

Cricket

By: Javid Lateef

Absolute Power Corrupts



The Indian team has secured a draw against the Aussies as I pen this, which ensures an Aussie victory in the Test Series. In all honesty, this series should have been a drawn tie, but a few umpiring decisions let the Aussies claim a series victory.

I am going to delve into another area of Southeast Asian cricket that I feel, needs to be addressed. The role of the captain.

I will use two examples here, *Sunil Gavaskar* and *Imran Khan*. *Gavaskar*, in his time as captain, was a dictator. He decided who was in the team. I still remember him picking a gentleman named, *Suru Nayak*, for an England tour. He was picked as a utility player. There was so much talent in the Southern part of India, spinners, batsmen ... but the Bombay lobby was so strong that, his wishes were upheld. It's really sad, that under his reign as captain, the only true International talent that surfaced was *Ravi Shastri*, and that too was pure fluke.

Let us look at *Imran Khan* now. He knew where talent was. Let us look at the people he chose to pursue ... *Wasim Akram*, *Waqar Younis* and *Inzamam Ul Haq*. All absolute International talents and these are just three of the many he chose to pick.

The consensus here is, that even if you are a dictator as the captain of a squad, whether it is International or local, you have the ultimate power to choose the right squad.

Now let us look at club cricket in the US. I can give you a perfect example, the example being myself. I used to play for a local cricket organiza-

to get neglected or ostracized because we don't fit into a social norm that we are supposed to, is preposterous. What is really sad is that the organization, knowing very well that there was injustice, decided to cast a blind eye on the proceedings and support this despot. To make matters worse, when I expressed my displeasure, the organization got a mindless minion to write into a blog we had, accusing me of throwing a game against a Pakistani club because of my background! The club is still active and is in the process of embarking on a new season, but I hope my ex-team mates will read this and decide on some course of action that will wrest control from these people.

On an International level, this too happens. *Imran* and *Gavaskar* were true dictators, and ruled with an iron fist. Players were dropped for the most bizarre and illogical reasons ... so, it can happen at any level.

We are not playing International Cricket, but to be subjected to persecution at a club level in the US, is something that is not expected, but has happened. I know there are many of you out there that can relate to this. My advice to you is to stay strong. The sport is bigger than the individual.

On that note ... I am signing off.

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tion in the Bay Area. The captain, when I joined, was an impartial, stick to pick players by performance kind of captain. After I joined, the captaincy was handed over to a player, who was a stellar performer for the organization. All this is great, in an Utopian scenario, but alas, there are always issues with us *desis*, aren't there?

This new captain, in his infinite wisdom decided to bench people based on his personal relationships with players (brother-in-law being a perfect example), and play people that he wanted, around him. This is not what cricket is all about, as there were other people in the organization who had paid their yearly dues and he was playing people who were not even members! We all, as weekend warriors, sacrifice our Sundays to play cricket, and

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