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Letters

Rebel cricketers

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The Daily Star carried the story on "Rebellion in Tiger camp" in its front page on 15 September 2008. It reminded us of the traditional fear of facing new challenges (and opportunities) from outside - and the first reaction was no different from the tradition - one that in subtle words flags 'patriotism' but effectively protects the status quo, and despises (rather envies) the new movers to avail market opportunities as 'opportunists'! Unfortunately, such juxtaposition is all too common in our intellectual and media culture! Absolutely, there is no attempt to understand and explain what is going on! The sports reporter owes some obligation to the readers; and I raise some questions to him.

Will ICL expand the market for cricket viewing? Will it increase competition among cricketers leading to better individual performance?

Will it reduce the 'near-monopoly' power of the cricketing authorities (including the so called Selection Team) in individual countries in deciding on the fate of our aspiring youngsters? Will the recent move by the ICL and formation of a new team, Dhaka Warriors, open new horizons for our youngsters aspiring to be professional cricketers?

All these questions need to be probed. In all likelihood, the reporter may return with affirmative answers to all these questions, which I intentionally raise with a bias. As in the case of globalisation, one may conclude that the benefits will be short-lived and the institutional disaster as a result of the market onslaught will have far-reaching adverse affects. Will the response from the BCB be through seeking protection (or, clubbing the 'movers') by using its contacts with the powers that be, or should they bring about changes in the way they operate and be efficient to face the competition?

I hope it is the latter: because I am in favour of having competing leagues (multiple providers of entertainment in the market), but would also urge for civil governance of such markets to achieve greater collective good.

I would also love to see Bangladesh flag fly high in a different arena! Can anyone dare to be the judge on whether one or the other team is a better bearer of the flag?