Who is Going to Reform the UN, Anyway?

ONCEIVED in the cauldron of war, the UN's first task must remain the pursuit of peace and security. says the North, especially the unisuperpower US. But some households of the global village may not like US-called for agenda, just as America plays its role in international affairs. An unmistakable question looms large: which course the world body might be taking off? The developing and underdeveloped member-states are still sceptic, reports suggest, whether the Kofi Annan's - and for that matter the US's, they surmise blueprint will benefit them, although Bangladesh delegation has given its extensive supportive edge.

No doubt, for 50 years the UN has helped prevent world war and nuclear holocaust. But, incidentally, conflicts between nations and within nations had continued. From '45 until today, these have cost 20 million lives. And again, during the post-cold war period, there have been more than 30 armed conflicts each year in each of which more than a thousand people have lost their lives, including, very recently, a quarter of a million killed in the former Yugoslavia and more than half-a-million in Rwanda. Yet. after all this, UN still continues to keep many nations away from bloodshed: in El Salvador and Mozambique, in Haiti and Namibia, in Cyprus and Bosnia, where so much remains to be done but can still be done because the bloodshed has ended. It is presently keeping the peace in 16 countries, often in partnership with regional organisations like NATO, ASEAN etc., avoiding wider conflicts. The UN, however, cannot build nations, but it can help them build themselves — that's what the decision makers think of it.

But money is the only essence that seems to be the animated strength in the UN corridors where the 52nd session of General Assembly is appraising secretary-general Kofi Annan's reform package disclosed in July last — the nation which contributes more becomes the powerful fist. Japan, for example, whose economy is half the size of the America, pays 16 per cent of the UN budget, and wants to pay more when it comes to get a permanent membership in the UNSC. In this regard, the Japanese foreign minister Keizo Obuchi quoted to have emphatically said to the press that his country already pays more than the other four, except the US, permanent members

On the other hand, America is seeking to cap its contributions to UN peacekeeping operaby Ekram Kabir

Initially, Annan's reform programme failed to meet US demands. And now, a few months later, the secretarygeneral is receiving eulogy by the US President. And reports revealed that, at a September 19 briefing at the State Department, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright emphasised, in dictating terms, that the US Congress was willing to pay the nearly \$1 billion America owes the UN if the world body adopted financial and management reforms.

has to be a "crusade" unless

there's an impending setback

for America at the interna-

Another "core mission" of the

UN, Clinton said, "must be to

defend and extend universal

human rights" and to "help

democracy's remarkable gains

endure." "Fifty years ago." he

reminded, "the UN's Universal

Declaration of Human Rights

stated the international com-

munity's conviction that people

everywhere have the right to be

treated with dignity, to give

voice to their opinions, to

choose their leaders; that these

rights are universal - not

American rights, not western

rights, not rights for the devel-

oped world only, but rights in-

herent in the humanity of peo-

wash, for what is most signifi-

cant about America's legisla-

tion is that it recognises its

abiding interest in a strong, ef-

fective UN. Given a choice be-

tween giving up on the UN and

making US investment work.

between retreat and reform,

Congress is choosing the re-

sponsible course. It is choosing

to keep America engaged more

than ever before which is an ex-

pression of American pragma-

tism. According to the US, it is

aimed to keep UN inspectors in

North Korea and Iraq so that it

can prevent those nations from

building weapons of mass de-

struction, to keep UN war

crimes prosecutors on-the-job

so that it can deter genocide and

hold killers accountable, to

keep peacekeepers in some of

the most strife-torn places

where America needs them to

be, where no nation would wish

to go alone, and in favour of

programmes that immunise

children and prevent the spread

programme, supported by al-

most all the member-states, the

world may be off to a promising

start. For the first time in his-

tory, according to slap-bang

West, more than half the people

represented in the UNGA freely

choose their own governments.

Free markets are growing.

spreading individual opportu-

. 5111

mity and increasing national

With Annan's far-reaching

of diseases

This idea sounds like an eve-

ple everywhere."

tional level?

tions at 25 per cent (down from the current 33 per cent) of the total UN budget. The Washington wants to limit its share of the UN regular budget to 20 per cent, down from the current 25 per cent The secretary-general has suggested the Assembly a shift to a process of "budgeting for results" under which it would specify the results it expects within a specific budget. Then there will be agenda for achieving greater goals.

Initially, Annan's reform programme failed to meet US demands. And now, a few months later, the secretarygeneral is receiving eulogy by the US President. And reports revealed that, at a September 19 briefing at the State Department, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright emphasised, in dictating terms, that the US Congress was willing to pay the nearly \$1 billion America owes the UN if the world body adopted financial and management reforms.

But some Americans have argued that in fact the UN owes the US billions of dollars. These are based on the assertion that the UN should pay the US for all the peacekeeping activities that are authorised under UNSC resolutions. The US credits itself for contributions to all formal UN peacekeeping

The Clinton Administration is determined, suggest wire agencies, to work with the US Congress to meet the US's financial obligations to the UN and, simultaneously wants to ensure that the UN meets its obligations to the US. And, reportedly, legislation nearing completion that would allow the US to pay its arrears is proof of America's abiding interest in a strong, effective UN. The US interest is clear when Albright said: "The US needs the UN, and the UN needs the US." (Indeed, the secretary-general has a very tough job ahead.)

America's iron lady went further as saying: "Our crusade for reform is not just an effort to save money, but an effort to focus the UN's limited resources on the priorities we share." Question is: why is the reform century, more than 20 of the Assembly's members may be able to lift themselves from the ranks of low-income nations. The UN must play a leading

well-being. Early in the 21st

role in this effort, filling in the fault lines. The pivot it has pursued during its first halfcentury should be just as relevant during the next half-century: the pursuit of peace and security, promoting human rights, and moving people from poverty to dignity and prosperity through sustainable development.

The US is asking the UN to be prepared to respond, not only by setting standards but by implementing them. To deter abuses. US will strengthen the UN's field operations and early warning systems. To strengthen democratic institutions, the best guarantor of human rights'. America intends to pursue programmes to help new legal, parliamentary and electoral institutions get off the ground. To punish those (Lybians and Iragis?) responsible for crimes against humanity and to promote justice so that peace endures, it must maintain its strong support for the UN's war crime tribunals and truth commissions.

But progress perhaps is not yet everyone's partner. Tens of millions lack the education, the training, the skills they need to make the most of their natural abilities. The UN has a special responsibility to make sure that as the global economy creates greater wealth, it does not widens the growing disparities between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', or threaten the

global environment. The reforms will be nothing Earth-shattering, because the point of US foreign policy is to keep the Earth from shattering, since it has become the global policeman after the Soviet demise. This will simply be the opportunity of doing America's business what they call breadand-butter diplomacy. But on the top of everything, the weighty question remaining is whether the developed countries have the vision and the "heart necessary to imagine a future by not making the developing their scapegoats — that is truly different from the past.

At the dawn of a new century, apparently so full of hope, but frowning with peril, more than ever the world needs a "morethan-a-definite" body to ensure a world where people can work with shared problems and take action to confront them, where nations with goodwill can join in the struggle for prosperity. and shape together a future of progress.

BANGABANDHU MURDER CASE

Verbatim Text of Cross Examination of Twentyfifth and Twenty-sixth Prosecution Witnesses

Continued from yesterday

Cross-examination of the 25th prosecution witness in Bangabandhu murder case. Naik (retd) M Yasin, began when the court resumed on Tuesday.

Following are excerpts from examination by advocate Khan Saifur Rahman defence counsel for accused Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farooqur Rahman:

Q: On which point of the radio station you discharged your

A: At a sentry post in the north-eastern corner of the radio station. Q: Did you never go to Magh-

bazar area? A: No, I never went to Magh-

Q: You took ammunition from your regiment armoury as part of your preparation for going to Serniabat's house. A: This is not true.

Q: Did you return the two chargers of ammunition? A: I returned the chargers along with all the ammunition that I took.

Q: By signing on registar? A: My ammunition was deposited against my name. We were not to sign while depositing ammunition ... we had to sign while receiving.

Q: Did you tell anyone of your colleagues or relatives or law enforcing agencies that you took part in closing formation operation at Serniabat's house? A: I told the IO of the case.

Q: Was the IO first person to whom you said it? A: Yes. Q: Did you come to the IO voluntarily?

A: No, I was informed by local police. Q: Did you ask the IO how he was informed of you? A: No.

Q: You were an accomplice in killing Abdur Rab Serniabat. A: This is not true. Q: Or, you were the killer.

A: This is also not true. Q: Who did control the Serniabat's house after the incident — police or military?

A: This is not know to me. Q: Was the notice of August 14 night parade hung on board? A: I can't recall.

Q: Aminur Rahman (PW-24) was from which battery of your regiment? A: Headquarters Battery. Q: You — Artillery and

Lancer personnel — didn't assemble together before the incident. You met together in the town after the incident to maintam law and brider. A: This is not true.

Q: Did you come to know that martial law had been imposed while you were at the radio sta-

A: I can't recall. Q: You are a self-confessed killer of Abdur Rab Serniabat through your deposition made for Bangabandhu murder case.

A: Not true.

Examination by advocate Sharfuddin Mukul, defence lawyer for accused former state minister Taheruddin Thakur: Q: How many days did you go

to CID office? A: Two days. First, after receiving a notice for giving statement and second time also receiving a notice before coming to the court.

Q: Notice from this court? A: Yes. Q: In which case did you

make your statement? A: Bangabandhu murder Q: Did you not make a state-

ment in any other case? A: No. Q: Can you say the name of the road and house number of

official residence of Serniabat? A: No, I don't know. Q: Were you arrested for the

killing of Abdur Rab Serniabat?

Q: Do you know whether you are an accused in that case? A: I am not an accused.

Q: The killing incident at Serniabat's house is fabricated. You have been taught to say so. A: This is not true.

Q: Was there any other house adjacent to Serniabat's residence? A: I don't know.

Twenty-sixth

Prosecution Witness Excerpts from cross-examination of PW 26, Naik (retd) Jamrul Islam, by advocate Gazi Zillur Rahman, state defence counsel for absconding accused Khandakar Abdur Rashid:

Q: How many personnel did discharge their duty at the

A: The key was kept at the Quarte's Guard. I kept the key on that day at the order of CO Major Khandakar Abdur Rashid. Q: Was the system of keeping

the key at the Quarters Guard a written one? A: I took the key after writ-

ing on registar and also deposited it after writing. Q: It was your duty to give ammunition to anyone with

written issuance. A: One had to receive ammunition from the store with written issuance.

Q. You were responsible for general mismanagement of the

A: Yes, but I was not responsible for that day. All responsibilities are of CO Major Khan-

dakar Abdur Rashid. Q: The order for distributing ammunition usually came

through Quarters Master. A: Yes, on that night Quatters Master Captain Jahangir saheb himself was present. CO saheb was also there.

Q: Did you write on registar while receiving order for distributing ammunition? A: Yes.

Q: CO saheb didn't make such order directly.

A: Not before. He came on August 14, 1975. Q: Were you in uniform while discharging duty at the store?

A: We had always to wear uniform during duty. Q: Had you to wear uniform while remaining stand-by in the unit line.

A: Yes. Q: And it includes your duty.

Q: There is no scope of sleeping in duty.

A: Sleeping is possible in rotation. Q: You were incharge of the

store alone. So, there was no scope of taking rest or going to

The person who is incharge of the store has no shifting duty. Q: You didn't tell the IO that soldiers accompanying Rashid

took away ammunition at his order. A: I told him.

Q: He didn't order you to keep A: This is not true.

Q: You went on voluntary retirement as you could not make tally of the ammunition. A: Your statement is not cor-

Examination by advocate Khan Saifur Rahman, defence counsel for accused Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farooqur

Rahman: Q: Rashid saheb became CO of 2 Field Artillery after returning from India in March, 1975. A: I don't know be became CO

after returning from where. Q: But you told the IO that he became CO after returning from

A: I didn't. I told him Rashid saheb became CO in March.

Q: Were you informed that night parade takes place on every second Thursday of a month.

A: I depended on CO. If he wished, the night parade took place on weekly fortnightly or monthly basis.

Q: Were there arms in the

A: No, the arms were kept at

regiment armoury. Q: Did the soldiers return ammunition after returning from radio station and other

places? A: The sepoys who were outside deposited ammunition after returning to the regiment and I recorded as much as they

deposited. Q: And you could make tally of all ammunition as the sepoys returned to the regiment in turn and returned the ammunition. A: But total ammunition was

Q: After how long Captain Jahangir asked you to make a

A: About one month. Q: Did you feel encouraged

after hearing the news that martial law has been imposed? A: There was no question of being encouraged.

Q: Did you hear that martial law had been imposed?

Q: And you were asked to remain stand-by after hearing the

A: I can't recall.

Q: When were you asked to remain stand-by? A: At about 6 to 6:30 am.

Q: Did you open the store after being asked to remain stand-by? A: They too ammunition as per rules.

Q: Were the first line ammu-

nition kept at the respective armouries? A: At the respective battery armouries.

Q: What is the meaning of first line ammunition? A: Quarters Master keeps ammunition at the armouries on advance basis.

Q: You saw Artillery and Lancer personnel after martial law was announced. A: This is not true. I saw them on August 14 night. Q: You didn't feel any ab-

normality on August 14 night. If so, you would had reported. A: There was no question of reporting.

Q: The ammunition are supplied from the Ordnance. A: Ammunition are brought from there. Q: There are commissioned

officers in the Ordnance. A: Naturally. Q: An account of ammunition is to be submitted to the

Ordnance. A. It was the matter of Captain Jahangir and Ordnance. TO LIV WALL TE UNB

Further texts of cross examination will be published as and when received.

cars are so crowded Garfield®

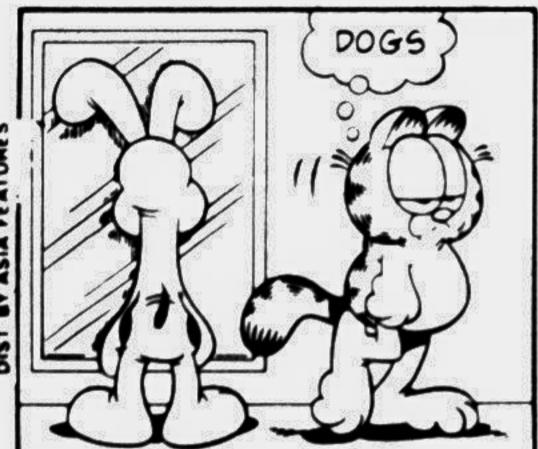


IAN FLEMING'S

James Bond











DRAWN BY JOHN MCLUSKY



Of Human Cloning: The Question of Right

ECENTLY, the issue of human cloning surfaced in the global media, especially after the G-8 leaders' call on June 22 for a ban on human cloning. Clones can be defined as exact genetic duplicates of another animal, produced without sexual reproduction. The issue of cloning. especially of human-cloning. has serious implications for the

The twenty-first century is often referred to as the age of bio-technology. This technology has the potential to, and in some cases has already accomplished feats in controlling the nature, that no other human inventions could claim for. While referring to nature, we often tend to use such phrases as "conquering the nature" as if the nature is some flerce opponent that needs to be defeated

at any cost. In 1947, long before the environmental movement came into limelight, the late British professor CS Lewis published his last essay. The Abolition of Man. With the recent controversy over human cloning. Lewis' article seems to be even more relevant today than it was

50 years ago. The main ideas of Lewis' article may be summed up in the following words: attempts to

by Sarwat Chowdhury

While referring to nature, we often tend to use such phrases as "conquering the nature" as if the nature is some fierce opponent that needs to be defeated at any cost.

control the nature beyond a certain limit can become extremely dangerous and could have dire consequences. Similar ideas are reiterated in the more familiar. Mary Shelly's fictional account of Frankenstein or the popular Spielberg movie Jurassic Park. To return to the specific is-

ago in Scotland naturally led to the aspirations of engineering human beings. However, do we really want the cloning of human beings?

Can we even be comfortable with the knowledge that scientists at their will can create exact genetic replicas of any one Obviously, we are talking about "someone" or "a thousand persons" who not only look or

act like any of us naturally born

human beings, but also has the

same genetic traits as well.

sue at hand, biotechnologists today are already able to isolate valuable genetic materials from virtually any living organism. The events of the successful cloning of a sheep a few months

This completely changes the scenario because we, as ordinary citizens, no longer have control over the manipulation of these "persons" or if you will "xerox" copies of us. Even if we were to become

extremely trusting of the extraordinary powers of science and technology, and decided "human cloning" is something we accept as just and necessary, what about our future generations? Do we really have the right to decide whether our great great grandchildren will live in a world which has been significantly altered (there is no guarantee, how bizarre or wonderful the affect of human cloning will be on normal human lives) due to a decision to legalise human cloning?

Since the future generations are not here, they cannot voice their opinions today. However, if we are ingenious enough to invent human cloning, we should also be able to use our intellect to recognise the farreaching consequences of our

sometimes use the term "biodemocracy" which basically involves believing that all lifeforms have intrinsic value and genetic integrity, and cannot be used as mere commodities. Even from an objective scientific point of view, as we move up the ladder of animal kingdom. we find Homo sapiens at the top of the chain. From a religious perspective. Muslims believe that human beings are the best and finest of all creations. therefore every individual de-

Environmental-ethics writers

serves proper respect. Unfortunately, various com-panies in the West seem to be forging ahead with the cloning of life-forms and the latest "conquest" is a calf named "Gene". Unless the G-8 leaders' call for a ban on human cloning becomes a reality, the day may come, sooner than we expect, when human-cloning will be a news item in the world media.

In their arrogant rush to "conquer" nature, scientists could at times practice some humility and caution. In this particular case, such practice is extremely important as the consequences may surpass our worst possible nightmares. Otherwise such arrogance, to repeat C S Lewis' words, may cause our ultimate downfall.

■ Metropolitan i

UN Day

United Nations (UN) Day will be observed in Bangladesh as elsewhere in the world tomorrow, reports BSS.

ugh a children group's painting at the South Plaza of Jatiya Sangsad in the morning. The theme of the painting is "Our City and Our Village in

2010".

More than two thousand five hundred children below the age of fourteen years from different educational institutes are likely to take part in the onekilometre long group painting. noted artist of Bangladesh Kalidas Karmakar will coordi nate the event.

A group of folk artist will roam around and render popular songs to cheer up the child artists. Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, LGRD an Cooper atives Minister Zillur Rahman. Environment Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, UN Resident Coordinator David E Lockwood, different UN mission heads, diplomats and other guests will be present on the occasion.

VGF programme Govt to disburse

The government has decided to distribute rice worth Tk 21 crore free of cost among distressed people under the Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF)

physically handicapped through VGF cards. Under the relief programme, every VGF cardholder family

The Disaster Management and Relief Ministry has taken the welfare programme for all districts at the directive of the Prime Minister. Adequate measures have already been taken for implementing the programme smoothly.

jects. This was followed by a

activities.

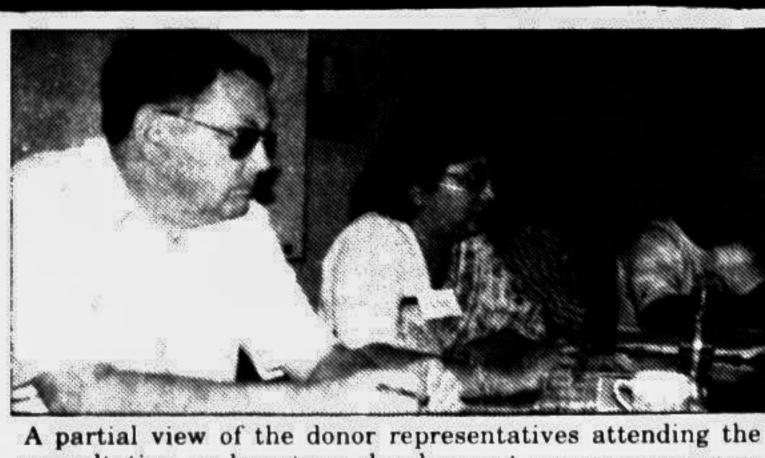
SAP-Bangladesh programme consultation

South Asia Partnership-Bangladesh, a national NGO organized a five-day consultation on Long Term Development Programme (LTDP) in Dhaka recently, says a press release.

The consultation was participated by the Executive Directors of 13 SAP-supported local NGOs, SAP-Bangladesh officials and representatives from Canadian Donors - Leger Foundation, Canadian Lutheran World Relief, Human Concern International and International Development Refugee Foundation.

The consultation took place in two phases. Under the first phase the participants went on a field trip to see different prodiscussion session held at the SAP-Bangladesh office in Dhaka.

The Canadian partners were quite positive about continuing their support to SAP-Bangladesh in its on going programme



consultation on long-term development programme organised by South Asia Partnership-Bangladesh in Dhaka recently.

Weather

Dry weather likely

Barisal, Dhaka and Khulna divisions in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB. Met Office says weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere across the country.

Light rain is likely at one or two places over Chittagong.

Slight fall in day temperature is likely throughout the

country. Country's highest temperature 33.7 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest 19.2 degrees at Srimangal.

The sun sets today at 5:26 pm and rises day tomorrow at 6:00

Justice Naimuddin Ahmed administered oath to the outgoing 21st batch students of the

'AIDS epidemic worrying for country' The AIDS epidemic that is Bangladesh. Ten of them devel sweeping Asia is especially worrying for Bangladesh because of its location and other

Jahangir Nagar university yesterday.

health factors, two UN officials are a gross underestimation warned Monday, reports UNB. The reported cases of HIV, Program Adviser of UNAIDS the virus that causes the fatal told a joint meeting of Rotary AIDS, has so far been 83 in Club of Metropolitan Dhaka

oped full-blown AIDS and six Dhaka (RCD) at a local hotel. have already died. These figures in Bangladesh Dr Lisa Messersmith, Country

of blood

Bangladesh she said is at risk because of many poor health factors such as sexually transmitted diseases, especially among urban poor, low use of condoms, minimum screening

(RCMD) and Rotary Club of

tomorrow

The UN system in Bangladesh will observe the day thro-

rice worth Tk 21 cr free of cost among distressed

programme, reports UNB. Besides the distressed, unemployed, needy and natural calamity-affected people, the rive will also be given to the

will be given 32 kilograms of rice for two months, 16 kg in each month, said an official announcement today (Wednes-

Meanwhile, 7,000 metric tons of rice was allocated today against 2.09 lakh VGF cards.