

# Sharif letter to Benazir boosts alliance hopes

UNI & PTI

DUBAI/NEW DELHI, Nov. 25. — Pakistan's strongest political alliance against a military government could emerge tomorrow if the Pakistan People's Party-led Grand Democratic Alliance admits Mr Nawaz Sharif's Muslim League in its fold.

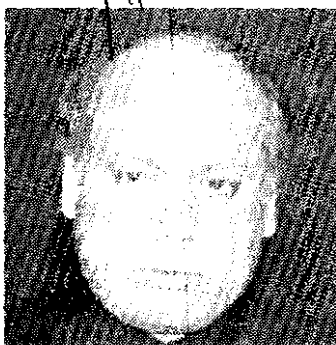
Mr Nawaz Sharif has sent a taped apology to PPP leader, Mrs Benazir Bhutto to meet a precondition to forge a political alliance between the two parties.

During the 30-minute taped apology recorded sometime earlier this year, Mr Sharif termed Mrs Bhutto his "good sister."

Mrs Bhutto had demanded a taped apology which was recorded and handed over by Mr Sharif through his wife Mrs Kulsoom Nawaz during one of her visits to the Attock fort, the *Gulf News* said. The tape was later sent to Mrs Bhutto in a foreign country.

But the tape, meant only for the PPP leader, came into wider circulation. Mrs Kulsoom Nawaz has denied the existence of any such tape, the daily said.

Criticising the apology, PML sources told *Gulf News* that "within our party culture, an apology in such phrases by a man to woman is especially awkward. PML men are expected to be brave and bold." "PML rebels have threatened to air the tape in public, the daily added.



Mr Nawaz Sharif (above) and Mrs Benazir Bhutto



Meanwhile, Democratic Alliance head, Mr Nawabzada Nasarullah Khan told BBC (Urdu) that if the PPP-PML tie-up comes through, it would be for the first time that all major political parties would jointly launch a campaign for restoration of democracy.

Mr Nasarullah Khan said this was the first time a military ruler had no political support.

Pakistan's two main political parties — the PPP and the PML will now be together

## SAHABA THREAT

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, Nov. 25. — A prominent religious group of Pakistan, Sipah-e-Sahaba, has announced that it will impose Islamic system in 20 cities across the country by 2001 and has directed people to withdraw cases from courts and file them before 'qazi courts' or face death.

In Dogdara village of Dir, people who do not withdraw their cases from courts and file them before 'qazi courts', will face death penalty.

Allama Tahsin Qadri, chairman of the group, said people would be asked not to seek justice from existing courts as they were following the judicial system inherited from the British, "replete with shortcomings and lacunae".

"They will be asked to go to mosques in accordance with the Islamic system."

against the military rule and it is going to be the strongest political alliance in Pakistan's history, said Mr Khan.

The PML, virtually headed by Mrs Nawaz, has passed a resolution favouring its alliance with the Democratic Alliance.

**Sharif charge:** Mr Sharif has accused the military regime of preventing his lawyer from meeting him, adds a report from Islamabad.

THE STATESMAN

26 NOV 2000

# Army team raids Dawn office in Pak

Mubashir Zaidi  
Islamabad, September 28

AN ARMY inspection team accompanied by a representative of Sindh Government raided the office of Pakistan's largest circulated daily newspaper Dawn at Karachi yesterday, the management of the Dawn Group of Newspapers said today.

The Dawn group issued a press release stating that an Army monitoring team, consisting of six armed forces personnel, accompanied by three engineers of the Karachi Electric Supply Corporation (KESC) and a professed representative of the Electrical Inspector, Government of Sindh, arrived this morning at the group's headquarters at Karachi.

"The contingent of the Army monitoring team and the KESC engineers insisted on an immediate inspection and testing of all the existing electric installations, with a notice under the Electricity Act, 1910. The team threatened with immediate disconnection of the electric supply

and the consequential stoppage of all newspaper printing and publishing activities if immediate access was not allowed," the press release stated.

The Dawn spokesman said that despite strong protest, the inspection team demanded immediate entry and access to all floors, particularly publishers, editors and journalists' offices, satellite communication rooms and secured areas where sensitive pre-press and printing technology effects of the daily printing of Dawn and its sister publications were kept.

After a gruelling four hours inspection, the spokesman said, the Army monitoring team prepared a statement and ordered the management representatives present to sign it. "Although the statement virtually cleared the Dawn's headquarters of any charges, the representatives of the management refused to sign it on the grounds that duress was being applied by the monitoring team, particularly since nothing untoward had been discovered," the spokesman added.

The newspaper management announced that it would release a report to various human rights and civil rights organisations both nationwide and internationally. The Group has also lodged a strong protest with both the military and the civilian authorities in Islamabad and Karachi.

The editor and special correspondent of Dawn were served a legal notice by the military government after the paper published a series of reports and analysis criticising the visit of country's military ruler Chief Executive General Pervez Musharraf to the United Nations Millennium Summit held in Washington early this month. The paper refused to print a clarification of its stories as directed in the legal notice.

Though it could not be ascertained whether Wednesday's raid on its office was conducted to suppress the management, a government spokesman has denied the impression that the raid was done in retaliation of the critical reporting of the paper regarding the performance of the military government.

# THE ASIAN AGE

30 SEPTEMBER 2000

## Censored

The punitive raid carried out by the Pakistan army on the offices of newspaper *Dawn* deserves to be condemned in the strongest possible terms. It is the first indication, insofar as the press in Pakistan is concerned, that Chief Executive General Pervez Musharraf is a man in uniform and not at ease with a free press. One of the main issues being highlighted by the military regime through its articulate information minister Javed Jabbar was the supposed commitment to the freedom of the press. Mr Jabbar regaled visiting journalists from India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka with pious declarations, that the press was and would remain absolutely free. General Musharraf also said the same, the effort being to prove that this military regime was different from others that had preceded it and proof for the sceptics was provided by the absolute freedom guaranteed to the media. Of course, journalists in Pakistan were sceptical about the military ruler's long term ability to stand by his word. *Dawn*, in particular, decided to play the role of a free newspaper and did not mince words in pointing out the foibles of the military regime. Its opinion columns, in particular, contained strong critiques of the Musharraf's dispensation which had not been taken well by the Chief Executive and his men. It is amazing how, in this subcontinent, governments come to power applauding the role of a free press. And within weeks, and months, become very sensitive to the same free press. Insecurity that becomes part of the mental make up of any dispensation in power eventually leads to a direct confrontation with the media. This takes many forms. It can be as subtle as the denial of access to even routine government information, to censorship, to arrests and closure of newspaper establishments. The army which carried out a four-hour raid on the offices of the *Dawn* has sent out the first signal. Dissent will no longer be tolerated. The *Dawn* is a professional newspaper and was able to withstand the raid with firm dignity. The management refused to sign a paper proffered by the raiding party in uniform, making it clear that it was not obliged to accept any certificates from the army. But the smaller newspapers might not find it so easy to resist the pressure and are likely to fall in line without even being asked to. This is really what the first raid was designed to achieve: to silence the susceptible press and to send out a signal to the others that they are under scrutiny. The *Dawn* is Pakistan's leading English daily, with a wide international readership. Obviously General Musharraf's insecurity has allowed criticism to penetrate the uniform, to the point where he is willing to invite world criticism for his action so long as he is able to muzzle the critics. The entire press of Pakistan must unite to face this challenge. This is not a *Dawn* versus the rest issue, as some sections of the media might like to project. It is a freedom of the press versus government issue and should be fought as such. The media has received the raw end of the stick from successive governments in Pakistan, with little difference between so called democratic rulers and military regimes. All have made use of the divisions within to wield a selective stick. It is time now for all newspapers to get together and make it clear to General Musharraf and his men, that they will face the challenge together and with total unity. The choice then before him, will not be selective targeting. But censorship for the entire press or freedom. Given his desire to placate the world he will probably find it very difficult to impose total censorship as a policy, and will just have to swallow the anger that has so visibly been aroused by a media doing its duty.

HD-13  
11/10

# I won't stay in power beyond SC deadline: Musharraf

PAKISTAN

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, OCT. 10 The Pakistani Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, today said the military had no intention of continuing in power beyond October 12, 2002 fixed by the Supreme Court.

Addressing reporters at Lahore, ahead of the first anniversary of the military coup that saw the ouster of Mr. Nawaz Sharif, Gen. Musharraf said neither had he any political ambition nor would the Army stay in power beyond 2002.

"We will return to our place exactly after three years in accordance with the deadline given by the Supreme Court in May. I can give a surety bond that I will not form a political bond. All such talk is nonsense. We will hand over power to elected people and we have an elaborate plan to achieve this." Gen. Musharraf, who has been under pressure from within the country and outside to announce a road-map for the return of democracy, said that after district-level elections between December and July next, the Government would hold provincial and national elections. Elections at the district level, in which party representatives are barred from taking part, are being held under a 'devolution plan' envisaging greater powers at the grass roots level. The plan has been rejected by most of the parties as being "unworkable and impractical".

Gen. Musharraf accused vested interests and unidentified external forces of creating a sense of despondency in society. He was willing to concede inadequate progress only in the accountability process. It was an ambitious programme launched by the military regime to bring to book corrupt and inefficient politicians, bureaucrats and business persons.

The Chief Executive termed "exaggeration" reports of large-scale flight of capital and immigration of Pakistanis since the military takeover. "The situation is not alarming and there is no truth, whatsoever, in the baseless claim that the country is being deserted. There is no cause for worry. If 30,000 out of 140 million people are going abroad, it should not create any ripple," he said.

Gen. Musharraf spelled six thematic achievements of his Government: Rebuilding trust between the people and the Government; a strict code of ethics for those who hold public offices; complete check on macro-level corruption; evenhanded accountability; unprecedented level of freedom of speech and press and strengthening of relations of Pakistan with the international community.

### Our stand on Kashmir principled: Pak.

There is no change in Pakistan's stand on Kashmir and it will continue to provide political and diplomatic support to those engaged in the fight against the Indian Government, the military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, said today.

Addressing a news conference in Lahore, Gen. Musharraf said Pakistan's policy on Kashmir was based on a 'principled stand'. He denied the suggestion that the problems of Pakistan economy were related to Kashmir. "It is just a fallacy. 53 per cent of Pakistan's budget goes towards debt-servicing," he said. The Chief Executive accused India of resorting to unprovoked firing and violence across the Line of Control and said Pakistan fired back at the Indian positions only in self-defence. "We are showing maximum restraint despite India's continuous aggressive actions along the LoC, the de facto border in Kashmir".

Pakistan favoured a settlement of the Kashmir dispute through dialogue and regretted the "negative" attitude of India to peace moves. Gen. Musharraf referred to the offer of a no-war pact and mutual reduction of forces that he made in his speech at the United Nations millennium session.

Gen. Musharraf accused 'external forces' of attempting to destabilise his Government as it was engaged in reconstruction and development. "I will not go into details to describe the external forces, but I know they are trying

to destabilise my government because it is putting the economy on the path of progress".

In another development, Pakistani intelligence agencies have claimed to have arrested seven agents of the RAW and recovered explosive material and ammunition from them. They have been accused of involvement in 'heinous crimes' after receiving training in several places in India.

### I am not under pressure to quit: Tarar

The Pakistani President, Mr. Rafiq Tarar, has dispelled media speculation that he is under pressure to step down from office.

In an informal chat with reporters here after launching a nationwide anti-polio campaign, Mr. Tarar blamed vested interests wishing to destabilise the Government for spreading such rumours.

"I do not wish to continue in office a minute more than God wishes to me say. I have full faith in Allah who has entrusted me with this responsibility. My primary objective of holding the office is serve the nation," he said.

Mr. Tarar, who became the President during Mr. Nawaz Sharif's regime, managed to stay on despite the military coup.

Though the Chief Executive has denied that he has any plan to take over as the President, speculation persists in the Pakistani media of such a possibility.

THE HINDU

11 OCT 2002

## Migrants Forever

The visit of a delegation of Pakistani MQM (*Muttahida Quami Movement*) to India and the declaration of the MQM leader Altaf Hussein that the partition was a blunder have not come a day too soon. The forefathers of the 20 million Mohajirs, whom the MQM represents, were the creators of Pakistan. Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan, the first leaders of Pakistan, were themselves Mohajirs. By contrast, those already established in that province, the Punjabi Muslims, were not keen on the creation of Pakistan. Once Pakistan was created -- because of British Cold War strategic compulsion, and the complementary demands of the Muslim League -- they were not prepared to subsume their interests and dominance into a larger Pakistani identity. With the assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan and assumption of the office of the governor-general by Ghulam Mohammed in 1951, Punjab began dominating Pakistan. When the Punjabi-dominated army seized power, Pakistan turned into something of a greater Punjab, resulting in the alienation of the majority Bangladeshis, and their eventual secession. However, that only further enhanced the dominance of the Punjabis, who now constituted an absolute majority within the population, the armed forces, government as well as agriculture and industry. The contradiction between the concepts of Pakistan as a multicultural homeland for all Indian Muslims and as a greater Punjab, got exacerbated during the third martial law of General Zia-ul-Haq. The Mohajirs who were largely from the Gangetic plains, and had their own distinct Mughal and Lucknowi cultures, were treated as aliens by the Punjabi majority.

While the refugees from Pakistan were absorbed without any discrimination in the middle class-led Indian democracy -- one of them, I K Gujral, went on to become prime minister and another, L K Advani, is second-in-command in the ruling coalition -- the landlord-dominated Pakistani polity did not care to absorb the Mohajirs. The stifling of democracy by the Punjabi landlord-army-bureaucracy combine perpetuated their alien status. Pakistan's opportunistic alliance with the United States during the Cold War further enabled the feudocracy to consolidate its power and prevent the healthy development of a middle class. Since Pakistan chose to cast itself as the opposite of India, those who were products of the rich composite culture of the Delhi-Agra Lucknow belt could not fit in with a state that rejected pluralism and multiculturalism. General Zia-ul-Haq successfully divided the Mohajirs and the native Pakistanis, particularly the Sindhis. Thus the community was victimised a second time, having already suffered the divide and rule policy of the British. Though General Musharraf, himself a Mohajir, talked of doing justice to minorities immediately after the coup, the last 12 months has seen no evidence of any move in that direction. As Pakistan's economic condition deteriorates, ethnic tensions are likely to exacerbate with adverse impact on the minorities. Successive regimes in Pakistan have prevented the millions of Mohajir families from maintaining contacts with their relatives in India -- a policy analogous to the one practised by North Korea. Now the Mohajirs are asserting themselves and demanding federal autonomy in Pakistan. While wisdom would demand that the demand is conceded, it is doubtful if the Punjabi feudocracy will oblige. The future of Pakistan looks bleak and that should be a matter of concern to India.

## Milosevic's Exit

THE TIMES OF INDIA

7 OCT 2000

A year after seizing power, Pakistan's junta is secure in office as the nation continues to sink

# Sliding towards anarchy

BY BRAHMA CHELLANEY

NEXT WEEK'S anniversary of the world's first ever military coup in a nuclear-armed nation is a reminder that democracy is a global norm that can be successfully flouted. The *jeihad*-spouting generals in Islamabad seem firmly ensconced in power even though their one-year rule has neither halted their country's slide towards chaos nor reversed its international isolation. In fact, military rule has served as one more negative label for a country that conjures up images of fanaticism, terrorism and gun-toting *militants*.

The radicalisation of the Pakistan military since the time of Gen. Mohammed Zia ul-Haq has progressed to the extent that its generals are increasingly beginning to appear like *militants* in uniform. With the *mullah*-generals calling the shots, there can only be trouble for neighbouring States. It is no accident that, except for authoritarian China and the Islamabad-backed thugs in power in Kabul, States all around see Pakistan as proliferating, what Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee has called "practitioners of medieval religious extremism". Pakistan, or 'Land of the Pure', is looking so dirtied and bloodied that it has become, as Robert Kaplan says in the Atlantic Monthly, "the lawless frontier".

With the military on the political saddle for half of Pakistan's existence, last October's coup came hardly as a surprise. What was a surprise, however, was the West's readiness to tolerate the coup without seeking early results from the new rulers. And more acute over the past year, the West is still willing to put up with military rule, as shown by the finalisation of the IMF's latest \$ 580 million debt-relief package for Islamabad.

If the West wanted, it could have used Pakistan's deep economic vulnerability to keep on a tight leash a regime led by the general who masterminded last year's villainous Kargil invasion. The West still has an opportunity to exert more pressure on the regime so that it frees itself both from the grip of narco-fundamentalist forces and from its own compulsive belligerence towards India.

Self-styled 'chief executive' Pervez Musharraf's record in power speaks volumes despite his moderate facade: His regime connived in the hijack of the Indian jetliner last December; it stepped up its aid

to armed criminals masquerading as *mujahideen* in Kashmir; it continues to prop up the Taliban by participating in its military campaigns (including the Panjshir battles in recent days) and facilitating its narcotics trade; and it refuses to crack down on radical bands within Pakistan that are exporting terrorism to many parts of the world.

Economically, Pakistan has become a basket case under military rule, which has scared away investors with its bellicose rhetoric and cosy ties with fundamentalists. Most of the regime's initiatives have turned out to be barren, except for tax-collection overhaul, while the introduction of harsh Islamic banking laws has proved counterproductive. The economy currently is growing only at the same rate as population, while external debt has ballooned to \$ 35.5 billion, or half of its GDP. With four-fifths of the national budget being used for defence and debt servicing, hardly any development is taking place.

The West's strategy in not pushing the regime too hard has backfired, as it has made Pakistan's condition worse without slowing the movement of drugs and extremists to other parts of the world. Even today, some in Washington view military rule as Pakistan's 'last option', although that country's problems are largely the legacy of the various generals that have been at its helm. It is doubtful whether the present military can keep Pakistan together. Pakistanis are more disillusioned than ever, realising that the Musharraf regime is no better than the politicians it replaced.

The only beneficiary of the coup has been the military itself, which has thrived even as the nation has continued to sink. The coup was countenanced by the West as a last-ditch effort to prevent Pakistan from becoming a 'failing State'. Instead, military rule has only reinforced Pakistan's 'failing State' image. Sebastian Mallaby described Pakistan in *The Washington Post* as a "Colombia with nukes

and Islamic fundamentalism". There is growing international concern that with the gradual Talibanisation of Pakistan, the military there values its nuclear weapons as a shield for reckless adventurism, as it showed in Kargil.

Not only has Pakistan become a haven for terrorists and home to the world's largest population of heroin addicts, there appears little hope for its future. The military, however, can flourish only as long as the Pakistan State survives. Therefore, the military will do everything to keep Pakistan from disintegrating, even if it means ratcheting up hostility with India and engaging in further adventurism. A sinking Pakistan will insist on sinking India too. Its role since last year in Kargil, Kandahar and Kashmir is a stark reminder of that.

The major question is whether Indian policy-makers understand the lurking dangers and are ready to devise a strategy to counter them since Pakistan's travails increase, rather than decrease, its mischief potential. Myths, however, abound in India. One myth is that Pakistan is making itself bankrupt by bleeding India in Kashmir. Pakistan is perched on the edge of bankruptcy, not because of its surrogate war in Kashmir, but because of its search for military parity with India that results in unsustainably high defence spending as well as its political and economic disorder.

In fact, proxy war is a highly cost-effective strategy that Pakistan can carry on everlastingly because it consumes a tiny proportion of its defence expenditure but inflicts disproportionately high costs on India — costs that a conventional military strategy cannot impose. The failure of conventional aggression, even when it is covert, as in Kargil, has further increased the attractiveness of proxy war for Pakistan. The low-cost tool of surrogate war was perfected by Pakistan in a decade of declining fortunes, with unemployment doubling and poverty increasing 41 per cent during the Nineties.



It is well known that Pakistan's foundation has been built on hostility towards India. Its aggressive fixation on India, in medical language, will be called obsessive-compulsive neurosis. Many Indians view that antipathy as a path to Pakistan's eventual self-destruction. But for the Pakistan military, that antagonism is the essential glue to hold Pakistan together and provides the *raison d'être* for its strong political influence over the State.

As Pakistan sinks further, its military will increasingly take recourse to its economical tool of proxy war to keep India mired in internal-security problems. Today's "war of a thousand cuts" being waged by Pakistan could become a war of ten thousand cuts. It doesn't take much for a strong-willed State to murder, maim and menace the innocent through surrogate agents.

India cannot counter these dangers through continued passivity. In modern history, no State has pursued a sustained surrogate war of the scope and extent waged by Pakistan. Nor has any nation like India brooked a situation for so long where its security has been progressively impaired through externally directed subversion and murder. The cumulative costs of this proxy war for India have been greater than all the conventional wars imposed on it.

A decaying neighbour that could potentially slide into the Islamic ruins of Afghanistan and become the world's first failed nuclear State calls for a clear, long-term Indian strategy. The military will continue to lead the reins of power in Pakistan, although Musharraf's own future seems uncertain. The former army commando is forced to constantly look behind his shoulders at the Islamist generals of his junta who executed the coup when he was aboard the flight from Colombo last October 12. Pakistan's post-1971 history shows that its rulers invariably get killed, jailed or banished.

Pakistan will continue to loom large on India's security horizon unless it disintegrates. India's interests can be served neither by piecemeal for a secure, stable Pakistan nor by disdainfully writing off Pakistan. A collapsing Pakistan can remerge with India or splinter into four or five distinct entities. India can certainly aid the process of disintegration to help fragment Pakistan's consolidated military assets and clinch the final solution to Kashmir.

# Vexed with the West

*The people of Pakistan are not impressed with unsolicited sermons on democracy. There is, says B. MURALIDHAR REDDY, a sense of hurt over the attitude of the West.*

110-16 28  
THE MILITARY has ruled Pakistan, directly or indirectly, for more years than elected Governments. But, perhaps, never has the country faced the kind of pressure it does today from the rest of the world for restoration of democratic rule.

Every conceivable leader and institution around the globe has deemed it necessary to either politely or bluntly impress upon Gen. Pervez Musharraf the urgent need to hand over power to elected representatives and send the Army back to the barracks. The United States and Japan, the Commonwealth and the European Union, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are among those in the forefront of the campaign for 'restoration of democracy' in Pakistan. Diplomatic and economic leverage has been freely employed to deliver message after message to the military Government since the coup in October, 1999.

But the simple truth is the people of Pakistan are not impressed with unsolicited sermons on democracy. The visit of the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr. Don McKinnon, is a case in point. The general perception of the media and the intelligentsia in Pakistan is that the rest of the world is being hypercritical in its approach to the military Government. The people of Pakistan

have their reservations about the Army being at the helm of affairs, but, at the same time, they believe that the rest of the world cannot escape blame for the current state of affairs.

There is a sense of hurt over the attitude of the West, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the changed global realities. Pakistanis believe they have been abandoned after being used as pawns on the international chessboard for the first 40 years of their country's existence.

Pakistan was the frontline ally of the U.S. and the rest of the West in their fight against the Soviet Union and it mattered little to the West who ruled in Islamabad. The Afghan war was fought with Pakistan under the thumb of the military dictator, Gen. Zia-ul-Haq. The consensus is that he was the most tyrannical of all the military rulers since 1958.

The common refrain in Pakistan is that much of the present evils in its society are a direct result of the Afghan conflict. These include the politics of *Jehad*, the gun and drug culture and Talibanisation. Should not the Western powers bear responsibility for

these and help Pakistan?

So, the present exhortations from the world leaders only evoke apathy and anger. There is also the firm belief that the "return to democracy" campaign is more on account of the fears nuclear Pakistan generates than from any genuine concern for democracy.

Given the changed geo-political equations and the emergence of a unipolar world, Pakistan does not enjoy the same strategic importance it did till 1990. At the same time, with Pakistan going overtly nuclear, no power can afford to ignore it. And the Pakistanis, both the establishment and the people, are fully conscious of this.

The threat of South Asia becoming the theatre of a nuclear holocaust because of the tensions over Kashmir between India and Pakistan is the dominant theme of every foreign visitor to Islamabad. The rest of the world seems to endorse the apprehensions of New Delhi that the nuclear status of Pakistan is all the more reason for a representative Government to be in charge.

However, Gen. Musharraf is not bothered by the global campaign, notwithstanding the tremendous

problems Pakistan faces particularly on the economic front. He is proceeding at his own pace towards establishment of what he terms "genuine rather than sham democracy".

The all-round price hikes and absence of any spectacular achievements since the military takeover have certainly disappointed the common people but at the same time they are not desperately awaiting the return of the politicians. The reason: 'disgust' with the political class, seen as completely corrupt. And, deep fissures in the mainstream parties of Pakistan have made the military's job easier.

Gen. Musharraf has undoubtedly succeeded in creating a consensus in the country that the politicians have done little good for the welfare of the people and have only lined their own pockets. At the same time, his Government has nothing to show in terms of achievements. So it is difficult to guess how long it can continue at the present pace on the basis of a single-point programme of politician-bashing.

No one is sure if Gen. Musharraf will indeed stick to the timeframe of three years (from October 12, 1999) for restoration of democracy. So far, he has announced a plan for holding of elections to the local bodies with an ambitious agenda for devolution of powers at the grass-root level. These elections spread over eight months will be on a non-party basis. The plan has been largely denounced as illogical and unworkable. Undeterred, the General is chugging along.

The military Government has initiated a series of measures in the last few months that are largely perceived to be vindictive against popular leaders of the main parties. These include the so-called accountability drive, under which several prominent leaders have been booked for their alleged acts of omission and commission, and the amendments to the Political Parties Act barring individuals convicted on charges of corruption from holding party posts. The legislation, in effect, dethrones the two former Prime Ministers, Mr. Nawaz Sharif and Ms. Benazir Bhutto, as leaders of their parties.



# Pakistan's dictatorial disarray

B Y A Y A Z A M I R

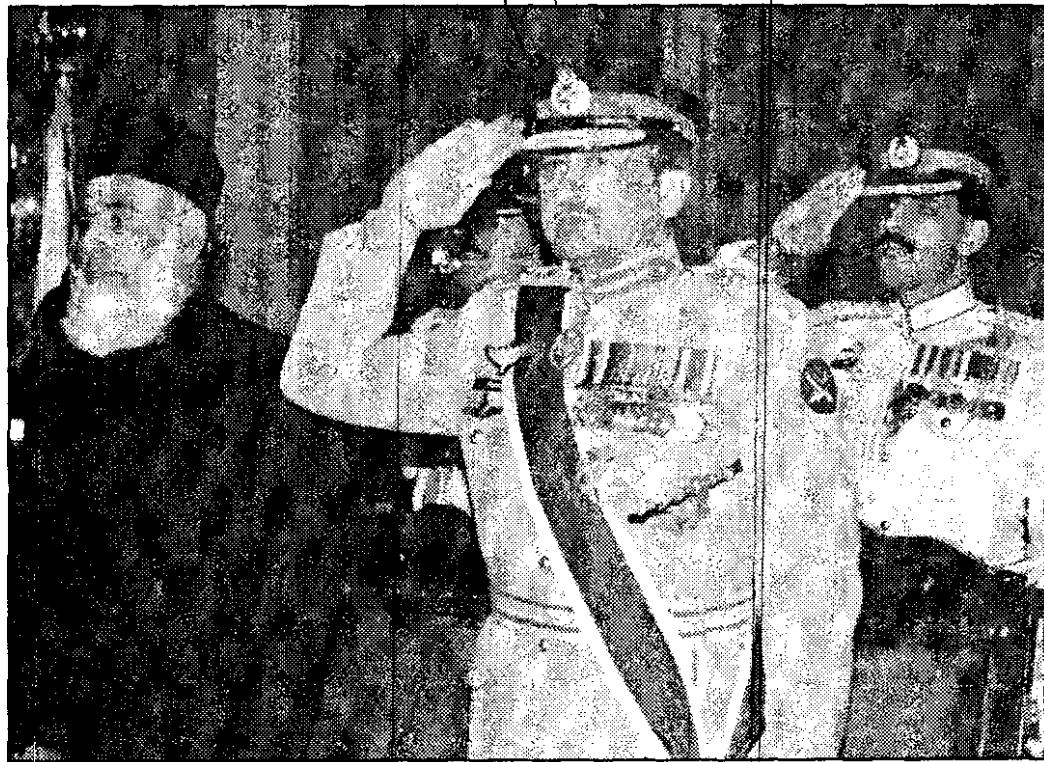
**O**f Pakistani democracy, I do not despair. I stopped grieving for it a long time ago, having realised through personal observation that as a nation, we have no genius for the thing. The virtue of consultation and a tolerance for the vagaries of human nature, the two essential pre-requisites for democracy, we quite simply lack. We are a nation of individual fanatics, each of whom wants to convert everyone else, at the point of the gun or the bayonet if it comes to that, to his point of view. This evangelical strain sits ill with democracy.

What I despair about is Pakistani dictatorship. With our long and repeated experience of this phenomenon, we should have succeeded in producing a workable dictatorial model. But we have done nothing of the sort. Each dictatorship begins from scratch. Reinventing the wheel is a metaphor or rather cliché that has been worked to death, since the latest military takeover. But it describes our predicament best. Pakistani would-be redeemers do not begin from where the last one left off. They begin from the beginning, which is not only a waste of time but also produces boredom. How many times can you watch the same performance, the same stumbling steps and the same promises to usher in a golden age?

Authoritarianism can be efficient. It can also be corrupt and "nerivating. After all, who fires its engines? Military and civil bureaucrats plus a sprinkling of civilian collaborators out hunting for jobs. As simple as that. If the quality of this intake is good, the results will be good. If not, God help you. How do we fare in this regard? Whether earlier times produced a better class of mandarins (the myths in this respect being very potent) I cannot say. But what I have seen with my own eyes, from the Zia era till now, leaves a dispiriting impression behind: higher bureaucrats who in any clime would be considered as astounding specimens of human incompetence. The official obsessed with rank, protocol and a sense of his own importance is an enduring literary type. But the asses we manage to produce, would take the prize anywhere.

As if civil service asses were not bad enough, military officers who should be proud of their uniform and the profession of arms want nothing as badly in a military government as to win a civil service posting. It should therefore surprise no one if a veritable horde of officers have seized supposedly cushy civilian jobs since the Musharraf takeover. Obviously, the dictum that all politics is about jobs remains true whether democrats or dictators are running the show (or the pantomime) in Islamabad.

What is also true is that Pakistan's governing class is knit



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closely together by a sense of shared values: plots, houses, land in Bahawalpur and a foreign education for loved ones, with nothing remotely approaching culture leavening this mass. This is one side of the picture. The other side is provided by the blurring of any distinction that might have existed

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Pakistani would-be redeemers do not begin from where the last one left off. They begin from the beginning, which is not only a waste of time but also produces boredom

between public service and private gain. In fact, public office has come to be taken as the surest way of getting rich. That is why till very recently bright lads wanted to get into the civil service, police and customs because these jobs brought perks and privileges and the prospect of future gain.

**T**here is nothing wrong with wanting to get rich. Did not Comrade Deng say "to be rich is glorious"? The problem is different. Wherever the spirit of enterprise flourishes, a different sort of individual pursues the paths of wealth and an altogether different sort goes in for public service. H.L. Mencken (perhaps the only journalist who will ever sup with the gods) says this of the early American Republic, "Setting aside religion, (politics) was literally the only concern of people. All men of ability and ambition turned to it for self-expression." In the 18th and early 19th centuries, politics drew "the best literary talent into its service — Franklin, Jefferson and Lincoln may well stand as examples..." A far cry from Pakistan where, exceptions apart, third-raters enter politics proper while the more talented enter the administration (which is also a form of politics) not for any fantasy about self-expression but simply to get up the ladder of self-advancement.

How do we draw a line in the sand? How do we get the national renewal for which the patriotic classes in their cups pine so much? It will be hard getting this revolution from the standard-bearers of the govern-

ing morality which is the true ideology of Pakistan.

And what about the people, whose poverty and helplessness every incoming government, with sonorous if repetitive platitudes, promises to alleviate and indeed in whose name the skull-duggery of the Republic is carried on? To say that the people

**T**o say that the people are lost, miserable or despondent, some of the favourite adjectives which leader-writers and columnists deploy when the breast-beating mood overtakes them, would be wrong. The drawing room gliterati have only to emerge from their shells to see that in the real Pakistan, alongside the pain and squalor, there is also a great deal of purpose and bustling energy. But vile contradiction! It is also true that the people are not fully in control of their lives. The state does not provide for them. It only makes life more difficult for them — just as under the Sikhs, or the worst Muslim rulers

are lost, miserable or despondent, some of the favourite adjectives which leader-writers and columnists deploy when the breast-beating mood overtakes them, would be wrong. The drawing room gliterati have only to emerge from their shells to see that in the real Pakistan, alongside the pain and squalor, there is also a great deal of purpose and bustling energy. But vile contradiction! It is also true that the people are not fully in control of their lives. The state does not provide for them. It only makes life more difficult for them — just as under the Sikhs, or the worst Muslim rulers. The state has abdicated its true functions, and provides neither quality education nor quality health care. Nor indeed equal opportunity or justice of any kind. But it continues to oppress and thwart the people in every aspect of their lives. Just look at the police, an extortion agency; the district administration, all pomp and show and no purpose; the so-called nation-building departments, hives of corruption. It is a fine soup we are in: the country in hock to the IMF and other external creditors, the people kicked around at every turn by the state. If the people of Pakistan are still cheerful, as indeed they are, (newspaper prophets of doom notwithstanding), their resilience and patience deserve to be applauded.

**W**hat about the larger picture? The generals are in control and doing what anyone else in their place would do: strengthening and perpetuating their hold on the levers of power. The three-year time frame for the conceiving of that mythic animal called "real democracy" is somewhat like the thought about which Ghalib said that it was good to beguile the heart. Do military saviours surrender their batons or robes of office just like that? It has never happened before in Pakistan, but the nation, even as it tries to adjust itself to over-priced sugar and a worsening economic situation, is being told to suspend disbelief and await the unfolding of this miracle at the hands of this military government.

Meanwhile, there is the devolution plan which promises to empower the grass roots. A long night (or day) of the generals at the top and devolution below may seem a contradiction in terms but then this is the only show on offer: take it or, if you nurse political ambitions, be prepared to be sidelined when this process gets going. Meanwhile there is also the reported reshuffle under way in the army's higher echelons. Much ink is likely to be spilt about the likely implications. But never mind. When the rest of the national picture remains the same, what does it matter whether a particular general goes here or there?

*By arrangement with Dawn*



for 10-19

# Benazir Bhutto elected party chief for life

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By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 11 A convention of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in Lahore has elected the former Prime Minister and PPP leader, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, as the life chairperson of the party.

The convention in the capital of Punjab held on Monday was hailed as the largest gathering of party workers since the military take-over in October last year. The city of Lahore also witnessed the largest gathering of political parties after the "October Revolution" on August 6 when an all-party meeting brought together leaders of all hues on one platform against the military rule.

The gathering of PPP workers at Lahore is significant for a number of reasons. It demonstrated the total control of Ms. Bhutto, referred to as the Daughter of the East, on her party despite her prolonged absence from the Pakistan political scene. Recently there was some talk about the return of Ms. Bhutto but there was no mention of the subject at the convention. None of the speakers even deemed it necessary to talk about it. If reports are to be believed it was said senior leaders armed with cellular phones could be seen relaying the details of the convention to their leader in London.

The convention also signaled the defiance of the Musharraf regime and conveyed in categorical

terms the rejection of efforts to "eliminate" Ms. Bhutto from the political chessboard of Pakistan. The election of Ms. Bhutto as the lifetime chairperson amounted to the rejection of the recent ordinance promulgated by the military Government barring convicted persons from holding party posts.

Ms. Bhutto chose to leave Pakistan after a court convicted her along with her husband in a corruption case and disqualified her from being a member of the National Assembly. An appeal against the court verdict is pending in the Supreme Court and the apex court is due to take up the case in the next few days.

Reports from Lahore suggest that enthusiastic workers of the PPP shouted slogans not only hailing Ms. Bhutto as the only hope for Pakistan but also actually declared her "elected for the third time" as the Prime Minister of the country. The estimated crowd of nearly 10,000 party workers shouted slogans against the military Government and warned of dire consequences if their leader was not allowed to participate in the political process.

The PPP workers adopted what has been termed as the "Lahore Declaration" that begins and ends with the party leader. The focal theme of the convention was the conspiracy to "eliminate" Ms. Bhutto from party politics. No other issue figured at the four-hour long convention.

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# 19 killed in Islamabad market blast

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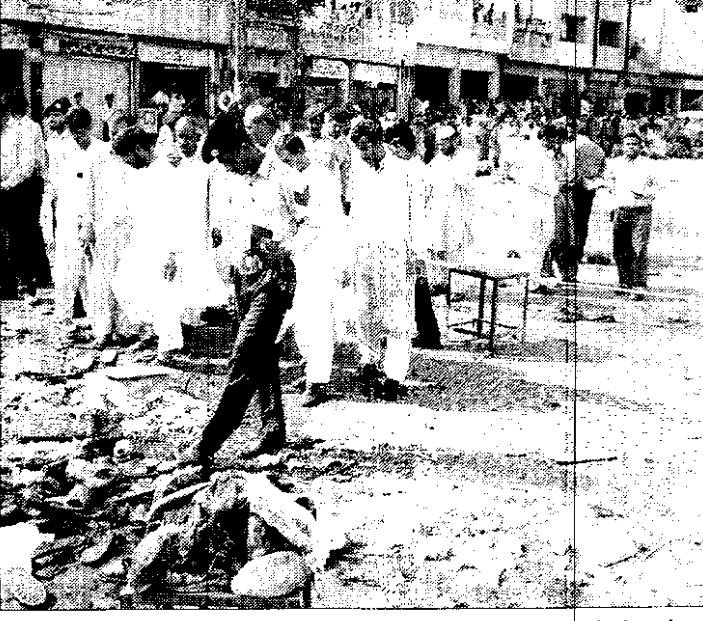
UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, Sept. 19. — At least 19 people were killed and nearly 70 injured in a powerful bomb explosion in a busy market here this morning. The blast occurred in the congested and over-crowded fruit section of the market where crates of grapes, imported from Afghanistan were being unloaded from a truck.

According to available information, a truck loaded with crates of grapes reached the market in the morning. The bomb was hidden in one of the crates and went off when a labourer dragged the crate.

Army and police have cordoned off the area. The driver of the truck was arrested immediately and is being interrogated. The injured were rushed to the hospitals both in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

**Benazir charge:** Ms Benazir Bhutto today said the military regime was "miserably failing" in maintaining law and order in the country, adds PTI. Reacting to the bomb explo-



Policemen search for possible evidence after the blast in an Islamabad market on Tuesday. Nineteen people were killed in the blast. — API/PTI

sion, she said in a statement that the incident demonstrated that the situation was beyond control. Stating that the regime was

becoming increasingly isolated both within and outside the country, she demanded they returned to barracks without delay.

THE NATIONAL

## **Pak urges Bangla not to revive 1971 memories**

76/11 2/25  
Islamabad, Sept. 25 (Reuters): Pakistan said today it had written to Bangladesh asking it not to revive memories of their bitter 1971 war, which have resurfaced recently to strain relations between the countries.

Foreign minister Abdul Sattar told a news conference Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina seemed to be ignoring the views of her late father and the country's founder Sheikh Mujibur Rehman by talking about the war that led to the creation of Bangladesh from former East Pakistan.

There have been demands in Pakistan and Bangladesh that Islamabad publish a report by a Pakistani judicial commission in the 1970s about the war.

Usually friendly ties between the two nations took a U-turn at the UN Millennium summit this month when Hasina condemned military coups and Pakistani military ruler Gen. Pervez Musharraf cancelled a scheduled meeting with her. "We were saddened by some of the remarks made by the prime minister of Bangladesh in the course of her statement in the Security Council," Sattar said.

"Let me say that we also sent another communication to the government of Bangladesh expressing the view that the events of 1971 were traumatic enough even without exaggeration and one-sided interpretations," he said about Bangladesh charges that the generals were guilty.

THE TELEGRAPH

1 SEP 2001

# Pak satraps see final solution for J&K

Sanjay Suri

LONDON 25 SEPTEMBER

THE NEW coming together of regional leaders within Pakistan can present the "final solution" to the Kashmir issue in a federal set-up involving more autonomy to the country's four provinces, according to senior leaders associated with the political grouping.

A critical element of the demands made by the Pakistan Oppressed Nations Movement (PONM) was spelt out at a meeting of the leaders of Mohajir, Sindhi, Baluch and Pashtun leaders in London last week. The leaders passed a resolution that said: "All the provinces shall have total autonomy and all the present functions of the federation with the exception of defence, foreign affairs and currency shall be transferred to the provinces."

A senior leader associated with the new grouping said: "We see this as the final solution also to the Kashmir problem." The leader, who did not wish to be named "as yet", said the resolutions passed also sought a similar deal for people living within Pakistan-administered Kashmir. The Kashmir dispute has dogged relations between India and Pakistan for the past 53 years.

One of the senior leaders from Pakistan pointed out that within the kind of Pakistan that the non-Punjab provinces are seeking "it will make no sense to demand the accession of Kashmir to Pakistan on the basis of Islam." He said that PONM leaders wanted similar rights for Kashmiris and an end to "oppression" within Kashmir.

The leader said the joint resolutions have spoken of "smaller nations" within the larger nation. The Indian Constitution, he said, already provides for most of what the smaller provinces of Pakistan are now demanding.

The new demands in Pakistan for issues that Kashmir already has can radically alter the situa-



HOW GRIM IS MY VALLEY: Members of the European Commission delegation, headed by Michel Cailloues, talk to the chairman of All Parties Hurriyat Conference Abdul Gani Bhat (second from right) in Srinagar on Monday. — AP

tion in the subcontinent. Changes within Pakistan along the lines sought by the PONM leaders could

end the extremist campaign in place and also whittle down separatist demands within Kashmir.

the senior Pakistani leader said.

The PONM leaders are demanding amendments to Pakistan's Constitution, insisting that greater autonomy should be given to the country's four provinces. Their resolution warned the Pakistani military establishment that if they did not change the Constitution, it will result in the break-up of Pakistan.

The resolution said: "If the existing Pakistan breaks up, it will not be the doing of the smaller provinces but of the Punjabi Army, the civil bureaucracy and the intelligence agencies." The PONM leaders made it clear that the answer to the present political problems lay in the grant of regional autonomy rather than in Islamic unity.

— IANS

## Indo-US meet on terrorism

New Delhi

25 SEPTEMBER

OFFICIALS FROM India and the United States will meet here on Tuesday for the third meeting of the joint working group (JWG) on counter-terrorism. The US side for the two-day talks is led by Michael Sheehan, head of the counter-terrorism inter-agency task force, while the Indian delegation will be led by Alok Prasad, joint secretary (Americas) in the external affairs ministry.

The decision to set up the JWG was taken during Indo-US talks held in London earlier this year on non-proliferation and other issues between external affairs minister Jaswant Singh and US deputy secretary of state Strobe Talbott. Sharing concern over the international menace which was assuming disturbing dimensions, the two countries decided to discuss steps to jointly combat it. Mr Sheehan will call on foreign secretary Lalit Mansingh, home secretary Kamal Pandey and others during his stay here.

— PTI

*The Economic Times*

25 SEP 2000

25 SEP 2000

# In PML lies Sharif's hope for redemption

By Jai Taraporevala



Nawaz Sharif

MUMBAI: Although the reaffirmation by the central working committee of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) of its continued support to the leadership of Nawaz Sharif comes as welcome relief for the former prime minister, he has few grounds for complacency. In the uphill legal battle which Mr Sharif faces with the military regime, it is crucial that he retains a firm grip over the PML since it is potentially the most effective medium he has of mobilising the masses.

However, although the party has expressed support for Mr Sharif, it has done little to enlist public opinion as actively as

possible. This is partly a reflection of the tough restrictions enforced by the military government on political activity and partly an indication of the lack of enthusiasm of most Pakistanis about Mr Sharif's record in office.

But it also underscores the serious misgivings among a significant section in the PML about the authoritarian style of functioning of Mr Sharif and the mounting allegations of corruption and nepotism against him. The fact that the former prime minister's wife, Kulsoom Nawaz, and brother, Shahbaz Sharif, have had their own sharp differences about the direction in which to take the party tells its own tale—not to mention the views of those heavyweights in the PML,

like Ijaz ul-Haq, who are increasingly looking to effect a change in the leadership.

The inability and unwillingness of Mr Sharif's critics to launch a stronger challenge to his leadership should be interpreted in terms of a correlation of factors. For one, Mr Sharif has been helped by the fact that his potential rivals are themselves divided on who should lead the PML and the precise direction in which to take the party. For another, they do not yet have the numbers necessary to move decisively against the former prime minister.

Besides, a number of those in the PML who have misgivings about Mr Sharif seem to have calculated that at a time when political activity in the street has been proscribed in the country, it would be tactically wise to play a waiting game and see

## NEWS ANALYSIS

how events unfold before taking a final decision. Any decision which they take either to stick with Mr Sharif or make a determined bid to effect a change in the leadership of the PML will ultimately hinge on whether they perceive him to be a political asset for the party or a liability.

Among the factors which they will no doubt take into account are the state of public opinion, the general perception of the legal proceedings against Mr Sharif, the scale of the problems on the economic front, the constitutional limits placed on political activity and the extent of external pressure on the military regime to effect greater changes. So far at least, the future does not look bright for the former prime minister.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

8 AUG 2000

# Musharraf's devolution plan rejected

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, Aug. 7. — Demanding a time-frame for general elections, an alliance of over 30 Pakistani political parties have rejected the military government's power devolution plan warning against any amendments in the constitution.

"The proposed power devolution plan is neither workable nor practically possible. The holding of elections on non-party basis is against fundamental rights," the All Parties' Conference said in a statement in Lahore yesterday.

The APC, called to discuss restoration of political activi-

ties in the country, said restructuring of the local government system should be left to the discretion of the chosen representatives of the people of Pakistan.

The APC has been convened by a 15-party alliance led by the former Prime Minister, Mrs Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party. Ousted Prime Minister, Mr Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League is also participating.

The APC has brought together Islamic clerics and secularists, regional nationalists and centrists along with the mainstream parties on a single platform for restoration of democ-

racy. The meeting, the first since Gen Musharraf came to power, is being held ahead of the military regime's plan to unveil what it calls a "devolution of power plan to set up elected local councils by mid-2001".

On the accountability process, the conference said it should be absolutely free, fair and transparent. "The present accountability laws are draconian," it said.

Calling for restoration of political activities, the APC said: "The military rule, by cutting off political activities, is giving rise to local and regional prejudices which are harmful

to the federation."

Opposing any change in the country's constitution, the APC said such a move would endanger the existence of the federation of Pakistan.

Referring to the foreign policy, the APC said the military government had brought the image of Pakistan to the its lowest ebb and under lined the need to install a representative government to restore the country's prestige.

**Junta rejects APC demand:** In a rejoinder to the charges made by the APC, Pakistan's military regime has rejected the call for immediate elections in the country.

0 AUG 2001

# Pak. devolution plan 'unworkable'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, AUG. 16. A majority of the political parties in Pakistan have rejected the devolution plan and the scheme of partyless elections to local bodies announced by the Chief Executive, General Pervez Musharraf, in a special address to the nation on August 14 coinciding with Independence Day.

The partyless elections are scheduled to begin in December and likely to be completed in August next year. The election is supposed to be the first step towards restoration of "democracy". The Supreme Court of Pakistan had fixed October, 2002 as the deadline for the military Government to hand over power to civilian institutions.

The political parties termed the scheme "old wine in a new bottle" and linked it to the "basic democracy" propounded by the military regime under Gen. Ayub Khan in the 1960s. It was unworkable and would only help perpetuate the feudal order in society, they felt.

## Meet to evolve strategy

The Grand Democratic Alliance, an umbrella of political parties that came together to oppose the Nawaz Sharif Government months before the coup, is scheduled to meet on August 23 to discuss the devolution plan and chalk out future course of action to force the Government to concentrate on finalising a schedule for early elections and restoration of

a civilian government. However, the Musharraf Government can draw consolation from favourable comments in the newspapers. Editorials in most of the leading papers have been appreciative of the features of the plan saying the politicians had none but themselves to blame for the present state of affairs. Striking a note of caution, the newspapers said the plan's success depended on its faithful implementation.

The Pakistan Muslim League and the Pakistan People's Party, who have ruled Pakistan for much of the time it has not been under military rule, came out strongly against the scheme. They believe Gen. Musharraf could use the office bearers of the local bodies as an electoral college for future provincial Assembly elections.

## 'Govt. motives suspect'

In short they suspect the motives of the military regime. In their view, the devolution plan could be a ploy to institutionalise martial rule. Their worry is compounded by the contempt shown by Gen. Musharraf towards politicians and political parties.

"A person who is genuinely interested in the political development of a decadent society and is in search of genuine democracy cannot support these notions. Building a democratic society at the grassroots level without involvement of political parties is not possible. That would further depoliticise the people and shall strengthen the influence of *biradaris* and

tribes and promote the already entrenched feudal, economic and social mafias in society. The fact that mainstream political parties and their leaders had proved anti-people and anti-democratic did not call for elimination of political parties," said Mr. Abid Hasan Minto, president, National Workers Party.

The PPP leader, Mr. Khalid Khairi, said the new scheme was unclear and unworkable. Demolition of the prevalent local Government would prove dangerous for the country and make difficult the redressal of public problems and grievances.

The senior vice-president of the Awami National Party, Mr. Ehsan Wynn, felt the military Government should have held party-based national and provincial Assembly elections before going ahead with the devolution plan.

In its editorial, the English daily, *Dawn*, wondered about the merit of leaving out political parties from elections to local bodies. If this was the first step towards revival of the political process, what is the logic in leaving out political parties? "Democracy is inconceivable without political parties whose existence ensures pluralism and a choice before the people".

Maintaining that the new scheme was not without strong and good points, the paper said the military government would have to ensure that the powerful vested interests in the bureaucracy do not scuttie the grandiose plan.

17 AUG 2002

17 AUG 2002



# Pak to Mori: No break in test moratorium

BY RAJA ASGHAR

Islamabad, Aug. 21: Pakistani military ruler General Pervez Musharraf assured Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori on Monday that Islamabad would not be the first to break its moratorium on nuclear tests, a senior Japanese source said. But Gen. Musharraf told Mr. Mori during talks in Islamabad that Pakistan would have to respond if arch-rival India held any new nuclear tests, said the Japanese foreign ministry source, who declined to be identified.

Both India and Pakistan have declared unilateral moratoriums on testing after their tit-for-tat nuclear test blasts in May 1998 triggered international economic sanctions against them.

The Japanese ministry source said Japan appreciated Gen. Musharraf's assurance and in response had decided to consider additional loans for a road tunnel project in Pakistan being aided by Japan, the Japanese source said.

"We appreciate that, so we have decided what can we do with this tunnel," the Japanese source told reporters.

However, he said Japan's seeking sanctions, what it calls its "economic measures" taken after the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests, would remain in place. The sanctions froze all new grants and loans to India and Pakistan, except for humanitarian aid. The ministry source said the Kohat tunnel project in the North West Frontier province, was an ongoing project and not a new one. Mr. Mori repeated Japan's call for both India and Pakistan to sign an international nuclear test ban treaty. (Reuters)

## Musharraf to meet Clinton in September

United Nations, Aug. 21: President Bill Clinton will host a reception on September 7 to welcome all heads of state and governments. Pakistan's military ruler General Pervez Musharraf is expected to attend the reception and avail of the opportunity for a brief chat with Mr. Clinton.

"Surely you cannot call it a substantive meeting but if you want, it can be given a name," an influential US-based Pakistani said.

According to White House officials, there is no other Clinton-Musharraf meeting on the cards, except this reception. "President Clinton will be in New York to address the UN on September 6, but there is no bilateral meeting on the agenda between Gen. Musharraf and Mr. Clinton," White House Spokesman P.J. Crowley said. (ANI)

Is Pakistan under Pervez

Musharraf going the Taliban way?

# General in his rat-trap

**T**HE SPATE of mutual recrimination between India and Pakistan that has followed the breakdown after only 15 days of the three-month cease-fire in Kashmir announced by Abdul Majid Dar of the Hizbul Mujahideen on July 24 has drawn our attention away from the long-term implications, and possible consequences of this first ever attempt to break the deadlock over Kashmir. By even the most optimistic assessment the setback has been profound, for it has thrown not just the future of Kashmir, but that of both Pakistan and India into serious jeopardy. Had Pakistan been a stable State with a well-defined focus of power and authority, one could have written off the breakdown of the cease-fire to the nervousness that gripped Islamabad, and to a lesser extent New Delhi, when the two Governments committed themselves to a process that they could not control and whose end they could not foresee. Other peace processes, notably Palestine, have seen numerous such breakdowns and survived. The Kashmir peace process might have done the same.

But the Pakistani State is anything but stable. Ever since the country became independent, it has witnessed a constant battle to control the State between democratic forces and a military-bureaucratic elite that regards itself as the guardian of the Pakistani nation-State. In 1977, Gen. Zia-ul-Haq sought to shore up the legitimacy of the latter by enlisting the religious establishment on its side. In doing so he unwittingly created a third contender, Wahabiy Islam.

Over the last two decades, the Afghan war, the Kashmir proxy war, and the Kargil defeat (which Pakistan insists on portraying as a victory won by the Mujahideen against the Indian Army), have conspired to turn this infant into a monster that is threatening to swallow the Pakistani State and extinguish every last modernising impulse in the country. It has become a threat not only to the democratic forces but also to the military-bureaucratic establishment in Pakistan. So long as Pakistan was under civilian rule, it was possible for the military to pit the Islamic and democratic forces against each other and play the ringmaster. After Gen. Musharraf's October 12 coup, there are only two contenders left. The failure of the peace attempt is a setback for the modernising elements within the military-bureaucratic establishment. It is

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES  
By P

one from which they may not recover. Many analysts in Delhi believe that an unabashed hawk who gave the F initiative only a grudging assent, in American pressure. The truth is far n Musharraf has been forced to confront a challenge — how to ensure economic and political survival as a m What is more, he has to overcome it within a strict time limit or face i isolation, if not worse.

Shortly after the coup, the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting gave him two years to restore democracy. Earlier this year, the Pakistan Supreme Court set a deadline: October 12, 2002. Musharraf has accepted this deadline.

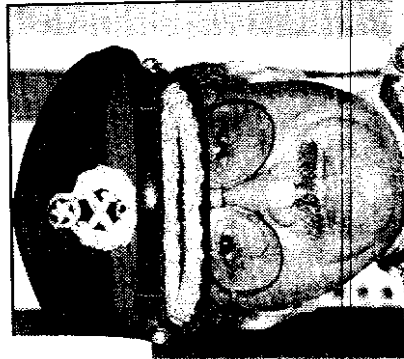
Musharraf is also facing an economic deadline. Pakistan was able to stave off an external payment default after the Chagai nuclear explosions in 1998 by getting its creditors to reschedule its debts till the end of this year. But today Pakistan is no more solvent than it was in 1998, so it will need another rescheduling of its debt. The most the donors are likely to give him is another two years. If he reneges on his promise to restore democracy in 2002 and is not able to reduce Pakistan's budget deficit by then, he will receive little more of either sympathy or accommodation from them. Even a partial default will ruin the economy by cutting off trade credit, disrupting imports and causing massive devaluation and inflation.

Musharraf cannot but know that the Kashmir dispute lies at the core of Pakistan's political and economic problems. It has fuelled the Wahabiy challenge to the State, and the Wahabiy religious establishment is now providing political shelter to the traders and dealers in smuggled goods whom Musharraf needs to tax in order to bridge the revenue deficit. As a result, he has been urging India to enter into unconditional

REM SHANKAR JIA

Musharraf is Hizbul peace under intense more compliance to power, Pakistan's modern State. its challenge international

talks ever since he came to power. What he has been unable to do, however, is meet India's condition that he must halt cross border terrorism if talks are to resume. This is because apart from enjoying considerable support within the army, most of the *jehadis* groups enjoy strong political patronage and financial autonomy because of their links with the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Pakistan, Afghanistan and drug money, and the Jamaat-i-Islami. Taking them on headlong would provoke a confrontation with Wahabiy Islam that Musharraf has been trying to postpone or avoid.



Of all the guerrilla organisations, the one directly under his control is the Hizbul Mujahideen. The Hizb's connections are with the Jamaat in Kashmir, which has a tenuous link with its Pakistani counterpart. In Pakistan, it is truly a 'guest' of the Government. Thus it is more than likely that Musharraf not only knew of, but encouraged the Hizbul's decision, taken at a Majlis-e-Shoura in March, to negotiate a cease-fire in the hope of breaking the logjam over Kashmir.

Pakistani newspapers have suggested that the July 24 cease-fire was preceded by considerable backroom diplomacy and elaborate arrangements to get Majid Dar to Kashmir from Islamabad. From June 26, Pakistan also observed a unilateral cease-fire on the Line of Control. Musharraf himself used a gathering of South Asian journalists in Islamabad in early July, attended by more than 40 senior Indian journalists, to send an unequivocal message that he was prepared to accept any solution that was in accordance with the wishes of the people of Kashmir, provided Pakistan was a party to the final agreement.

The Hizbul's cease-fire offer came just three weeks later. But hardly had it been made that Pakistan began to have second thoughts on the wisdom of this course of action. Initially, it had intended to let the Hurriyat, whose present chairman

Abdul Ghani Butt and its past chairman Ali Shah Geelani are both committed to Kashmir's accession to Pakistan, to take the lead in the negotiations. This was reflected in Salahuddin's statement that the Hizb would monitor talks between the Government of India and the Hurriyat. But within six days, Pakistan began to have second thoughts. These seem to have been triggered by the powerful wave of relief, bordering on euphoria, that the announcement set off in Kashmir. This probably provoked the fear that the Kashmiris' desire for peace might overwhelm their desire to secede from India and push the peace process towards a 'limited' or 'constrained' sovereignty solution that might be acceptable to India but would be hard for Pakistan to swallow. These doubts were mirrored by Salahuddin's demand on July 30 that the talks be tripartite, his ultimatum on August 3, and his termination of the cease-fire on August 8 despite Vajpayee's solemn commitment that India was prepared to explore solutions outside the framework of the Constitution.

Much of the above interpretation of Musharraf's actions is based on surmise, but if it is correct, then he has certainly been weakened by the need to beat a hasty retreat. This is not his first retreat. He was forced not long ago to 'postpone' the amendment of Pakistan's infamous blasphemy laws, to import all previous Islamic enactments into the Provisional Constitutional Order legitimising army rule, and to postpone the implementation of his General Sales Tax on shopkeepers. These and other less obvious failures show how deeply religion, and consequently an all-or-nothing stance on Kashmir, are entrenched in the Pakistani polity. All that Musharraf has succeeded in doing in ten months is to mark time, but the longer he does that the more expendable will he become.

In Kashmir, there is now a distinct possibility that the Hizbul will break away from Islamabad. But even if it does so, the Kashmiris will gain no respite from the *jehadis*, for there is now a fringe element of socially marginalised, mercenary Kashmiri militants who will join the other groups and continue to guide them. Nor is the outlook any less bleak for Pakistan. For, even a military regime cannot take the decisions needed to face the challenge of modernisation, then the country could go the way of Afghanistan. India may then have to cope with a mortal enemy in its Indo-Gangetic backyard.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2000

## FOR A FULL DOSE OF DEMOCRACY

29/8

THE COMPLETE RESTORATION of democracy has, in recent months, receded as a prime constitutional-political agenda in Pakistan despite the hopes of some of its citizens who are not afraid to dream about the big picture. It is in this context of a certain sense of diplomatic *deja vu*, traceable to the perceived signs of a gradual emergence of a 'stable' post-coup dispensation in Pakistan at this juncture, that the latest visit to Islamabad by the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr. Don McKinnon, must be evaluated. At the least, his visit has helped turn the spotlight once again on a political imperative that the international community of Governments and civil society cannot allow Pakistan to settle for a measured dosage of democracy that might be determined by the present military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, in course of time. Now, given the historical signposts in contemporary Pakistan and also its enduring strategic relevance to the continual interplay of *realpolitik* and morality in international diplomacy, there is a real danger of this prime South Asian state losing its way somewhere on the road to a total restoration of democracy. The conventional wisdom in this regard is that Pakistan can perhaps stumble, by its own collective but careless volition, mainly because of the pervasive revulsion among its ordinary citizens against corrupt practices which they tend to see as the compulsive preference of the civilian politicians as a tribe. At a different level, it is reckoned that Pakistan's quest for the politics of pluralism and the primacy of civilian authority can be endangered by a possible lowering of the pro-democracy vigil by the big powers for some perceivably compelling geopolitical or other reasons. The real significance of Mr. McKinnon's exploratory talks in Pakistan at this time is, therefore, quite obvious, although there are limits to a mere official's mandate.

Over four months ago, the Commonwealth's chief mandarin had come in for much criticism from the Pakistan Foreign Office for having ex-

pressed "dismay" over the judicial verdict against Mr. Nawaz Sharif, on the legal counts of "terrorism" and "hijacking" which had been adduced in justification of the military putsch by Gen. Musharraf. What particularly irked the Musharraf regime was Mr. McKinnon's reported act of "arrogating" to himself the "sovereign" rights of the Commonwealth's member-states by urging Pakistan's Chief Executive to "grant a full amnesty" to Mr. Sharif. The fine point made at the time was that it was the singular prerogative of the Commonwealth's member-countries to comment on the cases if they so desired. However, Mr. McKinnon pleaded soon thereafter for Mr. Sharif's release from prison. The question now is whether the Commonwealth functionary's latest "demand" for a definitive route-map for the plenary restoration of a democratic order has fallen on deaf ears in much the same way as his earlier plea for clemency for the deposed leader.

Unexceptionable is Mr. McKinnon's considered pronouncement, in the light of his latest talks in Islamabad, that the current suspension of Pakistan from the Councils of the Commonwealth will stay in place for the present. At an interpersonal level, though, Mr. McKinnon has not found it difficult to give Gen. Musharraf some benefit of the doubt about the need for time to put Pakistan back on a democratic course. Nonetheless, it is no surprise that the two have not been able to zero in on a time-frame that could be acceptable to the Commonwealth. Mr. McKinnon's dialogue with Pakistan's civilian "leaders", in the unfolding context of a gradual polarisation across the Sharif "legacy" as a divide, is unlikely to have made a judgment on Gen. Musharraf's rule easier, given also the country's familiarity with the military's primacy in national affairs. At the other end of the spectrum, Gen. Musharraf's plan of seeking the Commonwealth's intercession for the extradition of Pakistan's non-resident "corrupt" politicians is equally a blind game.

29 AUG 2000

**Islamic articles  
to be incorporated  
in constitution,  
says Musharraf**

ISLAMABAD: The army leadership in Pakistan will incorporate the Islamic articles into the provisional constitutional order (PCO) and will not let anything impinge upon the independence of religious schools in the country, a fundamentalist party chief has claimed.

"The chief executive (Gen Pervez Musharraf) has assured that he will incorporate Islamic articles of the constitution into the PCO, and carry out investigations against non-government organisations propagating against the religion," Fazlur Rehman, the chief of Jamiat Ulema-E-Islam said.

Gen Musharraf also gave an assurance that nothing will be allowed against the independent functioning of the madrasas, Mr Rehman said after holding a meeting with the chief executive.

During the two-hour meeting, they discussed a hosts of issues including the government's policy towards religious institutions, Pak-Afghan relations, the Osama Bin Laden issue, the proposed power devolution plan and 'anti-Islam' activities of certain NGOs, Mr Rehman said.

He added that the Osama Bin Laden issue also figured in the talks, and "there was unanimity of opinions that the United States should hold direct parleys with the Taliban on this matter."

Mr Rehman said the chief executive himself touched upon the issue of religious schools and said: "He (Gen Musharraf) exonerated religious schools of the charges that any militant training was being imparted there." (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

5 JUL 2002

## **Pak devolution plan on Aug 14**

PAKISTAN'S MILITARY ruler General Pervez Musharraf will announce devolution of power plan on August 14, Local Bodies and Environment Minister Umer Asghar Khan said on Wednesday. He said the process towards devolution of power would start from December this year with elections to local bodies in 18 districts.

PTI, Islamabad

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

6 JUL 2000

## MUSHARRAF'S OPTIONS

The usual problems for the general

GENERAL Musharraf is under no pressure from the GPML(N) and the PPP and if he has begun talking to them, his compulsions have more to do with Pakistan's international position and with the clout demonstrated by the religious Right in the streets over the recent tax reforms campaign — he also has to closely follow what the IMF is telling him. The religious Right, incidentally, came out beaming from their discussions with Musharraf to say that all their demands were met, namely, incorporation of Islamic statutes in the provisional order and protection for their institutions and activities. All this sounds credible in view of the general's own pronouncements and the fact that Kargil and the coup effectively annulled whatever psychological progress may have been made by the Lahore declaration vis-a-vis the two related questions of Pakistani identity and Kashmir.

Nawaz Sharif claims that he — and even significant sections of the armed forces — were kept in the dark about the whole adventure and that he would never have signed the Lahore declaration had he known about the operation, is interesting. The BJP seems to think that Sharif is telling the truth and confirms what the defence and external affairs ministries have learned through their own sources. It is clear that the bunch Musharraf is leading has a fair share of hardliners and that his own convictions may coincide with their position more than he lets on; he is not in a position to manage its repercussions on what he wants to do inside Pakistan. On bilateral relations, Musharraf has developed the usual forked tongue. He sees the Lahore declaration as a sell-out on Kashmir and continues to address the issue in terms of *jihad*. While talking to the international audience, he talks of strategic restraint. He is under Right-wing pressure both from within the military and society at large. How this will modulate his dialogue with politicians remains to be seen. As far as his domestic agenda is concerned, he has good reason to think that he can't do what he thinks is right for the country and allow political space to the established mainstream parties at the same time. Besides, he is in a quandary about Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto. He can keep one in prison and wait to do the same to the other as soon as she shows up. That is, if he wants to be true to his intention of cleaning up the political system and retain credibility. So what is the dialogue about? We had said earlier that he will need politicians to mediate with the people and also to avoid overdependence on the religious Right which is poised to hijack the reformist aspects of his agenda. There is international pressure too. This dialogue has been forced upon Musharraf by circumstances and there may be a good bit of haggling before we see the emergence of a new political arrangement in Pakistan.

THE STATE

## Kusloom vows to continue opposing junta

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

1077  
ISLAMABAD, July 9. — Mrs Kulsom Nawaz, Mr Nawaz Sharif's wife, today declared to confrontation the military regime till democracy was restored in Pakistan.

Mrs Nawaz, detained yesterday to prevent her from leading a rally from Lahore to Peshawar, declared "as long as I am able to breathe, I shall go on making efforts for my country. I shall go on making efforts against army rule. I will make the country free of this curse (of military rule) forever".

Asked why she tried to lead a rally when there was a ban on it, she said she took the action because she strongly hated army rule. "We want our country to progress. We want democracy in our country. Someone had to protest."

Mrs Nawaz drove back to her home early today after detention in her car since yesterday.

Meanwhile, other members of the Sharif family, confined to their houses in Raiwind and Model Town, termed the authorities' detaining them "illegal".

Mr Sharif's daughter-in-law, Ms Saira Hussain, criticised the military regime for "victimising the entire family".

"They even kept two-and-a-half-year-old Zakriya Hussain, six-year-old Mehrunnisa Safdar and five-year-old Junaid Safdar under protective custody, along with family elders... Never in the history of the country have the kids been made political prisoners," she said.

THE STATESMAN

10 20 0 1



# Pak military regime sees biggest threat in former housewife

Karachi, July 9

**T**HE PAKISTANI military regime last week launched its first major crackdown on opposition since the October coup, and in the process turned a former housewife into a political juggernaut, analysts say.



**Kulsoom Nawaz** Sharif, wife of ousted Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, drove to her home under police escort early Sunday, ending a 10-hour standoff with the military regime, the police said.

Kulsoom had been detained in her car since Saturday, after defiantly breaking a police cordon trying to prevent her leading a cross-country procession.

through the streets of Lahore. She had earlier lashed out at the military authorities and called on Pakistanis to rise up for democracy. "It is a reign of terror unleashed on the people of Punjab. I appeal to all patriotic people to come forward and play their role for restoration of democracy," Kulsoom said.

The authorities have defended the move as necessary to uphold an eight-month-old law banning political rallies. They say Kulsoom was planning to turn the procession into yet another attack on the regime.

But observers say the move has backfired and propelled Kulsoom into the forefront of Pakistani politics. They say the woman who once said "my job is to look after the kitchen" is now the only opponent the military really fears.

Human rights activist B M Kutty said Kulsoom was now the most prominent figure in Sharif's former ruling party, the

## Sharif's wife freed

**KULSOOM NAWAZ**, wife of ousted Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, drove to her home under police escort early Sunday, ending a 10-hour standoff with the military regime, the police said.

Kulsoom had been detained in her car since Saturday, after defiantly breaking a police cordon trying to prevent her leading a cross-country procession.

The police said she was under arrest but state-run television said she had merely been stopped on the side of the road to prevent her from breaking a law against political rallies. **AFP, Lahore**

Pakistani journalist Mohammad Riaz said Kulsoom deserved credit for taking her fight to the authorities despite strong pressure from within the PML to avoid confrontation at all costs. "Some of her statements have been more aggressive than her husband, Kulsoom must be thankful to the police for making her programme successful," he said.

Kulsoom has taken up the challenge of politics since Mr Sharif was toppled in October and subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment for hijacking and terrorism. But she has no official position with the PML and her role had been limited to protesting her husband's innocence and denouncing the government of General Pervez Musharraf.

That is until Friday, when she was suddenly at the centre of Pakistan's latest political storm.

"In the post-October scenario she has emerged as the only leader who is chal-

lenging the military ruler," said Tauseef Ahmed, a professor at a college in the southern city of Karachi. "Her party leaders will now come under more pressure from the workers to do something to launch the movement for the restoration of democracy."

Among her more memorable attacks on the regime, she has demanded General Musharraf be tried for treason, called for an investigation of last year's bloody border conflict with India in Kashmir, and denounced her husband's trial as a farce.

But in a recent interview, she said she did not want a career in politics and would be happy to go back to domestic duties if her husband is released. "I was never involved in politics. My job is to look after the kitchen. But since all our male members are in jail, I have to enter into this arena," she said. "I am here while my husband is in jail. Once he is released I will resume my duties as a housewife."

(AFP)

# Sharif's party members arrested

Islamabad, July 7

PAKISTANI POLICE today launched a crackdown on supporters of ousted Premier Nawaz Sharif's party by arresting scores of them in Punjab province in an apparent bid to prevent his wife from leading an anti-government march tomorrow. Police said they have arrested 165 members of Pakistan Muslim League (PML) and were acting on the orders of the Punjab provincial government which has vowed to stop Sharif's wife, Kulsoom Nawaz, leading the procession from Lahore to Peshawar.

Leading political parties immediately expressed shock and outrage over the mass arrests and claimed 300 workers have been arrested. Lashing out at the army regime, Kulsoom condemned the crackdown and vowed to go ahead with her march. "This step only

betrays the military government's shortsightedness. My caravan is not for political reasons. It is for the victims of drought," Kulsoom told news-

## One killed in Pak blast

AT LEAST one person was killed and four seriously injured when a bomb blast ripped through a bus in Lahore today, police and witnesses said. The bomb was planted under a minibus shortly before it was to depart for the northern city of Gujrat, they said.

Police said four commuters inside the bus were critically injured while the body of an unidentified man was found near the vehicle. No one has claimed the responsibility for the blast which came hours after the arrest of scores of supporters of deposed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. *PTI, Islamabad*

men. "For how long they can keep me or Sharif from the people? My rally is for a noble cause but they cannot tolerate even a non-political event," Kulsoom said.

"The government's reaction shows that the people are with us. The government is scared of Sharif's popularity and is trying to stop me from collecting donations for the drought-hit people of Sindh and Baluchistan."

"Governments cannot be run through police. What they are doing... will make them unpopular," said Ghafoor Ahmed, the leader of Pakistan's main fundamentalist party, Jamaat-i-Islami (JI). Punjab officials said they wanted to "convey a very strong message" that political activity was outlawed. Dozens of PML activists as well as provincial leaders were seen crammed into police lockups around the city while others had gone into hiding, witnesses said. *(PTI)*

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

7 8 JUL 2000

# Plan to sideline Sharif, Benazir

By K. K. Katyal

The Pakistan Chief Executive, General Pervez Musharraf's meetings with political leaders early this week generated, as I found during a recent visit, considerable excitement at practically all levels — in the Press, among intellectuals, the lay public and, last but not the least, the politicians of all hues and shades. For several reasons. One, it was the first contact between the military ruler and representatives of the political establishment: after the dismissal of the democratic government in October last year. Two, those called for separate one-to-one talks included the leaders of the Nawaz Sharif party, the Muslim League. Three, all of them responded positively to the invitations, while the deposed Prime Minister's wife, Mrs. Kulsoom Nawaz, lost no time in making known her displeasure — and that of her husband — over the engagement of their party leaders with the present regime.

There was widespread speculation over the rationale of the General's action. Was it a precursor of a serious move to partially hand over power to a civilian dispensation? Or was a civilian facade intended to be created, with real authority continuing to reside in the army? Was it meant for the consumption of the major powers, like the U.S. and the European Union, which spare no opportunity to denounce the demise of democracy in Pakistan? Whatever else may be the meaning of the General's move, it was amply clear that he wanted the former top persons of the two mainstream parties, Mr. Nawaz Sharif of the Muslim League and Ms. Benazir Bhutto of the Pakistan People's Party, along with their loyalists rendered ineffective. One way of achieving this objective — without the army parting with power — could be to set up a council of elders, comprising senior "clean" politicians, for a role, which may be little more than a merely advisory one. He could, thus, hope to coopt the politicians, of course with significant exceptions. Opinions differ on whether he would succeed in the long run, even if he is able to try the day in the immediate context.

The real test will be whether the army regime is able to make a serious dent in the mass following of the two major parties and of Mr. Nawaz Sharif and Ms. Benazir Bhutto. The supporters of the two leaders are confident that their bases would remain intact, and if at all there was an erosion, it would be too insignificant. This was how some of them expounded the argument in the course of informal conversations. "This is not the first situation of this type. More than once in the past, Pakistan had been under the control of the army rulers who had toyed with the idea of reconstructing the political establishment. Their plans seemed to work temporarily — but finally the military rule gave place to a democratic set-up. The present case would not be an exception." If democracy had taken roots, why were there no protests over the takeover by the army? The reply: "The street power is different from the vote power. That was evident in the past and it will not be any different now." To substantiate the point, they cited the

## PAKISTAN TODAY — I

case of the Jamat-e-Islami, which was able to attract public attention through rallies and agitations but had seldom made a mark electorally. The Nawaz Sharif loyalists were confident that their leader would retain the "public focus", even if a section of his associates deserted him. These claims of mass support contrasted sharply with the views from the other side of the fence — including from some of the former loyalists of the ousted Prime Minister and a section of intellectuals whom he had alienated. They were articulate and were able to put across their views through the print media. Against this, the backing of the masses, claimed by the Nawaz Sharif camp, could be known only when free, credible elections are held.

The choice of the Muslim League leaders, invited by Gen. Musharraf, served to emphasise the cleavage that had developed, slowly but surely, in the Muslim League camp. One of the two invitees was Mian Azhar, a confirmed

dissident, known for his outspoken criticism of Mr. Sharif even before his ouster, and the other Raja Zafar-ul-Haq, regarded a confidant of the former Prime Minister. By calling them on the same day, he succeeded in clubbing the two together and bringing to the fore an identity in the thinking of the old critics and erstwhile backers of Mr. Sharif. These meetings were following by the emergence of a "group of 38" within the Muslim League which, for the first time after the army takeover, gave a concrete shape of its agenda. Among other things, it opposed the remote-control of the party by Mr. Sharif through his wife and called for choosing a new head of the party and other office-bearers. To ensure against "autocratic" functioning, the group suggested changes in the party constitution, like introduction of the one-person one-post norm — forbidding any one leader from holding the post of the party president and the Prime Minister — and fixing a limit of two terms for the holders of these positions. If applied in the present case, it would mean the ouster of Mr. Nawaz Sharif from the party position and ensure against his return to power in the future. The military leaders will have good reasons to be happy with this development, fitting as it does into their agenda. The League dissidents opposed confrontation with the present regime, even while calling for restoration of Central and provincial assemblies.

As against the Muslim League, the PPP did not show any cracks under the impact of the General's invitation. While the League invitees did not care to consult Mr. Sharif, the PPP representatives, Mr. Amin Fahim, responded to the Chief Executive's call after getting Ms. Bhutto's clearance. That, however, will not make any difference to the objective of the regime's move — to sideline the old leadership of the two parties. The "political process" initiated by Gen. Musharraf is to be seen in this light. To what extent the "clean politicians" are trusted and get an opportunity for substantive, meaningful association with the military regime is to be seen.

(To be continued).

# KULSOOM FREED AFTER PAK STANDOFF

Lahore, July 9: The wife of deposed Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif returned home early on Sunday after a 10-hour standoff which started when police lifted her car with a crane and dragged it away with her still in it, witnesses said.

They said the police also broke up a meeting of supporters from Mr Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League in Rawalpindi, near the capital Islamabad, detaining about 30 people.

Mr Sharif's wife, Kulsoom Nawaz, returned home shortly after midnight, ending the standoff and her attempt to stage a rally banned by Pakistan's military rulers.

Ms Nawaz had vowed to lead a motorised procession some 500 km over two days from Lahore to the northwestern town of Peshawar.

Officials of Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League said the rally was being held to collect funds for drought victims. Political

sources said it was a bid to drum up public support for the jailed ex-premier.

Local media said about 50 people were detained in a crackdown on Saturday as police surrounded Sharif's Lahore home and stopped people from entering and leaving the area.

It was not known how the car carrying Ms Nawaz managed to elude the police barricades.

It was stopped about 15 km away, and police then used a huge overhead crane to lift the front wheels and drag it into a police compound. Ms Nawaz and three others then refused to leave the car or open the doors for 10 hours, before finally going home. Mr Sharif's daughter said her mother was tired but not hurt after the standoff.

"She's a bit tired from all that time in the car," Maryam Safdar told Reuters on Sunday.

Ms Nawaz has promised to set another date for the rally, but nothing had been fixed yet, the daughter said. Ms Safdar said the family home on Sunday was again completely surrounded by police. A spokesman for the Punjab government told the official APP news agency that Ms Nawaz was stopped "when she was trying to take out a procession. (Reuters)

10 JUL 1999

# Police ends house arrest of Kulsoom

LAHORE: After being confined to her home for three days by the police, the wife of ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif was on Tuesday freed, her press secretary Asmat Baig said.



**Kulsoom Sharif**

Ms Kulsoom Sharif, who staged a nine-hour standoff with the police on Saturday in an attempt to launch an anti-government march, had been confined to her home since then.

There was no immediate comment from the authorities.

A woman who seldom was seen in public while her husband was in power, Ms Kulsoom was catapulted into the public eye after Mr Sharif's ouster in a bloodless coup last October 12.

Mr Sharif has been in jail since

the coup. He currently is serving two concurrent life sentences having been convicted of terrorism and kidnapping.

The former prime minister also faces several charges of corruption.

Mr Sharif was thrown out after trying to replace army chief Gen Pervez Musharraf with a junior general and an ally of his government. At the time the army accused Mr Sharif of ruining the economy, engaging in runaway corruption and threatening institutions like the judiciary and the military.

Gen Musharraf has promised to return Pakistan to democratic rule in three years in keeping with a ruling from the supreme court.

According to Mr Beg, Ms Kulsoom left her home in the Punjab provincial capital early on Tuesday to visit her husband in the 16th century Attock fort where his trial on corruption charges is being held. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

12 JUL 2000

40-14  
By K. K. Katyal

What stand out in today's Pakistan are contradictions — in and about the ruling set-up, civil society and the political establishment. Visitors from India, in particular, become aware of this phenomenon because their relationship with Pakistanis is itself a bundle of anomalies.

Take, for instance, our experience in Lahore on the last day of the week-long stay in the country — at a shop, displaying audio-cassettes of prominent singers. We want something special, we say, announcing our Indian origin. We are shown a giant showcase with rows and rows of Lata Mangeshkar and Rafi cassettes. Only later is the best from Pakistan presented. The shop assistant is disappointed — we declined his offer of the best from India. It was a different story on the day of arrival — the shrieking newspaper headlines spoke of acute resentment over the Government move to expand trade with New Delhi and, to that end, to treat India as the "most favoured nation". This is a technical description under international trading norms, but Pakistanis were shocked (if the statements of politicians were to be believed). The headlines in Urdu appeared more disturbing to them — if translated into English, it would mean "the highly likeable country" — enough to take the blood of India-baiters to the boiling point. Within 24 hours the official who announced the policy decision backtracked, explaining sheepishly that he had been quoted out of context.

We decide to have a "pad yatra" (on taxi) of Lahore, the city that was familiar to us before the

partition — for another look at the landmarks. The driver — this tribe is the traditional friend of visiting journalists anywhere in the world — explains with relish the changes (where things are different now) or emphasises the continuity (where things are the same). It is still "Krishan Nagar" and "Sham Nagar", he says. Then he turns round and inquires: "Why do not more Indians come here and Pakistanis go to India?" He has a good political awareness — "Yes, it is Kashmir, I know. Why do not we settle it some way or the other. Let it be sorted out through 'takseem' (division)." The sentiments of friendship and amity find free expression else-

#### PAKISTAN TODAY - IV

where too — shopkeeper Anarkali or the wayside vendor at Neela Gumbad in Lahore or the money-changer in the Blue Area of Islamabad, the shopkeeper at the Jinnah Market and so on. A far cry from the tenor of the headlines the preceding six days.

Earlier, in Islamabad, the two-day South Asia Media Conference revealed a sharply contrasting pattern — the conference proper, on the one hand, and the session at the end addressed by the Chief Executive, General Pervez Musharraf, a virtual press conference, on the other. Let the story be told in the words of *The News*: "The conference proceeded smoothly, with handshakes, pats, laughter and a broad respect for each other's viewpoints even when disagreements were too entrenched to resolve... But the press conference was a different ball game.

The questions put to Gen. Musharraf captured the tense ambience."

The daily deals with the contradiction constructively: "At one end of the regional spectrum are extremely complex problems grounded in hardened positions, at the other end lie immense possibilities of finding efficacious solutions... It would be ideal if the spirit of sacrifice, self-restraint and openness that characterised the conference proceedings as well as group gatherings on the recreational sidelines become the ruling political idea for the governments of South Asia."

Pakistan has been under the military rule since October last when the Nawaz Sharif government was dismissed. The Chief Executive is assisted by a Cabinet, picked by him. The central and provincial assemblies have been dissolved. The judges of the Supreme Court and high courts had to take a new oath after the change. Political activity is banned. The army calls the shots. But there are no restrictions on the press which, at times, carries stuff sharply critical of the regime. At non-public places — clubs, hotels and private houses — politicians meet and engage in discussions on all manner of subjects.

We were called (through formal invitation cards) to meet the former Foreign Minister, Mr. Sartaj Aziz, and the Speaker of the dissolved Assembly, Mr. Somroo, at the Islamabad Club. After the meal, we were briefed on the present political situation and then followed a brief question-answer session. The questions were not parried. Except in one case, Mr.

Aziz was asked how far the back-channel diplomacy had proceeded after the Vajpayee bus journey. "It would cease to be back-channel, if the question is replied to," he snapped. Mr. Itzaz Ahsan, who was the Interior Minister in the Benazir Cabinet, played host to a large gathering of politicians, diplomats and, of course, to us, Indian journalists. Though a social gathering, politics and diplomacy were among the subjects freely discussed. I recall my experience during the Zia rule when I went to Mr. Ahsan's Lahore residence. He was then in the Opposition and I was advised to be discreet in contacts with that category of politicians. I changed the taxi thrice to cover less than two kilometres from my hotel to his house.

Pakistan could boast of a strong, vibrant movement of women activists. Enlightened in their outlook, they have distinguished themselves for powerful advocacy of their rights. Pakistan also has the most bigoted clergy, the most orthodox mullahs who seek to invoke narrowly interpreted injunctions in support of gender discrimination and other such practices. The women project two images — in cities and towns, they are modern in their outlook, appearance and dress; in villages and the interior of towns, they wear "burqah", the long, tent-like wrapper covering the entire body.

Last but not the least, the image-builders of the Chief Executive project him as a liberal with a modern lifestyle. And yet the bearded Generals are not an insignificant force. Contradictions galore.

(Concluded)

THE HINDU

12 JUL 2000

**Pak. not to sign  
CTBT without  
consensus**

By Amit Baruah

ISLAMABAD, JULY 1. The Pakistani Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, said today that Islamabad would not sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) unilaterally and without obtaining a national consensus.

The Chief Executive was quoted as saying at Uthal near Karachi that Pakistan would develop a national consensus before signing the treaty.

"Whether India signs it (the CTBT) or not we will take a decision according to our national requirements," he said.

Gen. Musharraf also said that Pakistan was planning to buy F-7 MG jets from China. "Our airforce needs more planes and we are certainly dealing with China to purchase them," he added.

THE HINDU

July 1, 2000



## Pak Govt says 'no' to Sharif's trial in Lahore

Mubashir Zaidi  
Islamabad, July 1

RF-12  
2/7 L

THE GOVERNMENT has said 'no' to holding of trial of ousted Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in his political base Lahore claiming that no fair trial is possible at Lahore as it would create law and order situation.

This was stated by prosecutor general National Accountability Bureau, Farooq Adam. He told a Lahore High Court bench, on the notice issued to the Government by the court on the petition of Sharif urging the court to shift his trial to Lahore from the 16th century Attock Fort where he is currently tried for cases of corruption.

**MFN status:** The military Government, meanwhile, has backtracked on the statement made by its Commerce Minister Razzak Daud that Pakistan was actively considering a proposal to grant Most-Favored Nation status to India. A Ministry of Commerce spokesman was quoted by APP today saying that there was no such proposal under consideration or any change of policy.

The spokesman, however, said that there are certain items which are on the list that can be traded with India and there is no objection to those being traded as per the past and present practice.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

2 JUL 2001

# 'I shall step down after 3 yrs as per SC ruling'

This is the concluding part of Gen. Musharraf's exclusive interview to *The Hindustan Times*

Rawalpindi, July 2

WHEN GENERAL Pervez Musharraf took over as the Chief Executive of Pakistan, he was quoted as saying: "It is good to be in charge." I asked the General whether nine months down the line it still felt good to be in-charge.

"There is a lot of work to be done. You get no time to yourself. But it is a good feeling that you are doing something for your country. Therefore, I certainly feel good that I am contributing towards taking Pakistan forward," he replied.

The tricky part, however, was if he would really hand over power to a civilian authority after three years if he still felt that it was good to be in charge. Would he then not continue in power because he enjoyed it? General Musharraf laughed and said, "I will hand over power. This is a Supreme Court decision and it has to be honoured."

With army officers being appointed to look after civilian departments, there is a real fear among the small liberal community in Pakistan that the Army is here for good. Such is the rate of take-over of civilian jobs by a major or a colonel from the army that Pakistanis are saying that General Musharraf's corps commanders are the real Chief Ministers of the four provinces. Was this a correct impression, I ask him. General Musharraf denied that this was the case. He, however, admitted that the army was indeed participating in a lot of civilian activities.

"But this is in the interest of Pakistan. Wherever I feel that the organisational and administrative capabilities of the armed forces can be used to improve an organisation or that it can contribute towards improv-

ing the administration of Pakistan, I use the army. To that extent, what you are saying is correct. I am using the army for this purpose and I will continue doing so. The army is acting as the eyes and ears of the government at the Centre and also in the provinces. But to say that the Army has taken over the task of governance itself is not correct," the Chief Executive of Pakistan claimed.

Pakistan being an Islamic state has a strange law called the Blasphemy Law. An offence under this draconian law is punishable by death. The law has often been used against Christians in the past in Pakistan. General Musharraf had given an indication that he would change the procedure

for registration of blasphemy charges against an accused but then went back on his commitment. Why had he done that? Did this mean that he was unable to take on the fundamentalists? And if he could not do so now, where was the guarantee that he would be able to do so later? Had he not lost whatever constituency he might have had among the liberal sections of Pakistani society by his backtracking?

General Musharraf replied that those who viewed things in this manner in Pakistan did not understand what he had done. All that he had proposed, he said, was that before a First Information Report (FIR) was lodged against anybody under the Blasphemy Law in a police station, the district commissioner should examine the complaint to prune it or to see if it was valid.

"Then I was given the argument that if people are agitated and there is a delay in the registration of the FIR then the life of the person who is charged with

Continued on Page 12

GETTING TO KNOW  
THE GENERAL  
Bharat Bhushan in Pakistan



# 'I shall step down after three years'

Continued from page 1

blasphemy may be in danger. Because people get extremely worked up on these issues, they may do anything to the accused. Therefore, I thought I needed to rescind the decision," General Musharraf explained. As for the Blasphemy Law itself, he said that it was part of the Penal Code and could not be changed.

Having eroded his liberal constituency, what kind of support base was he building for himself? General Zia-ul-Haq, it is believed, consciously built a right-wing fundamentalist constituency for himself.

What is General Musharraf's constituency in Pakistan? In which sections of society did he feel he had a support base, I asked him. "The people of Pakistan and the military - they are my support base. I don't need anyone's support. I am not looking for it. Looking for a support base, wanting to build a party or leaning towards a particular section or group, is a sign of weakness. It means that there are people who are opposing you and

you feel the need to generate support from a particular group. I don't find any such cause for such concern at all. The people of Pakistan support me. Therefore, there is no need for me to bank on any particular group. The whole of Pakistan is with me," he replied.

On the foreign policy front, what were the broad contours of the Iran-Pakistan talks on Afghanistan, I asked him?

"Well, we want peace in Afghanistan and bring in a multi-ethnic government there. Other than that, we also want to deal with the issue of sanctuaries and training grounds for any people or groups of people who are involved with extremist or terrorist activities," General Musharraf said.

Did he mean sanctuaries and training camps for terrorists in Afghanistan?

"Yes, in Afghanistan," he replied.

When asked about the impact of improving Sino-Indian relations on the subcontinent, the Chief Executive of Pakistan said that this had no effect on Pakistan's relations with China. "We have a long-

standing relationship with China based on a deep understanding of each other. It is a very cordial and sincere relationship. So our relationship certainly does not get affected by what China does with India.

"This is a bilateral issue between India and China. I am least bothered by it. I am only bothered about my relations with China which, I believe, are on a very strong footing," General Musharraf said.

Asked for his views on the ethnic strife in Sri Lanka and the kind of help Sri Lanka had sought from Pakistan, General Musharraf said, "We are for the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka. As far as military support is concerned, that is a bilateral issue between us."

Lastly, I asked him about the ways in which the mind-sets of the people on both sides of the border could be changed. Would not a more open visa regime help?

"If you are a 16-year-old in Europe, you can buy a train ticket and go off to see the neighbourhood. Where can our children go?

At least the youngsters in Lahore should be able to make a day trip to Amritsar, have a meal there, see a film and be back in the evening and vice-versa. Indian youngsters can't come to Pakistan, Pakistani youngsters can't go to India. They may not want to go to Sri Lanka because of the ethnic strife there. Nepal is a Hindu kingdom which is not going to do much to open up their minds, and Bangladesh may not be much of a destination for most. They are trapped. How will they broaden their minds about the region?

"All this is possible. All this is possible. But there is so much suspicion on both sides. And may I add that it is also a fact that if such a thing were to happen a lot of undesirable people would also come in, there may be an increase in bomb blasts and the influence of the intelligence agencies will be there. So this kind of openness can be productive only if there is a reduction in tensions and removal of disputes between the two countries," General Musharraf felt.

(Concluded)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

# Musharraf holds democracy talks

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ISLAMABAD, July 3. — For the first time since seizing power nine months ago, Pakistan's army ruler met the country's politicians today to plot a course for a return to democracy.

Gen. Pervez Musharraf met members of the deposed Prime Minister, Mr Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League, as well as a dissident faction. He also met Fazle-ur Rehman, who leads the ultra orthodox Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam — a big supporter of the Taliban rulers next door in Afghanistan.

There also were reports of a meeting between Gen. Musharraf and members of Mrs Benazir Bhutto's party.

Mr Raja Zafar-ul Haq, acting head of Mr Sharif's party, said Gen. Musharraf had a plan to return to the country to democracy. But he refused to give details of the plan, saying he would take Gen. Musharraf's proposals to his party leadership to decide whether they would participate.

There was no immediate comment from Gen. Musharraf or other members of his regime. Previously, Gen. Musharraf



Gen Pervez Musharraf

said he would return democratic rule to Pakistan in three years, in keeping with a ruling by the Supreme Court.

But he said before general elections were held, he would like to revive the economy, implement electoral reforms and root out corruption.

To that end, the military ruler has set up an anti-corruption commission, ordered a survey to document the country's economy and forged ahead to curb smuggling, a multi-billion dollar business in Pakistan.

The Supreme Court also gave Gen. Musharraf the authority to amend the Constitution. It is expected that Gen. Musharraf will revise the Constitution to institutionalise the military's involvement in the running of the country before handing it over to civilian rule.

Gen. Musharraf has accused many of Pakistan's former rulers of corruption and has said many will not be allowed to return to politics.

Mr Sharif is currently in jail convicted of hijacking and terrorism and sentenced to concurrent life terms. He is appealing his conviction. Mr Sharif and several of his family members and close associates also face several charges of corruption and abuse of power.

Mr Haq said he complained to Gen. Musharraf that Mr Sharif had been badly treated in prison, often kept in handcuffs and denied even the basic amenities.

Mr Sheikh Rashid, a former minister in Mr Sharif's Cabinet, called Gen. Musharraf's meetings with politicians an "icebreaker". "We hope the process will continue and pave the way for the return of democracy," he said.

THE STATESMAN

July 3, 2001

# Pakistan after Kargil

## Jihad versus Peace and Progress

By G PARTHASARATHY

**S**PEAKING to correspondents at Attock, where he has been incarcerated by the Musharraf regime, Nawaz Sharif squarely blamed General Pervez Musharraf for Pakistan's military and diplomatic debacle in Kargil. Sharif said Pakistan had suffered heavier casualties in its Kargil misadventure than in the entire 1965 conflict: "The fact is that unit after unit of the Northern Light Infantry were wiped out. With every passing day, Pakistan was losing posts".

While the military regime predictably branded Nawaz a traitor and liar, his wife Kulsoom, unarguably more politically savvy than her husband, joined the fray, demanding the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry to look into who was responsible for the Kargil debacle. Influential and highly respected newspapers like *The Dawn* supported this call. But, given the veil of secrecy that shrouds every activity of the army, there is no way that General Musharraf is going to oblige those who demand that his actions in Kargil should face the same measure of public 'accountability' as the actions of those whom he is now seeking to prosecute.

Many Pakistanis now privately acknowledge that it is the lack of transparency and public accountability that has led to their army becoming a virtual state within a state in their country. It is only after a lapse of over three decades that eminent Pakistanis like Air Marshal Nur Khan and Altaf Gauhar now acknowledge that the 1965 conflict instigated by Bhutto and executed by Ayub was a national disaster, rather than the great victory it was claimed to be. With the country unable to meet its international debt repayment obligations and regarded as a breeding ground for sectarian religious extremism by countries in its neighbourhood — ranging from Iran and India to Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan — there is growing international concern about where Pakistan is headed. This concern is naturally shared by many thinking Pakistanis.

However, is a regime that sought to present President Clinton's televised address during his brief stopover in Islamabad as an endorsement of its policies, at all capable of genuine introspection? The military establishment presents the Kargil debacle to its own people as a great military feat whose gains were bartered away by a blundering Nawaz Sharif. One has, therefore, to really ponder over whether the military establishment in Pakistan

has learnt any lessons at all from its recent history.

The military, strategic and diplomatic aims of the Kargil misadventure became evident to the world from the two conversations in May 1999, between General Musharraf, who was then in China, and his Chief of General Staff, Aziz Khan. In diplomatic terms the aim was obviously to get waning international interest refocused on Kashmir. The expectation was that India would not be able to retake the heights dominating the crucially important Srinagar-Leh road. So confident was Musharraf of being able to achieve these strategic objectives that he directed Aziz Khan on May 29 that Pakistan should not accept any Indian offer of a cease-fire in Kargil. Aziz Khan was also ordered that the Pak government should claim that the Line of Control was not properly defined or demarcated and that all military activities should be attributed to the "Muhjahideen".

### IN BRIEF

- Nawaz Sharif admits to Kargil misadventure
- General Musharraf will not allow investigation into his role in Kargil
- Pakistani army virtually a state within state
- Will Pakistan choose jihad over collective endeavour in South Asia?

The tunnel vision of those who planned and executed the Kargil venture soon became apparent. The argument that the LOC was not accurately demarcated was promptly rejected by the USA, the European Union and others who had been provided copies of maps signed by Indian and Pakistani military commanders in 1972. Further, by the end of June, virtually all Pakistani army posts overlooking the vital Srinagar-Leh road were overrun. When the United States CENTCOM Commander General Anthony Zinni visited Islamabad towards the end of June, Musharraf had realised that the game was up. Every strategic post except "Tiger Hill" had been lost. It needs to be remembered that Nawaz Sharif met Zinni only after Musharraf had agreed that withdrawal from remaining areas of Kargil was the only viable option left both militarily and diplomatically.

By the time Nawaz left on his fateful trip to Washington on July 4,

the Indian Flag was flying on top of "Tiger Hill" and supply convoys were proceeding unhindered to Leh from Srinagar. Pakistani army intruders drawn predominantly from the Northern Light Infantry had been forced out of over 95 percent of the strategically crucial Drass and Batalik sectors and the Indian army was poised for a major attack in Mashkoh where over 50 per cent of the territory had been cleared of the intruders. But, the weekend meeting between Nawaz and Clinton signalled the beginning of a new and deadly rivalry between Nawaz and Musharraf, over who exactly was responsible for the Kargil misadventure that ended ignominiously in military terms and earned Pakistan a reputation for irresponsible behaviour internationally.

The fallout of the Kargil episode was inevitable. As Musharraf visited cantonment after cantonment seeking to explain the debacle to sceptical audiences, he inevitably had to claim that he had ordered the withdrawal on instructions from Nawaz Sharif. The Punjabi prime minister was obviously not pleased at this explanation of his Mohajir Army Chief. Matters came to a head over Musharraf's decision to sack Corps Commander, Quetta, Tariq Parvez, for his allegedly unauthorised contacts with the Prime Minister. The impetuous and rash Nawaz Sharif, in turn, decided to sack Musharraf. The 111 Brigade in Rawalpindi, on red alert for just such an eventuality struck and Pakistan again slid back to military dictatorship.

One would have hoped that given Musharraf's credentials as a modern, Atatürk-oriented General, things would change. But the repeated invocation of "Jihad" naturally raises serious doubts about the direction that Pakistan intends to take.

Pakistan and its military rulers today stand at the crossroads of their nation's history. Will they choose the path of their country continuing to be a focal point for Jihad in Chechnya, Algeria, Egypt, Central Asia and Kashmir? Will they persist in a sterile and futile quest for "parity" with a neighbour several times their size and further bankrupt their crisis ridden economy? Or will they choose the path laid down in the SAARC Vision for the Year 2000 and beyond and constructively join a collective endeavour for developing a South Asian Community, dedicated to the progress and welfare of its peoples?

(The author is a former Indian ambassador to Pakistan)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

4 JUL 2000

# 21-year ban on holding public office Sharif gets one more life term, fined Rs 20 m

REUTERS & PTI

ATTOCK, July 22. — A Pakistani court today sentenced Mr Nawaz Sharif to 14 years' hard labour and banned him from politics for 21 years on corruption charges.

Mr Sharif, already serving two life terms handed down in April, told reporters in the courtroom that he was not surprised by the verdict, given what he called the "vindictive" government of Gen Pervez Musharraf, who deposed him in a bloodless coup last October.

Court officials said Mr Sharif later refused to formally receive the judgment by the special accountability court that also ordered him to pay a fine of Rs 20 million for failing to declare in his tax return money used to buy a Russian helicopter in 1993.

They said the court would now send the 50-page judgment to Mr Sharif through jail authorities. If he still refuses to receive the judgment, the document will come back to the court, which will then decide on the next course of action.

The court acquitted Mr Sharif's former top corruption investigator, Mr Saifur Rehman, of a charge of abetment. "I have...held accused Mohammad Nawaz Sharif guilty...(and) he is hereby convicted...(and) sentenced to R.I. (rigorous imprisonment) for a period of 14 years," the judge, Mr Farrukh Latif said.

"He stands disqualified for 21 years for seeking or from being elected, chosen, appointed or nominated as member or repre-

sentative of any public office or any statutory or local authority of the government of Pakistan," the ruling said.

The judge read out only a few sentences from the judgment to Mr Sharif's relatives, party loyalists and reporters as pouring rain beat down on the roof of the makeshift courtroom in the 16th century Attock Fort west of Islamabad.

Mr Sharif has already appealed against two life terms he received in April when he



Mr Nawaz Sharif: in deeper trouble

was convicted of hijacking and terrorism charges related to the day of the coup when a plane carrying Gen Musharraf was briefly prevented from landing in Karachi on a flight from Sri Lanka.

He said after the verdict today the convictions "show that there is a clear-cut agenda of General Musharraf that has only one target, and that is me...The whole process is based on a personal vendetta."

The PML decided to challenge the judgment in the High Court. "We will challenge the judgement and hopefully High

Court will do justice," Mr Raja Zafarul Haq, a central leader of the party said.

"There was nothing in the case after the statement of the former foreign minister, Mr Sartaz Aziz, that the helicopter belonged to the PML," Mr Haq said. He said the PML executive would hold a special meeting on 30 July 30 to discuss future strategy.

Asked if the judgment would have any effect on Mr Sharif's position as party chief, he said Mr Sharif had been barred only from holding any public office. "It does not bar Sharif from holding the party office." Earlier, a PML spokesman the judgment was a "mockery of justice and fair play". "Despite all evidence proving that Mr Sharif was not guilty, the court handed down the punishment ...," he said.

Mr Sharif's wife, Kulsoom, said the verdict was expected. "I was expecting this verdict because the National Accountability Bureau is Nawaz-specific. It is 'Nawaz Accounted Bureau' in fact...I Nawaz Sharif cannot own a helicopter in Pakistan. Who else can!" she said.

The country's Supreme Court Bar Association today asked the court to review its 12 May judgment validating the army takeover, saying the decision suffered from "inherent error of law and procedure."

The review petition filed by Mr MA Zaidi on the association's behalf said the doctrine of state necessity "may open door for future adventurers whenever the opportunity arises and then justified in the name of the state necessity."

# US quietly puts pressure on Pak, cautions Jamaat chief

CHIDANAND RAJGHATTA  
WASHINGTON, JULY 27

WASHINGTON is privately leaning on Pakistan to have militant groups call off the terrorism in Kashmir and the Hizbul Mujahedin ceasefire offer is the result of the general US principle that the issue cannot be resolved through violence.

Administration sources acknowledged on Tuesday that a Jamaat-i-Islami chief Qazi Hussain, whose outfit is said to control the Hizbul, met key US officials in Washington last week and was told in no uncertain terms about the American view on the situation.

Although the sources denied that the Qazi was directed to rein in the Hizbul, they disclosed that the Jamaat leader had a meeting with

## State Department officials say Hizbul ceasefire was nothing they engineered, though it was a welcome move

US counter-terrorism chief Michael Sheehan, where he was briefed on Washington emerging policy on Kashmir, a policy that is predicated on renunciation of violence by all parties.

Qazi also called on US Assis-

tant Secretary for South Asia Rick Inderfurth, who has a fairly intimate grasp of the dynamics of terrorist groups in the region given his

familiarity with Afghanistan both as an administration official and as a former journalist.

Qazi then met Harold Koh, who is the assistant secretary for democracy and human rights, presumably for a lecture on both sub-

jects the fundamentalist party is not entirely familiar with.

State Department officials said the Hizbul ceasefire was "nothing that we specifically engineered" and said the Administration was as surprised at the announcement as the rest of the world. But it was a welcome move, although Washington would prefer to wait "till the dust settled down," one official said.

The official also expressed surprise at initial reports of the Hurriyat Conference criticising the Hizbul's ceasefire and said "Everyone is looking over their shoulder, I guess." The Administration would prefer to wait till the dust settled down, he added.

INDIAN EXP...

INDIAN EXPRE...

2 A JUL 2000