

# Bush Can't Let Madrid Conference Fail

**M**ADRID Conference is a regional conference organised internationally for bilateral talks. It is an interesting diplomatic manoeuvre by Bush and worked out by Baker to put the feuding parties across the table for talks. In the process Bush has put the might and the prestige of the superpower in it. Now one wonders whether the US can let it go in Shamir's way. One does not expect it in Arab's way either. A good compromise must be worked out. But is it possible? Once before in 1979 the US went through this process in Camp David. It was not ingenuity of Anwar Sadat alone that led to the Camp David Accord, the US's carrot (financial assistance) and stick to both parties — Israel and Egypt — remained the force behind such accord. Here also similar pressure and guiding force must be maintained and particularly on Israel. It is a high stake gamble for Bush, it might make or break him — the US presidential election is not far off.

Though some commentators say there is no "Bush peace plan" and President Bush himself said he did not want to impose any settlement on the parties, there could be no doubt that Bush-Baker have worked out some possible peace strategies before embarking on such peace initia-

live. These strategies will be tried and worked out in the shadow conference and slowly injected into the negotiating table.

### Common Root

The first phase of the conference has ended "with a flurry of invective and bitter recriminations". Both sides dwell on history and some went close to rewriting history. They are the people that belonged to a common ancestral root some 4000 years ago. They are so close in terms of religion and live in the same land but so far apart otherwise. May be Bush-Baker would try to reactivate or even recreate the dead relationship for the purpose of a settlement and peace in the region. President Bush said in the conference, "It will take time — time for the parties so long at war to talk to one another, to listen to one another. Time to heal old wounds and build trust. In this quest, time need not be the enemy of the progress."

Before leaving for Madrid Prime Minister Shamir who has all along been dead against "land for peace" said — "Our belief is that the land is ours." Maybe the Palestinians also have the same belief. Thus land would be the central issue in the conference. But unfortunately his speech in the conference did not contain any

such ideas though he did not specifically rule it out either. He, however, said, "We know our partners will make territorial demands on Israel, but an examination of the conflict's long history makes clear its nature is not territorial". Here one can detect two points: territorial claim is the central issue which he said before leaving and the nature of the conflict is not territorial

fronts as interpreted by William Quandt, a former National Security Council official. He said, "One thing everyone agreed on at the time was that the phrase referred to territories on each front of the war — the Egyptian, the Jordanian and the Syrian fronts — and was not just relevant to Sinai, Israel knew that perfectly well. It was only when the Likud party came to

and insults" which Shamir replied with full force. At one stage Al Shara "held up a picture of Mr Shamir at the age of 32". The picture was distributed in the conference and in reply Al Shara tried to justify this by saying, "It was distributed because he was wanted. He himself recognised that he was a terrorist, that he practiced terrorism. He killed peace mediators and then he talks of Syria, Lebanon and terrorism." Apparently Al Shara became hard on Shamir as in a earlier rebuttal Shamir said, Syria "is the home of host of terrorist organisations ...". Though this vitiated the conference atmosphere, one feels that Shamir needed a blast of this sort as he always accuses PLO as a terrorist organisation though he himself was the head of a terrorist organisation. This would probably put Shamir in his place and he might talk less about others' terrorism. It is unfortunate that just on this point he forced the USA to keep PLO officially out of the conference though it would have been to Shamir's advantage to have PLO across the table. This would have strengthened Shamir's hand in dealing with the radical factions of the Palestinians.

### Second Phase

Shamir's sentimental offer of having the second phase of

the negotiations in each other's countries was in principle all right but he needed to have created conditions for this by announcing freeze on Israeli settlements and agreeing at least to consider the basic issue of "land for peace" subject to Israel's security. At this stage visit by Arab negotiators to Israel would mean indirect recognition of Israel which the Arabs can not do without some commitment on Israeli withdrawal.

Though there has been no agreement yet on the venue of the second phase of the negotiations there is no doubt that the negotiations will take place and that is more important. President Bush can not allow the Madrid conference to fail. He has indeed reached the 'point of no return'. Any failure will not only put the US interest in jeopardy but also of other Arab allies. The US Congress should also be fully aware of the situation and lend support to President Bush in dealing with Israel. The US and allies have engaged the UN to take care of nuclear garbage of Iraq, but now the threat is from another strong source in the region reportedly helped by a UN Security Council's permanent member. Therefore peace is a must now. Only peace can prevent nuclear proliferation.

## SPOTLIGHT ON MIDDLE EAST

Muslehuddin Ahmad

and therefore his argument for keeping the occupied territories to reduce conflict leading to security of Israel does not appear valid.

### Occupied Territories

The conference is based on the UN resolutions 242 and 338. The resolution 242 adopted in November 1967 calls for "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict." The debate on the omission, deliberate or otherwise, of the words "the" before occupied territories seems redundant as the words "occupied in the recent conflict" qualified the extent of land. Territories can not be only one part or piece like Sinai as interpreted by Israel; these must include land in all

power that it redefined it as only referring to Sinai."

### Terrorist

Though Shamir warned that "they would lead negotiations into an impasse if they proceed immediately to demand the return of the land Israel captured in 1967 Middle East war", the Palestinian chief delegate said in the conference that — "A new state of Palestine must be born on the land of Palestine to redeem the injustice and destruction of its historical reality and to free our people from the shackles of victimisation." Syria said Israel must return every inch of Arab land occupied by it. Indeed, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Shara went full blast on Yitzhak Shamir and "hurled charges

# Anyaoku Will Try to Speed Talks for New South Africa

Derek Ingram writes from Harare

**T**HE Commonwealth is sending its Secretary-General, Chief Emeke Anyaoku, on a most delicate mission to South Africa to help speed the peace process there. It wants him to encourage all the main parties to sit down together quickly and begin working out a new constitution. The hope is that the talks can start this month.

It was expected an all-party conference would be convened soon after the laws entrenching apartheid were replaced in mid-year.

Increasing violence in the townships and a souring of relations between President F W de Klerk and Nelson Mandela, President of the African National Congress, have so far blocked the process.

The Anyaoku mission means the Commonwealth will continue to play a vital role in the birth of a new South Africa. Commonwealth leaders in Harare wanted to facilitate the process, without having anything to do with the actual negotiation of the constitution, which is for South Africans to work out.

During the summit Anyaoku contacted all the main parties, including the de Klerk government and chief Buthehaz of the Inkatha Movement, and received a green light for his mission.

As one of the most experienced and skilled international diplomats, Anyaoku is well



CHIEF EMEKE ANYAOKU, Commonwealth Secretary-General

qualified for the mission. His experience goes back to the days, two decades ago, when he kept the trust of both sides in the Nigerian civil war.

He helped the Commonwealth to bring the parties together for peace talks in Uganda. Those talks failed, but it was the only time the Biafran rebels and the government

actually talked to each other. Eventually the Biafrans gave up.

In 1986 Anyaoku led the Secretariat team that accompanied the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) to South Africa. The mission, finally sabotaged by the South African government, proved highly influential. In the days when apartheid was fully in place and Mandela still in prison, it proposed the formula that led to the dialogue between the government and the ANC.

The Commonwealth summit in Harare marked the end of the long period of disunity over South Africa. There is now no serious difference between Britain and the other member countries.

The sanctions issue was played down, despite the fact British Prime Minister John Major wants to see investment put into South African right away while the rest (and the ANC) want economic sanctions kept in place until the text of a new democratic constitution is made by the all-party conference or by interim government.

Major said there were seven million blacks out of work in South Africa and he wanted to see them get jobs as soon as possible.

But there was, he said, no squabble whatever about sanctions in Harare and there was no difference about the end game.

The Harare summit agreed to the lifting of the whole body of what are being called people-to-people sanctions — that is, consular and visa restrictions, cultural and scientific boycotts, restrictions on tourism and the ban on direct air links.

There was also agreement that restrictions on sport should be lifted as well and sport criteria have been met. Spurred by sport, organisations in South Africa must achieve non-racial unity and be readmitted to the relevant international governing body. The leaders said they hoped South Africa would be allowed to enter the forthcoming cricket World cup.

The Commonwealth is now turning its attention to the ur-

gent need to train Black South Africans to play a full role in the new infrastructure of the country after a democratic constitution is in place. It is to explore the possibility of calling together, in collaboration with the United Nations, an international donors' conference.

When Anyaoku returns from South Africa he will report to ten heads of government, among them the prime ministers of Britain, India, Canada and Australia and President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe as

chairman of the summit.

The Commonwealth committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa, set up in Vancouver without British participation, is to continue its work.

The total change of atmosphere in the Commonwealth over South Africa was shown by the remarks made by Major and his final press conference, when he spoke of his easy relationship with Mandela and how they agreed on many things. The two men often talk on the telephone.

Many journalists present could not help recalling how only four years ago, at the end of the Commonwealth summit in Vancouver, Margaret Thatcher had told them the ANC was terrorist organisation.

DEREK INGRAM is editor of Gemini News Service.

## Lebanon's Sovereignty

With the end of the first round of direct talks (it is still too early to call them "negotiations") between the Israelis and the Palestinians, as well as between the Jewish state and Syria and Lebanon, a small corner of the Middle Eastern iceberg can be said to have melted. When neighbours who have for 43 years refused to acknowledge one another's existence, except on the field of mortal combat, an attempt to talk, even shake each other by the hand rather than by the scruff of the neck, can indeed be said to be a new beginning.

Unfortunately, well away from the Madrid limelight, life in the West Asian slaughterhouse goes on almost as usual, with Israel acting out its permanent role of the principal butcher. For the past six or seven days, Israeli artillery units have continued to shell villages in southern Lebanon, leaving an unknown number of civilians dead and causing thousands to flee. The attacks once again highlighted Israel's continued claim to Lebanese territory as part of its "security cordon" in total disregard to international law and principles of neighbourly behaviour, but regrettably, the international community and in particular the United States have been less than forthcoming in its condemnation of the assaults.

By launching the attacks at the precise moment when the talks in Madrid were progressing from one stage to another, Israel demonstrated that it is not constrained by any considerations other than those regarded by itself to be necessary for its "national security".

Furthermore, the attacks brutally exposed the importance of the international community when it came to defending small states against Israeli aggression. At the same time, and perhaps more seriously, by their failure or even unwillingness to deal with the situation as one of straight-forward aggression and breach of international law, the international community appeared to lend credibility to the Israeli claim that its actions in southern Lebanon are legitimate on the grounds of security. Ever since Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, nearly a third of that tiny but volatile Arab state has been controlled by Tel Aviv through proxies or through direct intervention whenever their puppets, the South Lebanon Army, failed to perform its quisling duties effectively. Israel's excuse for installing its shadowy but illegal occupation of southern Lebanon was that it was necessary to counter a threat to its northern border; but in reality, that occupation itself has spawned an indigenous resistance which has become that threat.

With all parties eager to keep the Madrid conference going by keeping the Israelis in good humour, Lebanon had little success in its attempt to attract attention to the issue of occupation. It succeeded in gaining enough sympathy for the plight of its villagers which may have contributed to the limited US pressure to ease the attacks. But the real solution to the problem will remain elusive so long as the international community continues to treat it as anything other than aggression. Without international backing, it is doubtful whether Lebanon will achieve its main aim of regaining sovereignty over its own territory. Beirut must be given that backing while the talking is still going on.

## The Worst Crime

A new kind of buses are on the roads that connect big cities with nearby towns. First time in the history of the world — thanks to the legendary inventiveness of the Bengali race — there are 'gatelock' buses, not just express ones. They convey the same message that these buses do not stop between their two posts they used to write in Bengali — "birotheen" or stopless. But when practical experience told passengers that the "birotheens" were actually stopping in between, they started resisting to be impressed. Then the 'gatelocks' took over promising not to open the doors of the vehicle even for once before reaching destination. From the very beginning 'gatelocks' took the chance of inordinate delay before 'locking' the 'gate'. So the 'gatelocks' in their turn started losing passengers — after all it hurts one to pay a premium on usual fare in return of nothing. So buses started displaying spectacular legends on their windscreen proclaiming 'absolute gatelock', 'unfailing gatelock', 'pure gatelock' etc — which prompted a Bengali national daily to quip that soon enough there would be *Allar Kasam* gatelock buses.

One is at a loss to understand how such frauds can become a matter of regular practice. The local buses which have stops than a seedy wood apple charge for less than the 'stopless' expresses naturally because they take much time to reach destination. The 'stopless' or 'gatelocks' or whatever persuading gimmick the express buses take on — charge whole world of money more than the locals as a price for two promises: they wouldn't stop before destination and take or unload passengers — and no standing passengers. The express buses renege on their promises not only at the cost of the passengers who are treated more as hostages than valued customers — but also of the numerous local buses who keep on losing passengers all the while. Why should they allow the express buses to continue with such criminal activity? Clash of interest between the operators of the two kinds of services should have been enough to curb the malpractice. But in practice that remains a far and fond dream. Why? The 'birotheens' and 'gatelocks' seem to be powerful people able to pull any number of strings at will.

It is inconceivable that long-haul buses would join the band of the frauds. The time that it takes to journey to Dinaipur or back is so great and tedious that no one would expect those buses to stop at every blessed bazar and take standing passengers in only to unload them at other blessed neighbourhoods. The North Bengal routes were for long free of the evil practices — may be because the routes connecting the upper districts with Dhaka were of necessity some of the longest in the nation. But the long-haul northbound buses have started yielding to greed and crime.

What is the most deplorable of all the features that distinguish the buses of Bangladesh? There is one aspect of our national life — the highway buses — that is completely devoid of the services of the otherwise omnipresent police. They seem not to have anything to do with checking overloading and speeding and unscheduled stopping and, at festival times, doubling and tripling of fares. The worst crime in Bangladesh is to make a journey — whatever the mode. Worst, if you have to take a bus — to anywhere.

## To the Editor...

Letters for publication in these columns should be addressed to the Editor and legibly written or typed with double space. For reasons of space, short letters are preferred, and all are subject to editing and cuts. Pseudonyms are accepted. However, all communications must bear the writer's real name, signature and address.

### The police

Sir, In any modern society, the police are regarded as the custodians of peace as well as law and order. They are the champions of the oppressed and victims of crime and the behemoths who bluster organized crimes of any sort. But sadly enough, just opposite is the case with our police force who are most often blamed as rescuers of the wrongdoers. May be, money plays the biggest role! The high officials of the police, however, wash their hands publicly and deny the hard facts, while our people suffer greatly.

A thousand and one cases of misconduct and inhuman treatment by the police can be cited. On many occasions they take innocent people to the Thana without showing any warrant or, valid document. Without conducting any investigation worth the name, they harass and sometimes manhandle innocent people. A few can muster moral courage to protest on the spot. The police can do crimes taking chance of the ignorance and illiteracy of the populace. It speaks of the very low standard of the morality and mannerism practiced in the police force.

Indeed, only a handful of people may take the risk of publicly speaking about the harassment, misconduct and brutalities perpetrated by the police. Needless to say they would become the targets of further harassment. Surprisingly, our religious minded society remains blind to such unjust and inhuman treatments. This amply speaks of the stark poverty of spirituality of

our much trumpeted religiousness.

One question naturally arises then: Is there anybody who can police the police force? At any rate, the corrupt practices should have to be stopped. There should be a strong vigilance and governance as to the code of conduct of the police. The sluggishness and half-heartedness on the part of the top echelon of the police in punishing the corrupt/guilty personnel/officers must be straitened. Mere transfer or suspension actually gives impetus to committing crimes.

Anyway, a great change is needed in the police force. The redemption of the police force will bring about the much-needed deliverance of our society from hypocrisy, false religiosity, degenerated moral strength and cowardice, heinous crimes of any sort. Vox populi

### ICB

Sir, A notice was published in The Daily Star on Oct 14 issued by the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB) to the effect that investors maintaining investment account with ICB and intending to apply for newly floated shares of Messrs Tamsuddin Textile Mills Ltd should contact the ICB by 20.10.91. Perhaps, this is the first notice of the kind issued by ICB. In the past particularly during the autocratic regime, ICB used to apply for newly floated shares for the investment account holders disregarding the usual practice of

purchase of shares. The scheme was then very much detrimental to the interest of the account holders.

In order to judge the extent of damage done to the account holders under the scheme the names of some companies with present market price of their shares in the bracket are mentioned below: i) Modern Dyeing and Screen Printing (41), ii) Rahman Chemical, (48) iii) Dulamia Cotton, (84), iv) Desh Garments (65), v) Zcal Bangla Sugar (8.15) vi) Satham Textile (78) etc.

From the price shown it will appear that account holders would have to sustain huge loss on account of the shares applied for them by their attorney ICB because of the fact that market price is far below than the par value of the share. Thus the so called market operation of ICB has proved to be a bow upon the heart of the account holders.

### B.I.T, Rajshahi

Sir, I am a student of B.I.T, Rajshahi. I passed the HSC examination in 1989 and could start class at B.I.T. only on 28th April 1991, after waiting for a long time.

But it is a matter of deep regret that we could hardly continue our classes for three months, the college was declared closed sine die on 28th July. First the long waiting then this unscheduled closure — all this is obviously destroying our life and disappointing our guardians to the extreme. All our hopes are almost nipped in the bud to see the recent state of affairs in most of the institutions.

So it is our fervent request to the B.I.T. authorities as well as to the Ministry of Education to find a solution to the problem immediately. We also request different political parties to take necessary steps against violence in the institutions for the sake of the majority of the students.

Mahjub Ahmed Choudhury 1st Year Mech. Engineering B.I.T, Rajshahi.

## OPINION Action Against BCCI

I feel the Bank of Credit & Commerce International has been liquidated through the conspiracy hatched by the Jewish and Christian interests in the USA and Europe against the Third World in general and the Muslims in particular. They visualised that if this organization continued its business for another two decades, then it would surely dominate and supersede the banking system owned by them throughout the world. And as such, by brandishing the activities of BCCI as massive fraud and those of drug traffickers, gun-runners and terrorists, directives were issued to officials in USA, France, England, Germany, etc. for liquidating BCCI under their jurisdiction. The Emir of Abu Dhabi, who owns 77% shares vehemently protested this sinister action, but his assertion fell on deaf ears. No strong protest has since been lodged by any Muslim country so far. USA is the leader of the rich countries of the world, and as such, perhaps no country dares to act against its wishes, right or wrong.

Mr. Jam Sadiq Ali, Chief Minister of Sind (Pakistan) perhaps rightly said that the Jews and Christians of the USA and European countries, who had so long monopoly in the field of banking business have found BCCI as their rival, and as such, they have plotted to defame it throughout the whole world. India has denied BCCI link in money laundering and fraud. There is no such case in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Middle East, Luxembourg, and African countries. BCCI has been operation in 77 (seventy seven) countries of the world.

Mr. Mashur Rahman, a top official of BCCI, London, complained that he was interdicted by a judge in England from speaking out and even his lawyers were advising him to keep silent. Mr. Rahman said that one of the executives of the Senate Sub-Committee even gave him a death threat.

From Abidjan (Ivory Coast), the victimisation of BCCI is being portrayed as a plot to keep the Third World down. Mr. Hasan Turabi, a powerful politician of Sudan stated that the closure of most of the Bank's worldwide operations beginning with a surprise announcement by the Bank of England on July 5 last was a part of a fierce campaign gaining momentum these days and aiming to besedge elements of

Islamic potential. This bank had been flourishing, and from the view point of the super-powers, had surpassed the limits. BCCI operated in twentyone countries in the continent of Africa, where it helped the people to set up shops in trade mark smoked glass towers. This bank always helped small man and charitable organizations even in the Western institutions. Nigeria which is black Africa's most powerful nation has denied the allegation against BCCI and said that there was no iota of truth in the report and it was wondered how any responsible newspaper could publish such allegations. All the BCCI subsidiaries in African countries were running in full swing despite strong mischievous worldwide propaganda. The CIA officials admitted that they had used this bank to support its overseas operations, and at the same time, they accused it of monitoring activities of drug traffickers and terrorists.

In view of the facts incorporated above, even Pakistan President Gholam Ishaq Khan urged the Islamic world to build its own financial institutions with a view to achieving financial security and self-reliance in the field of economic development.

The Bank of England, as per its opinion, closed the BCCI operations in order to promote 'ethical' values and demote malpractice all over the world. Such a premise poses questions like (a) does it view other banks in the same judgement? and (b) does it care for total banking trust of the general masses of the world?

Needless to mention that a bank operates on the growth of trust/confidence of the people it achieves over the years. Loss of confidence in BCCI may lead all to suspect not only the subjected bank's but also other banks' confidence. Thus people would start thinking thrice to have their monetary transactions, business obligations, international trade, etc. done through banks! The net effect would be less saving, loss of trade opportunities, adverse balance of payment and what not, thus expediting recession in the world. How Bank of England can compensate for it!

Sir, it appears to me as an international conspiracy in order to suppress the Third World.

Ahmadullah Mirpur, Dhaka