

FOCUS

Clinton's Journey to Moscow

by Henry Kissinger

For a discussion with Putin to be meaningful, Clinton needs to focus on two subjects. One is to ensure that Russia's voice is respectfully heard in the emerging international system. At the same time, President Clinton must stress — against all his inclinations — that geopolitics has not been abolished.

America cannot remain indifferent to Russia's support of Iran's nuclear programme, its systematic attack on American policies in the Gulf, especially in Iraq, and its eagerness to foster groupings whose proclaimed aim is to weaken so-called American hegemony. America should respect legitimate Russian security interests.

even higher civilian casualties, they changed their tune. The "freedom fighters" of Kosovo were transformed into "rebels" in Chechnya. President Clinton specifically approved Russia's right "to oppose violent Chechen rebels," drawing the line only at the treatment of refugees, "seemingly endorsing the actions that produced the refugees in the first place."

The West has a stake in a peaceful and democratic Russia that would contribute to a more stable international order. And Russia is clearly in the process of a historic transition. But history, culture and geography have left a legacy that cannot be removed by "dialogue" for its own sake. Throughout Boris Yeltsin's period in office, Western leaders acted as if they were a party to Russian internal politics. Ignoring a corrupt economy and autocratic governmental practices, President Clinton, on the occasion of Yeltsin's resignation, spoke of Russia as having emerged as "a pluralist political system and civil society competing in the world markets and plugged into the Internet."

Russian domestic reform is not a favour Putin does for America; it is imposed on him by reality, as he has pointed out in his own thoughtful manifesto, "Russia at the Turn of the Millennium," published on Dec. 28, 1999, just before he became acting president. There are some ways we can and should help, but, in the end, Russian domestic economic reform is a Russian internal problem that depends largely on Russian decisions.

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The deepest foreign policy challenge posed by Russia is how a potentially powerful country with a turbulent history can evolve a stable relationship with the rest of the world. For four centuries, imperialism has been Russia's basic foreign policy as it has expanded from the region around Moscow to the shores of the Pacific, the gates of the Middle East and the centre of Europe, relentlessly subjugating weaker neighbours and seeking to overawe those not under its direct control.

From the Holy Alliance to the Brezhnev doctrine, Russia has often identified its security with imposing its domestic structure on its neighbours and beyond. Russia has only peripherally shared in the Enlightenment and has never experienced a genuine democracy. Now reduced to the boundaries of Peter the Great in Europe, Russia must adjust to the loss of its empire even as it builds historically unfamiliar domestic institutions. The West does it to self no favour by pretending that Russia has already culminated a process in fact only in its very inception, or to celebrate Putin for qualities he has not been in office long enough to demonstrate.

Paradoxically, Putin may prove an effective interlocutor because he does not seem willing to play the game of appealing to our preconceptions. He emphatically does not share the Western assessment of Russia's internal evolution. In his seminal manifesto, Putin declared

that "it will not happen, if it ever happens at all, that Russia will become the second edition of, say, the United States or Great Britain.... For Russians, a strong state is not an anomaly which should be got rid of. Quite the contrary, they see it as a guarantor of order and the initiator and the main driving force of any change." Putin proposed to base domestic reform in Russia not on Western individualism but on what he described as the traditional values of Russia — in his words: patriotism, belief in Russia's greatness, statism and social solidarity.

Putin explicitly reaffirmed Russia's imperial tradition in his inaugural address: "We must know our history, know it as it really is, draw lessons from it and always remember those who created the Russian state, championed its dignity and made it a great, powerful and mighty state." This attitude was reflected in a Russian national security policy document adopted on Oct. 5, 1999, when Putin was prime minister: "... to create a single economic domain with the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States" — that is, all the former constituent republics of the Soviet Union (with the exception of the Baltic states, which are nevertheless facing constant Russian pressure).

The document does not define what is meant by a "single domain." Even were it possible to confine such an ambition to the economic field, it would surely be resisted by almost all the former subject states. But

eagerness to foster groupings whose proclaimed aim is to weaken so-called American hegemony. America should respect legitimate Russian security interests. But this presupposes a Russian definition of "legitimate" compatible with the independence of Russia's neighbours and such serious American concerns as proliferation of nuclear and missile technology.

President Clinton has implied another major objective on his visit to Moscow: a breakthrough on arms control, specifically regarding the ABM treaty, missile defence and reductions of offensive weapons. A word of caution is in order. The administration is highly uncomfortable with missile defence. If unavoidable for domestic reasons, it clearly prefers to squeeze it into a framework where it is confined to threats from so-called rogue states such as North Korea. Yet an ABM system aimed at North Korea will also be useful against a threat from China, and a strategic defence against China that omits Russia implies a definition of national security priorities that will profoundly affect all other international relationships. A lame-duck president should not attempt definitive breakthroughs on so controversial a subject.

As for offensive limitations, the administration is proceeding with the same avoidance of public and congressional consultations that wrecked the Comprehensive Test Ban treaty. There has been no public discussion or serious briefing with respect to the implications of a ceiling of 1,500 warheads that the administration is reportedly seeking. How is this to be distributed among existing categories of weapons? Does it require different types of weapons? What is the relationship to missile defence? What would be the impact on global deterrence and foreign policy commitments?

While Putin is concentrating on the modernization of Russia, which has its own momentum, our challenge is to deal with its international consequences. And, in what is left of the Clinton administration, the best that can be achieved in this respect is to start, rather than conclude, a dialogue.

Courtesy: The Dawn of Pakistan.

Clueless in Drought

by Ajit Chak

INDIANS have lived with drought since time immemorial. Communities have built water-harvesting structures and learnt to treasure the value of every raindrop. All this has been done keeping in mind that it does not rain throughout the year and it may not rain next year. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that the Indian media has no sense of history.

The media's reaction to the drought is the same as their reaction to a fire or a gas leak tragedy. They are treating it like a catastrophe, not as a process that needs to be managed. To begin with when other sections of society were talking about the drought as far back as October, the mainstream media woke up to it a few weeks ago, that too because water riots broke out in Gujarat resulting in casualties. Something the media understands. Next came a flood of drought-related stories in the press. But the understanding of the crisis was in the disaster mode and the issues that were raised were about disaster relief, almost as if they were talking about a cyclone or an earthquake. One nearly expected television reporters to ask questions like what is rain, followed by what is drought and then talk about casualty figures.

But a drought is not a catastrophe. It can be managed. As part of this process communities try and anticipate the crisis. They do so by taking measures to conserve and harvest water. Water use is regulated.

Where the ecology is fragile, farmers desist from planting water-intensive crops like sugarcane and rice. More than 60 villages have proven that drought is a myth and that this system works in the Alwar district of Rajasthan and the Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh. Even in this drought there is water for drinking and irrigation in the wells out there.

While it is good that the media has finally woken up to the drought, they should try and cover it more as a process than as an event. There should be a post-drought coverage as well so that issues of water and the role of communities in managing it are kept under public scrutiny. We don't need drought relief but relief against drought.

Then also there should be an analysis of what goes on in the name of drought-relief measures. There is a story that dates back to the time of the Nawabs of Avadh. The kingdom was experiencing a severe drought. As part of the drought relief work it was decided that a palace be built in Lucknow. The people were provided with work and food. Even the nobles and high officials were provided with work. While the workers were paid for raising the walls during the day, the nobles were paid for pulling down the walls at night, as it would be beneath their status to be seen mingling with the common folk. Everybody loved the drought.

Down to Earth Features



A water pipeline passes through a lake

Flash Flood Management in Haor Areas

by M A Matin

FLOOD Forecasting and Warning centre has started issuing flood bulletins from 1st of May 2000. I could locate a flash flood warning message issued by the centre as follows:

Flash Flood Warning Message: 2nd May 2000

The prevailing flash flood situation in northeastern part (greater Sylhet) of the country may deteriorate further as there is possibility of further rainfall around that region.

The sequence of events were as follows:

Date	River level situation	Rainfall
1/5/2000	Surma at Kanairghat is flowing 74 cm above DL. Kushiya at Amalshid was flowing only 15 cm below DL. River levels at Sheola and Habiganj were not available.	Rainfall recorded at Sylhet, Moulavi bazar and Monu Railway bridge ranged from 62 to 91 mm. Rainfall at Sheola, Kanairghat and Sunamganj were not available.
2/5/2000	Water level at Sheola, Kanairghat and Sunamganj were not available. But it could be guessed, Kanairghat continued to be above DL and Kushiya at Amalshid, Monu at Monu railway bridge and Khowai at Habiganj crossed DL.	Rainfall at Sylhet, Moulavi bazar, Habiganj and Monu Railway bridge ranged from 30 to 111 mm. Rainfall at Sheola, Kanairghat and Sunamganj were not available.
3/5/2000	Water level at Sheola, Kanairghat and Sunamganj were not still available. But it could be guessed, Kanairghat continued to be above DL and Kushiya, Monu and Khowai continued to flow above DL.	Rainfall at Sylhet, Moulavi bazar, Habiganj and Monu Railway bridge ranged from 12 to 28 mm. Rainfall at Sheola, Kanairghat and Sunamganj were not available.

On 5th May Surma, Monu and Khowai fell below DL while the Kushiya fell below danger level the next day.

I don't remember to have seen any news about this flood which caused the Surma, Kushiya, Monu and Khowai to remain above DL simultaneously for 2 to 4 days. This is a very critical period for the haor areas of Sylhet that grows only one crop during the year. The harvesting is generally complete by end of May. How did this flood affect the boro crop?

The only news I found in a section of the press on 15/5/2000 where a UNB reported news item dated Netrokona May 11 says:

"Boro paddies on vast tracks of land in haor areas of 5 upazilas were inundated as flood wa-

harvest is complete. Not all the haors have protection by submersible embankments and boro crops in these haors have to depend upon protection by natural levee (kanda lands along the banks of the rivers) and closure of interconnecting canals between haors and rivers.

Let us examine this year's early flood in relation to water regime at Sunamganj water level gauge shown above. The upper and lower curve are the recorded maximum and minimum April-June water level while the middle curve is the median curve for the period of record (1949-95). This year between 1-12 May the water level (shown by symbol XXX) reached almost the maximum level of the season. In fact since water level at Sunamganj was not

available on 2nd and 3rd May, we do not know if the river level touched or crossed the maximum level. It is also noticed that the median level at Sunamganj by end of May is 6.56 m-PWD but water level on 4th May rose to 7.38 i.e. 82 cm (2'-8") above median level.

How often such levels are expected at Sunamganj? An analysis of water level at Sunamganj for the 1st fortnight of May (during 1949-95) shows that this level has a return period of about eight years and was exceeded only four times during the period of 47 years as shown below:

Year	HWL (1-15 May)
1991	8.35
1977	7.62
1992	7.43
1956	7.40
2000	7.36

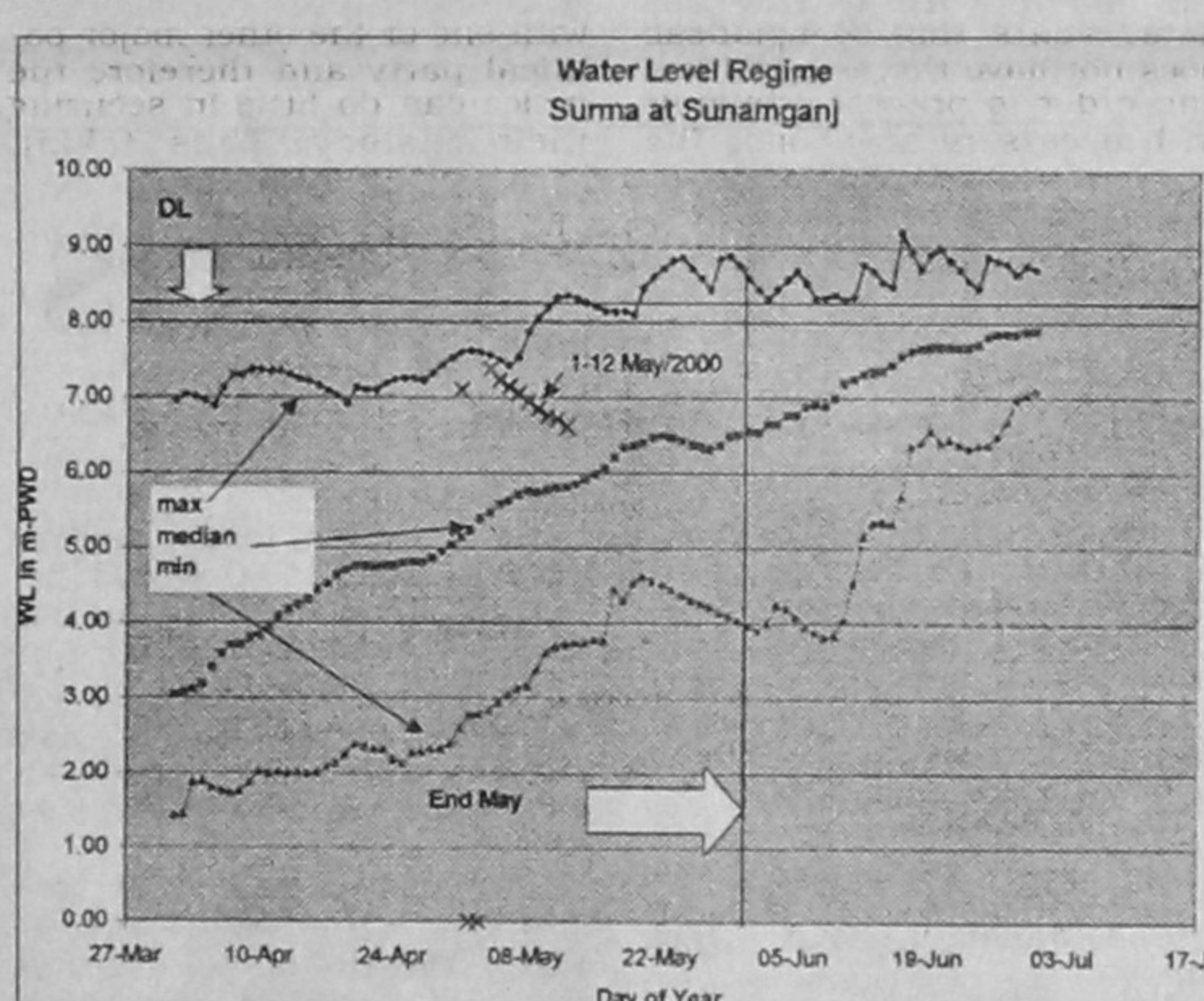
I met one of my friends on May 13 working in Jamaiganj upazila with CNRS. He said boro crops suffered damages in Pagner haor and Halir haor. Some of the breaches occurred in the temporary closures of interconnecting canals between haor and the peripheral rivers. Only a field survey can determine the extent of damages to the boro crop.

This area is far downstream from Sunamganj on the Surma. In Jamaiganj thana the Halir haor lies on the right bank while Pagner haor lies on the left bank. Some distance downstream of Jamaiganj the flow of two other rivers (Bhogai-Kangsa and Bhanu-Baulal) join the Surma. It will be of some interest to compare flood level at Sunamganj with those in the haor areas at Mohanganj and at Sukdebpur as follows:

Comparison of annual Flood levels

Could we think of an improved management of this flash flood? We have to remember

Stations	Surma	Bhogai-Kangsa	Bhanu-Baulal
Period	1949-95	1964-95	1982-94
Max	9.46	8.72	8.08
avg	8.58	7.67	7.23
min	7.24	6.99	6.47
max-min	2.22	1.73	1.61
max-avg	0.88	1.05	0.85



ber two important points in this connection:

- it is very difficult to increase the lead-time of flash flood forecast.
- even if the warning of flash flood warning is received how the boro crop growers can be benefited.

Let us consider the case of flash flood of May 2000 in Sylhet region. Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre issued flash flood warning on May 2. Now the points to be considered are:

- could the warning be issued earlier than 2nd May?
- did the warning on flash flood reach the stakeholders on time?
- what the farmers are supposed to do on receipt of the warning message?

Flood forecasting and warning centre had to act on a limited amount of data. They did not even get all the data from

their regular monitoring stations. So this situation needs attention and improvement to address the first point.

Regarding the 2nd point, who are the stakeholders? Boro crop growers of course. Then among others, we may consider upazila administration LGED, and BWDB officials at field level. Did these stakeholders receive the warning message? I think, at this time no clear-cut arrangement exists to reach the warning message to the stakeholders at that level.

Next point is what the farmers and other stakeholders are supposed to do on receipt of the warning message? We have to remember, not very many things can be done within the short lead time flash flood forecasts. Even then, little bits of improvement in different stages in an organised community can bring substantial benefit. The important point is that the community must respond to the warning message promptly and decisively.

What can be done to improve the performance of FF&WC? They must get the required data on a real time basis. Without placing all the burden on the FF&WC we may think of beneficiary participation in this regard. For example, let upazila administration take the responsibility of operating a water level station at Jamaiganj on the Surma (a good location for monitoring flash floods in Pagner haor and Halir haor).

They can use the facility of Grameen Phone if available to monitor water level and rainfall to FF&WC at Dhaka. Otherwise wireless facility of Police Department could be used. This will tremendously improve flash flood warning capability of FF&WC for vulnerable areas by beneficiary participation. Based on experience gained during initial operation, further optimisation of station network can be done.

Use of Grameen Phone will also enable the stakeholders to receive the flash flood warning messages.

Now with some improvement in data and warning message transmission to stakeholders, the next question is what to do on receipt of flash flood warning message. Appropriate actions to be taken will develop with experience. To start with we can have some of the following or similar points as our mental agenda:

- Important flash flood warning messages to act on will only come once in five years or so. People are likely to forget and warning messages will alert people at the time of emergency.
- as mentioned elsewhere, of necessity many of the interconnecting canals of haors with the rivers are kept open for fishing or for boat communication. These are hurriedly closed with the onset of flash flood season. This works quite well in normal years, but becomes every serious point of weakness during years of flash flood. So the stakeholder community has to organise themselves to address this problem.
- can be not conceive a community combat force to fight flash flood? How? Here in this case one stake is only up to end of May. If the community and stockholders are organised, they will find out, whether stocks of gunny bags, a listed youths, boats and spades or anything else could help them to fight the flash flood for which a judicious warning message has been issued.

This concept of beneficiary participation in flash flood management (flash flood forecasting and flood fighting) is worth trying.

The writer is retired Director BWDB

Wall Street on Trial

Justin Pope writes from Boston

FOR some kidney dialysis and cancer patients, the drug is a potential lifesaver. By stimulating red blood cell production, it can head off potentially fatal anaemia.

For drug makers, Eprex is an extraordinarily lucrative substance — already its market is worth billions of dollars and it could be worth billions more. In a patent infringement trial started Monday (May 15) in Boston federal court, arguments center on who has the right to produce it. Wall Street and the biotech industry will be paying close attention.

Amgen holds patents on the protein, which is known generically as erythropoietin and accounted for 1.8 billion dollars in sales last year for the Thousand Oaks, California-based biotech giant.

But a smaller company Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Transkaryotic Therapies Inc. or TKT, has found another way to make the protein that makes the drug work. Amgen says TKT is violating the patents it holds on Eprex, but TKT says its process is entirely new and could not have been envisioned when Amgen patented its technique.

While Amgen puts cloned human genes into hamster ovary cells to produce Eprex, TKT induces human cells to make the protein in a laboratory culture. Its version of the drug is now in clinical trials.

Wall Street is interested not just because of the billions at stake over Eprex, but because TKT could expose Amgen and other companies holding patents on other valuable proteins to competition from upstarts who find new ways to produce them.

A pretrial ruling last month narrowed the focus of this case and probably lessened the chances it will send shock waves through the industry.

In April, US District Judge William Young ruled that TKT infringed on one of Amgen's patents, limiting the scope of the trial to whether Amgen's patents are enforceable, or whether they were valid in the first place.

Experts are divided on whether the ruling puts TKT at a significant disadvantage. The company says it already conceded the patents were infringed

but believes they are invalid and unenforceable. But the issue that most interests the industry is whether Amgen owns the protein or merely one of several processes to make it.

The key issue for relevance to other cases will be whether a patent exists for the protein itself, which ultimately becomes the pharmaceutical product, said Dennis Harp of Deutsche Banc Alex Brown.

A victory for TKT could allow it to produce and sell other lucrative substances that aren't patented at the protein level, such as insulin, human growth hormone and Neupogen — an immune system boosting drug also made by Amgen. All could conceivably be copied if TKT's technology is validated.

There's potentially billions of dollars at stake, said Rebecca Eisenberg, a University of Michigan law professor.

Transkaryotic — which has no other drugs on the market — has more to lose in the case. While it has other potentially lucrative products in its pipeline, it may depend on the technology in question to make those products.

The patent suit probably won't affect attempts by Transkaryotic and its partner, the European drug giant Aventis, to break into the European and Japanese markets for Eprex, worth perhaps 1 billion dollar each.

But Transkaryotic's stock — which traded at 26.25 dollars May 12 on the Nasdaq Stock Market, giving the company a market value of about 594 million dollars — could crash or jump to \$200 a share, depending on the outcome, said Eric Schmidt, an analyst with SG Cowen Securities Corp.

Amgen, valued at 64 billion, dollars, has a stronger product line to fall back on if it loses. Schmidt estimated a 5 per cent downward revenue swing if it loses. Amgen shares finished the week at \$62.37 1/2, also on the Nasdaq.

Johnson and Johnson is also paying close attention. It holds the domestic rights to sell Eprex for cancer-related uses, and for all uses in several foreign countries. Combined worldwide sales of the drug for all uses totalled about 4 billion dollars last year. —AP

