



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

The fish rots from the head down



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BISHWAJIT ROY

Rifts among big-name teammates are not uncommon in cricket history. From Garfield Sobers versus Rohan Kanhai to Sunil Gavaskar versus Kapil Dev to Virender Sehwag versus MS Dhoni, there have been several notable incidents that sparked debate among fans. Much was said about how a cherished friendship between the two Ws – Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis – had devolved into hostility.

Sports teams are frequently portrayed as happy families, and most teams try to carefully maintain an image. But in reality, friction among teammates is part and parcel of most team sports. Bangladesh's cricket squad is no exception.

In keeping with that history, it was nothing extraordinary when the story of the rupture between Shakib Al Hasan and Tamim Iqbal made the news. But what happened before the Bangladesh team left for India to compete in the ICC Men's World Cup was a disgrace for the country's cricket.

It must have been hard for Bangladesh fans to envisage a player blatantly questioning his long-time comrade's dedication to the nation. Who is to blame for the unpleasant episode between the two stalwarts?

Supporters swarmed social media with support for their respective favourite hero. However, we must also investigate whether a defective system played a role in this ugly occurrence, when the seed of this rift was sown many years ago.

Cynics often claim that Bangladesh cricket is more prominent off the field than on it. Shakib-Tamim's recent feud certainly pushed matters that way.

The whispers of a bitter drift between the country's two best cricketers of their generation became a roar in February, when Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon revealed – the first time any board official did so – that the suspicions were warranted.

Bangladesh skipper Shakib fired on all cylinders during a two-part

interview with T Sports, aired on September 27 and 28, following Tamim's declaration that dirty politics behind the scenes resulted in his exclusion from the World Cup squad.

Tamim's inclusion/exclusion drama, which occurred just a few days before the showpiece event, was unique in world cricket. Apart from putting team harmony in jeopardy before the World Cup, it has done irreversible damage to the spirit of the next generation of players. One thing is certain: the two will be remembered not only for their individual geniuses, but also for all of the distasteful controversies linked to them that have occurred in recent years.

Tamim and Shakib, time and again, renewed hope for Bangladesh cricket with their performances throughout the years, and were frequently grouped with Mushfiqur Rahim, Mahmudullah Riyad, and former captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza as the "fabulous five." Coach Mohammad Salahuddin, mentor to both players, is undoubtedly correct to ask that, while they may have many individual achievements, how much have they accomplished for the team?

The way in which the situation unfolded demonstrated how damaging, deep-rooted, and downright suicidal their relationship has been; how ego trumped the national team's interest in both their eyes.

After Tamim's retirement/un-retirement saga in July, followed by the left-hander's hard work in rehabilitation programmes, and a fine 44-run innings against New Zealand in Mirpur, everything appeared to be in order. Fans were thus left speechless when it was announced that Tamim would not be attending the World Cup. Besides dirty politics, Tamim also claimed, in the video statement on his Facebook page, that many lies were spread in the media to mask the truth and that a phone call from a top board member led to the tipping point.

Tamim, to his credit, didn't point the gun at anyone. One may condemn him for a variety of reasons relating to the game itself, but no one can accuse him of indecency.

Shakib, on the other hand, did not display any decorum, slamming Tamim during his two-part interview. Shakib voiced several arguments against Tamim, and one may agree or disagree with them. But his behaviour towards a fellow teammate was not only unprecedented, but also shameful for the country's image in the sport.

Most importantly, he questioned Tamim's dedication to the national team and pointed a finger at someone against whom there have hardly been any major disciplinary accusations, and someone who once set a remarkable example by batting with a fractured hand.

And all this came from a player who was barred from all forms of cricket for two years for failing to notify the ICC's anti-corruption unit (ACU) of three separate "approaches or invitations" to engage in "corrupt conduct" by a bookmaker seeking match information, as well as being involved in other disciplinary issues.

Former skipper Mashrafe, via social media, rightly pointed out three major reasons behind this chaos: 1) Tamim's emotions (as he could have handled the call from a board high up differently); 2) Shakib's ego (as he could have given Tamim a call to sort things out); and most importantly 3) lack of proper management.

How did once-close friends become enemies? There is no simple answer to this question, because it was caused by a number of variables – or the presence of a proverbial third party who may be gaining from conflict between the two individuals – which must be investigated in depth.

In ideal circumstances, Tamim and Shakib would not have opened this can of worms, had there been a proper code of conduct in place. But given the reality, it seems too much to ask for since the board itself failed to follow procedure when it came to handling our national cricket team.

When a board official calls a national player to discuss his batting position, and has frequently spoken to the media about technical concerns regarding the team, it can be hypothesised that the chaos often surrounding our cricket is of a trickle-down nature.

Why did the US almost shut down?

An explainer for the bemused



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ASHFAQ SWAPAN

It's been like the nail-biting climax of a Hollywood thriller. You know how it goes: the bomb squad arrives when the bomb is less than a minute from exploding. Vital seconds go by as they try to spot the right wires to snip. Soon, it's only 10 seconds, then 9... 8... 7... and voila! The right wires are snipped, the bomb is defused, and the world is saved.

In a surreal case of life imitating art, with just three hours to go before the federal government was about to shut down, the US House of Representatives passed a resolution on September 30 to avoid a shutdown, which was promptly passed by the US Senate and sent to President Joe Biden's desk. Biden signed it and the US avoided a shutdown once more.

Many outside the US (and not just a few inside, truth be told) are bemused and appalled by what seems to be almost an annual feature of the US.

So, here's a brief Q&A-style explainer to help you understand the peculiar quirks of US politics that have led to this situation:

I heard that the US government was about to shut down because it was running out of money. How is that possible?

The main reason for this is US law. Like all countries, the US has to pass a budget to fund itself, and the deadline for that is September 30. US law requires that, unless Congress passes a law to fund US federal agencies, the federal government runs out of money.

Hold on. This is weird. How come I've never heard of this happening in any other country?

Even in the rare case that any country fails to pass a budget, all countries have backup workarounds which temporarily fund the government. Oddly enough, the US does not.

Doesn't Congress know this is about to happen?

Like clockwork, the US fiscal year begins every year on October 1. So, Congress knows all along what's going on.

Then how come Congress has this mad scramble at the end of the fiscal year?

That is unfortunately how it goes quite often in Congress. The US Congress is made up of disparate political players, many of whom are at loggerheads with each other, and it takes all the pressure of being on the verge of an impending political

disaster to thrash out an agreement.

But, coming back to the US shutdown, isn't a lot of it just media hype? I mean, the US does not really come to a standstill, does it?

Well, yes and no. It is true that much of US life continues to function. It is also true that the entire federal government does not shut down, just the parts which haven't been funded by an appropriation bill.

Still, the effects can be substantial.

The US House is controlled by Republicans, but they have such a slim majority that it gives right-wing members an opportunity to throw a spanner in the works. Try as he did, Republican House Speaker Kevin McCarthy failed to pass appropriation bills with his Republican caucus. Ultimately, he did what he had vowed he would never do – he passed a stopgap continuing resolution with the backing of Democrats. Some of his more partisan Republican colleagues are crying bloody murder and threatening to dethrone him as speaker.

So what kind of damage can a shutdown cause?

Take for example the longest ever shutdown in 2019, which lasted 35 days. Around 800,000 federal employees got no paycheck for 35 days. To add insult to injury, more than half of them, such as air traffic controllers and airport security personnel, still had to work because the attorney general considered them essential employees.

National parks lost \$11 million in entry fees. The 35-day shutdown cost \$11 billion, including a \$3 billion permanent loss. The effect was nationwide because only 15 percent of federal employees work in Washington, DC.

Now, federal employees did get back pay when funding was restored, but thousands of federal contractors (and other services which depended

on federal employees) took a financial hit.

Somehow, it seems to be getting worse.

That is absolutely true. In the 1800s, there were no shutdowns. As late as in the 1970s, despite funding gaps, federal agencies kept going. In the 1980s, the attorney general tightened the system.

The first big shutdown happened in 1996 and lasted for three weeks. Then, there was the big one in 2019.

Why is it getting worse?

One reason is that the laws are stricter now. But the other big reason is extreme partisan polarisation that has made politics particularly acrimonious. That's always bad news for Congress, which, like the nation it represents, reflects widely diverse political viewpoints. Legislation demands a collegial atmosphere with a readiness for a give-and-take approach, and that is increasingly hard to find in today's shrill political schisms.

So, is this what happened this time around? How did Congress avoid the shutdown in the end?

Well, this time there was another political wrinkle. The US House is controlled by Republicans, but they have such a slim majority that it gives right-wing members an opportunity to throw a spanner in the works. Try as he did, Republican House Speaker Kevin McCarthy failed to pass appropriation bills with his Republican caucus. Ultimately, he did what he had vowed he would never do – he passed a stopgap continuing resolution with the backing of Democrats.

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The Republican House caucus has become increasingly unmanageable in recent years, with a rump group of shrill partisans often making it impossible to pass legislation, leading two of McCarthy's predecessors – John Boehner and Paul Ryan – to quit in disgust.

Well, despite all of that, at least folks in the US can heave a sigh of relief. This year's shutdown drama is over. One can certainly hope Congress behaves more responsibly next year.

Not so fast. Congress hasn't passed federal appropriations for the entire year. It just passed what's known as a continuing resolution, a temporary stopgap measure which gives itself 45 days to get its act together and do the job.

My goodness! You mean that, after 45 days, we're going to see the same drama again?

You got it. Congress has just kicked the can forward. To paraphrase baseball player Yogi Berra, it's going to be *deja vu* all over again.

Hang on to your seats, folks. It's going to be another rollercoaster ride.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

30 Dainty drinks
1 Uses a needle
5 Bath need
9 Singer Cruz
10 Egypt's Sadat
12 Deal maker
13 Treaty goal
14 Mopping need
16 Mamie's husband
17 "Why don't we!"
18 Ceased
21 Snaky shape
22 Most like
Solomon
23 Tackles the quarterback
24 Smug looks
26 Big snake
29 Rich dessert

DOWN

1 Musical transitions
2 Votes in
3 Eye signals
4 Fill completely
5 Tree fluid
6 Count start
7 Looks forward
8 Bundle

9 Elevator lifter
11 Oboe part
15 Growth of trees
19 Inquires
20 "Misérables"
22 Conflicts
23 Bro's sibling
24 Bulb's place
25 Change genetically
26 Beach outfit
27 Starting bid
28 Fall flower
29 Physics amount
30 Fragrance
33 Egyptian goddess
35 Big weight
36 Final part

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Memo No. 22.01.707.29.01.23.

e-Tender Notice No. CNFD/SUFAL/2022-2023/GD-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description	Online notice publication date & time	Online tender closing date
881488	CNFD/SUFAL/2023-2024/GD-1	Supply of Poly-propylene bags for Nursery raising.	5-October-2023 10:00am	23-October-2023 12:00am
881489	CNFD/SUFAL/2023-2024/GD-2	Supply of Decomposed Cowdung and Loamy Soil for Nursery raising.	5-October-2023 10:00am	23-October-2023 1:00am
881490	CNFD/SUFAL/2023-2024/GD-3	Supply of Bariala Bamboo, Bamboo Chatai, Sungrass and Temporary Shed Materials for Nursery raising and Stakes for Plantation & Maintenance.	5-October-2023 10:00am	23-October-2023 1:30am
881491	CNFD/SUFAL/2023-2025/GD-4	Supply of Chemical Fertilizer & Pest Control for Nursery raising and NPK for Plantation Maintenance.	5-October-2023 10:00am	23-October-2023 2:00am
881492	CNFD/SUFAL/2023-2024/GD-5	Supply of Nursery Equipment, Water Supply Materials & M.S Wire for Nursery raising.	5-October-2023 10:00am	23-October-2023 3:00am
881493	CNFD/SUFAL/2023-2024/GD-6	Supply of Decomposed Cowdung, Planting Equipment, Shootly, RCC Sing Board Materials, Stationeries and Seeds for Plantation.	5-October-2023 10:00am	23-October-2023 4:00am

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for selling/downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 22-10-2023, 4.00pm. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd, +8809609112233, +8801762625528, +8801762625529).

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