 Like venison
- 46 "Halt!" caller

DOWN

- 1 Heel
- 2 Hail, to Caesar
- 3 Dem.'s foe
- 4 Make law
- 5 Continental coin
- 6 Brooklyn team
- 7 Have hopes
- 8 Chair, e.g.
- 9 Malleable metal
- 10 Count start
- 16 Partners
- 17 Ribcage setting
- 18 Edmonton player
- 19 Sandwich meat
- 21 Ventilated
- 22 Flair
- 24 Grazing groups
- 25 Stunned wonder
- 30 Nervous
- 33 Bolshevik leader
- 35 Little rascals
- 36 Exceptional
- 37 Witch
- 38 In the style of
- 40 CPR pro
- 41 Sea dog
- 42 Crafty



YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

LAPAZ FROST
ELATE JETLI
NOVASCOTIAN
TEETAR SPY
MENDS
LABOR STRUM
ATOP RAKE
BEGUN LAPEL
POPUP
SEATAG WHO
LABRADORIAN
OSCAR SALT
TESTY INDEX

BEETLE BAILEY

by Mort Walker



BABY BLUES

by Kirkman & Scott



QUOTABLE Quote



HARUKI MURAKAMI

IF YOU ONLY READ THE BOOKS THAT EVERYONE ELSE IS READING, YOU CAN ONLY THINK WHAT EVERYONE ELSE IS THINKING.