had stored somewhere frost-free - potatoes, onions, carrots, salt meat, apples....

In a way, this is what you are doing in your school days. You are storing up a good education so that you can use it later in your life. You are developing good habits that will be a great help to you later. Sometimes, in school and college, you make good friends that are a source of great support and pleasure for the rest of your life. Life can bring good times but also bad times, like the British winter. Now is the time when you collect a lot of things that you will use later on when life is not so easy as it usually is, when you are a child.

God bless you.

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HOW MUCH WE DEPEND ON RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE!

Assembly 45. Wednesday March 18, 2003

I have some very happy news to announce. The Superintendent of our school Mokhlesur Rahman Talukdar is going to be married – a week on Thursday – March 27th to Sabera Rahman. We congratulate Superintendent Lenin and his future wife, Mita.

I have requested his permission to inform you of the work that his future wife does because it is so interesting and I think you would like to know. She works at Zia International Airport and, when I tell you that she is in a high tower, can you guess what her job is? Yes, she is an air traffic controller! I told him that if HE can control this school and if SHE can control all the aeroplanes over Dhaka, what will their children be able to do? I think one of them may one day be Prime Minister of Bangladesh! Who knows?

Let us think of the work of an Air Traffic Controller. Have you seen the police trying to control the traffic on the major street corners? It is very difficult – but, in the 4 years I have been in Bangladesh, I think the drivers are beginning to have a little more respect for the traffic police. Many of the drivers have woken up to the fact that, if they obey the signals of the lights and the traffic police, then they are more likely to arrive at their destination more quickly than if they push forward to fill every space and create a traffic jam.

But imagine if you are responsible for airplane traffic! This is much more dangerous. Each plane needs a lot of space in the sky. You have to say to one plane, "Come in and land now on this particular runway and the wind speed is this or that." And to another plane you have to say, "We have no room for you yet. You must stay in the sky 10 minutes longer!" Then there are those times when there is mist and fog and the pilot cannot see and you must help to guide him down. This is very skilled work indeed. Another friend of mine is a computer specialist who produces the software that tells the plane what angle they must come in at.

When you and I go on airplanes, we must remember how many people are working so that we can travel safely. It is a very complicated business and every person in the process must do his or her job well and safely or there can be a terrible accident. In fact, there are all sorts of things that you and I do not think about – but someone, somewhere, is doing their job properly so that you and I can enjoy the conveniences of modern life.

When we turn a tap on, water comes! How does that happen? It happens because hundreds of people are working for the water company. Then there is electricity and gas and all the drains under the city that carry away the waste, all the people who sweep the streets, and repair the roads and plant the nice trees in the middle of the roads which I can hardly believe will ever grow! But some trees are so brave in Bangladesh and they grow, even in the middle of a polluted road – but someone has to care for them. So,

as we go around this great city, as we look at the airoplanes flying overhead and the buses below, think of all the people who work hard and do their jobs properly so that others can benefit.

And let us hope and pray that our Superintendent Lenin and his new wife, Mita will be very happy and have a long life together.

God bless them – and you.

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CRAZY FOR SPORT!

Assembly 46 – Thursday, March 21st 2003

We are having some very exciting handball matches this week, aren't we? We can hear the shouting all over the school! One day we shall have a lift in the lift shaft but, in the lift shaft at the moment, the noise of the games on this floor go all the way up the school!

It is very interesting for those of us who are very old, like me, to hear the noise that is made in sports these days. When I was young, when we watched matches, we shouted to our teams to encourage them but we did not have this chanting! – and never in cricket. Cricket was always a very quiet game – very restrained, as the English were expected to be.

I think it was television that brought the change. People saw crowds watching cricket, in the West Indies and other places, being very noisy and participative and rushing down the pitch to hug each other and clap hands etc and it spread, like an epidemic, all over the world. I cannot remember, even in football, players hugging each other – but now....! We older people could not believe our eyes! There was such a change in behaviour! Because of television, ways of behaving can spread very quickly. It is a kind of culture – but it is television culture. I remember when people began to put flowers in the place where someone had died in an accident or were remembered in a special way. This habit

spread until, by Princess Diana's funeral, it was one of the main ways that people had of expressing grief.

But I ask you to think before you copy everything you see on television. Think hard. Being much more noisy in sports is OK but not if it leads to the wrong attitudes. Let me explain.

There are two sorts of fighting in our lives. One is the fight of good against evil – and it is fine to be very strong about that. When we conquer something that is wrong, in our own lives or in the world, it is good to shout and sing and be triumphant. When a bad criminal is found guilty in court and sentenced, when a government passes a law that helps to bring justice, when a wicked leader is overthrown, when you and I conquer our fears or conquer a bad habit – we should indeed feel that we have stamped something bad into the ground. (Stamp! Stamp! I have won!)

But when we are playing competitive sports and games, we are happy to win but we must not go crazy. This is NOT about the fight between good and evil – this is a game! That is why, after some matches, the people on both sides, shake hands. Have you seen this? This is to express the feeling that we have fought hard – but we are still friends. But when, after a football match, the hospitals are full of people wounded by the fighting in the streets between the fans of the two sides, this is very bad – and the British football supporters are often the worst. In politics, I have to say that, when a political party wins or loses an election, it should behave as though politics is a bit of a game and sometimes you win and sometimes you lose – and, I am proud to say, the British are usually very good at political games. In our Parliament, people can speak very powerfully against one another, but they usually know how to behave themselves. The Government and Opposition supporters do not murder each other. We stopped doing that about 400 years ago.

There is a good expression in English that may help you in your thinking on these things. It is 'being a good sport.' The word 'sport'