



This photo was taken on a Friday when traffic was uncharacteristically light.

PHOTO: SHUN IDOTA

Four friends travelling from Khulna perish from starvation in Dhaka traffic gridlock

After a long and brutal six hours stuck in the same spot, the thrilling adventure turned into a nightmare when hunger struck the travellers. Unlike the seasoned city dwellers, the four friends did not know that stocking up on essentials like food, drinks and mobile data was essential.

NUTBOLTU

Last Wednesday Mishap Talukder of Khulna set out on a road trip to the capital with his three best friends. They were celebrating their recent financial gains from a startup pyramid scheme called RiverValley. Their startup gained rave reviews where people spent money to buy little pyramids all across Bangladesh, Mongolia and the moon and name each pointy structure after their beloved.

The friends were heading to the capital to open a restaurant based on their pyramid scheme. Little did they know that their fun times would end up in fun-eral* times (*reporters asked to keep morbidity low - Ed.).

The four friends, accustomed to the calm streets of Khulna, were caught off guard by Dhaka's impromptu traffic snarls. Google maps took a disastrous turn as they became trapped in a seemingly endless sea of vehicles.

After a long and brutal six hours stuck in the same spot, the thrilling adventure turned

into a nightmare when hunger struck the travellers. Unlike the seasoned city dwellers, the four friends did not know that stocking up on essentials like food, drinks and mobile data was essential. Initially, the four friends marked themselves "safe" on social media. But as the hours dragged on, the friends found themselves making progressively agitated Facebook posts.

As severe hunger set in, many celebrities sent them love, hearts and prayers. Many netizens tweeted (or X'd) about how they were standing by the four trapped travellers.

On Thursday, a harrowing 23 hours later, three of them tragically succumbed to starvation. Their names have been withheld to respect the privacy of the victims' families. But more so because one of them did try to eat the others.

Netizens have expressed outrage for almost an hour on social media with some asking why the four friends simply did not get out of their car and walk.

"Footpaths, we don't have any," exclaimed Masud Rana, representative of a local motorcycle group. "The only footpaths we have, we need for our motorcycles and it's not enough. We need more footpaths."

Local authorities have expressed their condolences and emphasised the need to address the capital's traffic crisis. Authorities have quickly formed a committee to find out why previous committees have not returned from a trip to Europe last year to study traffic management.

As soon as they are found, plans will be drawn to create more overpasses, underpasses and ladders on the sides called "sidepasses". This is a revolutionary development spearheaded by the forestry department so people can scale past the traffic much like Tom Cruise tackling the Grand Canyon walls.

Politician wins Nobel in literature for artistically insulting opposition

JEAN PAUL SATIRE

A politician from Chapasthanhas won the Nobel Prize in literature in recognition for his artistic way of insulting opposition leaders during speeches.

Chopetaghat Chandu, a presidium member of National Akromon Front (NAF), has been prominently featured in the news for many years now for being the most quotable politician going around. Despite being a minor member of a minor political party in a minor town of this minor country, he has now been given global recognition for his work.

In particular, a speech delivered from his party office's conference room in front of the press earlier this year caught the eye of the Nobel committee. He was asked to respond to allegations from a senior leader of National Rokkhon Front (NRF) that he has been involved in money laundering and extortion in the area. His response lives on in legend.

"If such lies from the cursed mouth of my opposition do not stop immediately, I will personally staple his mouth shut and pinch his nose, so the next round of verbal vomit he produces can come out of his ears," Chopetaghat Chandu said, to roars of laughter from the press.

As is the tradition among local political circles, he who gets the most laughter from his response is immediately considered the winner in any debate, thus Chandu has been exonerated from all corruption scandals. He is touted as a favourite to gain nomination and then election to the parliament in the national elections.

Other than the aforementioned comment, the Nobel committee cited some other moments of comedy and literary gold produced by the Great Chopet, as he is being called by his fans and followers.

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One comment came during a rally with his party supporters when he was describing how dominant his party is over their rivals.

"An NRF leader once came to my office to discuss some sort of compromise to the crisis that was going on at that time. He told me that it was the duty of political leaders to put their ego aside and discuss solutions to problems instead of prolonging it. I was so touched by his sentiment

that I finally came out of the toilet from where I was having that meeting, did the laces on my pajamas and told him, 'This is all the compromise you are getting today. Now do everything the way I tell you to or I will touch you with my unwashed hands.'"

Another story that is now the stuff of legend among locals is when Chopetaghat Chandu reacted to the story of a rival leader being sent to prison after being implicated in a bribery case. "Where else do you expect thieves to go? To the parliament?"

After news broke of his Nobel Prize win last night, Chopetaghat Chandu held a press conference at his residence.

"Here I am getting a Nobel Prize, but my opposition has not been given any prize. I feel sad for them on this auspicious day. Today, I want to bestow the leader of NRF with a prize of my own. To honour his lifelong commitment to lies and deceit, I want to make my rival the first ever winner of the Goebbels Prize. Congratulations!"

WORLD CUP ROUNDUP

Getting out to avoid cheating; Australia to Bangladesh's rescue

UNSPORTING CORRESPONDENT

The following is a roundup of World Cup news, real and imagined. More imagined than real. Actually, it's all imagined.

Batter suffers cramps, gets out immediately to avoid cheating

The name of this batter has been withheld because it is too soon, and time in this country follows a warped path in the case of humour, as it is always too soon.

Back to the imagined story, the batter suffered cramps during a World Cup match, and he remembered the words he uttered right before he left his country for the World Cup.

This particular batter, who may or may not be the captain of his country, had said that if anyone plays with an injury, that player was in effect cheating the country.

So, putting on our imaginary imagination hats, we have learnt that those words started playing inside his ear Bollywood style as soon as this batter, who may or may not be an all-rounder, suffered from an attack of the cramps while batting in a World Cup match.

Tearful-eyed at the prospect of becoming a self-proclaimed cheat, he proceeded to swing his bat at whatever the bowlers bowled till he got out.



Australia captain Pat Cummins.

PHOTO: AFP

Although he had left his partner, who was batting well and in the process of getting the team out of trouble, in the lurch, the batter left the ground with head held high as his integrity was intact.

The batter's team probably lost the match, but we cannot say for sure, because it really is too soon.

AUSTRALIA HELPING BANGLADESH

Since winning the first match against Afghanistan, Bangladesh's batters have had a woeful time at the global showpiece event. But before anyone could criticise the Tigers, Australia came to the rescue.

The five-time champions have outshone, or outgloomed Bangladesh, failing to cross 200 in their first two matches. It turns out that Australia's cricketers are big fans and sympathisers of Bangladesh cricket.

"Look, we knew we really did not have much chance coming into this World Cup," Australia captain Pat Cummins told our imagination. "So, with that in mind, we have started throwing our wickets away and dropping catches."

When asked why that would help Bangladesh, he said, "We know Bangladeshi fans. In fact, that's how we became fans, reading Bangladesh cricket lovers' Facebook comments. The moment their team starts doing badly, they will look for other teams doing worse. And we are the most successful nation in World Cup history. So, when we were out for our second sub-200 score, and saw their Facebook comments saying 'Even Australia can't score 200, so how can you blame Bangladesh', we knew we were on the right track."

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