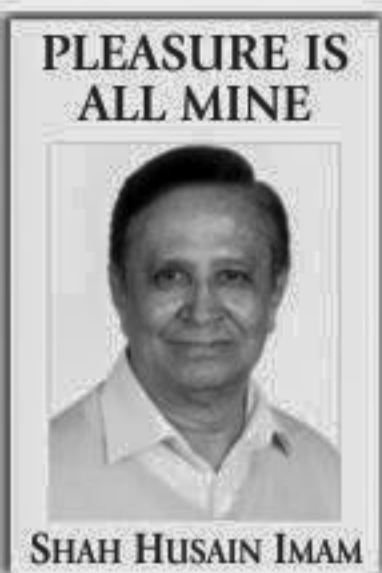


# Hail the Midas touch on national cricket!



PLEASURE IS ALL MINE  
SHAH HUSAIN IMAM

**B**ANGLADESH'S jinx over the highly popular T-20 format cricket has disappeared in a flash as if in a comic strip to put it picturesquely. Read as you may a certain lighthearted preamble, the rest you will find, we can assure you, worth its weight in gold.

The tide has turned for us the hard way with sweat and tears shed in the process through which we have attained the glory of reaching the finals of the Asia Cup 2016. Our T-20 records were abysmal; among nearly 20 outings against big teams that we have had we clinched only three victories, that too 'light years' apart.

Literally, it has been a sweet revenge as far as our match against Pakistan went on Wednesday. We had lost to them in the 2012 Asia Cup by only two runs and went unceremoniously out of reckoning. Mahmudullah who was taking strike failed to score the crucial runs. He broke down in tears and so did his teammates for missing out on a tantalisingly close call. But this

time around he scored the winning runs against the same contender Pakistan by hitting a boundary when only two runs would have sufficed. This led to a spectacular rejoicing among his teammates who fell upon each other on the ground in an embrace of rare camaraderie.

When Sakib got out through a lethal Amir delivery, the run-ball ratio was 26 to 16, a task obviously made the steeper through his exit. Mashrafe changed the complexion of the game by scoring two fours consecutively. Quick running between the wickets followed; and as though fortune favouring the brave, two no balls from Pakistani pacer Sami gave the bonus of free hits. This helped wipe out the margin with Mahmudullah delivering the final jab.

From the 'babes and minnows' through being dubbed as an 'ordinary side' playable by Jef Boycott's mother as the English cricketer-commentator himself once claimed - the epithets that flew in the face of Bangladesh cricket team are consigned to oblivion today.

We have come a very long way courtesy of Bangladesh Cricket Control Board, world class coaches, physiotherapists and mind-lifting psychiatrists. The modern tools of game analyses are being obtained.

We have had two cricket icons - Dean Jones and Mathew Hayden making some very insightful comments about the growth trajectory of team Bangladesh. Dean was piqued by a question from a Bangladesh journalist whether he was 'surprised' to find Bangladesh reaching the finals having beat teams like Sri Lanka and Pakistan! He shot backed at the questioner quizzing, 'Well, you don't yourself have trust in your team, so ...'. Then he introspected aloud, 'Why blame you, actually Bangladesh's players didn't believe in them.' A self-belief has developed in them changing their mindset. This is a precious virtue we must keep cultivating considering that cricket is very much a mind game.

Hayden, once the Australian aggressive batsman and now a commentator, hit the nail on its head saying that Bangladesh had always a good set of spinners; but now it is power packed by a terrific reinforcement of a good number of pacers. The catalysis is on and there should be no looking back given that in a country of 160 million people many batsmen, bowlers and fielders in different age groups are emerging out in the open. There are players in the pipeline, a structure is in place and inspirational wins create a

groundswell of potential to be realised on the world's Ivy League cricket circuits.

The abounding talents in Bangladesh need to be taken under the wings of care, nurture and training on a programmatic and sustainable basis. Sports can give us rare honours and strengthen patriotic bonding in the country and channel the youthful energy for constructive purposes.

As for nurturing players of Mustafiz's caliber we need to have special arrangements. There is an example of nourishing an especially talented mid-field player Rivelino in Brazil after Pele in world football. He was a lanky 19-year-old lad when spotted and would be especially put on an intensive training programme to build up his muscles. He would be scoring tons of goals with lightning speed in time for Brazil.

Finally, for our faceoff in the finals on March 06, we better take heed of what captain Mashrafe has urged the people to do: 'Put no pressure on our team with high expectations'. For that will only cramp them in their efforts to play their natural game. Free them up and they will deliver the goods.

The writer is an Associate Editor, The Daily Star.

## Rise of the land of entrepreneurs

NARMIN TARTILA BANU

**T**HE simple answer to the question, "What do you do", could really make a lot of difference. The enquirer could easily glean priceless insight based on the answer, ranging from whether he is a no-gooder or a potential suitor, to the extent to which his hometown played a role in his success (or absence thereof).

Different professions have occupied different rungs on a ladder of preference in the minds of the influencers of society. Expats, for instance, living abroad with the assurance (or perception) of higher disposable cash or a prestigious corporate profession flaunting fat paychecks, consistently top the charts. Lower levels of the ladder were reserved for the leftover lot, who make a lunge for self-employment to stay afloat.

The interesting thing is that things are changing. Entrepreneurship, the least lucrative career path according to many, has ceased to be the fallback option. It is increasingly being embraced and sought with open arms and minds. And not only by the ones choosing to stay back in the country, but by those who were once wooed by the West.

Why this sudden shift, you may ask.

To start off with, the thought process of the millennials is different. Independence is preferred over implicit parental control. An appetite to make their own mark continues to provide the drive to do something different.

Graduates from top notch universities and executives from coveted Silicon Valley companies are no different. With markets in the West getting progressively saturated, markets in the east are becoming more lucrative. Obviously, when you have a huge population ready to embrace innovation, and a market not infested with competition, the possibility of making an impact is higher! And when making money ceases to be a motivation to charge forward, the urge to do something impactful takes over.

Besides, there is an emerging ecosystem of like-minded entrepreneurs, support services, technical services, training providers and angel investors - all tossed into common networking platforms to explore, co-create and innovate. The trend hasn't gone unnoticed by big players. Corporations with millions of taka in annual turnovers are opening cells geared towards the incubation of startups with a promising business model.

Moreover, the most amazing part of Bangladesh, which is the abundance of unnervingly insightful entrepreneurs, also plays a key role in fueling this phenomenon. An unmet need is usually immediately met with a customised product or service. Take for instance the thriving online business market which sees a majority of transactions happening in cash. This initially posed a quandary, as traditional courier services only delivered products, and had no cash dealings with receivers. That's when a group of business-savvy entrepreneurs introduced a new model of business where the courier services would not only deliver but also reconcile cash with the sellers. The traditional courier service companies gave in, and eventually started offering this service as well.

Additionally, the slow adoption of plastic money, primarily due to various issues hindering banking-service proliferation, has been more than compensated for by the burgeoning mobile financial services.

Add to that the availability of superior technology - cheaper smart phones, increasing internet penetration and accessible contents. Starting from carrying out a casual search on Java coffee to exploring a complex tutorial on JavaScript, millennials have information at their beck and call. All of that further fuels the drive to embrace a non-mainstream career option.

Moreover, the inspirational success stories of flourishing businesses that emerged from rented garages often act as a motivating factor. Not only that, access to various trainings conducted by reputable schools also addresses the need-gap in knowledge.

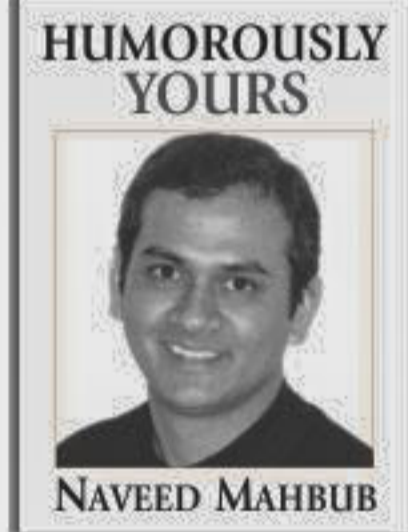
As is obvious, the environment in Bangladesh today is very conducive to entrepreneurial growth. Throw in a sprinkle of courage, a dash of dream, creativity and lots of motivation to make a mark, and et voila! Thus emerges the entrepreneur of today. With tenacity and hard work, they can surely take this particular career option to the highest level of the perception ladder!

The writer is a lecturer at the School of Business and Economics, North South University.



PHOTO: STAR

## No No, No No



HUMOROUSLY YOURS  
NAVEED MAHUB

At least for the time being, 'no' has become synonymous with Sami. But at the same time, 'yes' is synonymous with the Tigers. For it is not the no balls, but rather the 'yes' attitude of the Tigers that won them the game.

**N**ASIR not on the squad? Is he also having a baby? Doesn't matter. Bangladesh has done well against Pakistan lately in limited over games. Sunny boy, you are not only a Tiger, but also a lion - you are our Sunny Lion. That's plenty of sex appeal, in contrast with the appalling appeals by the visiting team on the field, which should rather be called apples, to be swallowed like The One from the Garden of Eden.

But that's later. Now it's the Tigers on the attack with their fierce bowling. Wickets fall in rapid succession. But one can't forget the Bangladeshi hospitality. The Tigers are kind to the umpires - after all, it IS tiring for them (the umpires) to keep raising their right hands so frequently.

Nevertheless, the guests finish off with a decent score. That inkling - what if... The Tigers start their chase. Tamim Iqbal is a good boy. Like any brand new father, he leaves work early.

We lose Shakib Al Hasan. He breaks another world record (and almost the stumps)

- the shortest transition time from anger to a sheepish apologetic smile as he hits the stumps and then instantly raises his bat to the umpires in apology. Ah, the match fee.

The spectators are biting their nails. As the cameras zoom in to the galleries, seems like there is a stench everywhere, as all we see are hands over noses.

The commentator couldn't be more correct as he says that no script writer could write as exciting a last stretch as this game. The probability metre shows 70 percent chances of a win for the Tigers. Knowing our luck, the scale will tip for the 30 percent.

And then...I will hate a no ball no more. The euphoria of seeing a no ball, perhaps akin to that of a bookie seeing one (hopefully not today).

It's not one, it's two. The no balls know no bounds of happiness. I guess like eye balls, no balls also come in pairs. Oh what a pleasure to the eye balls as the crowd has a ball.

What happened? Did Sami not want to bowl? Afridi to Sami in the locker room before the game: "I will not take a 'no' for an answer." "Alright then, I will bowl." But perhaps he takes it a little too literally.

Sami's delivery on the field is not normal, it is a C-section, causing his whole team tremendous labour pain. No frills - straight cut no balls.

One dares not imagine the post-game locker room scenario. After the Tigers, Afridi tears Sami to pieces into a Sami (shami) kebab, thus him (Sami) being nominated for this year's No-Ball Piece Prize. Is it a rumour that Sami is seeking cricketal asylum in Bangladesh?

Just as *Mork* and *Mindy* is immortalised with "Nanu Nanu", Sami and Afridi will be remembered as: "No no, no no!"

At least for the time being, 'no' has become synonymous with Sami. But at the same time, 'yes' is synonymous with the Tigers. For it is not the no balls, but rather the 'yes' attitude of the Tigers that won them the game.

Mash and his crew have caused the morale of Team Pakistan to go to M\*A\*S\*H (Mobile Army Surgical Hospital) while Mash himself has given a whole new meaning to the term 'mash potatoes' as Norail Express and mates put the formidable opponents on the last train to Karachi.

All eyes are on the finals. And please, pick good umpires. Remember Down Under? Meanwhile, Tigers endangered? Not so.

The writer is an engineer at Ford & Qualcomm USA and CEO of IBM & Nokia Siemens Networks Bangladesh turned comedian (by choice), the host of ABC Radio's Good Morning Bangladesh and the founder of Naveed's Comedy Club. E-mail: naveed@naveedmahub.com

## A WORD A DAY



**SOMNOLENT**  
SAHM-nuh-lunt  
Inclined to or heavy with sleep

## CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- Mona Lisa feature
  - Wild guess
  - Bays
  - Sum of one's actions
  - Sailor's cry
  - Inventor Howe
  - Tenant's fee
  - Allergy sign
  - Cigar bit
  - Obtained
  - Moines
  - Started, as a PC
  - At hand
  - Varnish layer
  - Unavailable for reservations
  - Little lie
  - Yea opposer
  - Scottish river
  - Kind of musical wonder
  - Suit piece
  - Figure of speech
  - Kind of musical wonder
  - Jargon
  - Hangs low
  - Influences
- DOWN**
- Sacred beetle
  - Goes elsewhere
  - Scott work
  - For fear that
  - Superlative suffix
  - store come-on
  - Had a go at
  - Stun
  - Diamond corners
  - Fort Knox setting
  - Lawn material
  - Apache leader
  - Bar bill
  - "The Raven" writer
  - Book supplements
  - Mardi Gas, for one
  - Granola bit
  - Rose features
  - Fencing swords
  - Nepal neighbor
  - Entity
  - Trough feeders
  - Observe
  - CD forerunners

**BEETLE BAILEY** by Mort Walker

Panel 1: "I PUSH THE BIG BUTTON AND THE TV COMES ON" (CLICK!)

Panel 2: "THEN I PUSH THE SAME BUTTON AND THE TV GOES OFF! AMAZING!" (CLICK)

Panel 3: "WHY DOESN'T IT JUST KEEP COMING ON?" (GREET MORT WALKER)

**BABY BLUES** by Kirkman & Scott

Panel 1: "YOU HAVE TO ADMIT IT'S FUNNY THAT WREN NAMED HER PUPPY WREN!" (X@#!)

Panel 2: "YOU THINK IT'S GOING TO BE FUNNY WHEN WE'RE IN PUBLIC AND WREN SAYS, 'I WANT MY X@#!'?" (OF COURSE NOT.)

**YESTERDAY'S ANSWER**

S	H	I	V	A	A	M	I	S	S	
A	U	D	I	T	L	A	N	C	E	
B	R	I	G	H	T	L	I	G	H	T
L	O	O	E	R	A	R	O	T		
E	N	T	R	A	I	N	A	L	E	
S	T	I	N	T	H	O	E	R	S	
T	E	N	T	M	U	S	E	S		
A	N	T	W	I	S	E	S	U	P	
U	S	E	A	F	T	I	N	A		
N	I	G	H	T	F	L	I	G	H	T
C	L	E	A	T	E	R	N	I	E	
H	E	R	D	S	R	E	S	T	S	