

Shakib Al Hasan: Guilty victim of blind injustice



CHINTITO SINCE 1995
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It is not easy to defend a cricketer who has kicked the stumps and uprooted them in successive overs in broad daylight, and that too on camera. His status as the world's number one ODI all-rounder makes that task impossible. And yet, a diagnosis is necessary for even a terminal case.

Cricketers not keeping wickets never have a brush with the stumps twice in the same innings, but last Friday, Shakib Al Hasan, a global pride of Bangladesh (often) not sung of loud enough, earned headlines that screamed "loses cool", "fit of anger", "rude behaviour", and "very angry", but there was no banner on the umpire's failing, so abhorred was the player's misdemeanour. Although the umpire is a Most Important Person in the episode, his name was blurred in most media reports. Howzzat?

In a Dhaka Premier League match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mohammedan Sporting notched 145/six. In reply, Abahani Krira Chakra were in dire straits being nine/three in the third over. In the fourth, the third delivery to be precise, Shakib's leg-before appeal trapping Mushfiqur Rahim was disallowed almost immediately. So prompt was the denial that the umpire could be guilty of premeditation. Normally,

umpires take a while to deliberate on the merit when asked, "How is that?" By the way, that was the second denial. Therefore, the lovable "spoilt brat" of Bangladesh cricket broke the stumps. Appalling, as many times as you may review the footage.

Let us move on to the next hot spot: 5.5 overs, Abahani were 31/three. The umpires, without any climatic (read rain) or any medical emergency on the field, or a demand from either team, called off play due to rain. What prompted them to stall the match with only one delivery left to complete the sixth over remains a mystery because the minimum requirement for a result in a T20 match is five overs. But, oh yes, at one time it was six, and the social media was flooded with speculations.

Now, Shakib has played 57 Tests, 212 ODIs and 76 T20s for Bangladesh, scored 3,930, 6,455 and 1,567 runs, and took 210, 269 and 92 wickets respectively, to know that, in dismantling the stumps, although it was officially after-match, he was looking for a suspension of up to five matches.

Unless S75 was trying to carve out an unscheduled vacation, that level of gardening was not the hallmark of a man who registered 18 five-wicket and two ten-wicket hauls in Tests, two five-wicket hauls in ODIs and a fiver in T20s. Success has turned his head much more than the frequent magical spin that he generates on the pitch.

Shakib apologised immediately afterwards, and later on Facebook, he apologised to the teams, management,

tournament officials and the organising committee for "losing my temper". He was full of remorse as "an experienced player" but conceded his reaction was a "human error" and this happens "sometimes against all odds".

Despite calls for his extradition from some quarters for his despicable conduct, Shakib was handed out a three-match Dhaka Premier League ban along with a fine of Tk five lakh, as ordained in the ICC rules, based on the grade of accusation by the all-important umpires.

However, there was not even a lashing with a chicken feather for Abahani's coach, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Director, national interim coach and manager, Khaled Mahmud Sujon—who kicked no stumps but had a broiling argument with Shakib—or for the umpires. You may clap with one hand.

Shakib is not the first to disgrace the game, nor will he be the last unless the game is played without stumps or by players without a soul, a heart and legs. Here, I am reminded of my previous column, "Why does the story always begin with Palestinians throwing stones?" The tale of Shakib too began on June 11 with him kicking the three uprights, for the umpires were not being so. Frustration creeps in for sportsmen who shed blood, sweat and tears.

To go to the root of Shakib's problems, his temper and insolence, we have to look at the entire composition of BCB, where club interest reigns supreme. Directors, originating from

the various sporting houses, must rise above their respective clubs. To borrow from a political cliché, club is more important than self, country is more important than club. Organisers at all levels have to sever ties, emotional primarily, with their mother clubs. Otherwise they are not ready for city, district and national duties.

During my Sports Reporter days (1974-80) for *The Bangladesh Times* (The editor was Late Sheikh Fazlul

Haque Moni), an umpire, by his own open admission, declared, "*Khaiya felsi*" (consumed it), meaning he gave a decision that was warranted. Those were the days before technology learnt to verify an appeal by the breadth of a hair. For fear that their "game is caught", cameras in live telecast league matches were allowed only very recently into our stadia.

Umpires must look no further than the boundary rope lest their eyes

behold a sinful signal from the VIP gallery. The common fan's conviction is that umpires are fitted to a local match to force a desired result by off-field negotiation, threat, advisory and reward. Bangladesh and cricket are the woeful victims.

Bangladesh, being among the top ten cricketing nations in the world (no mean achievement, that), cannot afford such laughable controversies arising out of unnecessary poor umpiring and motivated decisions. In the absence of Hawk-Eye, field umpires have a field day, as do self-interested cricket organisers. Until the computer vision system is installed, to do justice to the labour and performance of our players, BCB should, in the least, appoint home umpires with international experience.

The umpire's word is final, and therefore umpires must earn respect and reputation through their neutrality and performance in good faith. Shakib is indeed guilty of bringing the game to disrepute, but by the number on his back, he is perhaps 75 percent guilty, but the management and the umpires are that much blameworthy as well.

Bangladesh cricket is a sorrowful victim of election, grouping and power politics. Some persons are holding office for decades, and some seem to fall from the sky. Then there is nepotism. There is a lure, but that certainly is not the wellbeing of the game or the country.

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PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

From vulnerability to resilience to prosperity Transforming the narrative of tackling climate change



POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE
SALEEMUL HUQ

Agreement is breached. To that end, it remains imperative to equip vulnerable communities, key sectors and the government with vital instruments to bring about resilience and stability for all.



PHOTO: AHMAD MASOOD/REUTERS

The MCPP promotes empowering locally-led efforts by communities that are most vulnerable to climate shocks.

At the end of last year, Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina became the Chair of the group of the 48 most vulnerable developing countries, called the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), for the second time. A year into her two-year tenure, she has spoken on behalf of the group and will continue to do so,

The difference between them is that resilience focuses on managing the adverse risks of climate change, while prosperity implies overcoming those risks and becoming prosperous despite those prevailing risks. The 48 CVF countries are now internalising this concept and many of them are

considering preparing their own Climate Prosperity Plans, following the lead of Bangladesh.

The Prime Minister has offered to have Bangladesh draft, develop and share the first such plan, which she named after the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, as the Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan (MCPP). The MCPP has just been drafted and is being shared with all relevant stakeholders, including government ministries and agencies, experts, civil society and development partners. So far, quite a few excellent suggestions have been received and the Plan will be revised after the feedback is incorporated.

What are some of the broad areas that the MCPP is aiming to address? The first point to stress is that it does not replace any of our existing plans such as the Eighth Five Year Plan, the Perspective Plan to 2041 or the Delta Plan to 2100, but rather aims to supplement those existing plans and accelerate their implementation. So it will not create the need to operationalise any new bureaucratic institution to deliver or ensure its implementation.

The Mujib plan will also not be like the country's Paris nationally determined contribution or NDC, which orientates climate action around commitments to cut emissions. The Mujib plan is instead a strategy that explores the possibilities and potential of delivering robust socio-economic development while simultaneously maximising our climate resilience and various green opportunities. It will lay out the funding needs required from international, regional, public and private sources, as well as how the local economy can contribute, if the elements of the Mujib plan's vision for the future are to actually be realised.

The second important point to make is that it aims to achieve transformative change by enabling Bangladesh to leapfrog on a number of technological

and economic fronts. This will be done on a five-plus-five-year format, where the first five years will be to lay the foundations for doing something new and different, and the second five years will be to actually put in the investments and deliver them. Although this may seem a farfetched proposition, it is based on the new generation of bigger and more stable wind turbines, such as those now being deployed by the UK and Denmark in the North Sea, and which can also withstand the cyclonic wind speeds in the Bay. The first five years will be used to explore the offshore wind energy profile and develop the feasibility of the array, while the second five years will be for bringing in the billions of dollars of investment it will need from global private sector investors.

Another proposal in the MCPP refers to the construction of strategic Mujib Energy Hubs, which will ensure the reconversion of sources of "dirty energy" such as coal, oil and diesel thermal power plants to high-tech green hydrogen production facilities—thus reinforcing power grid stability, providing cleaner burning fuels, ensuring the up-skilling of workers, and allowing the energy sector to capitalise on high-value strategic export products in the form of green hydrogen. This is in line with the International Renewable Energy Agency's new 1.5 degree Celsius pathway report stating solar and wind power generation will provide 68 percent of the entire global electricity demand. Moreover, a report by the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology in Sydney completed a long-term scenario analysis, taking into consideration Bangladesh's land constraints, and showed that renewable energy production can reach 33 percent by 2030.

At the hear of the Mujib Plan, however, is the aim of accelerating adaptation and resilience actions. As a result, the plan promotes empowering

locally-led efforts by communities that are most vulnerable to climate shocks through a range of new initiatives, including innovative financing instruments and capacity development programmes.

A second novel idea is for Bangladesh to gear up to access the trillions of dollars of global funds available for green investment, which Bangladesh has not been able to access yet. As the country is aspiring to graduate out of Least Developed Country (LDC) status over the next few years, we will no longer be eligible for grant funding and will have to access global investments, with improved regulations and capacity in our financial sector. The idea is to enhance the capabilities of the financial sector, both public and private, in order to access global green investment funds.

A third area of focus is on enhancing the quality of education and capacity building of our youth, in order to transform them into problem-solvers and not just job-seekers. This particular investment does not really need extra funding, but it does require a major shift in the status quo in our education sectors—all the way from primary to secondary to university and even higher professional levels of education. As iterated by academics and experts, the main paradigm shift will be a focus on quality instead of quantity.

Finally, the MCPP aims to uplift Bangladesh to reach middle-income status faster, which inevitably means graduating from LDC status and an end to reliance on grant-based support from our development partners. This also means not relying on intellectual inputs and technical support from foreign consultants and agencies, but rather relying on our own finances, as well as intellect, to chart our way towards prosperity over the coming decade.

Dr Saleemul Huq is Director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development at the Independent University, Bangladesh. He also chairs the Expert Advisory Group of the CVF.

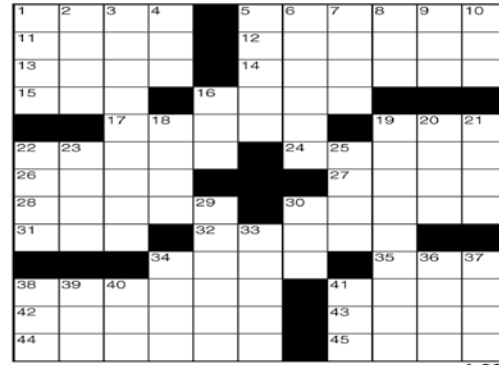
QUOTABLE Quote



JOHN RUSKIN
(1819-1900) ENGLISH ART CRITIC
There is really no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Mexican peninsula
 - 5 Pool sound
 - 11 Homecoming guest
 - 12 High-protein grain
 - 13 Easy win
 - 14 Oberon orbits it
 - 15 Eat late
 - 16 Layer
 - 17 Ice skate part
 - 19 Bar study
 - 22 Once more
 - 24 Play part
 - 26 Baby bull
 - 27 Stately trees
 - 28 Dagger parts
 - 30 Wash against
 - 31 USN rank
 - 32 Stand-in
- DOWN**
- 1 Cell features
 - 2 Baseball's Moises
 - 3 Basketball tipoffs
 - 4 Band blaster
 - 5 Ten-armed swimmer
 - 6 Makes baby food, maybe
 - 7 Teller of tales
 - 8 Writer Radcliffe
 - 9 Old French coin
 - 10 Holds
 - 16 Camel
 - 18 Boost
 - 19 2020 and 2024, e.g.
 - 20 "Lonely Boy" singer
 - 21 Compass point
 - 22 Massage target
 - 23 Make progress
 - 25 Cajole
 - 29 Film edit
 - 30 Cut off
 - 33 Tears down
 - 34 Influence
 - 36 Mob revolt
 - 37 - Domini
 - 38 Quaker's pronoun
 - 39 Garden tool
 - 40 Hosp. sections



SUNDAY'S ANSWERS

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

BETLE BAILEY



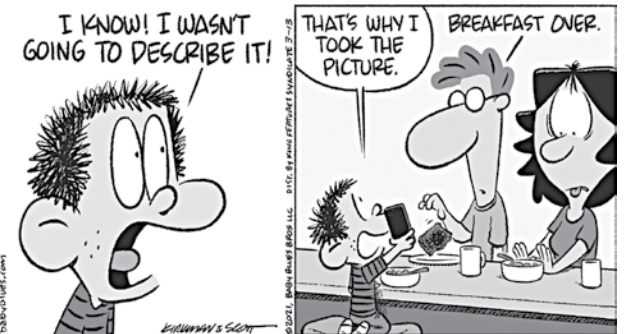
BY MORT WALKER



BABY BLUES



BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT



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