



Keep sports clean OF POLITICS

These Indians had to pick on someone to vent their understandable disappointment at their anticlimactic and “unexpected” free fall. In front of 1.2 lakh home supporters with patka in their pocket, and millions with mutton biriyani in the oven, the humiliation was complete. They found those gleeful Bangalees a soft target.

CHINTITO

When we were young, that for some of us is a long time ago; so long ago that you may need binoculars to see the 1960s. A magazine was published then, from most probably Karachi, Sports Times, I am trying to recollect. It was so long ago that today's net search has zero relevant hits for that title and era. Unfaded in human memory, however, for the last over sixty years is the mast slogan of that very popular publication, “Keep sports clean of politics”.

Globalisation since then has reached immeasurable length and breadth, as the ICC ODI cricket World Cup final between Australia and India on 19 November will also confirm. Post-match, Bangladeshi and Indian, mainly West Bengal, netizens got involved in nasty verbal and printed brawl, and here I am quoting a Pakistani magazine. Given The Daily Star's digital coverage, I assume fans from Bali to the Bahamas are going berserk how Bangladesh, badly hammered in seven matches, could bounce back in the fray.

After 10 flattering, one-sided wins, hosts India were restricted to below par, and Australia easily laid claim to the cup by losing four wickets to become World Champions for the sixth time at an almost all-blue stadium, custom-designed for a saffron victory lap.

Such was the frenzy leading up to this final that self-assured India did not pause to ponder that not everyone can be happy when one side is 10 times happy. Many in the rest of the cricket world waited with teeth gritting for the

supposedly invincible to falter. To their hilarity India were toppled when it mattered most. Henceforth, the rapturous outburst, I believe, worldwide.

Videos went viral showing some youngsters in Dhaka jubilant at the outcome, joyous at the triumph of the underdogs. Cameras did not capture another two crore Dhakaite sleeping, or the global crowds that were not so exhilarated.

The spontaneous viewpoint of those Dhakaite celebrating India's defeat infuriated some Indians, including politicians, who retorted with uncalled-for videos, with rhetoric such as “they are clothed and fed by us”, “we should not have supported them in ‘71”, “they beg for Indian visa and medical treatment”, etc.

These Indians had to pick on someone to vent their understandable disappointment at their anticlimactic and “unexpected” free fall. In front of 1.2 lakh home supporters with *patka* in their pocket, and millions with mutton biriyani in the oven, the humiliation was complete. They found those gleeful Bangalees a soft target, branding them agents of Pakistan. There could not be a more hurtful rebuke.

Ever since settled communities learnt to trade, people and countries have been dependent on each other, just as both our countries have been. The onions India supplies are not free, Bangladesh buys them. Treatment is obtained by Bangladeshis at a cost, benefiting their hospital business.

Being the second largest garment manufacturer in the world, we are very well clothed.

While we remain grateful for their support during our War of Liberation, India too gained a militarily friendly country on the east. What a relief!

Some childish Indians overreacted to infuse politics in sports to rub ointment on wounds they were still licking. There should be no shame or pain in losing to such a formidable opponent or even to a greenhorn. You should be magnanimous in defeat and pad up for the next innings.

The euphoric Bangladeshis who were caught on camera would probably return home to watch a Bolly or a Tollywood movie. Some of them could surely be falling asleep listening to Arjit Singh or AR Rahman, minus the latter's despicable *karar oi louho kapat*.

If we had so many “agents” of Pakistan, as some on both sides have insinuated, the ghosts of Yahya, Tikka and Bhutto would haunt us from the high ceiling of the Sangsad Bhaban. Some Indian politicians in fact are rather adept in sniffing them in clandestine conspiracies on their soil.

Our two friendly countries have made giant strides in bilateral cooperation and communication. Mutual collaboration has increased since BJP came to power and not suffered as many hoped after Congress lost. Between us the two countries matter, not any political party, definitely not a group of revellers finding joy at a cricket match.

Mirpur's pitch made with climate change in mind: high source

UNSPORTING CORRESPONDENT

The pitch in Mirpur on which Bangladesh are about to beat New Zealand today in the second Test today, or New Zealand are about to beat Bangladesh today, has become the topic of heavy discussion.

It is certain that the result will come today, barring rain, because the wicket is doing what Mirpur wickets have always done. Devoid of moisture or grass to hold the soil together, or whatever the dark art that goes into pitch prep, the 22-yard strip at the home of cricket in Mirpur has been behaving predictably unpredictably.

After another World Cup debacle, many were hoping that the cricket board would bring about changes, and that the pitch at the venue where Bangladesh play most of their cricket would start

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to resemble the wickets where they lose most of their matches – in other words, places not named Mirpur.

Experts who love to criticise anything the board does, like forming a committee comprising board members to look into failures brought about by decisions made by board members, moaned that only by playing on more standard pitches could Bangladesh be competitive in global events.

But a SatiReday investigation found that the decision for keeping the wicket just the way it was before –treacherous for the home and away teams – was taken keeping climate change in mind.

A high board official, also a high bored official, preferring anonymity because he was suddenly paranoid, said, “We are always accused of being short-sighted. But in reality, we are longer sighted than anyone can even imagine.

“What do you need to prepare a pitch. Water, lots and lots of water in soil preparation and what not. I don't know. I do know it needs water.

“And in a few years, when the climate goes even more bonkers than it is currently, do you think countries around the world will be able to devote thousands of gallons of water for pitch prep? No.”

The high official added that when that happens, Bangladesh will be the best prepared team and the one most used to playing on pitches like that found in Mirpur.

“All the world will be used to playing on wickets like the MCG, Lord's or whatever. But then, the whole world will be full of Mirpur wickets, and then I'd like to see who can stop us.

“Our target is the 2071 World Cup,” the official said.



PHOTO: JONAS JAEKEN

A representational image of what pitches the world over will look like in 2071.

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HR manager upset that workers are actually productive while working from home

BY NUTBOLTU

Local PR and content creation agency The Starmakers recently hosted a seminar on why employees should be back full time now that Covid is really over and we have bigger things to worry about like majority-approved genocide, air quality depletion, more Kardashians shows and lengthy run-on sentences.

The seminar aimed to educate employees on the benefits of being in office all the time. Even though most employees are showing far greater productivity and mental wellbeing by taking an additional day or two away from the workplace, “it is not cool”, according to the HR manager.

Brishty Hamid, CFO and HRO of The Starmakers, said, “We cannot access the quality of an executive if their face is not present under our surveillance cameras from 9-5 and beyond. Was Genghis Khan working from home when he conquered all the world? No! He murdered and plundered by being present all the time.”

Some say the overwork may have



PHOTO: LUKE PETERS

Employees of The Starmakers now required to be at the office for nine hours and do what they could do from home in 5 hours.

killed Genghis Khan before he could reached 30. Others say overwork and bubonic plague. Debate continues in another article.

The Starmakers employ roughly 300 people and they want them all to be

present in their little cubicles. During Covid they moved to a full work-from-home (WFH) policy because too many employees were dying without finishing their work. While sad, HR considered that a necessary evil since it helped

them save money from not having to pay out benefits due to inability to compete work.

“Dead people have a habit of leaving unfinished business,” said Alinoor Ali, Senior HR Executive.

During the WFH process, they recorded record growth in efficiency as people focused on getting their work done quicker and better so they can make better use of their home time. That led senior management to realise that maybe they were simply not giving the employees enough work. The Starmakers gradually moved to a six-day work period but now they want their employees to work full-time, which is ALL the time.

Employees are upset except the ones that have no life. The Starmakers have assured that this process will be eased into gradually. They plan to hold workshops to help employees ease into the routine without killing themselves. This is frowned upon. Cleaners generally ask for extra pay when cleaning dead people remains from cubicles.

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