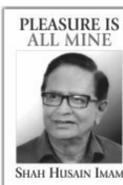


Watch out for the Tigers!



PLEASURE IS ALL MINE
SHAH HUSAIN IMAM

BA NGLADESH has done well for itself and world cricket by winning against Australia. Well, how it is emerging as a force of good for world cricket keeps you mulling over!

Test format has been receding in the background in the face of surges from ODIs and T-20s—the shorter versions. The rage for instant cricket, like perhaps instant coffee, leaves a fleeting sense of satisfaction. Nothing sticks. Of course, the shorter version is revenue grabbing advert razzle-dazzle. I am not quite sure it helps with time management because you can pick and choose interesting time-slots to be at the stadium and not miss anything worthwhile in a Test match.

And, if the Dhaka Test between Bangladesh and Australia was anything to go by, it should revive some of the lost interest in Test cricket which brings out the best in the cricketers.

Who says, Test match is dull, drab and slow in yielding result? For each of the four days of the Mirpur Test has been full of excitement, suspense and drama—in an ascending order! The game was thoroughly competitive, keeping spectators and TV watchers alike to the edges of their seats. It never looked like being over till it was over; "the match could go either way," was the oft-repeated reminder from the cricket commentators!

But the "tested" better team won the day; Bangladesh deserved the victory, no matter that a pedigree-sensitive critic or two termed it an "upset". ESPN cricinfo has given reasons why it considers that Bangladesh's win at Mirpur was not an upset. It referred to last year's England-Bangladesh series and the South Africa-Bangladesh encounters in July,



Tigers celebrating their historic win against Australia.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

2015 to illustrate Bangladesh's records on a winning trajectory in Tests in the recent years. As for the home ground advantage, every team takes it by turn when hosting a side. So, why make fuss about sub-continental pitches?

It is true that 19 Australian wickets fell to the spinning attack by the Sakib-Mehedi-Taijul trio (one was run out), while Australian off-spinner Lyon picked up most of Bangladeshi wickets.

It was all rosy in the garden for Australia on Wednesday morning! The Aussies began the first session on the fourth day at 109 for 2. David Warner and Steve Smith, vice captain and captain respectively of the

Australian side came on to the crease. As the most experienced pair of the team, the burden was on it to lead the team to an unassailable position.

Australia needing 156 runs to win in a 265-run chase, Warner and Smith just cruised along, pushing up the overnight score to a total of 158 for 2. With Warner out LBW off the bowling of Shakib, Steve Smith followed suit in quick succession, the two veterans leaving the score at 170 for four. Australia had to score 95 runs for a win with 6 wickets in hand.

The match, though evenly-poised, was potentially on a knife-edge with so many cliff-hanging moments having seen-sawed

between the two sides.

Thus, amid muffled sighs and moans among Bangladesh supporters as the crucial first hour for a breakthrough passed us by, and the opponent tantalisingly close to crossing the line, Shakib struck the game-changing blow.

Then on, wickets fell at regular intervals. Yet, just when some signs of resistance seemed to be peeking they were crushed with intelligent bowling and field-setting.

Soumya Sarkar has the genius for spectacular displays in fielding after batting debacles. He made up for his poor batting performance by taking two absolutely stunning catches by virtue of his

acrobatic reflexes.

Shakib's bowling prowess was once again vindicated by his ten-wicket hauls in Test matches against three top Test playing nations now including Australia. His 84 runs in the first inning had helped set up a decent total.

No word of praise is sufficient for the intrepid Bangladesh Test skipper Mushfiqur Rahim. Apart from being a good humoured team man, he works on game-plans rhyming in with the changing complexions of a match. His decision to use Taijul was spot-on.

All said and done, Bangladesh has created cricketing history. The Tigers taking after the iconic Royal Bengal Tiger have proved themselves worthy of their name! They have beaten Australia for the first time since 2003 when Test series began between the two countries.

Out of four Test matches we had had with the Aussies before the latest ground-breaking Mirpur Test, Australia won three of them by innings and 80-132 runs and one by 3 wickets.

Of the four Test matches, two were on our home ground in 2006 yielding that 3-wicket victory to Australia topped up by an innings and 80 runs win over us by them.

So the first victory against Australia after 17 years of getting Test status is mind-lifting. Congrats to Team Bangladesh, BCCB and, above all, the coaching team comprising the best in the business.

Tempted to add just a footnote on a glimmer of fan maturity—a few Bangladeshis were seen holding up a placard reading, "Warner, we love you", when he was batting. Whether they are Australian citizens of Bangladeshi origin or not, it was fan goodwill gone international! Isn't small beautiful?

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99TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF GENERAL MOHAMMAD ATAUL GHANI OSMANI

The man who inspired us during war

SYED MUHAMMAD IBRAHIM BIR PROTIK

IT was April 4, 1971, a little over a week after we had revolted against the Pakistan Army and the Pakistan government. I was then a member of the Second Battalion of the East Bengal Regiment, commonly known as Second Bengal. Being a second lieutenant and the junior most officer of the battalion, as tradition required, I was always with the Commanding Officer, and therefore had the opportunity to witness this historic moment. Colonel Mohammad Ataul Ghani Osmani was presiding over a meeting of senior Bengali officers who had by then revolted.

The meeting was organised quite hastily and secretly, in the bungalow of the manager of the Teliapara Tea Garden in Habiganj district, near the border with India. Among the prominent attendees were Major Ziaur Rahman, Major K M Shafiqullah, Major Khaled Mosharraf, Major Shafayat Jamil, and Major Kazi Nuruzzaman. The objective of the meeting was to coordinate the operations of the Second, Fourth and Eighth Battalions of the East Bengal Regiment which had joined the war of liberation.

Colonel Osmani, who was short in stature, was known for his grey, luxuriant moustache. To my surprise, I found his hair and moustache to be shaved off completely. It was apparently to hide his identity while crossing the eastern border from Bangladesh into India.

In the tumultuous early weeks of our liberation war, he was the symbol of unity for the rebel officers and soldiers of the East Bengal Regiment—nay, the ever-growing group of freedom fighters. Colonel Osmani was too senior to me to have any personal acquaintance with. As an aide to my commanding officer, Major K M Shafiqullah, I was around the meeting table with maps, a lantern and a broken twig to be used as a pointer. Colonel Osmani, as he was then, left the tea garden soon after the meeting.

Later we realised that the first chapter of a glorious history had just been written. Osmani appeared bold and decisive in the meeting. His English accent was similar to that of the British. During the nine-month war, we often received mails from the

After the victorious end of the war, Osmani continued to be the Commander-in-Chief of the Bangladesh Forces, Bangladesh Army, Bangladesh Navy, and Bangladesh Air Force were being organised as separate entities. Osmani relinquished his military post and responsibility in the first week of April 1972, and the respective Chief of Staff assumed responsibility for the newly organised Bangladesh Navy and Bangladesh Air Force and the reorganised Bangladesh Army.



General M A G Osmani with other freedom fighters.

Headquarters of Bangladesh Forces (HQ BDF) located in Kolkata. My seniors testified that much of the plans, orders and their expressions were Osmani's own.

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star General effective from the day of the victory.

His dedication to youth development and leadership was exceptional. Before joining the army, I was a student of the famous The East Pakistan Cadet College, which in 1964 became Faujdarhat Cadet College. By 1971, there were four cadet colleges in East Pakistan. These were modelled after and run more or less like British public schools, focusing on preparing the youth for leadership in various sectors of the country, by imparting an all-round education. The colleges had large grounds and well-constructed academic and residential buildings.

In independent Bangladesh, early in 1972,

the then government announced its decision to close down the four cadet colleges, including Faujdarhat Cadet College, and convert these into normal schools and colleges. The old cadets of Faujdarhat played a pioneering role in the "Save Cadet College Campaign." It was also joined by the well-wishers of the cadet college system. Their movement to keep the cadet colleges open and functional would not have succeeded if Osmani had not taken sides with the boys. It is he who pleaded with Bangabandhu to allow the colleges to function. Ultimately, Bangabandhu decided in favour of retaining the system.

In early April 1972, Osmani was made a minister in the cabinet with Bangabandhu as

President. But he continued to assist Bangabandhu in matters related to the war of liberation. The committee that finally decided on matters to the gallantry awards was headed by him.

Today, as we observe his 99th birth anniversary, I feel Osmani remains a largely unsung hero. I have come across a number of his biographies, mostly written in Bengali language and only one in English. I just hope today's generation will study and find inspiration from Osmani's rich and illustrious life and career.

Major General (Retd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim Bir Protik is a Freedom Fighter and Chairman, Bangladesh Kalyan Party.

QUOTABLE Quote

KAHLIL GIBRAN
 The Prophet

You talk when you cease to be at peace with your thoughts.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Ginger cookie
- 5 Angry look
- 10 See the sights
- 11 Work week's finish
- 12 Poker payment
- 13 Informational file name
- 14 Fizzy quaff
- 16 Outfit of the late 1930s
- 20 Toward the wake
- 23 Numbered rd.
- 24 Game expert
- 25 Navajo hut
- 27 Mont Blanc, for one
- 28 Record companies
- 29 Old West ceme-

DOWN

- 1 Sirius, for one
- 2 Taboo act
- 3 Lot buy
- 4 Knotty snack
- 5 Sat "hi" to
- 6 Deceitful bunch
- 7 Tack on
- 8 Zodiac animal
- 9 Pupil's place
- 11 Refrigerant gas
- 15 Tedious sort
- 17 Spur on
- 18 Romance lang.
- 19 Wallet bills
- 20 Melville captain
- 21 Go it alone
- 22 Newspaper goof
- 25 Sentry's cry
- 26 Rectangles
- 28 Detroit team
- 30 Use your head
- 31 Tackle box items
- 33 Watered down
- 34 Citrus flavour
- 35 Whole lot
- 36 Cart puller
- 37 Letter before psi
- 38 Earth tone

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

C	A	B	S		N	O	T	E	
A	K	R	O	N	K	O	R	E	A
P	I	E	T	A	N	A	I	L	S
E	T	A	P	I	E	H	O	L	E
R	A	T	H	O	L	L	E	D	
S	H	E	L	L	E	P	E	R	
			L	I	E	T	O		
C	I	D	G	I	S	T	S		
S	O	N	M	A	N	H	O	L	E
P	O	T	H	O	L	E	M	I	X
A	L	O	U	G	A	G	A	P	E
S	I	N	G	E	R	O	T	A	P
M	O	E	S		D	O	N	T	

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker

BEETLE HAS DISAPPEARED, CAPTAIN, WE CAN'T FIND HIM!
 WHAT DO YOU THINK HAPPENED TO HIM?
 WE THINK IT WAS THE CLASS IN CAMOUFLAGE YOU GAVE
 GREG+MORT WALKER

BABY BLUES by Kirkman & Scott

HAMMIE, IS YOUR CLASS INVOLVED IN PLANNING THE SCHOOL FUNDRAISER?
 NOPE.
 THAT'S FOR THE OLDER CLASSES.
 SO WHAT DO KIDS YOUR AGE DO?
 WE WANT UNTIL THE DADS START SETTING UP THEN WE GET IN THE WAY.
 I KNEW IT WAS A CONSPIRACY!