### The Baily Star

# **US-China relations: Signs of strains**

#### HARUN UR RASHID

RESIDENT Bush's national security team of defence and foreign policy chiefs is rich in experience but their views do not seem to sit well with the existing global political reality. The question is : Does it favour an America that engages with the world or one that raises tension with Russia and Ch-

The US Defence Secretary Mr. Donald Rumsfield (68) who worked with the Nixon administration and then with Mr. Ford's, and has seen Vietnam and the Cold War, is reported to have said that Russia was one of the main offenders in selling missile technology, helping China which in turn helps Iran, Iraq and Pakistan. He strongly supports the missile defence shield to protect the US against attack or terrorism. The Secretary of State General Colin Powell (63) pledged constructive relations with China but continued military support for Taiwan. The military assistance to Taiwan irks

The strained relations between the US and China does not augur well in particular for Asian countries because relations with America and China are both important to them. The bottom line is that they all avoid a choice between China and America.

President's National Security Adviser Ms. Rice (46) appears to be more hawkish. A tough- minded academic who sees China as a potential threat, she argues that the US should never be afraid to confront Beijing when its interests collide. She supports a national missile defence shield as insurance against the rogue states. She sees India as a possible counter-weight to China

There is a view in the Bush administration that the US, under Clinton presidency, has made 'dangerous and military concessions' to the Chinese. It is argued that strategic engagement with China has confused and alienated Washington's regional allies and encouraged China to undermine those relationships. The new administration's emphasis is being placed on Japan which hosts 47,000 American troops under a Security Treaty that forms the bedrock of the US Asia-Pacific security for 50 years.

In the light of this scenario, the news of alleged Chinese involvement of laying underground optical fibre in Iraq to improve its ability to detect and target US and British military aircraft is likely to increase

tensions between the two countries President Bush is reported to have said that " it is troubling that they would be involved in helping Iraq develop a system that will endanger our pilots". It is reported that General Powell called explanation from the new Ambassador of China to Washington Yang Jiechi of the reports when he presented his

building mechanism.

credentials in recent days. General Powell appears to be so concerned that he reportedly raised the matter with Chinese officials at the UN. Both Iraq and China denied the US allegation.

It is reported that the air raids on Iraq were carried out on 16 February by US and British jets out of concern that Iragi radar and command /control stations were about to become more effective due to fibreoptic connections. US news reports quoting defence department officials have said the bombings in Iraq were timed to minimise the chances that Chinese technicians would be laying the fibre on the sites. The US has been sensitive after striking the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, killing three Chinese, in a mistaken

attack during the NATO campaigr

there is no small irony in the fact that Powell, a Gulf War hero, has to confront again Iraq equipped with its new air defence network allegedly installed by Chinese technicians Furthermore it comes at a time

against Yugoslavia in 1999.

Political analysts believe that

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when China is increasingly concerned about Bush administration's support for Taiwan, the renegade province of China. Furthermore , China views the national missile defence shield as an aggressive act as it may encourage Taiwan to declare its "independence" from Beijing.

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Barrister Harun ur Rashid is former Bangladest Ambassador to the UN, Geneva.

## Goodbye Tulu Uncle

#### SHUMIT REHMAN

ITH great regret we had to say farewell to Zeaul Hug, known as Tulu to his friends and Tulu Chacha or Uncle to the sons and daughters of his friends. As has already been stated by many of his acquaintances he was one of a kind a true friend. I would like to qualify that statement by saying that he was also a true Uncle.

He befriended the offspring of his friends like no other. He knew most of us from birth and kept in touch till death. Not from Tulu Uncle came a brief hello or the usual pleasantries that one gets from other friends of parents, but a genuine interest in your well-being, your career, your marriage and your future. Every encounter with him was prefaced with a breathexpelling bearhug, which he maintained with some force right up to his death.

Then to sit down in front of him and tell him what you were up to was something quite exceptional across the two generations. And whenever you left you would be implored to return soon, with your wife or your kids and only sometimes with your parents. He treated us like adults from fairly early on and as individuals from earlier still.

Much of his interest in the younger generation stemmed from his love of culture. As his contemporaries got older and stayed longer at home, he would ask the kids what the best films were , where the best theatres were on and when should we go. He would squeeze in a film whenever he could and would invariably come out cheerful. I remember thinking once that Tulu Uncle seemed to like all the movies

he saw and was hardly ever critical. they have not mentioned that we The films he really appreciated, he the kids were often invited as well would speak glowingly about for And when we arrived we would be days with enthusiasm. Now I see it given as big a greeting as our parents and always looked after by our was a bit similar to his friends and family, he liked them all and the host whether our age was 6 or 60. If cream of them he liked even more. a wife or brother was missing we would be berated for not bringing Just last year in London we went them and then he would be off to

DHAKA MONDAY FEBRUARY 26, 2001

uniquely his.

meet and greet the next batch in the

warm, carefree manner that was

to Jolly Aunty. He asked me matter

of-factly what I thought of her. I was

as I think most men were, in awe of

Jolly Aunty so my answer was very

positive. But I was more impressed

that I at 7 years old had been asked

my opinion of something as impor-

tant as Tulu Uncle's bride.

I was present on his wedding day

to see a play with his daughter Tulie and nephew Shakil. He turned up in the fover immaculate as ever. He easily won the prize of best-dressed Uncle. Blazer and trousers, matching tie and handkerchief and highly polished shoes. His illness was never going to make him shabby. We watched the play which he enthused about of course and then he visited the toilets. We waited outside while he threw up inside, a yellowish skin pallor the only betrayal of what had happened. It was the first time I realised that his well-groomed appearance was now covering up a lot of internalclutter.

His parties have been mentioned in other writings by his friends but

For a timely step to check the slide course after a warning) for displaying arms! It has been taken by everyone with a pinch of salt and doubts are being expressed whether the order can be implemented. As The News said, in an

a walking stick, still handsome, with

a strong voice and a full head of hair.

Those are the images I will keep

forever. For Tulu Uncle it was

always a pleasure to meet us and

entertain us. Tulu Uncle, the plea-

sure was all ours.

already volatile situation .the killing of a member of the public, though arms toting, may act as a spark for further violence. The paper thinks that the present situation in the country is conducive to that: the government is losing sympathy because of its failure to revive the economy, the reputation of the police is still that of

LETTER FROM KARACH The actual position is, The News said, the government appears powerless to do anything when arms make public a corrupt force of state repression. Moreover, if appearances. The arms recovery the miscreants kill a campaign has not yielded the expected policeman, then police morale would be shatresult and crimes continue to be tered along with any committed with sophisticated weapons, remaining public confidence in it therefore the police may decide in its discretion, as a better

to a lack of sustained political will part of valour, not to use the gun and institutional lapses, no concrete even in a situation where it is called and sustained action has been forthcoming. Therefore, the current drive to tackle the issue will need determination, as The News said, in

Besides, as The News points out arms have also been on occans, displayed by elements sym pathetic to the government but no action has been taken. Such exceptions encourage even apolitica criminals to take liberties with a ban on the use of arms. The decision to put a ban on raising funds for 'iihad has also been criticised although The News said, there might be problems with its implementation. The paper said Kashmir freedom struggle and the Afghan 'jihad' have been cited as examples. These are special cases: the Kashmiris' struggle for freedom from Indian occupa tion has been decried by Pakistan; i is also considered as a liberation struggle by Pakistan and is provided diplomatic and moral support Fund-raising in Pakistan, which is meant to provide food and clothing to refugees, provides materia support. How does the Pakistan government stop this money being used to buy arms and ammuni-tions? Therefore, The News argued that there was no justification for stopping this fund-raising. As for Afghanistan, the paper said that there was very little fighting going on there and whatever fund was being raised was going towards humani tarian relief The actual position is, The News said, the government appears powerless to do anything when arms make public appearances. The arms recovery campaign has not vielded the expected result and crimes continue to be committed with sophisticated weapons, 'almost with impunity'. What is needed therefore, is a more serious effort to get Pakistan rid of the Kalashnikov culture bequeathed by a previous military regime. Of course the track record of the last sixteen months also is not very encouraging although, as Dawn opined, the government has the courage, vision and ability to take firm and timely steps to check the county's slide in utter chaos as a result of this.

### **Bangladesh-Kuwait Maitry Hospital** A two million dollar baby without care

#### **M SHAFIULLAH**

China

WO huge sign boards on Isa Khan Avenue, Sector 6, Uttara Model Town, 15 km north of Metropolitan Dhaka unmistakably draws attention to the existence of Bangladesh-Kuwait Friendship Hospital. The seven storied 200-bed complex costs Kuwait Joint Relief Committee (KJRC) US Dollar 2 Million in 1996. But the gates were never opened. Instead cows are grazing and roaming in the sprawling

compound. A group of Kuwaiti philanthropists donated the General Hospital Building to provide medical care to the poor. KJRC Dhaka office executed the project on the plot of land allocated by RAJUK. The tender committee comprised of representatives of the relevant Bangladesh Government Departments was headed by Kuwaiti Ambassador Ibrahim Najran. M/s Noor Hossain was awarded the contract. Kuwaiti Minister for Religion and Waqf Juman Faleh Al-Azmi laid the foundation on 4 December 1993. After a number of setbacks and inordinate delay the infrastructure was completed in 1996 far behind the schedule

Strangely enough KJRC encountered another set of problem in handing over the building. There was no taker or conversely there were rival claimants. The Ministry of Health should have been the legitimate choice but PWD of the Ministry of Works became the aspirant. The possible grounds were that the land of the Hospital was a grant of RAJUK under Works

Ministry and the PWD was involved in processing the tender documents and day to day supervision of the construction. Perhaps the Ministry of Health did not show much interest in the project or raised a set of conditions that KJRC found difficult to fulfil. The rivalry was not new but

just renewed. Just to recapitulate the

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was unaware of the issue. The Ambassador while giving a resume of his ordeal said that he was about to return US Dollar 2 million to the Kuwaiti philanthropic group who donated the amount two years before for construction of a general hospital in Bangladesh. His two years' errand in the Ministries of Works. Health. PWD and in RAJUK to get them around the project sounded very familiar ring in my ears

giving a wrong signal to aspiration of an emerging free society. The response, however, was far from our submission. The officials explained that a significant portion grant to Bangladesh remain unutilized for successive years. Some African countries had better absorbing capacity and the amount

backgrounds. In mid 1993 ambassador Najran one day walked in to my office room and gave vent to his frustration over the proposed Kuwaiti General Hospital. I was then serving in the Middle East desk of

the structure was formally handed over to the Chief Engineer Mokitur Rahman of PWD and the Health the successor Kuwaiti Ambassadoi H M Abdullah al-Muhaiteeb and the KJRC engineer Tarig al-Isa on 15 March 1999. The presence, at the last moment, of the Health Minister in the ceremony was the result of personal initiative of the Kuwait

A flash back came in to my mind of a circumstance in Stockholm in 1991. Economic Counsellor Rahman Aziz and myself as the Political Counsellor went to SIDA office to persuade for restoration of full amount of Swedish grant of 150 million kronar out of which 10 million were slashed down. Our line of argument was that the undemocratic and authoritarian regime was replaced by a freely elected democratic government in

Dhaka after a decade. Sweden

being a champion of democracy

and upholder of human rights by

cutting the quantum of aid was

was pursuing certain allegations against KJRC brought by some Bangladeshis. PWD invited tender twice to run the hospital on private line. In the middle of last year another tender was floated. An American medical investment company submitted a portfolio to run it as a private hospital. No significant headway was reported was diverted to those but would be reallocated to Bangladesh if it since then. Current Ambassador Ali utilized the amount already Hussain Al-Sammak went round all earmarked. We returned with the the power corridors to make the building operational but in vain. impression that Bangladesh needed overhauling of her capacity Kuwaitis in general are dismayed

at the overall developments of Some two years after the completion of the hospital building events surrounding the KJRC office and the hospital building. Downsizing of the Dhaka office has since been underway. With winding up of the office, axe will fall on its Minister [late] Salahuddin Yusuf by Taka ten crore annual programme for Bangladesh. The withdrawal will also cast a shadow on Bangladesh-Kuwait relation which was built so painstakingly over decades.

At this point it would not perhaps be out of place to turn a page of history. Kuwaiti Foreign Minister . Ambassador. Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber Abdus Samad Azad, State Minister Al-Sabah led a delegation of a group for Foreign Affairs Abul Hassan of Islamic Foreign Ministers to Chowdhury, Works Minister Eng. Dhaka in February 1974 carrying Mosharraf Hossain, some Members invitation letter of Pakistani Presi dent Z A Bhutto for Bangladesh of Jatiyo Sangsad, ambassadors of the Arab and the Muslim countries Prime Minister Sheikh Muiibur Rahman to attend OIC summit in If time and tide wait for none it Lahore. Within 24 hours of the was more so in the case of the return of the delegation mutual recognition of Bangladesh and Kuwaiti Hospital. Another two years Pakistan took place on 16 February. rolled by. Two front iron gates got rusted and the building gathered its Bangladesh immediately became a fair share of dust. M/s Noor Hossain member of the OIC and was admitwas paid the contractual amount but ted to the UN on 17 September 1974. The same year Bangabandhu came up with a court case for an paid a state visit to Kuwait in No additional claim of about taka 8 crore 56 lac. Anti-corruption Bureau vember. As his Press Officer I had

time in his life.

our school and college days in

forties and fifties. What he read

rehearsed to us very softly and

submissively obviously to encour-

age us to extend our reading range

and keep us abreast of latest devel-

opments. He had a knack to enrich

English vocabulary that he mas-

that he had a proud possession of a

radio in forties a medium that very

few organisations, let alone individ-

uals, were equipped with. He heard

the national and international news

regularly and understood the broad-

casting voices comfortably that

many of us, to speak the truth, got

confused to learn. I clearly remem-

ber that usually during Calcutta First

Division League Football matches

played particularly between

Mohammedan Sporting Club and

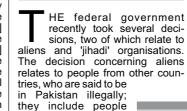
My friend had an edge over us in

tered quite appreciably.

the unique opportunity to accompany him. In his first embrace with the then Emir, Bangabandhu remarked, "You are Sheikh of oil and I am Sheikh of water". The rapport was instantaneous and infectious between them. Kuwait over years became a development partner of Bangladesh. Approximately one lac Bangladeshi wage earners are engaged in Kuwait. During the Gulf war military dimension was added which further strengthened the bilateral relation on solid foundation

Kuwaiti Hospital is a small irritant in the context of our overall bilateral relations which must be resolved by taking the following immediate steps at the high political level. [A] Outside the court settlement may be reached of the pending suit; [B] works Ministry should hand over the building to Health Ministry; C] There is no Government General hospital after BSMRMU [PG] for some millions in northern Dhaka. A high level delegation should visit KJRC Head Office to dispel misunder standing and to request them to equip the Hospital. The Kuwaiti Government could also be the alternative option; [D] Failing which the building may be given to the Diabetic Association. Still poor people will derive some benefit out of it; [F] The last resort should be the private investors at least to drive away the ghosts that are ruling the roost in the haunted hospital build-

M Shafiullah, till recently was Ambassador to Libya, Tunisia, Malta and the State of Palestine.



M J ZAHEDI

from other parts of South Asia and Myanmar. The number of all illegal aliens is said to be four million and most of them live in Karachi. This number does not include Afghans, so it can safely be assumed that it will be much higher. Whatever the num-

ber may be, there is no gainsaying the fact that the influx of illegal 'almost with impunity'. aliens has been having an adverse effect on

the country's job-market, especially because Pakistan is already a labour-abundant economy. Ťhis

influx has also adversely affected the internal security situation, because the illegal aliens live in a subterranean existence that provides ready recruits to the crime and subversion syndicates. Naturally, every government has tried to come to grips with it. But due

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With Tulu Uncle it was 'the more the merrier'. I am so glad I didn't have to face him in his last days and I am left with a memory of an upright man without

# In painful remembrance

#### A R SHAMSUL ISLAM

HE news of the demise of my bosom friend Tawfiq Aziz Khan, an eminent journalist, sports reporter and commentator. the executive editor of The Daily Star came to me surprisingly late. I was then confined to a bed of the BIRDEM Hospital after undergoing a six-and-a-half hour operation conducted with utmost loving care and profound precision by a team of doctors led by eminent surgeon ENT Head Prof ZAAmin at my neck that befriended squamous cell carcinoma. Meanwhile a lot of my old friends who were no less close to Tawfiq met me at my hospital bed but none of them told me of the passing away of Tawfig. Obviously they had intended to conceal to me how the shadow of omnivorous death was being lengthened. Do they perceive, rightly and logically, death is close to me?

In the meantime a much less acquainted, many years junior, friend of mine broke the news of the demise of Tawfig by an archaic away of reference. He was probably sure that I must have got that information much earlier since Tawfiq and I are close friends and an affair of one is to reach the other in the auickest of time

I can't describe how I felt when I learnt that Tawfiq was no more. I was then lying in a hospital bed. I felt the bed was nose diving deeper and deeper into abysmal darkness, chill and uncertainty of a grave. My heart ceased to throb, my voice was choked and my feeling stopped to work for quite an alarming period.

I met Tawfig last time on the 3rd instant, the evening before my being admitted to BIRDEM, in Salahuddin

semi-coma. As I looked at his eves till then open from very close what response he gave was unintelligible. Bhabi Saheba (Mrs Suraya) remarked that Tawfiq might have identified me. I fondly liked to believe but hard logic did not corroborate it. With my personal knowledge of cancer, I with my own hand examined his lymphnodes, necknodes that simply declared haughtily to be very aggressive, dangerous and devastating. I had practically no other option than to sink down pathetically and helplessly. In the meantime the most veteran oncologist Mr Karim took a routine check up of the patient and went back leaving an open, gloomy, hopeless indication that none of us including patient's wife, children had any difficulty or doubt to read.

What I did next being hospitalised in the BIRDEM the next day was to abandon purchasing and reading newspapers of all sorts probably in a worst exercise of escapism. An unknown fear of a known calamity must have gripped my mind to an abnormal degree. How foolishly I tried to disown that God's ordain is irrevocable and man is best to accept it in a spirit of calm resignation.

Tawfiq's qualities of head and heart are voluminous. His excellence of journalism, sports reporting and running commentaries, administrative acumen, financial discipline, organising ability, endearing colleagues and inculcating a sense of belongingness in them etc. were indeed vast that have been reflected in the newspapers by way of tribute. It is very likely that his colleagues, friends, admirers will pour out their heart in praise, respect and love of

Hospital. I think he was then in a this giant journalist on the pages of the newspaper, journals and books to remember this ever lovable. enjoyable personality. I am not going to assess Tawfiq's

were present on the occasion.

awfiq Aziz Khai

standing in those fields. Painfully aware of my poor limitations I know certainty that I am unfit to take such a scholastic task in my hand. This is the exclusive domain of critics.

academicians, analysts. I will simply remember Tawfiq in some of his personal, private traits of character. I cannot remember when Tawfig and I were first known But it must not be later than we used to wear, some undercloth in our 'very first stage of baby'. We read in same school (Pabna Zilla the School) and crossed the barrier of school by passing the matriculation exam together in a hilarious and conquering mood.

As a schoolboy Tawfiq was Mohunbagan or East Bengal we highly unconventional in mood and flocked around Tawfiq's radio set to method. He ridiculed the idea of a listen to the running commentaries boy memorising his class lessons delivered by Pearson Sureta, Vizzy by burning midnight lamp and etc. and when the voices of the commentators, in exciting moments vomiting the memorised particles of the match, got drowned by the the next day in the class to arrest

loud cheers of the fidgety supportmundane appreciation from the attending teachers. He identified ers we looked askingly at Tawfig to this type of labour of memorisation tell us what actually happened on with that of a coolie loading and the field as the remnant faint voice of unloading goods at a station or ghat. the commentators that could pass Rightly did he perceive that too through wild cheers of the crowd was in his grasp and intelligibility. much dependence on memorisation kills the power of imagination of a

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As a friend Tawfiq was unquesdisciple rendering him into a 'memtionably the loveliest. He was ory box' unable to move on its own master of the art of endearing one when the path is uncharted which a almost to the point of pleasant infatuation. We greatly enjoyed true fighter has to encounter many a being captured and captivated by his unalloyed love and affection Tawfiq was devoted to reading precisely blended with newer brand journals, periodicals, souvenirs, particularly those in English, which of wit and humour. He lovingly enquired more of less privileged and were very limited in number and that less fortunate friends. Mirth and too poorly available to us in those of

> closer to him. Tawfiq adored play-ground over anything else. He was consistently the first to turn on it daily and unbrokenly the last to leave it. He soon proved himself a dynamic game maker. This rare virtue of his transcended other domains like journalism with amazing ease and exquisiteness

jollity was the hallmark of his char-

acter. Gloom hardly dared to come

Last time towards the end of December 1999 when I got a part of my cancer-affected tongue excised he was my guide and guardian What an irony of fate is that when Tawfiq himself was attacked with that fatal disease I could not prove even an attendant of him. This sense of guilt I shall have to bear till the last day of my life which, in a liberal calculation, may not be far off. May Tawfiq forgive me.

Practically I had no inkling that Tawfiq was sick before the middle of December last. When I learnt it I was having a problematic health. Still I dashed to Dhaka by a coach on the 22nd December last. But fate

ordained otherwise. On the way I had to drop in because of sudden occurrence of sickness likely to be linked to my old heart problem (MI). Tawfiq was a very useful person

to the world of journalism of Bangladesh as well as to his friends' circle. He left us all at the call of Almighty God to serve what of his purpose we do not know. After venturing bypass surgery at Birala Hospital a few years back he was really consistently going tough attending office day and night showing no sign of tiredness physically or mentally. The end part of his life which may be counted as approximately four months from 3rd week of Oct 2000 when his disease was detected to 11th February 2001 when he breathed his last, was so aggravatingly painful declaring man's utter helplessness in the hand of relentless fate. His wife, two sons, one daughter-in-law, brothers, sisters, relatives, well-wishers, friends took fantastic care and nursing of the patient whole day and night round the clock all through his ailments. By what count was an innocent fellow like Tawfiq plunged into such untold sufferings will remain as a mystery to us. Yes, the Holy Scriptures say: "There are many things unknown and unknowable beyond human comprehension." But will the ever escalating void created by the demise of Tawfig be filled up in all futurity?

Let the departed soul of Tawfig rest in eternal peace. Let these poor words of his poorer friend reach out to his ear through the spiritual communion of Heaven.

A R Shamsul Islam, retired Principal of Govt Mohila College, Pabna, has written this piece from BIRDEM hospital bed.

e implementation stage. Only will determine the success or failure of the operation. It is indeed difficult to draw out

the aliens because it is easy for them to merge into the crowds and, thanks to the many mafias profiting from the lucrative trade, they acquire not only national identity papers but also citizenship, more often by official default. Only through an imaginative and credible mix of carrot and stick can they be induced to prefer registration (and therefore a legal presence) to a clandestine existence. Also crucial will be the ability of the officialdom to put the fear of punishment into the hearts of those who employ, and often exploit, the aliens. It must however be kept in mind

that while the present attempt to control the damage caused by past neglect is commendable, its success will depend ultimately on a concomitant ability to stem future inflows. This can be facilitated immensely by regional cooperation. But The News thinks that this will be difficult because of increasing population and poverty in South Asia, Labour outflows relieve the mother countries and this results in implicit official sanction. It is one of the main reasons why past efforts to repatriate or register the aliens have not been successful

But in any case the mafias trafficking in human cargo will have to be smashed, said The News. Alien registration will have to be backed up by strict and sustained law enforcement. Only by making illegal aliens' entry into the country difficult, if not impossible, and illegal stay riskier than profitable, can there be any hope for the success of the present drive.

The decisions regarding the 'jihadi' organisations give evidence of the government's good intentions but The Nation has raised several questions on whether the government can deliver on the decision. One of the decisions gives the lice the power to shoot





