

# PPP clarifies Benazir's statements in India

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, DEC. 1.** The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has clarified that the former Pakistan Prime Minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, in her interviews with the Indian media during her recent visit, had never said that the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, as an army general, had "planned the Kargil invasion in Jammu and Kashmir" while she was Prime Minister. In a statement here, the party maintained that he did, however, present a theoretical war game plan which was vetoed by the then Prime Minister. "She believed that if the theoretical war game became a reality, it would lead to humiliation for Pakistan. She wished to avoid hurting the honour of the country," the party spokesman said in a statement.

"It is also a miscommunication that she had said (again in the interviews to the Indian media) the Pakistan army as an institution had brought back Osama bin Laden."

"However, the PPP point of view is that one or more Generals on their own initiative sought the help of Osama to overthrow the PPP Government in 1989 and continued to have links with him. It is clarified that Pakistan Army did not want 'to invade Afghanistan' at the time of President Najibullah," the statement said. The party spokesman said that, however, there was a plan for the Afghan interim Government to announce a confederation with Pakistan and call for the assistance of Pakistani troops which was vetoed by the then Prime Minister.

"In her interview, the PPP chairperson said that when she took over office in 1988, the ISI was a state within a state. However, subsequently, power from the ISI passed from the institution to a coterie of retired generals who were in power during the Afghan operation. Under the leadership of the retired Generals, during the Eighties, the ISI received major funding for establishing madrassas. However, in the Nineties, the power to manage the madrassas passed from the ISI to private groups."

"She said that the retired Generals still had power and could influence decisions by influencing important appointments in the ISI, army and other institutions. It is clarified that while the Ms. Bhutto as Prime Minister had little control over appointments or investigation in the army and the intelligence she did have meaningful policy consultations and undertook policy initiatives which collapsed after her overthrow."

"As such, the important agreements regarding India and America and other issues were taken by the Prime Minister and her Government with the backing of the military and security apparatus. This included the non-attack on each other's nuclear facilities agreement with India, the briefing minutes of the discussions with the then U.S. Presidents, Mr. George Bush Sr. and Mr. Bill Clinton, persuading the Taliban to reach an agreement with the Northern Alliance in 1996 as well as other important agreements," the statement claimed.

The spokesman said Ms. Bhutto did not criticise the Army as an institution, and the party

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makes a clear distinction between the Army and officers who abuse their position in the military. The PPP respected the Pakistani armed forces and its intelligence operatives. However, it expected accountability of those who did "injustices to political leaders and to the country through abuse of office and violation of oath of office."

"We are disappointed that General Musharraf and his regime is continuing to persecute our leadership and protect such elements that destabilised democracy and supported state-sponsored perversion of justice. Without PPP support, it would have been difficult for General Musharraf and his regime to have survived the situation caused by support to the international coalition against terror. Unfortunately, the PPP was repaid with ingratitude," the spokesman said. The statement said that while the PPP sought the path of dialogue to redress national issues, Gen. Musharraf was determined to undemocratically keep out 'front-runner' Benazir Bhutto from the elections. "This is unacceptable for the PPP and those who believe in democratic will of the people."

The spokesman said, "Mrs. Bhutto initiated talks with India and General Musharraf followed suit to Agra. The PPP called for breaking ties with the Taliban in 1998 and General Musharraf did the same. The Party reserves its right to insist on accountability of those who brought a bad name to the military and to the country."

## PPP vows to clamp down on jihadi groups

HT Correspondent  
Islamabad, December 4

THE PAKISTAN People's Party (PPP) today announced that if the party returns to power in the October 2002 elections, it would ban jihadi organisations from entering "Indian-administered" Kashmir.

PPP's Punjab president Qasim Zia said the party does not consider India to be an enemy country and those criticising Benazir Bhutto's statements on Kashmir during her recent visit to India were ignorant of the developments taking place in the world.

"India is not an enemy country. Our party always favours good relations with all our neighbours. While Ms Benazir Bhutto was recognised across the world as a people's leader, these critics were just a bunch of fools. The attempts aimed at making her controversial amounted to a betrayal of the country," the PPP leader said.

Zia said PPP's Kashmir policy remained unchanged. "It still wants the resolution of the dispute in accordance with the United Nations resolutions.

"But the jihadi organisations have created problems for Pakistan. Lashkar-e-Tayyeba had admitted that it was engaged in jihad in 10 countries. It should first try to reform Pakistan," the PPP leader said.

Zia said a sedition case should be registered against those who had initiated the "bus diplomacy".

# Pak welcomes Bonn deal

Mubashir Zaidi  
Islamabad, December 4

PAKISTAN TODAY welcomed the breakthrough deal struck by rival Afghan factions in Bonn on Tuesday for forming a new broad-based Government.

Foreign Office spokesman Aziz Ahmad Khan said Islamabad hopes the Bonn meeting would soon agree on the composition of the interim administration. "The Government of Pakistan felicitates the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and his special representative Lakhdar Brahimi over the agreement," he said.

Khan stressed the need for mutual consent and adjustment among Afghan leaders to revive peace and stability after two decades of conflict and strife.

With the world community ready to provide generous help for humanitarian relief and reconstruction of Afghanistan, Khan said this is a favourable movement for an end to the travails of the Afghan people.

Meanwhile, Chief Commissioner for Afghan Refugees Syed Asif Shah said Pakistan is alive to all kinds of security concerns to displaced Afghans and measures are in place to deal with any eventuality.

He said the Government is following a three-pronged strategy announced by President Pervez Musharraf for food security in Afghanistan, establishment of camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan. He said 12 camps, eight in

## Taliban leaders form 'pressure group'

SEVERAL MEMBERS of the Taliban administration have fled to Peshawar and are trying to persuade Mullah Mohammed Omar to evacuate Kandahar to avoid further bloodshed, BBC said on Tuesday.

Taliban officials, reportedly with the blessing of Pakistan, have formed an unofficial pressure group. They are holding talks with Pashtun leaders, including Hamid Karzai, in a bid seek representation in the future Government.

The Taliban leaders, including former Minister for Mines and Industries Mullah Abdul Jan, and Taliban's UN representative Hakim Mujahid, arrived in Pakistan last week. Most of them belonged to a group led by former mujahideen commander Mullah Nabi Mohammadi.

HTC, Islamabad

the NWFP and four in Baluchistan, ARE are being set up to accommodate about one lakh forty thousand Afghan refugees. About 140,000 Afghans have entered Pakistan since September 11.

Shah said the World Food Programme supplied about 56,000 metric tons of food to Afghanistan last month as against the need of 52,000 metric tons.

## Pak. gets \$1.3 b IMF loan

**KARACHI, DEC. 21.** Pakistan has received the first tranche of its \$1.3 billion Poverty Alleviation Programme from the International Monetary Fund, Central Bank officials said today.

The IMF had, on December 7, approved the \$1.3 billion loan with an interest rate of 0.5 per cent.

"We received the first tranche of \$109.5 million from the IMF on Thursday," said Mr. Syed Wasiuddin, spokesman for the State Bank of Pakistan.

Pakistan was allowed to withdraw \$109 million immediately and the subsequent instalments in three years. The transaction has pushed the foreign exchange reserves to more than \$4.63 billion, with the Central Bank holding \$2.96 billion and the commercial banks the rest, the spokesman said. The fallout of the September 11 terrorist attacks in the U.S. has hit Pakistan's economy. But its support for the U.S.-led campaign against terrorism has been credited with the speeding up of international aid, including the IMF package.

Pakistan has also successfully negotiated a liberal re-scheduling of its \$12.5 billion debts with the Paris Club of creditor Governments, which has rolled over much of the debts for the next 38 years.

— AFP

THE HINDU

22 DEC 2001

# Leash on Jaish, freeze on LeT

Mubashir Zaidi  
Islamabad/Delhi, December 24

IN A series of rapid but synchronised moves, Pakistan today detained Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Maulana Masood Azhar, while the country's State Bank froze the assets of Lashkar-e-Tayyeba and Ummah Tameer-e-Nau, an organisation with perceived links to Osama Bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

In an apparent fallout, Lashkar chief Hafiz Mohammed Saeed stepped down as leader of the outfit, saying he was doing it to "save" Pakistan from Delhi's smear campaign linking his group to the December 13 attack on India's Parliament. Saeed said Lashkar had shifted all its offices to Indian Kashmir last month and would confine itself to the "freedom struggle" in Kashmir.

Abdul Wahid Kashmirir, a lit-

tle known man from Indian Kashmir, was elected to replace Saeed.

Lashkar and Ummah Tameer-e-Nau's assets were frozen to allay US concern over the possible involvement of Jaish and Lashkar in the December 13 attack and Ummah's track record of aiding Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network. But the outfits could regroup and rechristen themselves to renew attacks in Kashmir, Pakistani officials told *The New York Times*.

"If what George Bush wants is we simply give India all it wants, he's dreaming. Whatever we do, be sure it won't be an end to the struggle for Kashmir," a senior Pakistani official said. The newspaper did not name the officials.

Earlier, a Pakistan State Bank statement said it had ordered all banks to freeze Lashkar and Ummah assets in line with a similar move by the US administra-

## NOT ENOUGH, SAYS INDIA

AN MEA spokesperson said freezing Lashkar's assets was not enough. Pakistan would have to take comprehensive action. The MEA had no information on Masood Azhar's reported detention.

HTC, New Delhi

tion. The directive follows President Bush's advice to General Musharraf that he must rein in the two organisations.

*Ausaf*, a pro-jihad Islamabad daily said Jaish chief Maulana Masood Azhar had been detained by Intelligence agencies, and telephones at his Islamabad and Bahawalpur offices and those at his residences had been disconnected. The authorities had also sealed the Jaish offices and

removed their signboards, it said. Meanwhile, the Government today authorised its armed forces to take "maximum measures" to match the Indian build-up along the international border and the Line of Control.

A high-level meeting chaired by General Aziz, Chairman, Joint Chief of Staff Committee, and attended by all military big-wigs reviewed troops movements by India along the Sindh-Rajasthan Sector and the Chenab-Ravi corridor on the LoC.

Media reports said the Government had cancelled all leave in the armed forces and told defence personnel to report for duty at the earliest.

In India, a website said Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had told all central ministers not to leave the country.

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## MUSHARRAF'S MISCHIEFS

# Is Jaish chief really under arrest?

Udayan Nambodiri  
New Delhi, December 26

PAKISTAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT of "detention" of Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Maulana Masood Azhar is degenerating into a farce.

He is believed to be in his house in Bahawalpur in Punjab with merely a police picket posted outside while the Pakistani establishment is "arranging" inspired reports in the Press about his "arrest".

New Delhi is not amused. Pakistan not even bothered to

inform the Indian Government of the move even as its Foreign Office continues to plant stories that he has been "arrested". The Indian Deputy High Commission in Islamabad has not confirmed the obvious "house detention" to South Block.

Gen Pervez Musharraf's regime is torn between the fear of angering its fundamentalist fringe and pacifying Interior Minister Moinuddin Haider. Sources say Haider, whose brother was killed by fanatics last week, is learnt to be pressing for tough measures against

the Jaish leader. But jihadi Generals, led by Musharraf's Chief of Staff Lt-Gen Mohammad Aziz, want the Government to just act tough.

External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh said the Pakistani Government had made a mockery of its act of freezing the assets of the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba. The manner in which Lashkar was allowed to move its base to PoK has also been noted by India.

Indian sources confirmed that ISI officials visited Azhar in his house yesterday. How this

can be interpreted as detention is anybody's guess in New Delhi. India has already stated that nothing short of the arrest of Jaish and Lashkar leaders would satisfy it.

Pakistan also continues to deceive the world on the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden with media plants on his "death and burial" stories. Musharraf himself sponsored the "Osama dead" line while touring Beijing on Sunday. The Pentagon is believed to have sternly informed him that Laden, along with Taliban chief Mullah

Omar, are holed up somewhere in Bajaur in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) adjoining Baluchistan.

The Americans are understood to have told their Pakistani hosts that unless Musharraf orders immediate combing and searching operations, they may be forced to do it themselves. Bajaur is learnt to be a haven for escaped al-Qaida and Taliban leaders. The FATA region is quite remote to even the Pakistani Army. The writ of Islamabad does not amount to much there.



Jaish chief Maulana Masood Azhar, who was reportedly arrested by Pakistani authorities on Tuesday.

## Anti-Pervez activities led to Azhar arrest: Editor

Islamabad, December 26

JAISH-E-MOHAMMAD leader Masood Azhar was arrested mainly for domestic reasons and partly under American pressure, according to Hamid Mir, editor of Urdu daily *Ausaf*. Azhar has been kept under house arrest since yesterday by Punjab Police.

Mir said Azhar's detention has more to do with his inflammatory speeches and writings against the Musharraf Government than the Indian pressure to arrest him for his alleged involvement in the Parliament attack.

He said Azhar, considered to be a hardliner among the militant jihadi groups in Pakistan, has been writing extremely critical articles against the Musharraf regime in Jaish publications in recent weeks. According to a brief official announcement last night, Azhar was detained by Punjab Police for provocative speeches and disturbing law and

order. Prior to his arrest, he was banned from entering the North Western Frontier Province, the announcement said.

Mir, who has extensive contacts among the jihadi groups and was the last journalist to interview Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan, said besides being critical of the Government, Jaish was believed to have been involved in the growing sectarian clashes between the majority Sunni and minority Shia sects.

A radical Islamist organisation with a fierce belief in the militant Deobandi fundamentalist philosophy practised by the Taliban, Jaish was believed to have links with the Sipha-e-Sehba of Pakistan, which has been blamed for sectarian clashes in the country.

Speculation was rife that Jaish had a hand in the recent murder of the brother of Pakistan Interior Minister Moinuddin Haider in Karachi. Also, a delegation from the All Pakistan

Newspaper Society complained to the Government that Azhar tried to force many editors to publish his claim owning responsibility for the suicide attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly.

Azhar reportedly called up a number of newspapers in Pakistan that day, claimed responsibility and threatened them with dire consequences if they did not carry the report. A Jaish statement issued here two days later disowned its responsibility.

Mir said Azhar had recently demanded that Taliban chief Mullah Mohammad Omar nominate him his 'khalifa' in Pakistan. Omar declined to oblige him.

Mir said Azhar was a complex case for Pakistan security officials to handle in a routine manner. He said the Jaish chief would be detained and held incommunicado for a while until the heat over the Indian demand for action against him subsides.

PTI

# Musharraf reviews military preparedness

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 29 The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, tonight complimented what was termed as 'overall state of preparedness and vigilance' of various formations of the military to the Indian "unprecedented" build-up on the borders.

Gen. Musharraf made these remarks at a briefing at the military Headquarters here.

A statement from the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that senior military officers were present on the occasion. "During the in-depth briefing detailed assessment and evaluation of the situation was made and various contingencies were discussed".

The statement said Gen. Musharraf approved the responses outlined by the General Headquarters and expressed his complete satisfaction on the steps taken so far. He complimented the overall state of preparedness

and vigilance being exercised by various formations.

## PIA directive

In a related development, the Pakistan International Airlines said that it has asked its office in India to withdraw staff within 48 hours after January 1. "We will close down our offices and call back 10 Pakistani staffers from the airline's offices in New Delhi and Mumbai," the PIA spokesman, Mr. Gardazi, said.

## Shifting of troops

Meanwhile, a report from the Afghan border said that Pakistan has begun thinning out troops along its western frontier with Afghanistan.

The U.S.-led coalition has reason to be worried if the report is correct. The coalition would not like the Afghan border to be left unguarded at a juncture when the fighters of the Taliban militia and Al-Qaeda are reported to be on the run.

THE HINDU

ROLE OF 'EXTERNAL FORCE' NOT RULED OUT: MUSHARRAF

# Armed men attack church in Pakistan, kill 17

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, OCT. 28.** A group of persons opened indiscriminate fire in a church at Bahawalpur in Punjab province today, killing 17 persons, including a policeman outside the church.

Reports said at least 100 people were in the Catholic church when six men on motorcycles forced their way into the church, after killing the policeman and opened fire.

The authorities said the carnage took place around 9.30 a.m. (IST) and police are on the lookout for the culprits. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack.

The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, described the incident as a "heinous act against the tenets of Islam", and promised protection to the minorities.

While directing the authorities to bring the culprits to book, he did not rule out the role of an "external force" in the attack.

The pattern adopted by the terrorists is similar to the acts of violence in recent months in parts of Punjab and Sind, particularly Karachi. But the incidents, prior to the September 11 terrorist attacks in the U.S., were mostly sectarian. The diplomatic community and political observers here are perplexed at the timing and motive behind the killings. While there have been sectarian clashes in different parts of Punjab in the past, the province has not experienced any communal tension in recent years.

In a statement, the former Pakistan Prime Minister and chairperson of the Pakistan People's Party, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, ex-

pressed concern over the killings and called upon the military regime to take action against those endangering the lives of the minorities.

The attack has come at a time when the former chairman of the National Accountability Bureau, Lt. Gen. (retd.) Khalid Maqbool, has been designated as the Governor of Punjab. He is to assume office on Monday.

PTI reports:

Gen. Musharraf said that the initial investigations into the attack indicated the involvement of "trained terrorist organisations" which wanted to create communal discord in the country.

"The methods used and the inhuman tactics employed clearly indicate the involvement of trained terrorist organisations, bent upon creating discord and

disharmony in Pakistan where Christians and Muslims have always lived in peace with mutual respect for each other," he said in a condolence message to the families of the victims.

## Pope condemns attack

An AFP report from the Vatican City said Pope John Paul II has expressed his "absolute condemnation" of the massacre.

## 3 killed in Quetta

Meanwhile, three persons were killed and 18 wounded when a bomb exploded in a bus at Quetta. A Reuters report said the explosives, fitted in a transistor, went off as the bus was passing through an area subject to a tribal dispute. It was on its way to Hanna Hurak lake.

**Christian Council condemns attack: Page 13**

THE HINDU

## Crisis in PoK over President's

post 5.12

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, July 28. — A constitutional crisis is brewing in Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), where the newly-elected Prime Minister, Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan, has threatened to resign if former President and Prime Minister, Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, does not agree to become President.

Sardar Qayyum, who heads the Muslim Conference that won a majority in the election held earlier this month, wants his son, Sardar Attiq Ahmed Khan, to be the next President, according to Radio Zahedan. The presidential election is scheduled for 1 August.

Twenty-two of the 30 Muslim Conference members in the Assembly, support the candidature of Sardar Attiq. His father is reportedly miffed with Pakistan for backing Sardar Hayat Khan as Prime Minister, ignoring his contribution in leading the party to victory.

Sardar Hayat, who charged Attiq with corruption, said he would not like to work under him. Without Pakistani intervention, the situation might head towards a political crisis, if Sardar Hayat carries out his threat to resign.



# Pak govt promises to ban extremist Islamic groups

ASSOCIATED PRESS

KARACHI, July 28. - Shaken by a spate of religiously motivated killings, Pakistan's government today promised to draft a law banning extremist Islamic groups, which are involved in terrorism and killings.

"The government has prepared a comprehensive law to ban all the sectarian organisations" involved in violence and terrorism, law minister Ms Shahida Jamil told reporters in the southern port city of Karachi.

The announcement followed Thursday's killing of the chief of Pakistan's largest oil company in Karachi because he was a Shi'ite Muslim.

Shaukat Mirza, 62, managing director of the state-run Pakistan State Oil, was en route to his office when gunmen on a motorcycle blocked his vehicle and fired. He died immediately.

Ms Jamil said the government plans to implement the law next month. She gave no other details.

In recent years, thousands of people have been killed throughout Pakistan in religiously motivated killings. Small, but heavily armed

extremist religious groups attack graveyards, shrines and mosques of rival sects, killing unarmed people, including children.

Most of the victims belong to the minority Shi'ite Muslim sect.

**Ex-Parliamentarians shot:** Gunmen in the eastern Punjab province shot two former Parliamentarians today, including an ex-minister of state for foreign affairs, police said, adds AP from Multan.

Mohammed Siddique Kanju, 55, who was minister in the Nawaz Sharif government was shot several times in the head and chest.

Killed in the same attack was Aslam Joya, 52, a law maker in the dissolved Punjab provincial assembly.

The two men were attacked by five masked gunmen in Ladhyan, 100 kilometers south of Multan, police said.

Kanju, who had left Sharif party to join a dissident group of the former ruling Pakistan Muslim League, was seeking the job of mayor in municipal elections, which are to be held next week.

No one took responsibility for the crime, but police believe it may have been related to political rivalry.

THE END

# The unspooling of General Musharraf

Pakistan's military ruler and president has found his forte: the press conference. By Dawn columnist **AYAZ AMIR**

**A**FTER the confusion which marked the early stages of his rule, Pakistan's soldier-president has finally discovered his forte: the extended press conference. It is a sign of the confidence he has acquired that he prefers his press conference live. He's a natural, speaking easily and handling questions, even difficult ones, with aplomb. Nor is he a boring speaker. The tedium comes when he stops looking at his watch.

In his chosen medium of the press conference, Musharraf is the best speaker Pakistan has had since Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. He is also a more down-to-earth speaker than the Pride of Asia (one of the many titles bestowed on Bhutto by a grateful populace) who was inclined to rely on generous amounts of fiction to embellish his public utterances. Not that he is a Quaker who speaks always on oath. But he gives the fiction treatment only to a few chosen subjects, those the closest to his heart: his government's achievements and the wonderful things likely to accrue from devolution.

Make-believe in such small doses is pardonable in a leader. The larger question is altogether different. Backward countries like Pakistan face problems of development, not eloquence. When they get leaders who start liking the sound of their own voices, the danger is real of the medium becoming the message, of words filling in for action. The circus function of government then becomes more important than the prosaic task of solving everyday problems.

Who in the post-colonial era have been the great exponents of Third World righteousness? To name a random few: Nkrumah, Sukarno, Nasser, Ben Bella, Nehru and, a bit later, our own Bhutto. All of them dashing and romantic figures abroad, failures at home. Eloquent leaders who have also been men of action constitute a thinner list. Castro comes to mind and, at an altogether different level, Lee Kuan Yew and Mahathir Mohammad.

General Musharraf's foremost achievement so far is the consolidation of his rule —

not too difficult a task given the army's backing and the opposition of such fearsome luminaries as the Sharifs, Benazir Bhutto and the unshaven monks of the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy. Musharraf would have to be spectacularly inept to get it wrong.



For the rest, what has he to show for himself? Alas, very little. Army monitoring — of the country, the economy, the districts — may not have been a disaster but it's been a limp affair. While being quick at taking up different initiatives like ending smuggling, recovering bad loans and documenting the economy, the military government has been equally quick in abandoning them in the face of resistance or after realising that things simple on paper were more complicated on the ground. The cost of living is on the rise, investment has all but dried up and no jobs are available.

What are we left with then? Merely the

echo of the hackneyed phrase that General Musharraf has become increasingly "media-savvy" of late. Good for him, but of what consolation to the people of Pakistan is his increasingly effective handling of the media? How does it affect their cost of living? How

**General Musharraf's foremost achievement so far is the consolidation of his rule — not too difficult a task given the army's backing and the opposition of such fearsome luminaries as the Sharifs, Benazir Bhutto and the unshaven monks of the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy. He would have to be spectacularly inept to get it wrong**

does it improve the local police station?

Or take Agra. The General argued Pakistan's case on Kashmir effectively, perhaps better than most before him. Despite the lack of a declaration, Kashmir was placed firmly on the centre table, exactly what Pakistan wanted. However, statesmanship is not only about mounting the rooftops and beating one's drum. Ultimately, it is about realisable solutions. After Agra, is Pakistan any nearer getting India to accept its stand on Kashmir?

Foreign policy is the last, and quite often the first, refuge of Third World despots, demagogues or military figures. When domestic

problems — debt, crumbling infrastructure, corruption, mal-administration — are found to be intractable, the lure of playing international statesman proves irresistible. There is no shortage of monarchs and presidents in the Arab and Muslim world who play this role to the full, none more so than the most ineffectual of them all, Yasser Arafat, who, in Edward Said's words, flits from capital to capital on one pointless state visit after another to prove his supposed standing as Palestinian president.

Pakistani leaders have also been assiduous globe-trotters, the more keen on foreign travel the more ineffectual they have proved at home. Benazir Bhutto made a record number of trips abroad. So did Nawaz Sharif. In the short time he has been around General Musharraf has also done his fair share of foreign sight-seeing. But his India visit, under whose cover he made himself president, has been his most important and most fruitful.

It was a visit during which the general was not patronised by his hosts nor read lectures in democracy or stability as was the case with some of his earlier forays on to the international stage. He went to India as an equal and in pursuit of a worthwhile objective: getting Indo-Pak relations moving again. For providing him this opportunity he has reason to be thankful to Mr Vajpayee.

For Pakistan, General Musharraf's newfound confidence means the obvious: an extended presidential term and a new system whose foundations — in the form of local elections and election of army-approved *nazims* and *naib nazims* — are already being laid. Take your pick out of what is on offer.

The good thing about Musharraf is that he is a liberal. But as his record thus far proves, he is no radical reformer, his socio-political instincts being those of the institution which is the source of his power. Furthermore, the political system whose scaffolding he is erecting is a throwback, minus the suppression of the press, to the Ayubian model. Pakistan could have done without this regression.

# Pakistan Christians vow revenge for massacre

Bahawalpur (Pakistan),  
October 29

THOUSANDS OF mourners shouted revenge as the bodies of 15 Christians were brought to the church, where they were massaged a day earlier, for funeral rites on Monday.

Outside the church of St Dominic's, and around Christian monuments across Pakistan, more police have been deployed to protect the minority after the worst massacre of Christians in Pakistan's 54-year history.

More than 100 activists from militant Islamic groups had been detained in raids in southern districts of Punjab after the killings, police sources said.

President Pervez Musharraf said he had ordered a hunt to track down the gunmen and would address the nation.

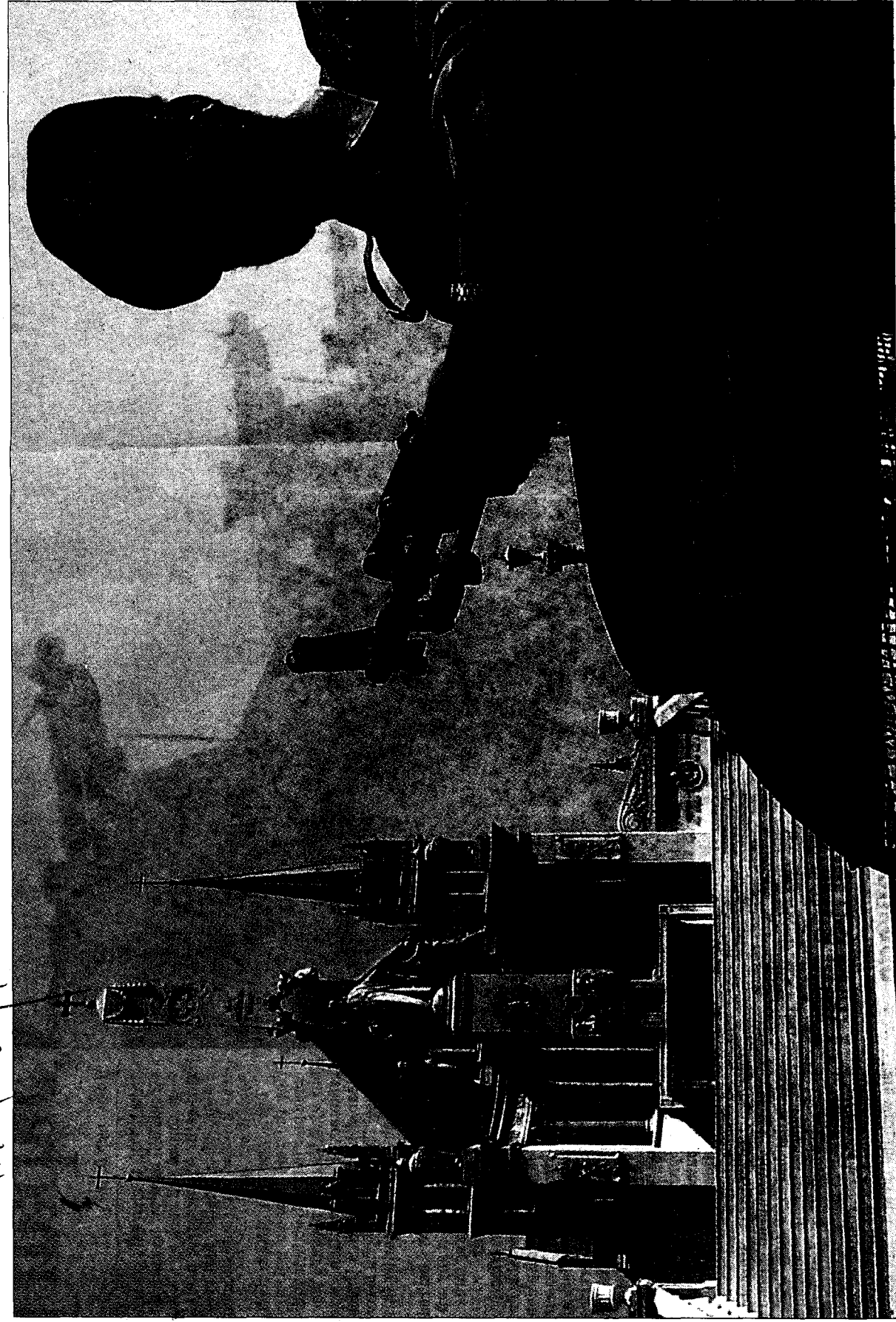
"My Government and law enforcing agencies would do everything possible so that whoever has committed this gruesome act will be brought to book and given exemplary punishment," he said on Sunday.

Security at places of worship "Police reinforcements are in place throughout the country around churches and other places of worship of minorities," said Brigadier Javed Iqbal Cheema, director general of the Crisis Management Cell at the Interior Ministry.

"We can deploy paramilitary troops wherever is required like in Sindh," he said referring to the southern province that is home to most Hindus and Christians who make up about 3 per cent of Pakistan's 140 million people.

Six masked men on motorcycloes drew up outside St Dominic's on Sunday morning, shot one of two police guards and strode into the church spraying the congregation with their Kalashnikovs while shouting "Graveyard of Christians — Pakistan and Afghanistan," and "This is just a start".

Christians have always said they feared of being targeted if unrest broke out in Pakistan



A policeman guards the St Patrick Catholic Church near Karachi on Monday, a day after 15 people were shot dead inside the shrine.

over opposition to the US attacks on Afghanistan.

At least 5 people were wounded, local doctors said. One was seriously injured. "We are moving patient Khurram Shehzad to the Intensive Care Unit. He has multiple injuries in the liver and

chest," Dr Abdul Qayyum, medical superintendent of Victoria Hospital, said. Thousands gathered at the church for the funeral, chanting "The blood of our martyrs will bring about revolution," and "We will not bow to oppression."

"What was your sin? Why were you killed?" wailed one woman who entered the church, its nave still stained with blood. She knelt to kiss the stains as others wept and screamed. Christians were still pouring into Bahawalpur from all over the country to

attend the funeral, witnesses said. Rallies were held and shops closed in the city to protest against the murders.

Schools were shut too. Bahawalpur and other parts of southern Punjab have been hotbeds for sectarian strife

between militant groups of majority Sunni and minority Shiite communities of the country for the past several years.

"It is the first such incident against Christians since the creation of Pakistan (in 1947)," said Minister for Minority Affairs SK

Tressler, a Christian. Andrew Fransec, bishop of central Punjab province, said Christians had no links with the US attacks on Afghanistan. "We have nothing to do with what's going on in Afghanistan."

Christians in Bahawalpur had been receiving threatening calls and letters, he said. "We had informed the administration about it on October 8 but unfortunately they did nothing."

Tressler criticised law enforcement agencies for failing to protect the minority community.

"The security for minorities has to be tightened. But the (Christian) community has to boost its own security as well."

Musharraf has thrown his weight behind the US air raids on neighbouring Afghanistan, drawing strong opposition from hardline Islamic groups with close links with Taliban.

## Pakistani fighters buried:

The bodies of six Pakistanis who died fighting for the Taliban against US and Northern Alliance were brought to their border village in Chaman on Monday.

Thousands of tribe people gathered for an angry funeral procession in Chaman on the southwestern frontier with Afghanistan. They were demanding jihad against America, shouting "Cruel America" and "Death to America," and were carrying photographs of Muslim heroes and Osama bin Laden and Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

"It was American bombardment and an ambush by the Northern Alliance (that killed them)," a man told Reuters, adding that the Pakistanis, all from Chaman, were killed in Badghais, near the western Afghan city of Herat.

In Chaman, relatives wept over the coffins as they were laid out on the dirt track running through the village in the parched and sprawling province of Baluchistan, while officials from the pro-Taliban Jamiat-e Ulema Islam (JUI) party called for revenge.

Reuters

# Pak minorities trapped in web of violence, prejudice: US report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, Oct. 28. - The US state department in its annual report on religious freedom has said minorities in Pakistan suffer harassment, discrimination and even violence.

Some Sunni Muslim groups publish literature inciting violence against Ahmadis and Shia Muslims, the report says. Some newspapers frequently publish articles with derogatory references to religious minorities, especially Ahmadis and Hindus.

There is widespread discrimination in employment. Christians have difficulty finding jobs other than those involving menial labour, though Christian activists say that the situation has improved in the private sector in recent years. "Illegal bonded labour is widespread," the report says.

Agricultural, brick-kiln, and domestic workers are often kept "virtually as slaves." Minority groups believe they are under-represented in government census counts, the report says. A 1974 constitutional amendment declared Ahmadis to be a non-Muslim minority. Ahmadis are prohibited from "directly or indirectly" posing as Muslims. This provision has been used extensively by the government and anti-Ahmadi religious groups to harass Ahmadis. They are also prohibited from holding any conferences or gatherings.

Religious minorities are given less legal protection.

Under the Hadd Ordinances in effect, a non-Muslim may testify only if the victim is also a non-Muslim. The testimony of women, Muslim or non-Muslim, is not admissible in cases involving Hadd punishments. So if a Muslim man rapes a Muslim woman in the presence of women or non-Muslim men, he cannot be convicted under the Hadd Ordinances.

The ministry of religious affairs has on its masthead a Qu-



A policeman guards the Crescent Catholic Church in Rawalpindi on Sunday, following the shoot-out in a church at Bahawalpur. - AP/PTI

ranic verse: "Islam is the only religion acceptable to God". In order to obtain a passport, people have to declare whether they are Muslim or non-Muslim. Muslims must affirm that they accept the unqualified finality of the Prophethood of Mohammed, declare that Ahmadis are non-Muslims, and denounce the founder of the Ahmadi movement.

*Islamiyyat* (Islamic studies) is compulsory for Muslim students in state-run schools. Though students of other faiths are legally not required to study Islam, they are not provided with parallel studies of their own religions.

Teachers often compel non-

Muslim students to complete Islamic studies. Pakistan's blasphemy laws, meant to protect both majority and minority faiths from discrimination or abuse, in practice are frequently used by rivals and the authorities to threaten, punish and intimidate religious minorities.

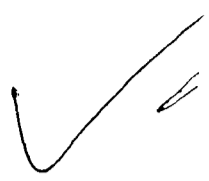
Credible sources estimate that several hundred persons have been arrested since the laws were implemented. However, fewer persons have been tried", the report says. Most of the persons arrested since 1989 have been released due to lack of sufficient evidence. However, many judges reportedly hand down guilty verdicts to protect themselves and their families.

THE STATESMAN

29 OCT 2001

Pak (17)  
H.D. 17  
20/10

# The harder it gets, the longer it takes



**T**HE STREET protests in Pakistan against the U.S.-led military campaign in Afghanistan since October 7 had ebbed after the Musharraf Government cracked down on outfits that took the law into their own hands. But, this Friday again saw big demonstrations. There is growing unease throughout the country as the strikes drag on with no end in sight. The failure so far of the mighty American war machine to get any of its real targets — Osama bin Laden, Al-Qaeda and the Taliban militia — after three weeks of relentless bombing indicates the nature of the challenge ahead.

The mounting civilian casualties and gory tales of the 'smart bombs' going astray have had a profound impact on Pakistani society. The onset of winter and the holy month of Ramzan in the third week of November have only added to the worries of the people and the establishment alike. The military Government in Islamabad has no reason to be complacent on any count. Worse, its carefully-crafted script for the post-Taliban scenario is just not moving forward, even if it is not falling apart.

As things stand, the Taliban appears to be well entrenched not just in Kabul and Kandahar but even in Mazar-e-Sharif, the town closest to the bases of the Northern Alliance. Even assuming that the U.S. somehow manages to install a regime of its choice in Kabul, the moot question is whether it will mean something in the grand campaign against 'international terrorism'?

These are issues of vital concern to Islamabad as the days and weeks pass without any tangible movement in Afghanistan. How long can Gen. Pervez Musharraf hold down the pro-Taliban forces within Pakistan, particularly when Islamabad's own interests appear to be at stake? Two developments brought out the serious nature of the problem the Musharraf Government is grappling with. The first involved the downing of a U.S. Black Hawk helicopter inside Pakistani territory earlier in the week. There are no clear answers yet whether some group within Pakistan shot it down or the crash was accidental. The second embarrassment for Islamabad was the death of 22 (or 35?) activists of the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen in the U.S. air raid on a house in Kabul early this week. Pakistan pretends the outfit does not exist in the country. However, this bubble was burst following



Anti-U.S. feelings are running high in Pakistan.

*'There is growing unease in Pakistan as the U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan drags on, says B. Muralidhar Reddy.*

the skirmish between activists of the outfit and Pakistani guards on the Afghan border over bringing the bodies home for burial in different cities of Pakistan.

Even if one were to dismiss these incidents as acts of isolated groups and 'mad men', there is little doubt about growing unrest in three of the four provinces — Baluchistan, NWFP and Sindh — over the U.S. campaign in Afghanistan. The Jamaat-e-Islami, largest religious party in the country, which has a good following in Punjab province is threatening unrest there also.

Gen. Musharraf is right when he asserts that the overwhelming majority of Pakistanis are behind his regime in the current campaign against the Taliban and Osama. But few can dispute the growing unease even among the non-Jehadi elements over the situation in Afghanistan. In recent years Pakistan has not witnessed the kind of anti-American feeling

in evidence now. What is compounding the situation is the widening gulf between the Musharraf Government and the U.S.-led allies on the nature of the campaign in Afghanistan and what should follow. From day one Gen. Musharraf has been insisting on a "short, swift and targeted" campaign while the U.S. is more or less convinced that it will be a long-drawn affair. The collateral damage (a euphemism for civilian casualties) cannot but heighten tension in Pakistan.

In disregard of Gen. Musharraf's counsel that the campaign should be wound up before Ramzan begins, the signals from Washington are it will carry on regardless of the sentiments of the Islamic world. Washington is also clearly running out of patience on the much-talked-about but vague concept of a "broadbased multi-ethnic" setup to replace the Taliban. Much to the discomfort of the establishment in Islamabad, the Bush administration has decided to go the whole hog and throw its weight behind the Northern Alliance.

The bombardment of the Taliban frontline, not done in the initial stages to allow Pakistan time to cobble together the elusive broadbased setup in Kabul, in the last few days is ostensibly meant to facilitate the Northern Alliance's march on Kabul. Pakistan has made no secret of its disgust over

the prospect of the Alliance at the helm in Kabul.

While continuing efforts to somehow conjure up an alternative political setup in Afghanistan (the Peshawar meet of clerics and tribal leaders of Afghanistan a few days ago was one such effort), Gen. Musharraf has made known his preference for declaring Kabul a 'neutral zone' with multinational forces from Islamic nations, under U.N. auspices, in charge.

But the U.N. does not appear to be ready to accept the idea. Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, newly-appointed Special Representative of the U.N. Secretary-General on Afghanistan, has done some plain-speaking on the unworkable nature of the proposition. He is expected in Islamabad today to begin consultations with a wide range of people, including the military establishment in Islamabad. He is expected to then visit Teheran for the same purpose.

For the second time since September 11, Gen. Musharraf played the India card and in an interview to Pakistan TV accused New Delhi of trying to fish in the troubled waters of Pakistan. His first attempt (the September 19 address to the nation) to divert attention to India did not pay much dividends. If the second try succeeded somewhat, it had more to do with the ample help from across the border than to do with the people of Pakistan.

THE END

# Funeral meet turns violent in Karachi

Pak (1) (11) 25/10

*Pak refusal to let in bodies of Harkat men sparks unrest*      *War freebies fail to reflect in Pakistan balance sheet*

KARACHI: Police fired tear-gas shells on Wednesday to disperse thousands of stone-throwing demonstrators in Karachi after 35 Pakistani militants were killed in U.S. bombings in Kabul, witnesses said.

A crowd of more than 5,000 people who had gathered in Karachi for the funeral prayers of the militants turned violent on learning that the authorities had refused to let eight of the bodies back into Pakistan. Border guards refused entry to the bodies of eight members of the Harkat ul-Mujaheedin, which spends most of its time fighting in Kashmir and is linked by the U.S. to terrorism.

The Harkat confirmed that 22 of its "fighters", including several senior commanders, had been killed when a bomb hit a house in Kabul where they had gathered to "devise a plan to fight America".

Reports said 19 militants died on the spot while three succumbed to injuries later in hospital. Among those killed was a prominent Pakistani militant leader, Ustad Farooq. The demonstrators, who stripped one policeman naked, vowed they would not leave the public square where the protest was being staged until the government agreed to let the bodies in.

The bodies were turned back at the border with Afghanistan in what was seen as a warning to radical Muslim groups about fighting with the Taliban against the U.S.-led anti-terrorism coalition.

Experts said letting in the bodies would have risked serious anti-U.S. and anti-government demonstrations at the funerals.

Pakistan foreign ministry spokesman Riaz Mohammad Khan said the government had no information about the deaths in Kabul or whether the bodies had been refused.

Mufti Jamil, a cleric and senior official in the fundamentalist Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), said the Harkat men were in Kabul to wage a jihad when they were killed. Reports say several thousand Pakistanis, many of them youths from Islamic seminaries, have answered the Taliban's call for a 'holy war' against the U.S. (Agencies)

By Chidanand Rajghatta  
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: While Pakistan eagerly awaits a large infusion of foreign aid to revive its crippled economy as a reward for being shanghaied into a frontline state in the battle against terrorism, it is losing contracts, projects and key people because of its location in the war zone.

In the weeks since the September 11 attacks, the already ailing Pakistani economy has been further pulverised by a large-scale cancellation of orders by

foreign importers and foreign companies winding up projects. Many foreign airlines have shut down operations and Pakistani exporters are having to pay higher shipping and insurance costs to honour existing orders.

Islamabad is now demanding that it be compensated for the losses that are accruing because of its support for the war campaign. Despite protestations about its support against terrorism being "principled", Pakistani officials have been bawling about numbers ranging from \$1 to \$2 billion in immediate relief.

The economic situation is so perilous that the U.S. department of commerce last fortnight called an urgent meeting of American garment importers, beseeching them not to cancel orders from Pakistan, whose principal export is textiles. The department is also promising greater access to Pakistani textiles in the U.S.

market. The U.S. administration is also rushing through legislation in Congress to provide immediate financial aid and is urging Japan and its European allies to do the same.

But while lining up the aid, Washington has been among the first countries to pull out its personnel from Pakistan because of safety concerns, leading other countries to do the same. The State Department has virtually shut down its consulate in Lahore, pulling out all American staff and leaving only some Pakistani employees in place. American personnel have also been evacuated from the Karachi and Peshawar consulates, and the embassy in Islamabad has been downsized.



## COLLATERAL DAMAGE

- ▶ Pak's reported refusal to let in bodies fuels unrest
- ▶ Govt. denies knowledge of deaths or entry refusal
- ▶ U.S. chopper fired upon at Pak airport retaliates

# No compromise on n-programme: Pak.

H10-13  
29/10

Pak (1) ✓

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, OCT. 22.** The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, today asserted that there was no question of his country compromising on its nuclear programme. Pakistan was determined to defend its sovereignty and independence and thwart any aggression, he said.

Presiding over a special session of the National Command Authority (NCA), vested with matters related to command and control of nuclear assets, Gen. Musharraf said Pakistan's strategic assets were the cornerstone of the country's national security and there was no question of any compromise on the nuclear programme.

It is not known what provoked Gen. Musharraf to call a special meeting of the Authority at the current juncture. However, an official statement put out at the end of the deliberations said: "Dismissing negative speculation regarding safety and security of strategic assets, he said he had reassured the world leaders that the strategic capability was fully safeguarded and there existed no possibility whatsoever of its falling into any wrong hands."

It said the meeting, which took a number of decisions on strategic matters, was attended by the Foreign Minister, the Interior Minister, the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Service Chiefs, senior scientists and other senior military officers.

The proceedings assume added significance in the wake of the U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan and the heightened tensions between India and Pakistan.

## U.S. forces will not stay for long: Musharraf

**ISLAMABAD, OCT. 22.** The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, today said he did not foresee a long American military presence in the country as a consequence of the U.S.-led attacks on Afghanistan.

"This is totally wrong," he said responding to the claim that the U.S. forces would not leave the bases offered to them for the military strikes against the

Taliban. "I guarantee that they will never stay here," the General said in an interview with the State-run Pakistan Television.

People making such statements were "neither capable of making a strategic analysis nor do they understand realities," Gen. Musharraf said about the allegations made at the anti-U.S. protests organised across the country by Islamic groups. "It will neither be in (the U.S.) national interest to stay here nor will the environment be suitable for their stay."

None of the attacks on Afghanistan had been launched from Pakistan, which had only promised to share intelligence, allow the use of its airspace and provide logistical support.

## 'Make Kabul neutral zone'

In another interview on Lebanon's Future TV on Monday, Gen. Musharraf said Kabul should be turned into a neutral zone to prevent its occupation by the Northern Alliance after the Taliban's collapse. Objecting to a possible Northern Alliance control of the city, he said "I am very keen there should be a political strategy crystallised, which is put in place in Afghanistan."

"I would go to the extent of saying Kabul should be maintained as a neutral zone and nobody should enter that... Because I feel that may be atrocities could start if at all the vacuum is filled by the Northern Alliance."

Stating that the Taliban as a Government would be destroyed by the U.S. attacks, Gen. Musharraf advocated the inclusion of "moderate" members of the Taliban in a future government which would be friendly to Pakistan. "There should be some restraint on any... feeling of vacuum (in Kabul) that may be created after the military objectives are achieved in Afghanistan."

Meanwhile, a report from Jacobabad said the head of Pakistan's main Islamic party, Jamaat-i-Islami, vowed to defy a Government ban and hold a protest near an airport and seize an airbase used by the U.S. forces, as police threw a security net around the southern town. More than 100 people were arrested.

THE HINDU

24 OCT 2001

# Angry protesters clash with police in Karachi

## Islamic parties in Pak call for strike against Powell's visit

ISLAMABAD: Violence broke out in Pakistan's southern port city of Karachi on Friday as hundreds of people protesting the U.S.-led strikes in Afghanistan clashed with the police, pelted stones and torched an American fast-food outlet besides several vehicles.

Simultaneously, Islamic religious parties called for a nationwide strike on Monday to protest against the expected visit of U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell to Islamabad in the next few days. "The nation will not tolerate his clean feet on our clean land," said a joint statement issued on Friday by a dozen heads of religious parties who urged Pakistanis to keep their shops and offices closed to protest against the visit.

Reports from Karachi said the police had to fire teargas shells to contain hundreds of demonstrators who turned violent and torched a Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet. Witnesses said the restaurant had covered its familiar sign and logo this week in anticipation of anti-American reaction, but protesters already knew of its existence.

Firefighters rushed to the site and put out the fire, the reports said. There was no immediate report of any casualty. While one group of protestors attacked the KFC outlet, another group set fire to a passenger bus in the southern part of the city after forcing the passengers to alight. The reports said at least three

other vehicles were torched in different parts of the city. There were also reports of factories being attacked in the industrial suburb of western Karachi.

Reports of demonstrations also came from a number of other cities, including Quetta and Peshawar which border Afghanistan. In Lahore, which expected protests on Friday, the police said they quickly deployed officers to the local KFC outlet.

The Pakistan government had virtually sounded a red alert to deal with the protests since this was the first Friday after the U.S.-led forces began bombing Afghanistan on October 7. The government had warned of severe action against demonstrators and had even deployed army personnel in some volatile cities like Quetta, where five persons were killed in arson and looting a few days ago.

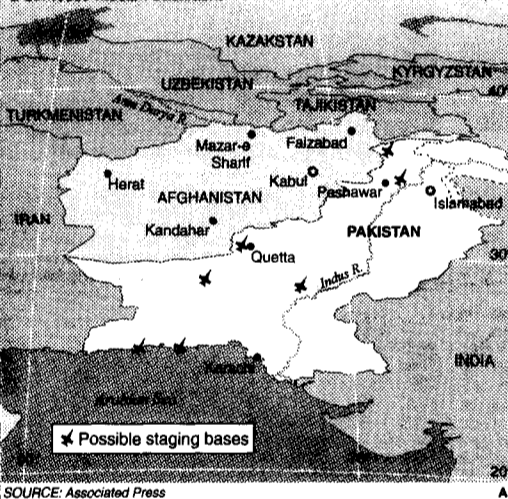
Meanwhile, the joint statement by Islamic parties opposing Mr Powell's visit said, "The national leaders said Mr Powell is coming for a visit at this critical situation to add

salt to the injuries of Pakistani Muslims.

"Prove by closing your shops, bazaars and businesses on October 15 that the Muslims of Pakistan are with the oppressed people of Afghanistan instead of being behind America and its surrogate Pakistani rulers," the statement said. (Agencies)

### Pakistan's cooperation

U.S. presence in Pakistan was to be limited, but approval has been given for use of several bases. A long border with Afghanistan makes Pakistan a valuable base for operations, but officials fear a domestic Muslim backlash.



SOURCE: Associated Press



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## General's Tightrope

Pervez Musharraf has never had it so bad. He has to back the United States against a friendly regime, guard against rebellion in his own government and the military, and control rioters growing more violent by the hour in one Pakistani city after another. And yet, as only he can, he is adroitly walking the tightrope. He first made a stirring speech where he distinguished between the terrorism of Osama bin Laden and the plight of the Afghan people. Lest this be construed as capitulation, the general took a few swipes at India and for added measure included the mandatory references to "the freedom struggle in Kashmir". Speech over, he went out and sacked three of his most trusted pro-Taliban military aides, including the chief of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). By evening, he had his hands full dealing with protestors on the rampage in key Pakistani cities. By any account, this is a difficult situation even for someone as astute as general Musharraf. In the past, we have seen him deftly turn adversity to advantage, whether that was in getting the better of India at Agra or in seizing his own opportunity in the crisis that developed post-September 11 for the US. This time he may find the going tough, not least because he has chosen to simultaneously take on the influential lobby of clerics, sections of the army and the all-powerful ISI.

For all this, there was really no option before general Musharraf. There can be no doubt whatever that any defiance of the United States would have hurtled Pakistan towards economic bankruptcy, with the West imposing sanctions in addition to those already in place. In that situation, the support of the Taliban and the jihadis would have been of no help. On the other hand, the general's co-option into the US war effort has won him handsome rewards in the form of waived sanctions and economic assistance, the latest on that front being the EU's decision to sign a new cooperation treaty with Pakistan. So, in effect, the general made a choice between certain chaos and a fair chance at getting Pakistan back on its feet. Other than his own considerable survival skills, general Musharraf has another advantage. And that is the support of the ordinary Pakistanis. As one columnist recently pointed out, Pakistanis have grown sick and tired of the jihadi politics of the past 20 years and are in a mood to welcome the general's "correct stance" on Afghanistan. Of course, there is a powerful minority waiting to wreck what is obviously a quiet consensus. While the next few days will decide to what extent general Musharraf can withstand this pressure, there is one way he can build on the support he has earned from within his own country: By asking leaders of other Muslim countries publicly to endorse the logic of his reasoning — that terrorism is incompatible with Islam. Should he succeed in this, he will have a powerful counter-propaganda tool against the jihadis. As for India, there will be many here who will delight in the general's current discomfiture. Suffice it to say that it doesn't help to have the neighbour's house go up in flames.

# Pakistan takes a tough stand, ignores protests

ISLAMABAD: Following a tip-off by U.S. airborne surveillance stations, Pakistan seized three Taliban-owned helicopter gunships even as three more persons died in further rioting on Tuesday by hardline Islamic militants protesting the U.S.-led strikes in Afghanistan. The seizure was Pakistan's first military action against the Taliban since it snapped ties with the militia.

Pakistani authorities also detained three pro-Taliban Islamic party leaders and ordered intelligence agencies to identify local sectarian outfits involved in internal violence and their sources of income, which may lead to freezing of their funds.

Besides, for the first time in Pakistan, the government ordered the army to set up bunkers of sandbags at key installations, including the diplomatic enclave that houses the U.S. embassy, and other government buildings. Small army units were deployed at all intersections in the city but there was no officials comment on the deployment of such a large number of troops in the capital.

President Pervez Musharraf sought to

downplay the protests, which claimed three more lives on Tuesday, claiming the support of an "overwhelming majority" to his decision to back the U.S.-led strikes and said there was no room for extremism and violence in an Islamic society.

"It is regrettable that a small group of people are unable to distinguish between what is in Pakistan's interest and what is in the interest of its adversaries," he said, adding, "The overwhelming majority has refused to be misled by a small group."

The three helicopter gunships seized by the authorities had landed in the North West Frontier Province. Flown by Taliban pilots, they had taken off from unnamed airstrips in Paktia province in Afghanistan, bordering the tribal areas in NWFP, and landed at a location in Kurram agency on Monday.

The fate of the pilots is not known and there has been no official comment on the report. Reports said Pakistani authorities faced some resistance from tribal elders in their attempt to remove these helicopters to a Pakistani air force base. (Agencies)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

10 OCT 2001

# Protest waves lash Pakistan

FROM SCOTT MCDONALD

Peshawar, Sept. 28 (Reuters): Protesters surged through Peshawar shouting "Fight, fight USA" and "We love Osama" today in the biggest anti-American demonstration since Washington threatened to punish Afghanistan in the wake of the devastating attacks on the United States.

A crowd of up to 10,000 waved banners, burned an effigy of US President George Bush and denounced Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf for backing Washington in its threat to attack Afghanistan's ruling Taliban if they do not give up Osama bin Laden, chief suspect in the September 11 attacks.

But, reassuringly for the government, protests elsewhere in the often volatile country failed to show much strength. In Karachi, the country's largest city with a population of some 12 million, the only unrest was a protest by a few hundred people that was dispersed peacefully by police.

The Peshawar protest, following Friday prayers when a crowd is already assembled, came a day after the government launched a massive campaign to boost support for Musharraf's controversial decision to support the United States. The protest in the largest city near the Pakistan-Afghanistan border wound through the old part of the city and the Khyber Bazaar. Merchants watched from rooftops as demonstrators shouted "Trash Bush," and "Jihad (holy war) is our way".

Riot police were on hand with tear-gas launchers and blocked roads, but there was no violence. Demonstrators denounced Musharraf by shouting "Friends of America are traitors".

Public opinion has been divided over Musharraf's decision to help Washington in the wake of the attacks on the United States in which some 6,500 people are dead

or missing.

The government, trying to demonstrate support for Musharraf's pro-American stance, held rallies and other events in several cities yesterday to counter criticism from pro-Afghan religious groups. Religious parties backing the Taliban have failed so far to capitalise on the scepticism about helping the US and mobilise mass opposition on the streets.

They have held sporadic protests the last two weeks to denounce the United States and criticise Musharraf, but today's demonstration was the largest. Musharraf said last week he had to back Washington in its demands for handing over bin Laden because that was the best way to guarantee Pakistan's interests.

Pakistan hosts at least two million Afghan refugees — more than one million in the North West Province bordering Afghanistan and the provincial capital Peshawar now has more Afghans than local people.

The protesters, assembled by Sunni militant group Sipah-e-Sahabah Pakistan (SSP) which the Shia minority accuses of sectarian killings, were asked by its leader how they would fight Americans.

"They say how will you fight bombs and missiles...let's show them how we will fight the Americans, remove one shoe and raise it," called Maulana Azam Tariq, the leader of the SSP who is facing several violence-related cases and is out of prison on bail.

## Indonesia fury

In Indonesia, too, about 4,000 protesters marched to condemn the US. Some threatened to round up Americans and take them to the airport to be expelled.

It was by far the largest of a growing number of protests in Indonesia, home to the world's largest Muslim community.

THE TELEGRAPH

29 SEP 2001



## Four die in Pakistan anti-US stir

PAK  
HTC  
22/9

PROTESTS IN Pakistan over its support to the US retaliatory campaign against the Taliban gathered momentum today with at least four persons dying at Karachi in nationwide demonstrations by religious parties.

The demonstrations failed to gather a large number of people as almost all mainstream parties boycotted the strike call. Over a dozen policemen were hurt.

Taliban Ambassador to Islamabad Abdul Salam Zaeef told a Press conference that the edict issued by the Shoorah that Osama should leave Afghanistan, was not binding on Taliban chief Mullah Omar and he could overrule the recommendation. He threatened that his Government was ready for jihad if the US attacks Afghanistan.

Pakistan again called upon the Taliban to pay heed to the demands of the US and the international community as President Bush has said his war is not against the Afghani people or Islam, but terrorists. The Taliban replied with a warning to Pakistan, saying whoever sides with the US would also face jihad.

HTC, Islamabad

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

22 SEP 2001

22 SEP 2001

# Unrest in Pak. over support to U.S.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 18.** The first signs of unrest in Pakistan over the prospect of the American retaliatory strikes against the Taliban regime were evident today in the port city of Karachi.

Reports from the city said the police had a tough time controlling a crowd of 5,000-odd activists of religious parties attempting to march towards the U.S. Consulate. The marchers reportedly burnt an effigy of the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, and shouted slogans such as 'Down with America', 'America's graveyard, Afghanistan-Pakistan' and 'We are Osama, we are Taliban'. It is a delicate situation for the Musharraf Government though the military is in control. However, if steps are not taken by the Government to take the religious and militant groups on board on its strategy, the situation could prove difficult to handle. The process of consultations with various sections of society initiated by the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, last week was aimed at this. But going by the debate within the country on the merits of co-operation with the U.S., it has not helped in achieving a consensus.

The next few days would be important as the Council for Defence of Pakistan and Afghanistan (CDPA), a conglomerate of over 20 Islamic parties in Pakistan, has given a call for a countrywide strike on Friday to protest the proposed U.S. strikes on the Taliban and Osama bin Laden. The CDPA was formed early this year to protest the second round of sanctions



**Students of religious schools in Karachi taking out a rally on Tuesday in protest against the proposed U.S. military action against Afghanistan. — AP**

imposed by the United Nations against the Taliban in January. Its mandate was to mobilise support within and outside Pakistan in favour of the Taliban, but it was hardly visible in the last few months.

In a resolution adopted at its meeting in Lahore on Monday, the CDPA said, "The Council considers an attack on Afghanistan as an attack on Pakistan and it would respond positively to the jihad call given by the Afghan Government." The meeting was presided over by the Council's chairman, Maulana

Samiul Haq, who leads a faction of the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam.

It was addressed by among others by the President of Jamat Ulema Islami, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Leader of Jamaat-i-Islami, Qazi Hussain Ahmad, Lt. Gen. (retd.) K.M. Azhar, Maulana Mohammad Azam Tariq of the Sipahi-Sihaba Pakistan, Mr. Afaq Ahmad Khan of the MQM (Haqeeqi faction), and the Lashkar-e-Taiba chief, Mohammad Hafeez Saeed.

The Council announced a month-long programme of rallies throughout the country to oppose

the Government's support to the U.S., to express solidarity with the people of Afghanistan and to condemn the terrorist attacks in the US and to express solidarity with the victims. Gen. Musharraf is trying his best to explain the compelling circumstances under which his Government has announced support to the U.S.

After his meeting with religious and political leaders, the State-run Pakistan Television ran a series of interviews with some of the leaders in support of the Government approach to the crisis.

THE HINDU

19 SEP 2001

Pak (1)  
1128  
9/8

# Pak. crackdown on militant outfits

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 8.** In the first crackdown of its kind, the military Government in Pakistan has rounded up 50 activists of the militant outfit, Jaish-e-Mohammad, and registered anti-terrorism cases against 600 others.

The Jaish was founded by Maulana Masood Azar, one of the three militants released by India in December 1999 in exchange of the freedom of the Indian Airlines passengers hijacked to Kandahar.

Maulana Masood Azar was a prominent member of Harkat before he fell out with the group and decided to go his own way. Thanks to his oratory skills and generous help from the establishment, the Jaish emerged as one of

the formidable militant outfits in the last two years.

It is not clear yet if there is a larger design in the crackdown on the activists of the Jaish in Gujranwala town in Punjab or whether it is a case of clash of interest with the local authorities.

However, what is interesting is that the Jaish is one of the few militant outfits that has faced charges of involvement in sectarian disturbances in Pakistan. It has been identified with Sipah-e-Sahaba of Pakistan (SSP), a Sunni extremist outfit, which has been recently warned by the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf. Its armed wing, the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, has been banned by the Government last month along with its rival Shia militant outfit.

The confrontation on Thursday between the police and the Jaish-e-Muhammad activists began after the Islamic militant group insisted to hold a public meeting at Sheranwala Bagh in Gujranwala.

But the administration declined to give permission and asked the outfit to hold the meeting to be addressed by Maulana Masood Azar in a local mosque.

Later, scores of Jaish activists led by former president of the Punjab unit of SSP, Maulana Muhammad Nawaz Baloch, blocked the traffic and raised slogans against the Government, police and the administration.

Maulana Asmatullah, another leader, delivered a provocative speech against the Government on the occasion.

THE HINDU

9 SEP 2001

# Pakistan calls off crackdown on militants

PAKO 5-12  
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

26/8

ISLAMABAD, Aug. 25.

- Faced with mounting protests from militant groups and their demand for resignation of the interior minister, Pakistan authorities halted the crackdown on fund collection of these groups in Sindh province and released those arrested in the last two days.

The decision came after several militant groups, including Lashkar-e-Toiba, Hizbul Mujahideen and Harkat-ul Ansar, met in Lahore yesterday and pledged to step up their fund collection campaign.

The crackdown had begun on Wednesday following an order from the Sindh government banning fund collection by militants in the name of "Jihad" and prohibiting display of signboards on their offices.

Corps Commander of Sindh, Lt. Gen. Tariq Wasim Ghazi, said at a hurriedly convened press conference last night that no official campaign was going on against "Jihadi" outfits and all the 200 arrested members of various groups had been released.

The militant outfits, at their meeting, also demanded the resignation of interior minister, Mr Moinuddin Haider, a close associate of Pakistan President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, for "instigating" the crackdown.

After the meeting, leaders of the militant groups told the local media they would start a public awareness campaign from today on fund collection and their activities.

They formed a joint coordination committee to interact with religious and political party leaders.

In another development, Pakistan's influential Islamic clergy threatened to launch a nationwide stir if the crackdown was not stopped and accused the government of acting under pressure from India and the US.

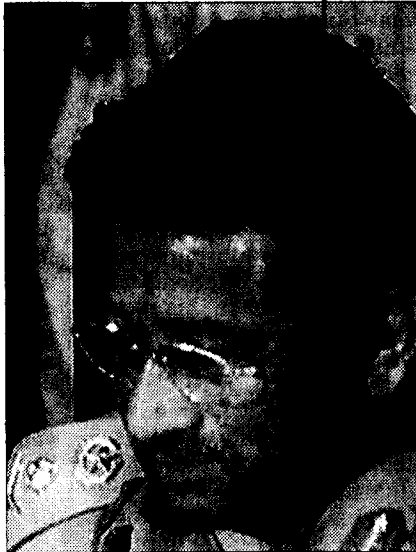
"We warn the government to stop harassing our workers in Karachi or be ready to face a countrywide agitation, which would wash away the government altogether," Moulana Ashraf Ali, chief of Ahle Sunnah Wal-Jamat, told reporters after a meeting of the clerics in Rawalpindi.

"The government seeks its legitimacy with the international community by adopting such a brutal way. But it will meet a total failure as we shall not watch the high-handedness of the government as silent spectators," Ali said.

After a day's campaign in Karachi, the government backtracked saying the crackdown was limited to two banned sectarian outfits that were fomenting sectarian violence and not the "Jihadi" groups fighting in Kashmir.

This is the second time this year that the Musharraf regime failed to carry out its promised campaign to curb the activities of such groups. A similar attempt was made during the Id festival this year to prevent these groups from collecting hides of animals killed in households across Pakistan.

Defying the government ban, the groups had set up 'pandals' to collect thousands of hides that fetched them millions of rupees.



*General Pervez Musharraf*

■ Editorial: Jehadi Frankenstein, page 8

THE STATESMAN

20 AUG 2001



# JEHADI FRANKENSTEIN

Musharraf trapped in his <sup>Pak</sup> own logic

SO what progress is Musharraf making in tackling jihadi elements in Pakistan? Not much, apparently, the principal problem being separation of what goes on at home from what Pakistan undertakes in the neighbourhood. Thus, the only significant step that has been taken so far is the banning of two organisations, one Sunni and the other Shia, who happen to be fighting their private battles on Pakistani soil, plus the rounding up of 250 men belonging to the Lashkar-e-Toiba. Whether the latter is a token gesture to please the Americans or the first sign of a policy change is unclear. But so far, the larger political dimension of radical Islam and its actual and potential impact on Pakistan hasn't been touched. Musharraf is still obliged to say that "the country was created for Islam" and the fight in Kashmir is a "jihad" which is a clear ideological stance. It is assumed that the government cannot really do anything.

Similarly, the anti-terrorism ordinance <sup>518 289</sup> that was promulgated this month is clearly aimed at curbing sectarian violence between Shias and Sunnis, which does not solve the main problem: thousands of young men moving around with sophisticated weapons, inside Pakistan, and ready, whenever opportunity arises to impose their brand of Islam on the country. One has to take a look at Pakistan's economy to realise how real this possibility is. Unemployment, already at 6.7 per cent, is being aggravated by the restructuring of the public sector and servicing the external debt takes away 50 per cent of tax revenues and 35 per cent of the budget, while GDP growth is at 2.6 per cent. The other problem is the availability of arms. Some have been seized, about 100,000 in number, but no move has been made so far to close down the arms factories that were set up in the north-west during the Afghan war whose market has been kept alive by the Taliban in Afghanistan and militancy in Kashmir. Apart from the fact that carrying a gun is part of the feudal tradition in many parts of Pakistan, Musharraf has squeezed himself into a tight corner from where he cannot really escape, disarm radical Islamic elements without questioning Pakistan's involvement in Kashmir and, thereby, undermining his own position.

THE STATESMAN

24 JUL 2001

# Pak police seal 24 offices of militants

AGENCIES  
KARACHI, AUGUST 23

**I**N WHAT is becoming a major government assault on militant groups in Pakistan, police sealed their headquarters before daybreak on Thursday confiscating weapons and "offensive" literature.

Police said they sealed 24 offices of militant groups operating in Kashmir.

Police also arrested several leaders of sectarian groups blamed for the relentless religiously motivated attacks that have left hundreds of people dead in Pakistan.

The crackdown, which began on Wednesday, follows a promise from Pakistan that President General Pervez Musharraf to stop sectarian killings and enforce orders to Islamic militant outfits to stop public fund-raising and public displays of militancy.

The military government has banned two sectarian organisations, but has not so far ordered any of the guerrilla organisations outlawed.

However, it did arrest more than 200 of their fighters in raids on Wednesday. Police said many of those arrested have since been released with a warning to follow the new orders and end their public fund-raising.

Banners that have been visible throughout Pakistan urging the young to jihad or holy war are also ordered removed.

Musharraf and his Interior Minister Mooin Haider earlier said the public display of militancy is giving Pakistan a bad reputation and discouraging public investment.

The crackdown has been centered in Pakistan's southern Sindh province of which Karachi is the capital.

There have also been reports of arrests in the eastern Punjab province, where several of the sectarian groups have headquarters.

Meanwhile, the police have released almost 200 members of militant groups after the surprise crackdown in Sindh province, officials said on Thursday.

Police said the men were freed around midnight on Wednesday on assurances that they

## Friends and favourites are paid experts: Reports

■ **NEW DELHI:** Largescale hiring of "friends and favourites" as consultants by various ministries in Pakistan seems to indicate that the Musharraf regime "has sub-let the process of governance to paid experts", media reports said on Thursday. Stating that over 200 such consultants had been appointed on "huge salaries" by various ministries and divisions of the Pakistani administration, a report said "by hiring a huge number of consultants, it appears that the Musharraf Government has sub-let the process of governance to paid experts, some of whom may not even be qualified for the big bucks they are receiving".

The report, which appeared in the *The News International* said: "A vast majority of the consultants have been appointed purely on personal liking, pick-and-choose basis."

—PTI

would obey a provincial order to remove militant sign-boards and public donation boxes to raise funds for jihad.

"We have released a majority of them on their assurances while some 25 to 30 activists will be freed later today," said a senior police officer who did not want to be named.

The activists, mostly members of the Lashkar-e-Toiba, Al-Badar, Jaish-e-Mohammad and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, were rounded up in a lightning police operation overnight on Tuesday. The State Bank of Pakistan on Thursday froze the accounts of two outlawed militant groups.

The bank order freezes the accounts of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, a militant Sunni Muslim group and Sipah-e-Mohammed, a militant Shi'ite Muslim group. Both organisations have been implicated in vicious religiously motivated attacks against places of worship, public gatherings and individuals.

# Pakistan freezes ultra accounts, seals offices

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

KARACHI, Aug. 23. - The State Bank of Pakistan today froze the accounts of two outlawed militant groups, while police sealed 24 offices of militant guerrilla groups operating in Kashmir.

The bank order froze the accounts of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, a Sunni militant group and Sipah-e-Mohammed, a Shiite militant group. Both organisations have been implicated in religiously-motivated attacks.

Police also arrested several leaders of other sectarian groups, believed to be involved in such attacks. These attacks have killed many in Pakistan, most of them members of the country's minority Shiites.

The crackdown, which began yesterday,

follows a promise from President Pervez Musharraf to stop sectarian killings and enforce orders to Islamic guerrilla groups to stop public fundraising and displays of militancy. The government, however, has not yet outlawed any of the guerrilla organisations.

**Militants released:** Pakistani police have released almost 200 members of militant groups after a surprise crackdown in Sindh province, officials said today.

Police said the men were freed on assurances that they would obey a provincial order to remove militant sign-boards and public donation boxes to raise funds for jihad. The activists, mostly members of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, Al-Badar, Jaish-e-Mohammad and Harkatul Mujahideen, were

rounded up on Tuesday.

**Mosques raided:** Police today raided some mosques and seminaries in Karachi in search of illegal weapons amid a surprise crackdown on religious extremists and militant groups.

"We have raided 10 seminaries and mosques and recovered some weapons including pistols and a rifle. We have also arrested around 25 members of two main sectarian groups. We will release the detainees if they produce valid licences for their weapons," a senior police officer, Mr Tariq Jamil said.

While the police described it as part of a nationwide campaign to recover illegal weapons, Islamic leaders warned the Sindh government for "playing with fire".

# Pak raid on defiant militants

FROM AAMIR ASHRAF

**Karachi, Aug. 22 (Reuters):** Police in Pakistan's port city of Karachi today detained more than 200 people in raids on militant Islamic groups that had failed to comply with a ban on raising funds for jihad, or holy war, police said.

A senior police official said early morning raids netted more than 200 activists, at least 700 collection boxes, some weapons and a number of signboards promoting jihad. "We gave them 24 hours to comply with the order issued by Sindh government and after the expiry of that time limit, detentions were made for defying the government ban," he said.

A Sindh provincial government order on banning militant Islamist groups from displaying signboards and publicly raising jihad funds took effect from yesterday.

The order warned militant groups that "any deviation from

2388  
this order will be seriously viewed by the government and appropriate action shall be initiated against the offenders".

The order covers all jihadi groups, including those operating in Indian-controlled Kashmir where more than a dozen guerrilla organisations are fighting New Delhi's rule.

Police said the offices of Al-Badar Mujahideen, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad were sealed after the raids.

Al-Badar Mujahideen, one of the groups fighting Indian rule in Kashmir, condemned the detentions of its activists and said the action would only harm the Kashmir freedom struggle.

Earlier it said that the mujahideen, or holy warriors, would not accept the ban.

An Al-Badar Mujahideen statement pledged the group would continue with its jihad to fight Indian rule in Kashmir.

A spokesman for Lashkar-e-Taiba slammed the Sindh govern-

ment's action and said it was nothing new because successive governments had also targeted mujahideen groups to please "Western powers" and the United States.

"Our struggle for freedom is with the blessings of Allah. If they (the government) have United States support, we have the support of Allah," spokesman Abdullah Muntazar told Reuters by telephone from Lahore.

"We ask the government not to invite the wrath of God by taking such actions against the Mujahideen who are fighting in God's name... such moves will only inspire us more and rekindle the spirit of jihad," he added.

India accuses Pakistan of backing the rebels in the disputed Himalayan region — a charge Pakistan denies, saying it only provides moral and diplomatic support to the separatists.

Pakistani militants are also known to have operated in support of Muslim fighters in

Afghanistan, Bosnia, Chechnya and the Philippines.

Islamabad has also stepped up a drive against widespread illegal weapons and mounted a campaign against rising levels of crime.

Pakistan wants the United Nations to ease sanctions against Afghanistan's Taliban rulers but will cooperate with observers monitoring the embargoes, a senior Pakistani official said yesterday. Inam ul-Haque, the deputy to Pakistan's foreign minister, appealed to the UN Security Council on the sanctions, saying they were partly responsible for hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees flooding into his country.

"We conveyed the view that sanctions have had an adverse impact on the people of Afghanistan and also indirectly on Pakistan, because almost 200,000 Afghani people over the past few months have moved into Pakistan," he said after meeting the council's president.

THE TELEGRAPH

23 AUG 2001

# Musharraf promises democracy by Oct 2002

15/8  
 H/T 10  
 PAK



APP PHOTO  
 Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf and his wife Sheba with schoolchildren after a flag-hoisting ceremony to mark the country's 55th Independence Day in Islamabad on Tuesday.

Mubashir Zaidi  
 Islamabad, August 14

**PRESIDENT GENERAL** Pervez Musharraf today announced that general elections for the National Assembly, senate and provincial assemblies would be held between October 1 to 11, 2002 a day before the Supreme Court's deadline to the military Government for the restoration of democracy in the country expires.

He told the gathering of newly elected heads of local governments in Islamabad to mark the 54th Independence Day of Pakistan, that his Government would abide by the Supreme Court's deadline and would ensure holding of general elections in the country before October 12, 2002.

According to an official schedule issued by the Government, the military Government intends to amend the Constitution to introduce checks and balance in the system before the news democratic Government is put in place. Government sources told Hindustan times that the controversial clause in the Constitution, 58(2)b, which allows the President to dissolve the Parliament would be solve the Parliament would be

brought back to ensure the smooth working of the Government.

However political parties have severely criticised the clause saying that it gives a license to the military establishment to send any Parliament packing if it dare challenge the authority of the establishment. The amendment also include providing constitutional cover to National Security Council, headed by General Musharraf and comprising the services chiefs along with the new Prime Minister indicating that the military would continue to influence the decisions of the Parliament.

According to the schedule the specific dates for the national elections would be announced in the second week of July next year. However the new democratic Government will be put in place in the first week of November 2002.

The schedule also includes address of President Musharraf to the new Parliament, which indicates that the General might seek endorsement of a five-year term for his office from the Parliament. Political parties were cautious in their reaction to the

announcement of polls by the military leader. PPP spokesman said in a statement that the party was concerned about military regime's plans to bring controversial amendments in the Constitution.

The General announced banning of two militant sectarian outfits of Sunni and Shia sects, Lashkar-i-Jhuyangvi and Sipah-i-Mohammed, which were largely responsible for sectarian violence that resulted in the deaths of more than 250 people during the nearly two-year tenure of the military regime.

General Musharraf also threatened the Sipah-i-Sahaba and Tehrik-i-Jafria, the parent organisations of the two sects, to avoid fighting against each other otherwise they would also be banned. Earlier, addressing a function at President House to mark the Independence Day of Pakistan, General Musharraf said Pakistan was in favour of further talks with India on Kashmir and other issues and could go to any extent in establishing friendly relations with India. He said that his Government succeeded in bringing the Kashmir issue into the world focus.

# Pak. bans two militant outfits

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, AUG. 14.** In what is seen as the first major step towards containing sectarian violence, the Pakistan Government today banned two militant outfits with immediate effect and announced an amended anti-terrorism law with stringent provisions.

Addressing the newly-elected district chiefs of the 'local system of governance', the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, dwelt at length on the havoc caused by the sectarian and ethnic violence and vowed that his Government would come down heavily on organisations which thrived on creating divisions in society.

He minced no words in suggesting that the biggest threat to order was from within. The law and order situation was one of the major stumbling blocks in the path of Pakistan's progress and prosperity.

The organisations banned include the Sunni-dominated Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and the Shia outfit, Sipah-e-Mohammadi. The Lashkar had claimed responsibility for some of the recent Shia killings in different parts of the country.

Gen. Musharraf warned the Tehriq-e-Jaffaria Pak. and the Sipah-e-Sahaba of similar action if they were found indulging in sectarian activities.

Sectarian and ethnic strife had assumed alarming proportions in recent years. Since the military take-over in October 1999, 222 people have lost their lives in sectarian violence and at least 200 have suffered injuries in 83 incidents in 30 cities across the country.

Putting an end to sectarian and ethnic disturbances was on the top of Gen. Musharraf's agenda when he took over.

The military Government has been severely criticised by political parties and independent ob-

servers for its failure to keep its promise. Gen. Musharraf has been talking for several months now about amending the anti-terrorism law to give more powers to the judiciary but for various reasons the new legislation never materialised.

The Government launched what was known as the 'de-weaponisation' programme with great fanfare several months ago. However, reports from the four provinces suggest that the Government has not met with success in recovering illegal and illicit weapons.

Pakistan witnessed unprecedented growth in illicit weapons after the Afghan war in the eighties. Several observers have pointed out that public display of weapons and indiscriminate use of guns to settle petty quarrels is a phenomenon of the nineties.

Successive Governments could do precious little to curb the trend as some of the organisations promoting sectarian strife

were also involved in 'jihad' in Kashmir and were out of the reach of the law and order machinery.

The Musharraf Government would also find it difficult to enforce the provisions of the new law at least against some of the high-profile organisations as they are also connected with the 'jihad' in Kashmir.

The case of the Jaish-e-Mohammad, the new organisation founded by Maulana Masood Azar, illustrates the point. Azar was set free by India in December 1999 along with two other militants in exchange for the release of the passengers of the hijacked Indian Airlines plane at Kandahar.

Gen. Musharraf referred to the de-weaponisation drive and said that it would be 'revitalised' with the police and rangers being asked to conduct 'offensive and intrusive' operations against unlicensed weapons.

THE HINDU  
15 AUG 2001

# Musharraf gives police sweeping powers

BY FARAZ HASHMI  
Dawn

Islamabad, Aug. 13: The President Gen. Pervez Musharraf on Sunday amended the Police Act of 1861, giving sweeping powers to the police system being introduced with the establishment of district governments in the country.

An order called "Police (Amendment) Order 2001" was issued late on Sunday night by President Gen. Pervez Musharraf in his capacity as the Chief Executive and in exercise of the authority assumed by him under Provisional Consti-

tutional Order of 1861. An official involved in the formulation of the police reforms said the order had covered only few areas related to introduction of Zila Nazims and District Public Safety Commissions and a detailed ordinance would be issued within a month.

The official seeking anonymity, said these amendments were approved at a recent meeting presided over by the President. When asked whether the objections raised by the provincial governments had been addressed, he replied in the affirmative.

The police ordinance had been delayed because of the apprehensions expressed by the provincial governments. The federal government decided to introduce the required amendments before the swearing in of the newly-elected Zila Nazims and Naib Nazims, he said.

On a question whether an act can be amended through an executive order, he said under the provisional constitutional order it could be done. The order provided for the setting up of District Public Safety Commissions in every district and Capital City District Public Safety

Commission at every provincial headquarters. The PSCs would be set up through a notification by the provincial governments in their respective provinces and it will consist of eight, ten or twelve members depending upon the size of the district. Half of the members of the commission shall be elected by the Zila Council from its councillors and the other half, to be called independent members, will be nominated by the chief executive of the province.

Women have also been given representation on the PSCs as well as on capital city commissions.

The order says: "As far as practicable, one-third of both the elected and the independent members of the commission shall be women."

There will be a separate panel of selectors at district level and at capital city level for the selection of independent members to their respective commissions. The capital city selection panel will be headed by the Chief Justice of the respective high court and district level selection panel will be headed by a sessions judge.

The selection panel will have two other members for suggesting name of independent members.

## Deputy mayor in Pak Punjab is shot dead

Lahore, Aug. 13: Four gunmen shot and killed a newly elected deputy mayor in Pakistan's eastern Punjab province, the police said on Monday.

Tariq Mahmood, who was elected deputy mayor with the support of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples' Party, was killed on Sunday in Gujranwala, some 60 kilometres north of Lahore, the provincial capital of Punjab. The police arrested Abdul Rasheed, the rival candidate belonging to the former ruling Pakistan Muslim League. He has been charged with murder.

Pakistan's military-led government held staggered local elections in what it called the first step toward the return of democracy for this poor South Asian country. (AP)



THE NEGOTIATOR: UN special envoy to Afghanistan Francesco Vendrell meets an official of the ruling Taliban at Kabul on Saturday. Mr Vendrell plans to hold discussions with the Taliban authorities over the arrests of 24 foreign and local staff of the Western-aid agency Shelter Now International, who have been detained since last week by the Islamic rulers for preaching Christianity among Muslim Afghans. (Reuters)

## Taliban see Western conspiracy in name of aid

BY AMIR SHAH

Kabul, Aug. 13: A week after jailing eight foreigners on charges of propagating Christianity, the ruling Taliban militia on Sunday said they suspect a larger conspiracy by Western aid organisations to convert Afghan Muslims.

Taliban investigators have uncovered considerable evidence of large-scale conversion attempts and want to question other foreign aid groups, including the UN World Food Program, Taliban foreign minister Wakil Ahmed Muttawakil told reporters in the Afghan capital. "Unfortunately some organisations under the guise of helping poor Afghans are preaching Christianity," Mr Muttawakil said.

"The investigators are looking at a larger conspiracy by countries and organisations to try to convert good Afghan Muslims to Christianity" he said.

The Taliban, who espouse a harsh brand of Islam that considers trying to convert Muslims a crime, arrested eight foreign workers and 16 Afghan staff with Shelter Now International on August 5 for allegedly preaching Christianity. The group is part of a German-based Christian group called Vision for Asia.

Among those arrested were two American women, four Germans and two Australians. Mr Muttawakil on Sunday said that the detained foreigners would not be released until the investigation is completed and that diplomats will not be allowed to visit them. (AP)

## Taliban give visas, deny access, acquittal

BY SYED SALAHUDDIN

Kabul, Aug. 13: Afghanistan's ruling Taliban on Monday issued visas to diplomats seeking to visit eight foreign aid workers detained for promoting Christianity, but said there could be no consular access and no pardon for those arrested. "The diplomats ... can collect their visas today. However, they can only meet the authorities of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, but not the detainees," Taliban ambassador to Pakistan, Mullah Mohammad Zaeef, told a news conference in Islamabad.

When asked when the diplomats could meet their nationals, he said: "They have to wait for a while before they can see the detainees."

Diplomats from Germany, Australia and the United States said they hoped to travel to Kabul on Tuesday to continue pushing for access to

the four Germans, two Australians and two Americans detained with 16 Afghans more than a week ago.

"They will not grant us access to the detainees ... but we have decided to go to Kabul to press on with getting access to them," a German embassy spokesman in Islamabad said.

On Monday, the purist Islamist movement ruled out pardons for the 24 detainees, all of whom worked for German-based relief organisation Shelter Now International and who could face possible execution if convicted of converting Muslims. Late last week, official Taliban media reported that Mr Georg Taubmann, Shelter's Afghanistan director, had appealed for a pardon for his group.

"The appeal for acquittal was only possible if they were not aware of our stance and announcements, or if they had done what they

did through a mistake," said Mullah Mohammad Wali, the Taliban's minister for the promotion of virtue and prevention of vice.

"After the investigation is over an Islamic Sharia court will decide as to what sort of treatment will be adopted against them," he added.

Those arrested are now in the second week of detention and Wali said none of the Afghans had admitted becoming an apostate.

Meanwhile, the Taliban say they have seized a massive hoard of Christian material and Wali said other aid agencies in Afghanistan would now be put under tight surveillance to ensure foreigners did not indulge in promoting religions other than Islam.

"Foreign institutions and NGOs (non-governmental organisations) will be under severe surveillance by the intelligence, security and religious organs," Wali said. (Reuters)

HD-17  
12/8

## Poll pains Pmk ①

**P**AKISTAN HAS just completed elections to local bodies. The military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, kept his promise. But the process has hardly generated any enthusiasm either among the people or the political and religious parties. And there are good reasons for the indifference of Pakistani society to what the Government touts as an exercise aimed at ushering in "genuine democracy" at the grassroots level.

The whole process of elections to the local bodies only seems to have created further confusion in the country's political scenario. Held on non-party basis, spread over eight months, the polls have raised more questions than they have answered.

What should be a matter of greater concern was that even as the people were busy electing their representatives at the lowest level, the country was in the grip of serious sectarian strife. The

*Even as the people of Pakistan were busy electing representatives to local bodies, sectarian violence reached serious proportions.*

**B. Muralidhar Reddy reports.**

stern warnings and threats of draconian laws by the military Government hardly made any impact on the situation.

The manner in which the Musharraf Government went about the local body polls only brought back memories of the route taken by two previous military rulers — Ayub Khan and Zia-ul-Haq — to legitimise their regimes and consolidate their power. This is the consensus in intelligentsia and media circles.

There are serious worries among political parties and all those who are concerned about the future of democracy in Pakistan about the new system of local governance set in motion by the Musharraf Government. The new system which would be operational from August 14, Pakistan's Independence Day, could be a major obstacle to the revival of Parliamentary democracy as envisaged in the Constitution suspended in the aftermath of the

military coup of October 1999.

Local governance as conceived by the Musharraf Government is not only convoluted and confusing but also goes against the very spirit of democracy — ruling out the participation of political parties. It is only natural that the system will come into conflict with the provincial and the national Governments, as and when they come into being.

Under the new scheme, the heads of the local bodies at the district level would be almost on a par with the Chief Ministers at the provincial level. The district administration including the police would be answerable and ac-

in 1947. But, as survey after survey has established, the outcome has belied all expectations. The estimates suggest that 80 per cent of the people elected to the local bodies are believed to be active workers of some party or the others. The Pakistani media has been lamenting how the same old "power brokers, corrupt, feudal and fundamentalist" elements have managed to sneak into the new system.

The whole process has triggered a wave of cynicism at least in the Pakistani media. In the words of Mr. Aamer Ahmed Khan, distinguished Editor of the Pakistani English monthly, *The Herald*,

Government on the law and order front is even more worrisome. Recent months have witnessed an unprecedented rise in sectarian violence involving killing of some high-profile personalities. Gen. Musharraf himself appeared to be so perturbed over the trend that at a function in Islamabad last week he said he would like to pick up a gun and shoot down those responsible for the senseless murders. But there was a rider: he said he could do so if he only knew who the killers were.

If such is the anguish and helplessness of the most powerful man in Pakistan, one could well imagine the plight of the ordinary



Women in Karachi demonstrate against sectarian strife.

countable to 'Nazims' and 'Naib Nazims' (to a limited extent they could be compared to Zilla Parishad chiefs in India).

The elections were a disappointment for the people who were desperately looking for a new crop of political leaders. When Gen. Musharraf announced his plan to put in place a new local Government system, this was what he promised. He dubbed politicians "useless" and held them responsible for all the ills ailing Pakistani society.

The military Government launched a massive propaganda projecting the local bodies election as the best thing to have happened to Pakistan since its birth

"We now have a system where the military leadership will be part of the decision-making process on a day-to-day basis, at the district level. And the civilians in this arrangement will have to be accommodating at every step of the way to keep the sword of disqualification away from their necks".

On the claims made by Gen. Musharraf that he was ushering in genuine grassroots democracy, in contrast to the sham democracy of the past, Mr. Khan says: "It was evident what the military leadership was looking for; a set of people that need neither be new nor different, just dependable enough to be presented as the new face of reform in Pakistan".

The track record of the military

person on the street. Since the military takeover in October 1999, sectarian violence has continued unabated with 222 people killed and over 200 injured in 83 incidents in 30 cities across Pakistan. Karachi tops the list with 33 incidents, which left 54 dead.

For months now the military Government has been talking of tough measures but there has been no action. There is no doubt that the people of Pakistan are growing increasingly sceptical about many of the promises made by the military when it seized power two years ago. The Musharraf Government will have to act, and act fast, if it has to regain its credibility.



# Musharraf talks tough as Pak gets tanks

Mubashir Zaidi  
Islamabad, July 20

PRESIDENT GENERAL Pervez Musharraf on Friday said Pakistan is a peace-loving country and has always worked for peace and stability in the region but could not lower its guard and must have the desired deterrent against misadventures by its adversaries.

Addressing the handing-over ceremony of the first batch of 15 Chinese aided Al-Khalid main battle tanks to Pakistan Army held at Heavy Industries Taxila, the General said his Government would provide all the resources to ensure a strong defence for a stable Pakistan

"Being a developing country, it becomes all the more important to find cost effective solutions and to promote indigenous capability in the manufacture of arms to meet defence needs," he observed. But he stressed that wars today are fought not just by the armed forces and the whole nation has to engage in economic, scientific, political and social endeavors as well as production in all conceivable fields.

Gen Musharraf said the nation has made sacrifices in the

establishment of defence production facilities and it is time now that they start getting dividends by diversifying defence industry and promoting export of defence equipment.

"It is indeed an auspicious day as they witnessed the maturity of a project that was conceived ten years ago. This Project has a unique character as it symbolises the excellent and close co-operation with our great friend, People's Republic of China. It also reflects the experience of a very successful interaction between Pakistan, China and Ukraine," he added.

Describing Al-Khalid, the President said that due to the dedicated efforts of engineers and workers at Heavy Industries Taxila, it has been possible to develop and produce a tank with the most modern feature in a time frame which is comparable to that of industrially advanced countries. "With the highest power to weight ratio in the world Al-Khalid has agility which can be matched only by the German Leopard," he claimed adding that Al-Khalid's ability to automatically track targets was previously available only on the French Leclerc. With

Hunter Killer Day-Night Sight and a state of the art Fire Control System Al-Khalid is truly a world class tank, Musharraf disclosed.

General Musharraf said he was grateful to the Government of the People's Republic of China for the help they have extended in completing this vital project. He appreciated the contribution of the Chinese and Ukrainian technical experts, which has ensured the quality of the product and facilitated the timely completion of this phase of production.

First batch of 15 Al-Khalid main battle tanks, claimed by Pakistan that they are comparable to any of the most modern tanks in the world, were formally handed over to Pakistan Army at a ceremony at Heavy Industries Taxila (HIT). President Gen Musharraf was chief guest. Other two services chiefs, Foreign Minister Abdus Sattar, Finance Minister Shaukat Aziz, Ambassadors, Defence attaches and senior serving and retired armed forces officers attended the ceremony.

According to HIT, the industry has formulated plans to manufacture 300 Al-Khalid tanks for armoured formations.

## 5r.b PUPPET MASTER 9/18 Obstructing self-determination in PoK

POLITICAL developments in Pakistan occupied Kashmir cast an interesting sidelight on General Pervez Musharraf's supposed determination to pursue Kashmiri self-determination. Elections to the PoK parliament were won by the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference led by the popular Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, bagging 30 out of 48 seats. Nevertheless, in supposedly "autonomous" PoK, the AJKMF has been leaned on to drop Qayyum from the race for the presidency, and put in his place one of the boys from the army, a Maj Gen Sardar Anwar Khan. The problem with Qayyum? He was pro-independence rather than pro-Pakistan, which throws a spanner in the works of Musharraf's Kashmir policy. Qayyum was forced out by threatening to reopen old cases pending against him with the National Accountability Bureau. Likewise, in order to induct Anwar, he was retired prematurely from the armed forces, and a two-year post-retirement ban on government officials contesting presidential elections arbitrarily set aside. There is more. Having installed his own man as president, Musharraf is now mulling "constitutional reforms" which would enhance the president's powers vis-a-vis the PoK parliament. Is this a dry run for Musharraf's plans for October 2002, when elections are supposed to be held in Pakistan?

There is another question. How accountable is the National Accountability Bureau itself? Is it meant to bring to account the corrupt, who had a free run during the Nawaz Sharif regime, or is it a ploy to nail dissidents? The NAB overlooks corruption by army personnel, but trains its guns on Asma Jehangir, perhaps the most forthright and courageous dissident in Pakistan today. Likewise Rehmat Ali Afridi, one of Pakistan's most critical newspaper editors, has been framed on drug charges by the Anti-Narcotics Force run by the army, and sentenced to death, for exposing in his articles the ANF's links with drug smuggling. Except perhaps for his belief that armymen are intrinsically superior, Musharraf is in no way different from Nawaz Sharif — something the Pakistani people will see for themselves pretty soon.

THE STATESMAN

- 9 AUG 2001

# Pak. Govt. in a fix over banning sectarian groups

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By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, AUG. 5.** The military Government in Pakistan is on the horns of a dilemma on a strategy to deal with the menace of sectarian violence and the groups considered to be behind them.

An inter-provincial conference on law and order on Saturday chaired by Gen. Pervez Musharraf is believed to have decided to use para-military forces along with police against the groups.

At least on two occasions last week, Gen. Musharraf expressed his anguish over the failure of the intelligence agencies and the law and order enforcement authorities to check incidents of sectarian violence and bring to book those responsible for some of the recent high-profile.

At a conference in Islamabad on the menace of small arms Gen. Musharraf had gone to the extent of saying that if only he knew the killers of some senior Government officers, he would personally go after them.

Media reports have said that the Musharraf Government however has second thoughts over the proposal to identify various groups behind the sectarian violence and consider ban on militant sectarian groups.

The meeting, attended by the

four provincial Governors, gave the green signal to the law enforcement agencies to launch an all-out offensive against terrorists and terrorist groups. The conference also discussed and approved draft amendments to the Anti-terrorism Act 1997 which will now be promulgated as an Ordinance.

The amendments seek to facilitate apprehension and prosecution of terrorists and prevent acts of terrorism, particularly sectarian and ethnic terrorism. Addressing the conference, the President declared that there should be no inhibition against use of every available force and all available resources to combat the menace.

He directed the provinces to make use of the police force, the rangers and other para-military troops to track down the terrorist groups and bring them to justice. "We owe it to this nation and we shall give them peace and security," the President said.

He asked the law enforcement agencies to be firm and act without fear or favour. Emphasising the need for close coordination between the federal and provincial agencies concerned, Gen. Musharraf told the meeting that there was a need to sharpen intelligence gathering, streamline the prosecution process and

speed up the judicial process.

He assured all available help to the judiciary and to the law enforcement agencies. Responding to observations regarding the large number of cases awaiting adjudication, the President asked the Ministry of Interior and the Provincial Home Departments to monitor progress of all such cases and particularly the major ones involving terrorism.

There should be a monthly review of all such cases with the law enforcement officers and the law officers both at the provincial and the federal levels, he said. On the issue of de-weaponisation, he asked the provincial governments to adopt an intrusive and proactive campaign for recovery of unlicensed and unauthorised arms.

The unchecked proliferation of weapons in the country, Gen. Musharraf told the conference, had contributed largely to the present state of affairs and only a concerted campaign would result in the desired recovery of unlicensed weapons.

The conference was also attended by the Federal Ministers for Interior and Law, Attorney General of Pakistan, Inspectors General of Police, Provincial Home Secretaries and other senior officials.

THE HINDU

- 6 AUG 2001

# The Pakistani defence cut

By P. R. Chari

40-10  
19/7

**W**HY SHOULD the slight reduction in Pakistan's defence budget, no surprise given the parlous state of its economy, have any implications for India? First, the facts. Pakistan's recent budget froze defence expenditure at Rs. 13,164 crores, some Rs. 200 crores less than last year's budget. Accounting for the annual rate of inflation would reduce its defence outlay by another Rs. 350 crores. This is the second consecutive year Pakistan had to cut its defence budget, despite its stated desire not to compromise on national defence and security, and to maintain a credible deterrent posture. Significantly, India's defence allocations rose by 27 per cent in 2000-01, and would increase by around 14 per cent in the current fiscal year 2001-02.

Pakistan's macro-economic indicators are dismal: debt servicing and defence outlays, totalling Rs. 4,690 crores, exceed its revenue receipts of Rs. 4,530 crores, indicating that the remaining Government expenditure must be financed from borrowings. The external debt is around \$38 billion, amounting to about 70 per cent of its GDP, whilst foreign exchange reserves are hovering around \$1 billion, raising the spectre of a default occurring.

Ironically, Pakistan has reduced its defence expenditure with a military regime being in power. Indubitably, the cuts in the defence budget have been necessitated on the directions of the international financial institutions that have been pointing out that Pakistan cannot sustain its high defence outlays by seeking external sources of funding from every possible source. Pakistan needs to present its case to the IMF for a three-year loan programme very soon; it could be expected that the IMF would impose more conditions for granting the loan, including further reductions in its defence expenditure.

New Delhi's strategic community has greeted the news of Pakistan reducing its defence budget with a certain satisfaction but also with considerable scepticism. There are several aspects to its thinking. First, the belief is widespread that no reduction has been effected, since Pakistan has traditionally concealed its defence spending within outlays of the civilian departments. This is true to a limited extent — thus, naval expenditure has been dis-

guised under shipping and ports, air force expenditure has gone under civil aviation and so on. There are practical difficulties, however, in separating civil and defence expenditure. India, for instance, accounts for strategic roads under the budget of the Surface Transport Ministry. Second, defence pensions amounting to some 20 per cent of the defence budget are now being debited to civil estimates. This argument is quite egregious since it ignores the fact that India transferred defence pensions to its civil estimates almost two decades

ago. It is assumed to be a regular or major source of funding for Pakistan's defence budget.

The short point to be emphasised here is that Pakistan's economic difficulties have led to a steady reduction in its defence budget. Attention should also be drawn here to a thesis voiced by some members of New Delhi's strategic community that India should radically increase its own defence budget, forcing Pakistan to compete and beggar itself in the process. The 'smash them' school has further argued that India should use the economic weap-

changed in the post-Cold War era. The low levels of technology involved in the manufacture of nuclear weapons has made them the preferred strategic instruments of weak, insecure and paranoid states. Their primary dependence on nuclear weapons to ensure national security requires, as a corollary, adherence to a "first use" doctrine to compensate for their inferior conventional military capabilities to deter a stronger adversary. Otherwise, "asymmetrical warfare", comprising proxy wars, encouragement of cross border insurgency and terrorism and, possibly, in future, the use of chemical and biological weapons would become the retaliatory means employed by the weak to confront the strong states. The basic implication, therefore, of Pakistan's continuing economic decline, which has placed its defence budget under continuing strain, is that it would increasingly rely on nuclear weapons and on "asymmetrical warfare" to deter India. For this purpose, it may feel it necessary to adopt brinkmanship as state policy, and construct nuclear postures based on keeping its nuclear forces on a high state of alert; this would be designed to suggest its willingness to use nuclear weapons at the first available opportunity rather than as a last resort.

***The basic implication of Pakistan's continuing economic decline, which has placed its defence budget under strain, is that it would increasingly rely on nuclear weapons.***

back. Third, it is argued that yearly reductions in the defence budget are not significant; that expenditure trends over some 4-5 years are important. This is correct. But India's strategists gloss over the fact that Pakistan's defence budget has steadily declined over the last decade from 6.33 per cent of its GDP in 1990 to around 4.5 per cent now. Similarly, its defence expenditure, as a percentage of its federal Government spending, has dropped from 26.43 per cent in 1990 to around 21 per cent at present.

Fourth, Pakistan's importations from China, largely manufactured by processes of reverse engineering, are cheap but reliable, which provides it with 'more bang for the buck'. This is a matter of some controversy. Serious doubts obtain regarding the operational worth of Chinese equipment. For instance, Chinese aircraft delivered to Pakistan are believed to be quite inferior in performance and a source of some concern to the Pakistani air force. Fifth, Pakistan is believed to finance its defence expenditure from out-of-budget sources obtained through secret allocations by the Gulf countries or Army-controlled private organisations such as the Fauji Foundation or ISI-procured drug money. These are allegations that are difficult to prove or disprove, but revenues from these clandestine sources can hardly

be assumed to be a regular or major source of funding for Pakistan's defence budget. Regrettably, the implications of Pakistan reducing its defence expenditure and of exacerbating its economic difficulties have escaped the attention of the 'smash them' school. What could they be?

The answer to this question can be found in the Pakistani Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar's address to the annual non-proliferation conference of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace last month. Emphasising that Pakistan's pursuit of nuclear capability was driven by security compulsions, Mr. Sattar pointed out that the denial of military equipment and spare parts due to U.S. sanctions was degrading Pakistan's conventional military capabilities and this "has been exploited in South Asia (translate "by India") on more than one occasion in the past". What Mr. Sattar said thereafter is of the essence; "It is not necessary in this forum to mention the risks inherent in erosion of conventional capability and consequently increase in reliance on strategic deterrence". This veiled threat was further elaborated to justify Pakistan's adherence to its concept of "first use" of nuclear weapons and denigrate India's promotion of its "no first use" doctrine as being a ploy to exploit its superiority in conventional arms.

In truth, the role of nuclear weapons in the international security system has

It cannot be anybody's case that India should reduce its defence expenditure to reassure Pakistan or that the international financial institutions should assist Pakistan to acquire larger conventional military capabilities. But, what seems unavoidable is that both countries discuss the implications of Pakistan's falling defence budget, growing dependence on its nuclear capabilities, and the doctrinal beliefs underpinning its nuclear posture. An opportunity would be available during the Agra Summit to address these esoteric but vital questions; it would only be wise to establish a permanent mechanism for discussing such issues further at technical levels to reach some understanding. In fact, establishing a nuclear-safe regime in South Asia, as a first step to peace, is as significant for the stability of bilateral relations between India and Pakistan as addressing the impasse on Kashmir.

(The writer is Director, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi).

19/7

# Fresh challenge to Musharraf in SC

PAKISTAN  
Islamabad, July 10

PAKISTAN MILITARY ruler Gen Pervez Musharraf's decision last month to declare himself President has been challenged in the Supreme Court.

Court officials said the petition, filed by an advocate from Rawalpindi challenging the "self-induction" of Gen Musharraf as President and removal of the elected President Rafiq Tarar and dissolution of the National Assembly, has been received yesterday and could be listed for hearing during the course of the week.

Musharraf, in a surprise move on June 20, took over as President and the decision was condemned by major political parties as unconstitutional and illegal. The Lahore High Court, however, had rejected a petition challenging the self-appointment.

The new petition has evoked curiosity here as Supreme Court Chief Justice Irshad Hassan Khan had leant credibility to the appointment by administering oath of office to Gen Musharraf.

He was widely criticised by the political parties and former judges for this action. Criticising Justice Khan's decision, former Supreme Court Chief Justice, Saeeduzzaman Siddiqui in an interview had said "the Chief Justice before administering the oath, should have considered his own decision in the case where they validated the present



regime subject to the judgment of the court.

It would have been appropriate for the Chief Justice to have refrained from administering the oath himself and appointed somebody else to do it".

In his petition to Supreme Court, advocate Chaudhry Shafiq Ahmad, has named Gen Musharraf, who is also holding the posts of chief executive, chief of Pakistan army and chairman joint chiefs of staff committee as a respondent in the case and charged him with treason.

"The respondent (Gen Pervez Musharraf) has committed high treason as envisaged in Article 6 of the Constitution," the petitioner said.

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

# Musharraf convenes NSC meeting

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD JULY 8. Pakistan's military ruler and President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has convened a meeting of the newly-reconstituted National Security Council (NSC) on July 11 to discuss his scheduled summit meeting with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, in Agra on July 15 and 16.

The NSC, the most powerful decision-making body under the dispensation of Gen. Musharraf, is expected to deliberate on Pakistan's strategy at the meeting in the light of its stand on making Kashmir the core issue.

There are indications that Gen. Musharraf would secure the consent of the Council, heavily dominated by the military, to enable him to negotiate a solution to the Kashmir issue.

Gen. Musharraf had 'consultations' with a cross-section of the people in Pakistan the last two weeks. These include editors of the leading Pakistani dailies and magazines, political and religious leaders, representatives of women's groups, Kashmiri parties, Pak-occupied Kashmir and Muslim scholars.

Only last week through an amendment to the Provincial Constitution Order (PCO), Gen. Musharraf re-constituted the NSC by making the President (himself) the Chairman of the Council. The three Service Chiefs and the Governors of the four provinces are also members of the NSC.

Under the amended order, the Chairman of the Council would have the powers to co-opt any

person he deems fit as member of the Council and he or she shall continue in office at the 'pleasure' of the President.

Indications are that besides the regular members of the Council, the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, will be invited to address the NSC meeting.

## 'Onus of success on both of us'

ISLAMABAD, JULY 8. The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has said the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and he will be equally responsible for the success of the July 15 summit.

In an interview with the 'Voice of America', he said, "fifty per cent is my part, but I am not responsible for the other 50 per cent...I would say we have a desire to remove this tension, this main issue."

To a question, Gen. Musharraf said he should not be held responsible if the talks failed due to intransigence from India. "Then, why would I be held responsible, why should my credibility be reduced?"

Asked what was the minimum he expected from the summit, the President said, "if we set our direction towards a structured approach towards addressing the core issue, I think we need to certainly initiate and continue the process of dialogue. And, the dialogue should certainly not be fruitless. Instead, it should be aimed at a direction which moves towards resolution of the core issue."

# Power, generals, polls in Pak

□ God is in the details, read the fine print of General Musharraf's devolution plan to know, says *Dawn* columnist Ayaz Amir

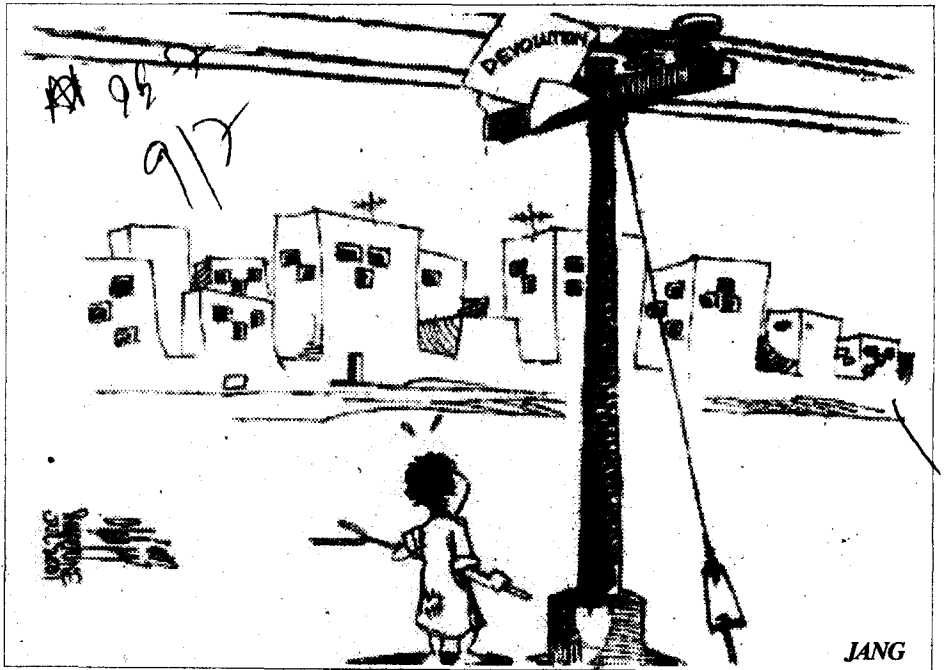
I HAVE been watching elections since 1964 — the year the Field Marshal and Ms Jinnah squared off against each other — and, in one form or the other, participating in them since I came of age. This record is no testimonial to my civic-mindedness. It only reflects my rural origins. In Islamabad and the posher parts of Pakistan elections are an irrelevance. They have nothing to do with the lives of ordinary people.

In the other Pakistan, comprising the stretching hinterland and the congested cities, elections are a necessity. Ignore the political process and you count yourself out of local affairs. The authors of the Devolution Plan say all this will change after their new system is ushered in. Power from the top will filter down to the grassroots enabling people to become masters of their own destiny. It's a beguiling thought but at odds with the reality of military rule.

General Musharraf is not about to draw in his fangs. The brave new world he and his scientists are creating differs only in matters of detail from previous models. The substance is the same with elections and local councils only obscuring the real thing within. Why hold elections at all? They involve the mass of people in an exercise both tortuous and painful. While raising exaggerated hopes, they confer no political sovereignty. Nor do they alter the contours of power, a lesson successive generations of Pakistanis learn at a cost which involves the loss of innocence and the onset of an all-pervasive cynicism. The Devolution Plan wrests planning and development from the mandarins of the provincial capitals and brings these precious commodities to the districts. But it is a far cry from the dispersal or distribution of power. The one nagging fear about the new paths to local grandeeism being charted by the plan has to do with the quality of the Nazims and the role of the police. If the nazims who will step into the executive shoes of the deputy commissioners start settling political scores, we might as well start composing the obituary of the incoming order. A heavy responsibility will rest on the shoulders of the police. More than the nazims it will be the police department which will help make or mar the new system.

When Shahbaz Sharif (Nawaz Sharif's brother) as Punjab overlord proposed recruiting direct inspectors into the police force I who was consulted strongly opposed the idea, arguing that inspectors at the upper rungs of the ladder were a source of demoralisation for their colleagues below. The chief minister's argument was that the police had become so rotten that only shock therapy could help improve matters. I must confess that from what I have seen of direct inspectors in my own district, Punjab's erstwhile overlord was right and I wrong.

In Punjab, the powerhouse of Pakistan poli-



**In Islamabad and posher parts of Pakistan, elections are an irrelevance. In the other Pakistan, comprising the hinterland and congested cities, elections are a necessity. Ignore the political process and you count yourself out of local affairs.**

tics, the electoral strength of Nawaz Sharif's Muslim League is well on the way to being broken. Rawalpindi Division, the heart of the army's recruiting belt, was a Nawaz Sharif stronghold. As evidenced by the local election results, not any longer. With other factions coming to the fore the glue holding the Muslim League together is coming apart. Political strength first came to the Muslim League through local elections ordained by General Zia. Now it is losing it, and experiencing a gradual political meltdown, through local elections sponsored by another general. Those who live by the sword, die by the sword. Change sword to local elections and you have an epitaph for the Nawaz League.

The problem for the military is over the long-term. A closed political system, such as Ayub Khan's was and Musharraf's promises to be, breeds frustration and anger. The middle class, the motor of political thought and activity in most countries like Pakistan, feels left out. What is more, a closed political system also breeds cronyism and corruption. From Indonesia to Nigeria the most conspicuous feature of military regimes is the corruption which leaves their country dry. There is much talk of clean-

ness at the top of the Musharraf government. Wait till complacency sets in. Military men don't admit it, perhaps they don't even understand it, but the great cyclical leaps in corruption we have had have all been under military regimes. Not because soldiers are more corrupt than civilians but because army rule, by destroying democracy, removes a check on administrative corruption.

Yes, I can hear angry cries about the felonies of politicians. But a point lost on sophisticated urbanites is the check-and-balance role of any political system, no matter how corrupt. A myth beloved of generals is about the watchdog role of the military. Sooner than anyone realises the army becomes part of the problem. What are the people left with? Another coffin of shattered dreams. When their anger breaks out, the system performs a cleansing act, removing the Ayub Khans and Suhartos but without touching the essentials. Another election is ordained, new alliances are made and the air is full of talk of a new beginning. New faces emerge — the Benazir Bhuttos and the Megawati Sukarnos — with whom the people identify their hopes.

But nothing changes. Only the past reinvents itself in fresh colours.

# Musharraf forms Security Council

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, July 5. - The Pakistani President has constituted a National Security Council (NSC) to aid and advise him on a host of issues including Islamic ideology and national security.

"The NSC shall deliberate upon, discuss and tender advice to President Pervez Musharraf on matters of his choice and issues relating to Islamic ideology, national security, sovereignty, integrity and solidarity of Pakistan," a release said here last night.

"The council has been constituted with immediate effect. It comprises the President as the chairman, joint chiefs of staff committee, services chiefs, Governors of the four provinces and other members, who will be appointed by Gen Musharraf.

Its members shall hold office



President Pervez Musharraf

so long as they enjoy his confidence," it said.

It wasn't known whether Gen Musharraf planned to make the NSC a mandatory policy body in all future governments by bringing in a constitutional amendment.

Mainstream political parties like Pakistan People's Party

and Pakistan Muslim League have been opposing a policy role for NSC.

They allege that Gen Musharraf was trying to institutionalise a policy role for the armed forces even after restoration of democracy at a later date.

Meanwhile, officials view the NSC's constitution as another attempt by Gen Musharraf to broaden his power structure within the armed forces in order to get their support on all his major policy initiatives like peace moves with India as it comes just 10 days ahead of the Indo-Pak summit.

Two days ago the Pakistani President had invited the deputy Army chief, Lt-Gen Muzaffar Husain Usmani, to a high level meeting convened to give final touches to the strategy to be adopted during his three-day visit to India.



# Musharraf forms panel on Islamic ideology

Islamabad, July 5

AHEAD OF his forthcoming visit to India, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf has constituted a National Security Council (NSC) to aid and advise him on a host of issues including Islamic ideology and national security.

"The NSC has been constituted with immediate effect. It comprises chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff committee, services chiefs, governors of the four provinces and other members, who will be appointed by Musharraf. The president will be its chairman and its members shall hold office so long as they enjoy his confidence," a release said here last night.

"The council shall deliberate upon, discuss and tender advice to Musharraf on matters of his choice and issues relating to Islamic ideology, national security, sovereignty, integrity and solidarity of Pakistan," it said. It was not known whether Musharraf planned to make NSC a mandatory policy body in all future governments by bringing in a constitutional amendment.

A policy role for the NSC has

been opposed by the mainstream political parties like Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League (PML), which alleged that it was an attempt on the part of Musharraf to institutionalise a policy role for the armed forces even after restoration of democracy at a later date.

The NSC has been constituted less than 10 days ahead of his visit to India. The move is seen in official circles here as yet another attempt on Musharraf's part to broad base the power structure within the armed forces in order to get their support on all his major policy initiatives like peace moves with India.

Two days ago, he invited the deputy army chief, Lt Gen Muzaffar Husain Usmani to a high-level meeting convened to give final touches to the strategy to be adopted during his three-day visit to India beginning from July 14.

That was the first time after India extended invitation to Musharraf on May 23, Gen Usmani was seen to be associated with the official preparations for the President's visit.

PTI

## Pakistan slams Armitage remark

Islamabad, July 5

PAKISTAN HAS reacted sharply to US deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage's remarks that US-Pakistan relations in the past were relatively false and urged the Bush administration not to adopt different approaches to lift sanctions against India and Pakistan.

Reacting to Armitage's remarks a spokesman of the foreign office, Riaz Mohammad Khan, has been quoted by a Pakistani daily today as saying "you can not call history false".

Armitage in an interview to an international news agency yesterday had said: "We have never had a balanced policy in South Asia." He called the 50-year-old US relationship with Pakistan relatively false. It has been a relationship that was not based on Pakistan. It was based against someone else—in the first instance India and their relationship with Soviet Union and later against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, he said.

PTI

# PAKISTAN'S MILITARY-II

## Above The Law Of The Land

**N**AWAZ Sharif was young and inexperienced and failed to show any commitment to resolve Pakistan's numerous problems. In April 1993, the president dismissed Nawaz Sharif and installed Balash Sher Mazari as head of an interim government. However, the Supreme Court ordered the re-instatement of Nawaz Sharif as Prime Minister and an ugly situation was developing when General Waheed played a positive role. "By a combination of tact, forcefulness, honour and tenacity, he convinced the President and the Prime Minister that they should stand down" and they did. Moeen Qureshi, a World Bank economist, agreed to lead a caretaker administration.

In army-supervised elections, Benazir Bhutto managed to put together a working coalition and once again took over as Prime Minister in October 1993. This time she lasted for three years and, after a lacklustre performance, was finally dismissed again in November 1996 by President Farooq Leghari as the nation was once again becoming ungovernable and was on the verge of financial bankruptcy. In elections held in February 1997, Nawaz Sharif's Muslim League was voted to power. The new Prime Minister was determined to show the nation who was the real boss.

### INVITED COUP

Among the first few major initiatives of the Nawaz Sharif government was the 13th Amendment to the Pakistan Constitution that curtailed the President's power to dismiss an elected government. The government then politicised the issue to appoint five new Supreme Court judges and sought to exploit the deep divisions within the judiciary. During October-November 1997, there was a standoff between the executive and the judiciary, with President Leghari openly siding with the judiciary and criticising Nawaz Sharif's "personal dictatorship". On 27 November 1997, unruly Pakistan Muslim League workers physically prevented a Supreme Court bench from hearing a contempt petition against the Prime Minister.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister threatened to initiate impeachment proceedings against the President. The Pakistan COAS, General Jehangir Karamat, who had been watching the sordid drama unfolding from the sidelines with growing consternation, finally intervened to broker a truce between the President, the Prime Minister and the Chief Justice. In an hour of constitutional crisis, the civilians had once again failed to get their act together and had to settle for military arbitration. If there was anything that emerged clearly from this imbroglio, it was that the Pakistan COAS was undoubtedly the ultimate arbiter of power.

President Farooq Leghari resigned on 2 December 1997 following irreconcilable differences with the Prime Minister. However, Nawaz Sharif's high-handed rule continued. The army, bureaucracy and the intelligentsia watched from the sidelines as Nawaz Sharif continued to push through controversial legislation despite wide-

By GURMEET KANWAL

spread objections. Sharif had accumulated so much power that his critics had begun to call him an "elected dictator". However, despite having gained almost unquestioned supremacy over virtually every aspect of governance in Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif was unable to rein in the military.

Nawaz Sharif attempted to

keep the military at bay by leaning on it for administration. The armed forces were asked to assist in collecting unpaid electricity bills, building roads and fighting crime to hold the divided country together.

They were also given the task of conducting the national census and were asked to take over and run Pakistan's largest power company. In November 1998, civil rights were suspended and martial law was imposed in Sindh in an attempt to curb ethnic violence in Karachi. To administer swift justice, military courts were established.

A western observer described Sharif's dependence on the military as a "coup by invitation". Involving the army in running the administration was bound to result in its increasing politicisation due to its wooing by petty politicians and a steady deterioration of its professional military capabilities.

### ARMY UPSET

The COAS, General Jehangir Karamat, was well aware of the falling professional standards and low morale in the Pakistan army and as a professional himself, he wished to set things right. During a lecture at the Naval War College he advocated the setting up of a National Security Council. PML ideologues interpreted his recommendation as a veiled attempt to institutionalise the role of the Pakistan army in governance and encouraged the media to make an emotive issue of it.

General Karamat's resignation sent shock waves through the army as the Pakistan media suggested that the COAS had been asked to resign by the Prime Minister and had complied. Karamat himself has gone on record to state that he voluntarily chose to step down, as he did not wish to create an unnecessary controversy between the army and the civilian government.

He wrote to Brian Cloughley: "The speech was wrongly interpreted as a bid for power by the military and a criticism of the government... I left at my own request, to save my institution from controversial and uninformed public debate... never did the Prime Minister ask me to leave". This appears extremely plausible because not even a Prime Minister with Nawaz Sharif's major-

ity in the National Assembly could have dismissed an army Chief of Pakistan. However the military establishment was rather upset; the feeling was that Sharif's autocratic rule had gone too far.

The Prime Minister appointed General Pervez Musharraf (a Mohajir) to the post of COAS and till the Kargil conflict, Nawaz Sharif and Musharraf got along quite well. Musharraf was instrumental in establishing Special Military Courts in Karachi to try MQM workers. Also, it was during his tenure that the Pakistan army took over the Water and Power Development Authority. At this time, Pakistan's economy was in a shambles, corruption was rampant and administration was characterised by extreme inefficiency. The rate of growth hovered between negative and one to two per cent - a figure that was being derisively referred to as the "Islamic rate of growth".

Nawaz Sharif, as was his wont, excelled in running with the hare and hunting with the hound. Even as he kow-towed to the Muslim clergy for political gains and to the Pakistan army by approving the Kargil excursion, he made overtures to India and invited Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to Lahore in February 1999.

### FAR GONE

Musharraf and the other two Service chiefs snubbed their own Prime Minister by staying deliberately away from Lahore on a flimsy excuse. Sharif himself was less than effusive in reciprocating Vajpayee's warm hug and friendly tone as he did not wish to be publicly seen to be endorsing a policy of friendship with India though he certainly wanted to pursue renewed ties, particularly to enhance trade in which he and his cronies had a vested interest.

With hindsight it can be clearly stated that the Lahore bus diplomacy was deeply resented by the Pakistan army and the Islamic fundamentalists, as moves for peace with India did not suit the vested interests of either of them. In any case, the Pakistan army had by then gone too far with its planning for Operation "Badr" in the Kargil district of J&K and was not going to allow Sharif to ruin what the Pakistan GHQ thought was a bold plan to once again seize the military and moral high ground on Kashmir.

The Musharraf regime's sole contribution so far appears to have been to institutionalise the role of the army in governance. Pakistan's economy is surviving on external life support systems. The lot of its people has never been worse than what it is today. Bruised and battered into submission through a half-century of either direct military rule or the military's watchful oversight over national affairs through a proxy civilian government, the people of Pakistan appear to have resigned themselves to their fate. Perhaps they are convinced that only Allah (an question the military rulers who have proclaimed themselves to be above the law of the land.



(Concluded)

# PAKISTAN'S MILITARY-I

## 5-6 Tradition Of Backseat Driving 2/2

By GURMEET KANWAL

LESS than two years ago, on 12 October 1999, the military jackboot had returned once again to crush Pakistan's fledgling democracy and the hopes and dreams of its oppressed citizens. The international community had wrung its hands in despair and watched helplessly as General Pervez Musharraf, Chief of the Army Staff, appointed himself Chief Executive. He and his hawkish senior colleagues had set about systematically undermining and, in places, even dismantling the civilian administrative structures. They lost no time in placing junior army officers in supervisory positions at grassroots levels. Now, less than two years later, the General has appointed himself President of Pakistan for five years and signalled that he is here to stay a la General Zia-ul-Haq.

Ever since the evolution of the floundering nation-state, Pakistan's army has projected itself as "the guardian of the nation's values and ideals and the protector of Islam" and has always looked upon itself as the protector of the nation's physical boundaries as well as its ideological frontiers. The militarisation of the Pakistani polity began soon after independence. General (later Field Marshal) Ayub Khan was for some time the Commander-in-Chief (1951-58) as well as the Minister of Defence (1954-58) before he finally overthrew the government and established Pakistan's first military regime in 1958.

### TRAINING

Instead of concentrating his energies on improving the organisational structure, the standard of training and the level of preparedness of his army, Ayub Khan chose to dabble in politics and gradually began to enjoy wielding extra-constitutional authority. Ayub experimented with a system of "Basic Democracy" for Pakistan in which the people were allowed only a limited amount of participation. Military officers received many favours and were given plum assignments.

Though Ayub Khan did try to keep the bulk of the army away from martial law duties, even handing over the post of COAS to General Mohammad Musa (1958-66), he could not "save the reputation of the army as a professional, non-political institution from being greatly compromised". General Yahya Khan (1966-71) was sworn in as interim president in 1969 when Ayub Khan was finally forced to step down after a popular people's movement. Yahya Khan retained the post of COAS. His fall from grace and power in the wake of Pakistan's humiliating military defeat at India's hands and the birth of Bangladesh in 1971, led to the appointment of General Gul Hasan as the COAS (1971-72) by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who had taken over as President and Chief Martial Law Administrator. Gul Hasan was, in turn, replaced within three months by General Tikka Khan (1972-76), better known as the butcher of Bangladesh. To his credit, Tikka Khan kept himself scrupulously aloof from civil-political affairs.

Bhutto tried to rein in the unbridled power enjoyed by the military. In May 1976, he

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issued a White Paper outlining the government's defence and strategic policy and institutional arrangements for a Higher Defence Organisation. However, his efforts failed to work and Bhutto was overthrown in a military coup. Though Bhutto did much to transform the Pakistan armed forces from a defeated and demoralised lot into one of Asia's leading fighting forces, his political manoeuvring bred in the rank and file an innate distrust of his party and government.



On General Tikka Khan's retirement, Bhutto, by then Prime Minister, had hand-picked General Zia ul Haq as the new COAS (1976-88; till his death in an air crash) over the heads of several senior Generals and hoped that his protégé would toe the line of his civilian bosses. However, Zia had other ideas and not only overthrew Bhutto on 5 July 1977 and once again proclaimed martial law but also hanged him on trumped up charges. Zia ruled for eight years as the absolute ruler under martial law and for three years as a civilian president with absolute powers.

Zia got the Pakistan army and the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate embroiled in the Afghan war and commenced the Islamisation of the army. During 1983-85, after Bhutto's execution, Zia began to seek ways to legitimise his military rule. He even tried limited local government in the four provinces without much success. In domestic politics, Zia played the role of a consummate politician to the hilt despite having had an army upbringing. Zia aided the growth of the Mohajit Quami Movement to check the spread of the Jamaat-e-Islami in Karachi.

### TWO POSTS

It was only in 1985, that General Zia yielded to a civilian regime but not before promulgating the dreaded Eighth Amendment to the Constitution, under the cloak of which elected civilian administrations could be and were repeatedly dismissed by Pakistan's Presidents in collusion with the army brass. General Zia continued to retain the two important posts of President and COAS and introduced a structure in which the politicians were prepared to accept a political role for the military. However, he soon realised that a parliamentary form of government could not co-exist happily with a strong President and dismissed Prime Minister Junejo in May 1988. Had Zia lived, it is reasonably certain that he would have guided Pakistan towards a presidential form of government with an institutionalised role for the military, possibly through a National Security Council.

On the demise of General Zia, General Aslam Beg (1988-91) stepped into the power vacuum

as COAS and Ghulam Ishaq Khan, a Pakistan Civil Service bureaucrat, was sworn in as acting President. Despite doomsday predictions by well-known defence analysts in India and other parts of the world, this time the Pakistan army took care to act in a mature manner. Under Aslam Bag's leadership, the Pakistan army headquarters carefully weighed the pros and cons of continuing with martial law regime and magnanimously decided that a return to army-backed democracy would be more appropriate. It was at this stage (early 1989) that the concept of the ruling "troika" emerged. It was an informal grouping that comprised the President, the Prime Minister and the COAS and ruled Pakistan through consensus. However, the army made it quite clear that it was the source of real power and preferred to let the civilians bear the burden of governance.

The ruling elite grudgingly accepted Benazir Bhutto as Prime Minister in 1988 under American pressure but only when she agreed to their terms.

Anwar H Syed has written that it was agreed that Benazir Bhutto's party would support the election of Ghulam Ishaq Khan as president of Pakistan for a full term and not interfere with the military's management of the government's Afghan policy. She would also not intervene in the military's internal administration (postings, transfers and promotions). Bhutto also agreed to be guided by Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Aslam Beg in the development of Pakistan's nuclear and missile capability.

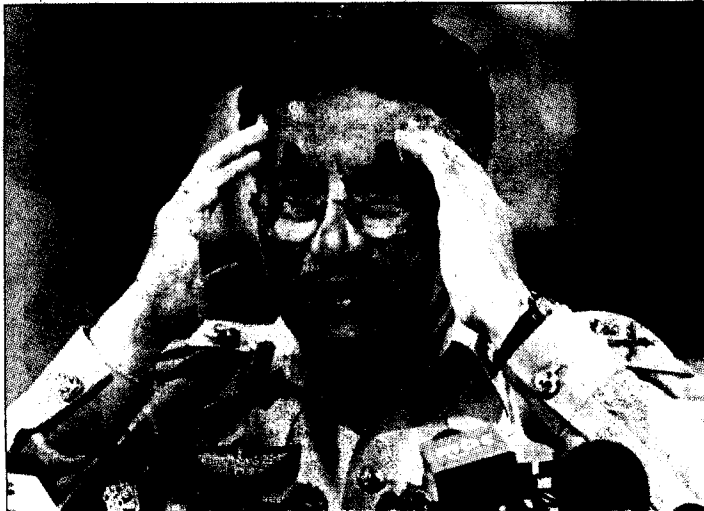
### CONFRONTATION

Aslam Beg was followed by General Asif Nawaz Janjua (1991-93). He was a no-nonsense soldier and found it difficult to get along with Nawaz Sharif, whom he considered a scheming politician. He died of a heart attack under mysterious circumstances and was succeeded by General Abdul Waheed Kakar (1993-96) after a massive confrontation between the President and the Prime Minister who was vehement that Lieutenant General Farrukh Khan, whom the President had selected, must not be appointed. General Abdul Waheed did his best to wean the army away from politics. General Jehangir Karamat followed as COAS (1996-98) and continued the policies of his predecessor.

Acting on inputs provided by the ISI, during the period 1990-96, several civilian governments were dismissed by incumbent Presidents in connivance with the COAS. Benazir Bhutto's government was dismissed by the president in consultation with the COAS in mid-1990 for "persistent and scandalous horse-trading for political gain, breakdown of law and order in Sindh, corruption and nepotism and use of statutory corporations, authorities and banks for political ends and personal gain". The President declared a state of emergency and appointed Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi as caretaker head of government. After general elections in October 1990, the Nawaz Sharif-led Islami Jamoori Itehaad coalition, believed to have been cobbled together and funded by the ISI to prevent Benazir from returning to power, won and Sharif became Pakistan's Prime Minister.

(To be concluded)

# Musharraf puts development before anti-India posturing



New Delhi, July 1

DISTANCING HIMSELF from the traditional Pakistani stand, President Pervez Musharraf has questioned the need for Islamabad to think in terms of hoisting a green flag over the Red Fort in India when its own dwindling economy is causing worry and needs immediate attention.

Speaking at a conference in Islamabad, Musharraf "pointedly asked the audience why they felt the need of challenging India constantly and promising the Pakistani people that they would soon fly the green flag over Red Fort", reports Pakistani weekly newspaper *The Friday Times*.

The paper said General Musharraf "spoke from the

heart and the mind" and his message was critical of some of the attitudes in Pakistan adopted mostly by people who were attending the conference on Prophet Mohammed.

Deviating from his written speech, Musharraf asked the audience the "need of this empty boasting when the country is in a delicate situation economically and there is hardly a shred of unity or consensus on anything at home?"

He was referring to the verbal outbursts of his Deobandi warriors of Kashmir jihad when he questioned the wisdom of using violent language against the states, which were the origin of the foreign investment Pakistan desperately needed, the paper

reported. Musharraf said he was himself a veteran of the Kashmir war and knew exactly where Pakistan was headed in its policy, but there was no need to spoil Pakistan's economic chances by making violent statements about it, *The Friday Times* said.

The President believed that though Pakistan was the most important Islamic State in the world, it was weak and troubled. "It was the duty of all Pakistanis to first become strong and then challenge the world."

In a veiled attack on certain fundamentalist groups, which were threatening to carry out attacks on the United States and other powers of the world, Musharraf made a special point saying "Pakistan is in such a weak position at home that making hostile statements about the big powers is not only useless but also a disincentive to foreign investments".

The paper commented that, in fact, the economists should compute in terms of millions of dollars the amount of investment the country has lost each time they have published their mediocre jingoist invectives against India in particular and the world in general.

It said Musharraf, barring his recent statement against the NMD, has exercised a lot of unwanted caution while addressing a nation used to the grotesqueries of military braggadocio.

PTI

## Pak plans law to stop strikes

Islamabad, July 1

THE PAKISTAN Government will soon promulgate a new terrorism law under which strikes by intimidation and coercion will be banned, Minister for law, justice and parliamentary affairs Shahida Jamil said.

"We are almost at the final stage of promulgation of this new law which will ban shutting down of shops by force and threatening the people to follow dictates of any particular group," the Minister said.

She, however, said voluntary strikes, seeking public cooperation for a particular purpose, are not going to be banned, as this law is exclusively aimed at checking terrorist activities.

"Strike will not be banned if

it is done voluntarily, but if the people are forced to shut down, it will not be allowed at any cost. Violent and forced strikes can no longer be tolerated."

"We are going to ban all those organisations against which we have evidence that they are involved in acts of terrorism," she said today.

The Law Minister said Pakistani people are fed up with the strikes, meant to spread fear, pelting stones, burning public and private vehicles or resorting to aerial firing.

The new law, Jamil said, aims at restoring peace and protecting the democratic rights of the people projecting their viewpoint. While drafting the new law, the provincial governments and the bodies dealing with

human rights were consulted, besides taking benefit from the prevailing law in Britain and other developed countries, she said. She said the new law would deal strictly with those groups using violent tactics to threaten the Government to follow their dictates. "The law would neither be discriminatory nor would it be used against any particular group."

Through the anti-terrorism law, the Minister said, the Government is also trying to soften other existing laws, like awarding death penalty to those who commit terrorism in any manner whatsoever. But the new law, also provides life imprisonment, right to appeal in the higher courts and the right to bail, she added.

PTI

# A sense of deja vu

HPD-16  
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Gen. Pervez Musharraf prays with politicians in Islamabad after consulting them on the planned summit with India.

*It was not the action but its timing that came as a surprise to the people of Pakistan.*  
**B. Muralidhar Reddy on the reactions to Gen. Pervez Musharraf declaring himself President.**

“**H**ISTORY REPEATS itself. Once a King was questioned about the legality of his action. He replied, I am the Law,” read a three-line letter under the headline “I am the state” in the leading Pakistani English daily, *The News*, of June 28, exactly a week after the military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, appointed himself President of the country.

The letter from Mr. Radia Mohyuddin from Peshawar, a town experiencing one of the worst upheavals in Pakistan’s history because of the refugee influx from Afghanistan, makes no overt reference to the takeover as President by Gen. Musharraf. But its import is clear. It is a reflection of the sense of resignation, at one level, and of disgust, at another, of the ordinary Pakistani at the state of affairs in the country.

There is no other way of gauging popular opinion. There is a ban on open political activity. The occasional thunder from leaders of mainstream

political or religious parties against the Government is never translated into action. So the man/woman on the street has every reason to be sceptical of the real intent behind the rhetoric of the self-proclaimed leaders of various hues. Pakistanis have heard so much rhetoric from the traditional *netas* that they prefer to let off steam in the columns of the media, rather than fall in the trap of the political class.

The manner in which Gen. Musharraf crowned himself President is characterised as the ‘second coup’ by several commentaries in the lively Pakistani press. The first coup was when the military decided on October 12, 1999, that enough was enough with the so-called experiment of democracy of the 1990s and decided to overthrow the Nawaz Sharif Government.

Never in the history of Pakistan was anyone elected with such an overwhelming majority as Mr. Sharif. His party had won four-fourths of the seats in the National Assembly.

And yet when he was ousted, there was not a ripple across the length and breadth of Pakistan. In fact, there was quiet celebration all over the country. Such was the legacy left behind by him and the Government before him led by the “Daughter of the East”, Ms. Benazir Bhutto. People actually felt relieved that the Army had intervened.

There were very high expectations of the Musharraf regime. His much-publicised seven-point agenda was very well received. But the hopes died soon. But Gen. Musharraf is still seen as a better bet than the two civilian rulers who preceded him. His Government is at least seen to be making an honest attempt to put the system back on track. The General has succeeded in sending the message down the line that his regime is not into making millions and opening secret accounts in Swiss banks.

However, Gen. Musharraf has squandered much of his “hard earned popularity” by ousting the one and the only elected representative in Pakistan, Mr. Mohammad Rafiq Tarar. It was not his action, as it was known that Gen. Musharraf had an eye on the Presidential palace, but its timing that came as a surprise to the people in Pakistan. The manner in which Gen. Musharraf fulfilled his

ambition also shocked one and all. By adding a few lines to the so-called Provincial Constitutional Order (PCO) — the Constitution under which the military has been governing Pakistan since it took over in October 1999 — the General has usurped the office of President! It is as simple and as complex as that.

Why did Gen. Musharraf do it? What was the great hurry? Could he not have found a more sophisticated method to walk into the Aiwan-e-Sadar (the Presidential Palace)? Was it necessary to make a mockery of the PCO? Did the India factor (his planned Summit with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee) force his hand? Or was it a case of pure hunger for power? These are the questions that are haunting ordinary Pakistanis.

By his action last Wednesday, Gen. Musharraf has ended up being no different from the other military dictators of Pakistan — Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan and Zia-ul-Haq. They all took cover behind the same old hackneyed cliché of “supreme national interest” that was used by Gen. Musharraf in announcing his decision to don the mantle of President.

Today, Gen. Musharraf wears five different hats. He is Chief of the Army Staff, Chief Executive, President, chief of the National Security Council, and chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. The man who promised to usher in “genuine democracy” from the grassroots level ends up occupying all the posts that matter in the country.

The development has raised several disturbing questions, partly triggered by the statements of Gen. Musharraf himself. He has been talking for some time on the need for balancing the powers between the President and the Prime Minister to ensure that future Premiers does not end up repeating what Ms. Bhutto and Mr. Sharif did. The point would have been well taken if he had not occupied the post of President and that too for an unspecified period.

At the moment, there are too many questions that beg an answer about the future of Pakistan. Gen. Musharraf by elevating himself as President has only added to them.

# Musharraf rules out early polls

REUTERS

RAWALPINDI, June 29. — General Pervez Musharraf has ruled out any national elections for a restoration of civilian government before October 2002.

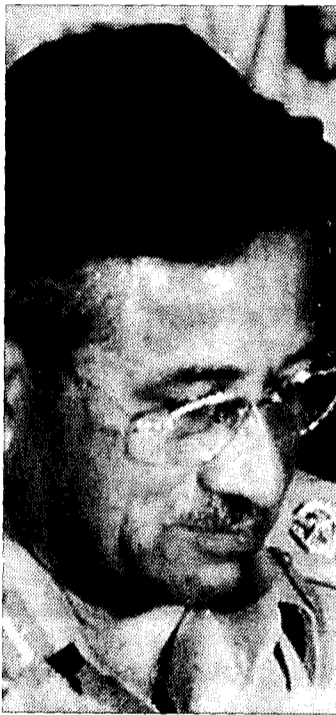
The General, who drew criticism from western countries by taking over as President a week ago, yesterday said he wanted constitutional amendments to prevent future coups. But he said he would do whatever was in Pakistan's interests regardless of foreign reaction.

Gen. Musharraf, who seized power on 12 October, 1999, said he wanted to end any speculation that he would allow elections before the deadline set by the Supreme Court — the third anniversary of his seizure of power.

"No. Never," he said when asked by some foreign correspondents if he would call early polls, which many countries and local politicians have sought.

"Let that be closed, absolutely," he said during a meeting at his army home in Rawalpindi. "(The) Supreme Court has allowed us that time and no polls will be held before that." He added that elections to the National Assembly (lower House) would be held within a few days of the date allowed by the court decision, which followed his ousting of Prime Minister Nawas Sharif 20 months ago.

Western countries, while largely agreeing with Gen.



'No. Never before Oct 2002'

Musharraf's description of the chaos and corruption during a decade of civilian rule before his takeover, have pressed for an early resumption of civilian government.

But they were dismayed when he took over the presidency this month, reinforcing suspicions that he intends to stay on as a powerful President long after the return of an elected government.

Gen. Musharraf, who defended his actions as being in the national interest, said he would not be swayed by international criticism of what other govern-

ments see as a way to ensure continued military rule.

"I remain conscious of the international concerns... I would like to prove to them that I am doing things for the benefit of my country," he said. "I will not take a decision against (the) national interest just because the international community would not want me to behave in a certain manner."

The General will need to change the constitution to add powers to a now largely ceremonial position of President if he is to use the post to oversee a civilian government following the promised 2002 polls.

But he noted that the same Supreme Court decision that gave him three years to call an election also gave him the power to amend the constitution.

"I would like to certainly bring the constitution in a form which balances power within the power brokers of the country, which exercises checks and balances on everyone in the national interest," he said.

He pointed out that amendments would ensure there was no repetition of the military takeovers that have punctuated Pakistan's history. Gen. Musharraf is the fourth army leader to seize power and no previous one relinquished power by choice.

"I'm sincerely trying to do this when we talk of amending the constitution. I will try my best that the constitution comes into a form and this kind of military takeovers, which are not acceptable in the world, do not recur in Pakistan."

# Musharraf action negation of court verdict: ARD

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 28. The Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD), a conglomerate of 18 political parties in Pakistan opposed to the military Government, has said that it does not recognise Gen. Pervez Musharraf, as the new President of Pakistan.

In a resolution, the ARD has said that as per the Supreme Court judgment of May 2000, that has validated the military coup, the Musharraf Government has no right to amend the Constitution and anoint Gen. Musharraf as the President.

The ARD has been engaged in a confrontation with the military Government ever since it came into existence in November last year. There have been three futile attempts by the ARD to hold public rallies in support of its demand for an early announcement of the election schedule.

Days before he appointed himself to the office of President, Gen. Musharraf had a meeting with the Chairman of the ARD, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, and agreed to his demand for allowing the ARD to go ahead with its proposed rally on August 14 at Rawalpindi. It was seen as a concession to Gen.

Musharraf to political parties to secure their support on his summit meeting with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee.

In a strongly worded resolution, the ARD argued that assumption of Presidency by Gen. Musharraf was negation of the Supreme Court verdict in which the apex court had directed the military government to hold general elections by October 2002.

It maintained that neither the Supreme Court nor the National Reconstruction Bureau has the mandate to amend the Constitution. The resolution said Pakistan Parliament alone has the authority to amend the Constitution.

The ARD adopted the resolution at a meeting held in Lahore to decide on whether or not to respond to the invitation extended by Gen. Musharraf to the representatives of political and religious parties on his coming Delhi yatra. Though the announcement on the decision to boycott the 'all-party meet' was made on June 26, the ARD chose to release the resolutions adopted at the meeting the following day. It has expressed surprise over the presence of the Supreme Court judges at the swearing-in ceremony of Gen. Musharraf.

# THE GENERAL WHO BECAME PRESIDENT

By AVAZ AMIR

**F**or as long as Rafiq Tarar — the last prisoner on parole to be given the freedom of the presidential mansion — was allowed to perform his ceremonial duties, and for as long as General Musharraf contented himself with just the title of Chief Executive, the fiction could be sustained that Pakistan would soon be returned to democracy — democracy as understood not by GHQ's constitutional experts but by most people around the world.

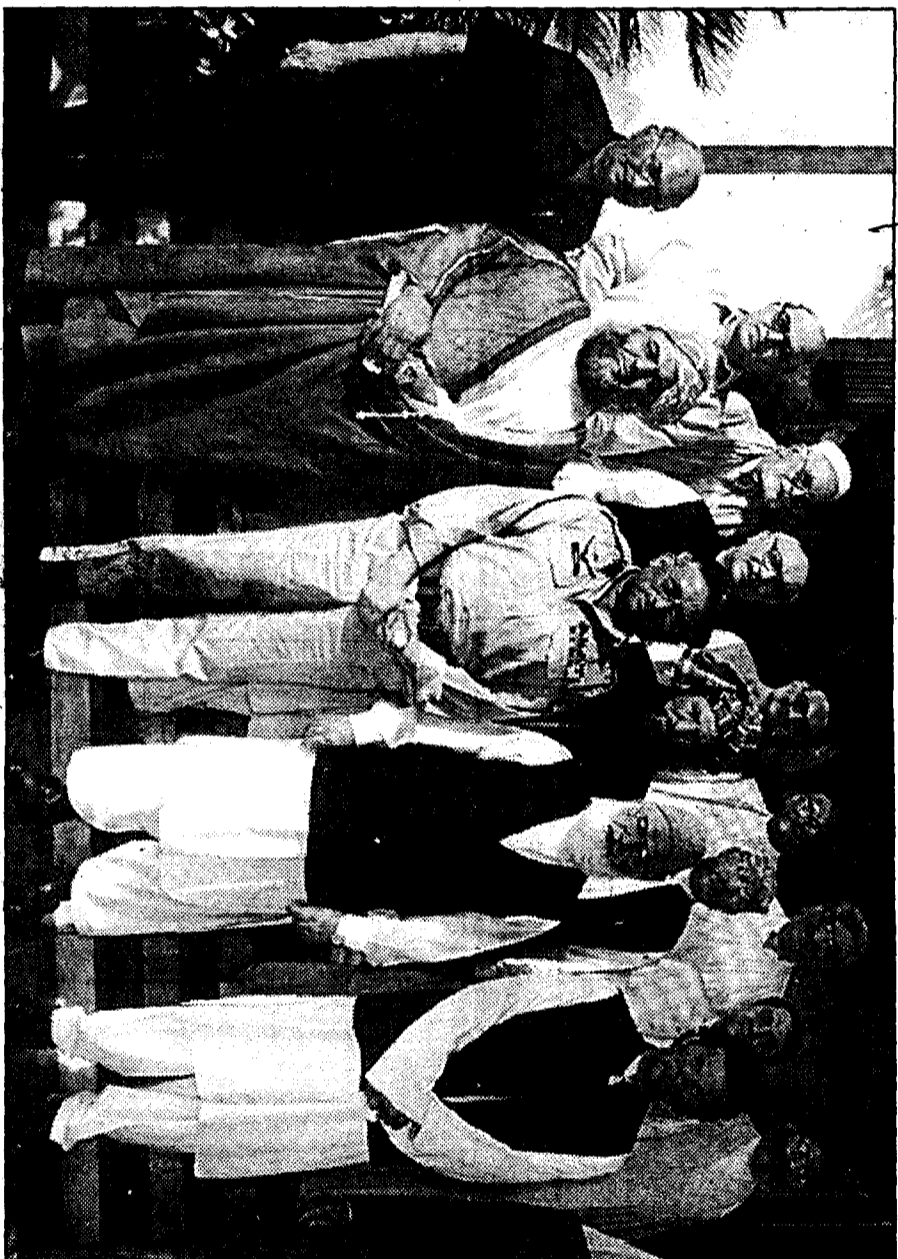
With Tarar eased out unceremoniously from that architectural monstrosity, and Musharraf losing no time in easing himself in, that fiction lies cruelly destroyed. It took no more than a few scratches on paper (call them what you will) to bring about this change — a military decree ousting Tarar and another anointing Musharraf. The true face of military tolerance lies exposed as a result. It is a form of tolerance hanging by a thread and in ever danger of snapping should the higher call of military whim or expediency so demand.

Right from the start no doubts should have been entertained on this score. For a military order is a military order and only the naive will see any other colour in it. Just as a tiger is a tiger no matter whether it smiles or snarls. Still, there was a pretence in the air which kept the innocent engaged. The latest charade to enliven Islamabad's skyline — a *maye* dictated, as old hands would have guessed, by "the supreme national interest" — performs, therefore, a salutary function. It strips the flimsy veil from the hard reality and shows like nothing else could that whatever democratic freedoms exist in Pakistan, and there are several which limp on, including the openness of the press, have no institutional basis more enduring than the suffering of its military reformers. What a window this opens on the imaginative qualities of Pakistani

militarism. With its vast experience of reinventing democracy, it might have been supposed the military's witch-doctors would put a fresh spin on a reality whose outlines go back to the first military government of General (later self-appointed field marshal) Ayub Khan. But what are the standard items in Pakistan's longest-running stage show? Assemblies dissolved, the Constitution suspended, prime ministers and Presidents ousted, provisional constitution orders signed more readily than a common man would sign cheques. All these actions taking place against a musical score whose constant refrain is the steady invocation of the national interest.

The very monotony of this script sheds a frightening light on the poverty of intellect and imagination holding sway in Pakistan. The bemused onlooker might well ask why Third World despots are so insecure. Not content with the reality of power, why do they also crave so much its outward form and expression? The only explanation is that somehow this gives them greater assurance. When General Musharraf opted for the ungainly title of chief executive he was making a concession to the democratic sensibilities of the western world. The military government having gained a measure of international acceptance, the need for window-dressing has receded and hapless Tarar, having outlived his utility, has been shown the door.

It would be wrong to think, however, that it is for his India visit that General Musharraf has upgraded his status. After all, in Mr Vajpayee's eyes General Musharraf does not become a more effective negotiator as president instead of plain chief executive. Rather it is the closeness of the Indian trip which has served as the setting, if not the excuse, for fulfilling an ambition which falls within the familiar ambit of military takeovers



*Pakistan's military ruler and President Gen. Pervez Musharraf (front row centre) and other politicians pose for a photo session on June 27, in Islamabad. More than 20 political parties in Pakistan pledged support for next month's Vajpayee-Musharraf summit, a party leader said. (AP)*

abnegation and eschewed the temptation of seizing the presidency, the hope, however dim, could be entertained that perhaps for once our deviation from the democratic path may not be long or sharp. With Musharraf succumbing to the temptation and virtually proclaiming his intention to continue in office past the Supreme Court deadline for the restoration of democracy, that hope must be lowered solemnly into the ground.

As a result, we must come to terms with the realisation that like military regimes in the past this one too promises to be around for a long time. There will of course be the window-dressing of devolution, local elections and elected bodies further up. But, to judge by experience, what looks likely is that while the military will retract its naked claws and go back to barracks, a semi-authoritarian model like the ones we have had before will be in place. And at least in its initial days it will be all the tighter in place for facing no organised political opposition. This is not clairvoyance or rocket science but the iron conclusions flowing from the repetitions. Persian-wheel turnings of our dismal history. Put the same ingredients in the pot, add the same herbs and light fire of the same intensity underneath, and you will get the same dish.

Musharraf as interim head of an interim order lent himself to easy and safe analysis. He could be accepted more readily because he gave the impression of being a transitory figure. Musharraf as permanent head of a dispensation stretching into the horizon represents an altogether more grim undertaking.

Ayub was greeted with hope and fervour when he arrived on the scene. But when his rule lengthened it gave rise to a feeling of suffocation. Towards the end the new generation which came of age in the shadow of his rule just wanted to see the last of

him. While some economists and historians make much of the economic development which took place under Ayub, the most enduring feature of his rule was the anger and frustration which it bred.

**S**o too with Zia. With money coming into Pakistan as a result of the Afghan war, Zia presided over a time of economic ease and plenty. But after a decade of hypocrisy and false sermons about Islam people were weary of his rule. By 1988 when with Junjo's dismissal his democratic experiment collapsed, even generals could be heard muttering that Pakistan needed a change.

Once again we are embarked upon a voyage similar in spirit to the odysseys of the past. Once again a general catapulted into power by the force of blind circumstances is speaking the language of predestination and personal indispensability: "I feel in all humility that if I have a role to play for this nation I will not hesitate whatever decisions are involved. I hold national interests supreme... I think I have a role to play. I have a job to do here. I cannot and will not let this nation down..." In other words, by becoming President he has answered the call of higher duty.

What miracles is General Musharraf seeking to protect? What is his record in office? Are people enthused with the lumbering performance of his government? The record of the past eighteen months, if viewed through real-life spectacles, is an invitation to humility, not chest-thumping. But then none of this is particularly surprising or new. All of Pakistan's previous soldier-presidents spoke in much the same vein. But it is profoundly depressing if we look at the disasters reaped by Musharraf's famous predecessors.

By arrangement with Dawn



# The General's Gambit

It comes as no surprise that Pakistan's 16-party Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD) has boycotted the all-party meeting convened by general Musharraf. The self-appointed president badly needs to build a domestic political consensus ahead of the July summit between India and Pakistan. And yet, it is not as if the ARD has signalled its disapproval of the need or the desirability of summit negotiations between New Delhi and Islamabad. The boycott only questions general Musharraf's assumption of the presidential office in flagrant disregard of the 1973 Pakistani constitution which bars an unelected president. What has added fuel to the fire is the general's ill-advised 'clarification' — in the face of intense domestic and international opposition — that he intends to continue as president for a full term of five years. The larger political and strategic implications of the latest developments in Pakistan need to be carefully weighed in this country. The question is: What should New Delhi's negotiating strategy be vis-a-vis an interlocutor who is facing not just domestic flak but near-political isolation in the run-up to the crucial summit? Conversely, how should the general view the outcomes that might conceivably emerge at the summit? If the general is seen to initiate a process of detente and reaches an agreement with prime minister Vajpayee, he will be, regardless of the merits of the case, denounced as the author of a sell-out. If, on the other hand, he adopts a hardline stand and spurns any agreement, he runs the risk of being dubbed a failure. Either way, the domestic credibility and stock of the general is unlikely to see a marked improvement in the short run.

The truth is that the politics of Pakistan currently is a zero-sum game. Any achievement to the credit of the general would entail a corresponding marginalisation of the political class. Yet, all things considered, and in the interest of his own political survival, general Musharraf would be best advised to reach some sort of detente and agreement with India. If nothing, it will earn him and the country he presides over, badly-needed support and assistance from the international community. A prospect which may yet prove crucial as much for Pakistan's future as the general's own. It would, therefore, make eminent sense for him not to let the risk of political alienation dictate or circumscribe his negotiating position at the summit. As for India, nothing will suit this country better than to help the general embark on a course of detente which will both ensure his stay in power for some time and enable him to distance the administration from the Jehadi elements. The success of the summit is important for other reasons too. As of now, general Musharraf seems to enjoy the support of a majority of corps commanders in the Pakistan army. There are, however, some disturbing signs that all is not well and he may be facing opposition from some of the 'mullah' generals. A creditable performance from the general at the forthcoming summit might be crucial if he is to sideline and retire the hardliners and ensure that the Pakistan army does not get Talibanised.

# The third general

## DIPLOMACY

K.P. NAYAR

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In a decade which extols the virtues of democracy non-stop from Vancouver to Vladivostok, it is tempting to assume that an usurper to state power like General Pervez Musharraf will have a natural disadvantage over a democratically elected leader like Atal Bihari Vajpayee when the two men get together for a summit which will be closely followed in capitals around the world.

However, India's experience with three generals in Pakistan — Ayub Khan, Zia-ul-Haq and Musharraf himself — should warn Vajpayee against even the slightest trace of complacency at the Indo-Pakistan summit next month. There is a popular — at times, dangerous — thread of conviction which runs through the Indian media, the country's intelligence community and among its strategic analysts that patriotism demands they should run Pakistan down and ride a moral high horse while talking of that country even when Pakistan is clearly getting the better of India.

Notwithstanding the fact that some grandiose schemes against India by all these three generals came to nought, Ayub, Zia and Musharraf have been more than a match to India's legitimate rulers. Those who were present at Vajpayee's first meeting as prime minister with Nawaz Sharif in Colombo in 1998 were witness to the reality that Sharif was putty in the seasoned hands of the Bharatiya Janata Party prime minister. Nobody, none of us from the media present in Colombo at any rate, believed Indian officials who told us, off-the-record, on the night of that summit that Sharif had confided in Vajpayee about shunting off his vitriolic, acerbic foreign minister, Gohar Ayub Khan, who spat venom at India at every opportunity.

But that was precisely what happened. In less than a month, the high-flying Gohar Ayub was relieved of his charge and packed off to the less glamorous water resources ministry. It was a performance by Vajpayee which the Indian prime minister repeated when he met Sharif for the second time in New York a few months later. Vajpayee's aides would be making a monumental folly if they advise him that the prime minister's meeting with Musharraf next month will be anything like his three summits with the man whom the general deposed in October 1999.

Witness the way Musharraf handled the Americans through last week's events when he strode into the presidency. His foreign minister, Abdul Sattar, a veteran of two high commissionerships in New Delhi, showed no trace of red-facedness or embarrassment when he met United States officials the day after Musharraf staged his "second coup". Sattar's performance was dramatically different from that of Sharif when the former president, Bill Clinton, summoned the Pakistani leader to Washington on July 4, 1999, and pressured Pakistan into pulling out of Kargil.

Last week, the deputy secretary of state, Richard Armitage, did bring up the awkward subject of Musharraf dissolving parliament and evicting Pakistan's sole left-over from a democratic past: the president, Rafiq Tarrar.

Sources privy to the conversation assert that Sattar explained to Armitage that he had been away from Islamabad for about 10 days, and therefore, did not know about the general's immediate plans. It may or may not have been true, but it was certainly more than what K. Raghunath, India's foreign secretary during the 1998 nuclear tests, could do. Unlike Sattar, Raghunath could never make the Americans believe that he did not know about Pokhran II in advance. State department officials are convinced

lowed the Americans to bask in the belief that they had walked a high moral road in dealing with totalitarian excesses in Pakistan. In the process, the wily general lost nothing; he gave away zero.

The Bush administration is in the process of drawing up a new policy towards Pakistan. It aims to get rid of the pussy-footing that was the hallmark of the second-term Clinton administration's Pakistan policy and return to the certainties of the Clinton team's first term. But the new policy will also take



**↳ Musharraf will try manipulating New Delhi so that the world blames Big Brother India for south Asia's perceived strategic woes**

into account the change in relations with India which have brought New Delhi into Washington's strategic calculus and avoid parity between India and Pakistan, at least overtly.

No one is more interested in the contours of this new policy than Musharraf who, like Zia before him, hopes to be around in Islamabad for some time to come. It is wishful thinking in New Delhi that Musharraf will do anything to sabotage an emerging new relationship with the Republican administration: his elevation to the presidency was carefully timed to make sure that it will cause the least ripples in Washington. Contrary to all the hype in India about the continuing US sanctions against Pakistan and Washington's insistence on a democratic Pakistan, the lasting

message which Sattar left behind in the US last week was that the Bush administration had better work with Pakistan on a cooperative relationship.

Just as New Delhi convinced the US over the last two years that the full potential of Indo-US relations cannot be realized as long as sanctions are in effect, Islamabad has convinced the Bush administration that sanctions have only served to strengthen Islamic fundamentalist forces in Pakistan.

Notwithstanding the general's military attire, Musharraf has persuaded the Americans to take his administrative reforms and his war on corruption seriously. His finance minister, Shaukat Aziz, has done a good job of getting international lending institutions to loosen their purse-strings in dealing with Pakistan.

For that matter, Sattar stopped just short of accusing the Americans of being responsible for south Asia's current nuclear impasse. Without mentioning the Americans by name, of course, Sattar said that with the erosion of Pakistan's conventional military capability — on account of the Pressler amendment and so on — Islamabad has been forced to rely on strategic defence, including nuclear weapons and missiles.

There will be enough takers in the Republican administration for this line. After all, this is precisely what many Republicans have been telling the Clinton team for the last four years when Washington's tilt towards India began to manifest itself. Besides, there is bipartisan support in the US on preventing Pakistan from becoming a failed state. So, in a way, Musharraf will be looking for the failure of his talks with Vajpayee next month. This will help advance his cause not only in Washington, but elsewhere in the world as well. Musharraf's only concern will be to ensure that he does not get blamed for the summit's failure.

His grand gesture in pleading with the Indian prime minister to tone down the rhetoric in the run up to the summit is a classic example of how Musharraf will try to manipulate New Delhi so that the world blames Big Brother India for south Asia's perceived strategic woes.

Vajpayee's big challenge, on the other hand, is to find a way of moving forward on Kashmir. The BJP leadership will be loathe to admit that the prime minister had no option but to invite Musharraf for talks. The ceasefire initiative by the Vajpayee government in November had reached a dead end. The choice before the prime minister's office was to either lose men and material in Kashmir on account of the non-working ceasefire or prepare for a massive deterioration of the ground situation there.

Even a decision to just call off the ceasefire would have created ripples abroad with Musharraf accusing India of raising tensions in a "nuclear-armed" south Asia. India successfully overcame this dilemma by calling off the ceasefire and, in quick succession, inviting the general for talks. It was a master-stroke which worked. But now Vajpayee has to pay the price for it by actually playing political chess with a general who has already outsmarted politicians in his own country.

# The General as President: a tale foretold

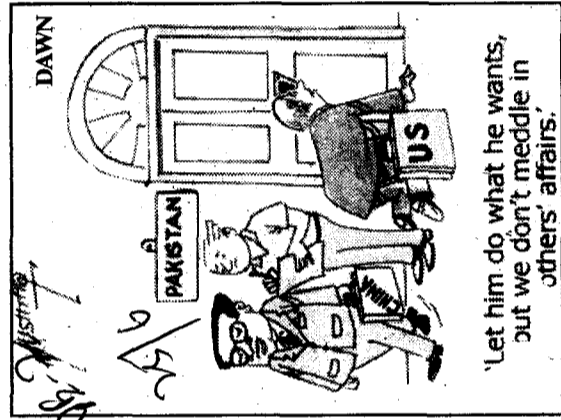
After Musharraf's new turn, deja vu descends over Pakistan all over again. By Dawn columnist Ayaz Amir

**F**OR as long as Rafiq Tarar — the last prisoner on parole to be given the freedom of the presidential mansion — was allowed to perform his ceremonial duties, and for as long as General Musharraf contented himself with just the title of Chief Executive, the fiction could be sustained that Pakistan would soon be returned to democracy i.e. democracy as understood not by GHQ's constitutional experts but by most people around the world. With Tarar eased out unceremoniously from that architectural monstrosity, and Musharraf losing no time in casing himself in, that fiction lies cruelly destroyed. It took no more than a few scratches on paper to bring about this change — a military decree ousting Tarar and another anointing Musharraf. The true face of military tolerance lies exposed as a result. It is a form of tolerance hanging by a thread and in ever danger of snapping should the higher call of military whim or expediency so demand.

A military order is a military order and only the naive will see any other colour in it. Just as a tiger is a tiger no matter whether it smiles or snarls. Still, there was a pretence in the air which kept the innocent lamabad's skyline performs, therefore, a salutary function. It strips the flimsy veil from reality and shows like nothing else could that whatever democratic freedoms exist in Pakistan, and there are several

which limp on, including the openness of the press, have no institutional basis more enduring than the sufferance of its military reformers. With its vast experience of reinventing democracy, it might have been supposed the military's witch-doctors would put a fresh spin on a reality whose outlines go back to the first military government of General (later self-appointed Field Marshal) Ayub Khan.

What are the standard items in Pakistan's longest-running stage show? Assemblies dissolved, the Constitution suspended, prime ministers and presidents ousted, provisional constitution orders signed more readily than a conman would sign cheques. All these actions taking place against a musical score whose constant refrain is the invocation of national interest. The monotony of this script sheds a frightening light on the poverty of intellect and imagination holding sway in Pakistan. The bemused onlooker might well ask why Third World despots are so insecure. Not content with the reality of power, why do they also crave so much its outward form and expression? The only explanation is that somehow this gives them greater assurance: When General Musharraf opted for the ungainly title of chief executive he was making a concession to the democratic sensibilities of the western world. The military government having gained a measure of international acceptance, the need for window-dressing has receded and hapless



Tarar, having outlived his utility, has been shown the door.

It would be wrong to think, however, that it is for his India visit that General Musharraf has upgraded his status. After all, in Mr Vajpayee's eyes General Musharraf does not become a more effective negotiator as president instead of plain chief executive. Rather it is the closeness of the Indian trip which has served as the setting, if not the excuse, for fulfilling an ambition which falls within the familiar ambit

of military takeovers in Pakistan.

When Third World strongmen heap honours on themselves is the spectacle in any way considered edifying? Will Pakistan be accorded more respect as a country because General Musharraf has become president? Will Pakistan get more money? But if General Musharraf's elevation makes no difference to the outside world, it holds enormous significance for Pakistan. For it tells us a familiar tale: that history is water off our backs, that we refuse to learn from the past, and that as a nation we are fated to retrace the steps of failures and blunders past.

While Musharraf practised a form of self-abnegation and eschewed the temptation of seizing the presidency, the hope, howsoever dim, could be entertained that perhaps for once our deviation from the democratic path may not be long or sharp. With Musharraf succumbing to the temptation, that hope must be lowered solemnly into the ground.

Like military regimes in the past, this one too promises to be around for a long time. There will of course be the window-dressing of devolution, local elections and elected bodies further up. But, to judge by experience, what looks likely is that while the military will retract its naked claws and go back to barracks, a semi-authoritarian model like the ones we have had before will be in place. And at least in its initial days it will be all the tighter in place for fac-

ing no organised political opposition. This is not clairvoyance or rocket science but the iron conclusions flowing from the repetitious, Persian-wheel turnings of our dismal history. Put the same ingredients in the pot, add the same herbs and light fire of the same intensity underneath, and you will get the same dish.

Musharraf as interim head of an interim order lent himself to easy and safe analysis. He could be accepted more readily because he gave the impression of being a transitory figure. Musharraf as permanent head of a dispensation represents altogether more grim undertaking. Ayub was greeted with hope and fervour when he arrived on the scene. But when his rule lengthened it gave rise to a feeling of suffocation. While some economists and historians make much of the economic development which took place under Ayub, the most enduring feature of his rule was the anger and frustration which it bred.

So too with Zia. With money coming into Pakistan as a result of the Afghan war, Zia presided over a time of economic ease and plenty. But after a decade of hypocrisy and false sermons about Islam people were weary of his rule. By 1988 when with Junejo's dismissal his democratic experiment collapsed, even generals could be heard muttering that Pakistan needed a change. Once again we are embarked upon a voyage similar in spirit to the odysseys of the past.

## WHITHER MUSHARRAF?

He now has two ways to turn

MUSHARRAF is an enigma. That the architect of Kargil, who once refused to shake hands with Vajpayee, should now affect bonhomie and fly to India for a summit is not such a paradox — it is possible he has come to the realisation that he cannot get his way on Kashmir by military means. After taking over as the corporate-sounding “Chief Executive” of Pakistan, he even managed at times to sound like a closet democrat, but his sacking of Rafiq Tarar, national and provincial assemblies, as well as his own unashamed elevation to the post of president while retaining his other titles, put paid to such hopes. We know now that the democracy line was for the birds particularly foreign ones. What is less clear is his relationship to Islamic fundamentalists at home, a related question is how much he will be prepared to relent when he shakes hands with Vajpayee in Agra. In other words, does he see himself in the role of a Zia ul-Haq (Islamiser) or a Kemal Ataturk (moderniser)? The Islamising line may appear attractive — continue the covert war against India, hope Kashmir will somehow fall into his lap, keep fundamentalists on his side. In practice, however, it could prove disastrous as the international context has changed totally from the Zia days. There aren't any big power rivalries to exploit; rather Pakistan-sponsored *jihadis* have declared the United States as the evil empire and launched terrorist attacks. Not only does Pakistan face unprecedented isolation on the diplomatic front; its economy is foundering. Its GDP registered a growth of 2.6 per cent last year, against a population growth of 2.4 per cent, which amounts to virtually zero growth. Pakistanis appear relatively indifferent to the abolition of democratic processes. But what is beginning to bite is spiralling inflation and unemployment.

The other option available to Musharraf, therefore, is the Ataturk option, modernising in order to effect rapid economic improvement. This would entail curbing the *jihadis* who are frightening off foreign investment and preventing modernisation; listening to the business class; improving relations with India which would have a knock-on effect on its relationship with the rest of the world. It behooves India, therefore, to give him that opportunity, which is why the summit and the “goodwill” telephone calls are all right, although President Narayanan is laying it on rather thick by congratulating Musharraf on his assumption of the presidency. Policy needs to be subtle — embracing Musharraf too cordially would amount to overlooking the support he is lending to insurgency; denouncing him for being a dictator would be interpreted internationally as not being willing to give peace a chance. The latter can be left to the Pakistanis — assumption of total power makes Musharraf vulnerable, as there is no one else left to blame when things go wrong. Power has its limits in the beginning of the 21st century, the shelf life of military dictatorships is getting shorter.

THE STATESMAN

# Musharraf to hold all-party meet on summit

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 23. The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has invited representatives of political and religious parties for a meeting here on June 27 for consultations on his coming visit to New Delhi for a summit meeting with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee.

The exercise, a kind of an all-party meet, is a follow-up to the promise Gen. Musharraf made when he appeared live on the Pakistan Television on 'Face the nation' programme last week, but would have a totally different connotation as it is taking place under dramatically changed circumstances.

Assumption of the office of the President by Gen. Musharraf has complicated matters vis-a-vis the all-party meet, for the military Government. The mainstream political parties, including the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) led by Mr. Nawaz Sharif and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) led by

Mrs. Benazir Bhutto, have announced that they would stay away from the conference in protest against the manner in which Gen. Musharraf has walked into the Presidential palace.

The Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD), a conglomerate of 18-and-odd parties including the PML and the PPP, is meeting a day before the conference convened by Gen. Musharraf to consider whether or not to respond to the invitation.

Most of the political parties, including the ARD, had welcomed the prospect of resumption of dialogue between India and Pakistan and said they looked forward to a positive outcome from the summit.

However, in the changed political context in Pakistan, the parties want to utilise the all-party meet to register their protest against what they believe is "usurpation" of the office of the President by Gen. Musharraf.

Representatives of over a dozen political and religious parties

have been invited for the June 27 meeting. Besides the PML and PPP, the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), Millat Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, Jamaat-e-Ulema Party, Tehriq-e-Jafria Party (Sunni-dominated outfit) and Pakistan Tehriki Insaf.

In an interaction with a select group of editors and opinion makers on the PTV, Gen. Musharraf had said that in the next few days, he would interact with representatives of political and religious parties, ulemas and religious scholars, Kashmiri groups and senior editors of the national press, on his India trip.

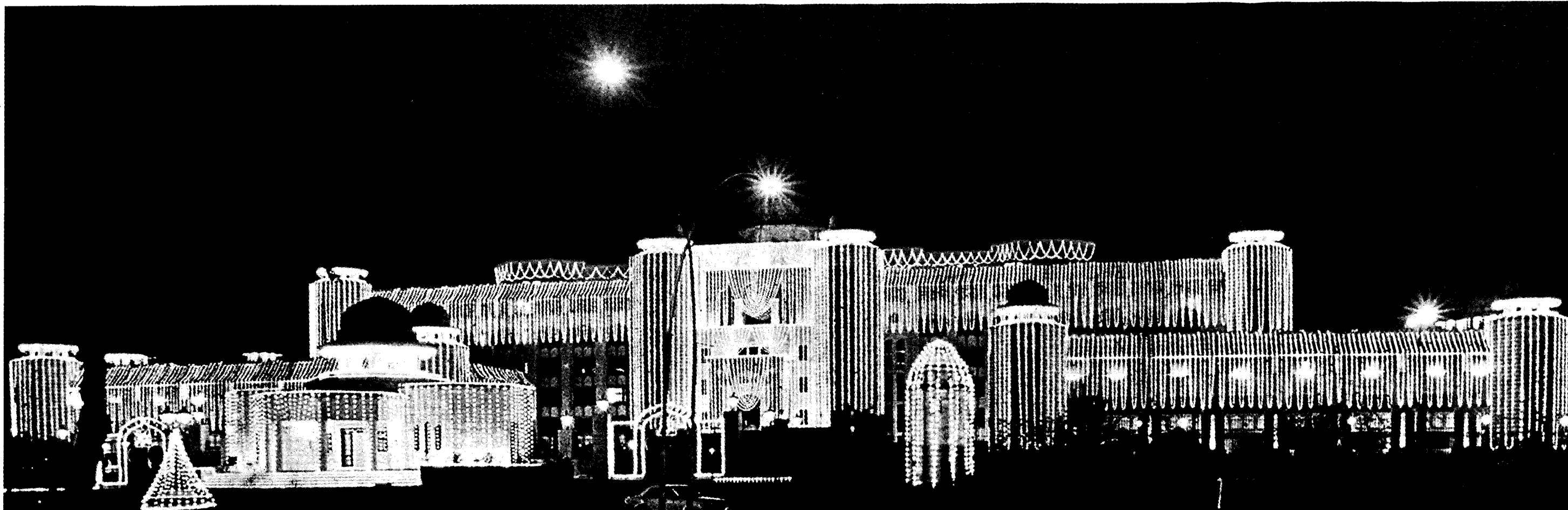
So far, there are no indications that he would like to hold consultations with extremist, religious and militant outfits that are opposed to his journey to India. Most of them, like the Lashkar, have urged the new President of Pakistan to decline the invitation from Mr. Vajpayee and not fall in to the "trap" laid by India.

Meanwhile, anger is building up among leaders of political par-

ties at the manner in which Gen. Musharraf donned the mantle of Presidency. But the truth of the matter is that with Mr. Sharif and Mrs. Bhutto in exile, the mainstream parties are hardly in a position to offer any resistance. The PML (Nawaz) group, at a meeting, announced that none of its leaders would meet Gen. Musharraf in his new capacity.

"The PML(N) is of the firm opinion that Gen. Musharraf is not a trust-worthy person, therefore no leader of the ARD member parties should meet him in connection with his scheduled Indian visit," the Acting President of PML(N), Mr. Javed Hashmi, announced here. The PPP also shares the view.

There are indications from the Nawaz group that it intended to legally challenge Gen. Musharraf's decision to appoint himself as the new President of Pakistan. The petition earlier filed in the Lahore High Court by a lawyers' group has been dismissed on technical grounds.



## NIGHT OF THE GENERAL

Another Pakistani Army chief gives himself the top job, the nation goes back to the old rule-book

Mubashir Zaidi  
ISLAMABAD

Nobody was surprised. It was coming, they all said. There were just a few questions about the timing, but that's about all the ripple General Pervez Musharraf created by promoting himself to the top job. President. He isn't the first military dictator to do so and, most people here know, he will not be the last. Political parties were largely quiet, barring stray murmurs, the Pakistani people were even quieter, the Americans complained but only of not being informed by the visiting Pakistani foreign secretary and India, of course, jumped the gun congratulating him even before he was sworn in.

Musharraf's promotion plans were possibly going down in history as the sub-continent's worst kept secret. In fact, since he grabbed power in October 1999, in a bloodless coup, his every move was subject to intense scrutiny, debate, analysis and more analysis. Most experts, including some in the ministry of external affairs in New Delhi, say they knew, or at least, were expecting it. The timing? Well, you could argue, they say, the coming summit with India may have hurried the general's plans. But that's about all.

Here in Pakistan, even fewer people were taken aback by the promotion. It was an all too familiar scenario: A military dictator first dismisses an elected government, throws out the constitution, establishes military rule and finally assumes the office of President dumping a dummy civilian figure head. This is the fourth time that a military ruler has marched down that road. It's almost a drill now.

The interest really, if at all, is in the timing. The official theory given was that it had to do with the forthcoming visit of General Pervez Musharraf to New Delhi. With ridiculous arguments that General Musharraf assumed the office so that he would not salute Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, which otherwise as army chief he would have to. Or that he would be able to negotiate better with the Indian government. Initially, the nation and the media were fooled into buying this line. The General exploited media's misunderstanding to his advantage saying that the decision to become President was taken in 'supreme national interest' and that keeping in view this interest he sincerely believes that he has a role to play in shaping the future of Pakistan.

The discredited dissenting but exiled political voices failed to convince the otherwise irrelevant Pakistani people about the real intent of the military establishment despite the fact that even a semi-literate taxi driver knows that the General is planning a long innings. Similarly, the dissolution of the suspended Parliament and provincial assemblies did not surprise, or worry, anybody. Except a rag-tag bunch of politicians who left the assemblies, restored by General Musharraf, offering him in return their loyalty.

### How he did it

But little did they know the general had other plans and had in Syed Shar-

ifuddin Pirzada, a legal expert par excellence, to carry them out. Musharraf's plans were known for some time now. Actually, the day he ousted then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif - on October 12, 1999 - most of the country knew he wasn't going to melt away easily now and that the top job was what he wanted. What took him so long? Well, the general needed time to plot it carefully to make it good in law, even if it meant changing the laws of the land. And for that, he needed a man who could do it.

Enters Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, the country's top legal expert and an automatic choice of military rulers down the years. And it was just a matter of time before he was drafted by this administration. In fact, he was taken aboard from the first day, purely as an adviser. Gradually, his role grew. He drafted the provisional Constitutional Order, the oath of allegiance to the Chief Executive for the superior court judges.

It was in the last week of April when he again sat down with General Pervez Musharraf, ISI chief Lt General Mahmood, DG Military Intelligence Lt General Ehsan and Chief of General Staff Lt General Yousuf to chart his benefactor's rise to the top job, the legal way to do it. They sat till late into the night and it was decided that General Musharraf should follow in the foot-steps of the last military dic-

tator, General Mohammed Zia ul-Haq by first appointing a deputy chief of army staff and then elevating himself to the President's coveted slot at an appropriate time, which came with the announcement of the summit in New Delhi. The General grabbed the opportunity and appointed himself President.

Two weeks after that meeting, the corps commanders okayed their boss's career plans; the poor 'civilian' cabinet was naturally neither consulted nor informed. They heard of it just by the chief justice. In fact, the whole thing turned out most embarrassing for Pakistan's foreign minister, Abdul Sattar, who was then on an official tour of the United States of America. The "coronation" back home came just a day after Sattar met US secretary of state Colin Powell. When asked by a reporter if he was aware of the move, Sattar meekly replied he was informed "last night" but hastily changed that to "I was informed last evening". He had obviously not been informed, or informed late. His other civilian colleagues in the cabinet could not have fared any better but were saved from an embarrassing situation only because they were home, away from harm's way.

### What next?

Former Information Minister in the

Nawaz Sharif government, Mubashir Hussain sums up it well: A powerful President, weak Parliament and strong local bodies system comprising 2,25,000 councillors elected with the support of the military government. Judging the game plan of the military government, Hussain believes that after he has amassed power one by one - Musharraf now wears five hats: President, Chief Executive, Army chief, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and chairman National Security Council - and converting the power structure into a virtual 'one man show', the President intends to keep it that way: as a one-man show.

"Rather than the Turkish pattern of reform, restructure and return to the barracks, the preference is to not just rule but also govern like the Indonesian and Burmese models," he told Hindustan Times. After ensuring that, he further stated, Musharraf will create an alternative domestic 'political constituency' of 2,25,000 grassroots politicians who are beholden to the military regime for their survival, success and sustenance. "In this regard political preferences have been made clear as to who is acceptable and who is not."

The two major parties have already split, three leaders (Benazir Bhutto, Nawaz Sharif and Altaf Hussain) are



MAN OF THE MOMENT: Pakistan President Gen Pervez Musharraf (above) and (top) The lit up Secretariat building in Islamabad

### PAKISTAN'S MILITARY RULERS: 24 YEARS OF HISTORY



Ayub Khan  
Ruled from 1958 to 1969

October 8, 1958: First Martial Law proclaimed. Within 4 months, the then martial law administrator, General Ayub Khan, forced President Iskandar Mirza to resign, and ordered him to leave the country. Subsequently, Khan became President.

Ayub Khan, who later added the Field Marshal badge to his uniform, ruled the country till 1969. He introduced a new constitution in 1962 envisaging a Presidential form of government to ensure perpetuation of his rule. During his 11 years' tenure, he also manipulated the sham election he was forced to hold in order to counter internal and external pressures. He defeated Fatima Jinnah, sister of Mohammed Ali Jinnah. The courts validated all his actions and his rule.

Finally, succumbing to people's pressure, Ayub Khan handed over power to another General of the Army, Yahya Khan, on March 24,



Yahya Khan  
From 1969 to 1971

1969.

Yahya Khan, too, proclaimed Martial law in the country and became President on April 1, 1969. Though he held elections in March 1970, martial law was once again proclaimed on March 1, 1971.

Yahya Khan banned the Bengali-dominated Awami League, which resulted in insurgency and the subsequent breakup of Pakistan. That forced him to hand over power to Pakistan Peoples' Party in December, 1971.

In July 1977, the Army once again took over, throwing out Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The then Army chief, General Zia ul-Haq, became chief martial law administrator, and after 14 months, replaced the civilian president Chaudhry Fazl Elahi in September 1978.

General Zia held local body elections in 1981, and then non-party based general elections in 1985,



Zia ul-Haq  
From 1977 to 1988

installing a pro-military, so-called democratic regime at the parliamentary level to ensure that he could continue his rule. When his puppet prime minister Mohammed Khan Junejo tried to express dissent on some petty issues, his government was sent packing - embarrassingly for the poor prime minister, who was on an official visit when General Zia dismissed him.

Democracy returned to Pakistan in 1988, but only when General Zia was killed in a plane crash.

Finally on October 12, 1999, the military again took over power, dislodging the democratic government of Nawaz Sharif. On June 19, eight months down the line, General Pervez Musharraf assumed office of the President, adding to his four offices of Chief Executive, Army Chief, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chairman, National Security Council.

living in exile, and the religious parties are quite muted, unlike their roles in civilian set-ups, while the national parties have failed to move beyond their one point agenda of politics. A strong troika of governance is emerging: A strong centralised system at the top, a weak middle with provincial powers yet to be defined and a strong lower tier with the Khaki backed political elite plus the police and may be the Army monitoring teams.

The editor turned information minister is equally harsh on his tribe, of politicians. "All military coups have had the backing of a section of political forces. Former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto supported General Yahya's take-over in 1969. Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) supported the 1977 coup and PPP-led Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) applauded the 1999 coup by General Musharraf. After every coup, political forces, who supported the coup expecting a share of the action have been disappointed, because the khaki agenda is autonomous and at variance with that of the political forces," he says.

It's a familiar ground for most people. The same rules will apply. No political force in the country can function smoothly without a NOC (No Objection certificate) from the ISI. General Headquarters and US. Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto shares almost the same feelings. Without the three A's - Allah, Army and America - she never tires of reminding her people you cannot become prime minister in this country. Her reaction to the elevation of General Musharraf - a mild denunciation - was only for public consumption. Actually, she believes that some day the military will be able to convince the military establishment that she can deliver where others have failed. But she also knows well the military doesn't trust her for being the daughter of a "traitor" who maligned the Army after the debacle in East Pakistan (Bangladesh).

### Beware the dangers

Former army chief General Mirza Aslam Beg is a worried man. No, he is not worried because a soldier like him, and also a Mohajir like him, has now become the president of the country ending hopes of early return of democracy. But because he fears that by accumulating so many powers, General Musharraf has ren-

dered himself extremely vulnerable. "Today Musharraf is the center of power. If the enemy knows the center of power then it is easy to target him. Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee is in a stronger position after Musharraf became President. He can make or break Musharraf," the former army chief says. On the domestic front, he says the political parties should shun politics of country. Further weaken the political process in the country. "It must be fully realized that in the past all political movements to push the Army back to the barracks through force, failed. Army relinquishes power only on its own volition."

When faced with a movement demanding his ouster, Field Marshal Ayub Khan did not choose to transfer power to politicians, he passed it on to his compatriot in uniform, General Yahya Khan. If Yahya had not faced opposition from within the Army, he would have continued holding the reins of power. And, Beg adds, "Had Allah not intervened, General Zia ul-Haq would have continued..."

However, even after Zia's death, power remained with the Army, which decided to let the civilians take over and not the other way around. What Beg is trying to say is that don't

try and get the Army out, the decision to hold on or relinquish power rests squarely with the soldiers.

In short, don't fight the military administration, wait for it, and its supporters, to come around. He recalled incidents from the past to illustrate the futility of fighting military dictators. Having decided to restore democracy in 1985, general Zia ul-Haq summoned Beg for advice. He basically wanted to know if it will be all right to transfer power to civilians, and how.

"My reply was that elections should be held on party basis and power to be passed to the elected representatives," Beg recalls. To that, the dictator replied: "Do you want that the noose should be round my neck." In 1988, after dismissing the Junejo government, Beg was summoned again and his advice was the same. Zia's reply was also no different from what he had said earlier.

"The past mistakes must not be repeated," Beg argues. The retired general also blames politicians for inviting the Army to settle political rivalries. "Army never came by itself. It was always invited," the former army chief said.

But the former army chief did not mention that Army also never went by itself. Nor will it this time. It's going to be another long night of the

## PRESIDENT FOR FIVE YEARS?

# Appointment of Musharraf challenged

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 22. The appointment of Gen. Pervez Musharraf as Pakistan President has been challenged in the Lahore High Court even as several legal and constitutional questions related to the takeover remain unanswered.

A petition filed by the People's Lawyer Forum has contended that since Gen. Musharraf was a Government servant, he was not eligible to become President.

Confusion over the move has been heightened by a hint given by the military spokesman, Maj. Gen. Rashid Quereshi, that Gen. Musharraf could continue in his new role for five years. He claimed there was no scope for ambiguity over the term of the President. "The tenure is well defined for the office of President. It is very clear."

Maj. Gen. Quereshi told *The Hindu* that while talking about the term of the President, he was responding to a specific question on the Constitutional position. "The question was not about the term of Gen. Musharraf. When I was asked if Gen. Musharraf would seek the mandate of the new Assemblies, I merely said we would cross the bridge when we come to it."

The two amendments to the Provincial Constitution Order (PCO) by the military Government to remove Muhammad Rafiq Tarar as President and appoint Gen. Musharraf in his place are bizarre and raise serious questions. No doubt the logic for the "removal" of Mr. Tarar is at one level very simple, but legal and constitutional experts wonder if the orders would stand judicial scrutiny.

The manner in which Mr. Tarar "ceased" to be the President is interesting and is the result of the first amendment to the PCO under which the military Government has been governing the country since the October 1999 coup. Under the Proclamation of Emergency (Amendment) Order, 2001 the National and four Provincial Assemblies, suspended after the military takeover, were dissolved. As a consequence, Mr. Tarar, elected by the members of the National and Provincial Assemblies, "shall cease to hold the office with immediate effect".

The argument was that since the Assemblies which had elected the President had been

dissolved, he should cease to hold office. Sound logic. But it also raises several questions.

One legal expert said by this logic since the Assemblies which elected him President were kept in "suspended animation" in October 1999, he could not have continued in office. "If one were to stretch the logic, since Mr. Nawaz Sharif was ousted from office, all the appointments made by him should have been deemed as null and void. I do not know if there is any precedent anywhere in the world where the President of the country had to go because the electoral college that elected him was no longer there."

The order also said the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Senate had already ceased to hold office; the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and the Provincial Assemblies shall also cease to hold office with immediate effect.

Experts wonder if the Speaker of an Assembly could cease to hold office in the event of dissolution of the House. The Speaker of an Assembly continues to hold the post till the constitution of a new Assembly. Questions are being raised as to why the Government deemed it necessary to incorporate the provision. Was it meant to send out the signal that if the President has to go on account of dissolution of the Assemblies, the Speaker could not be far behind? It is under the second amendment to the PCO, known as the President's Succession Order, 2001, that Gen. Musharraf has taken over as the President. It reads that "upon the office of the President becoming vacant for any reason whatsoever, the Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan shall be the President... and shall perform all functions assigned to the President... The Chief Executive shall hold office as President until his successor enters upon his office."

The order leaves several questions unanswered. It means there is no fixed tenure for Gen. Musharraf; it is not clear if it would mean he would continue in office till the new Assemblies elect a new President.

Under the suspended 1973 Constitution of Pakistan, there is no provision for the office of Chief Executive. The office of Chief Executive is the creation of the PCO promulgated by the military regime.

# Musharraf's decision surprises Pak parties

By arrangement with Dawn

**Karachi, June 21:** Political parties in Pakistan were taken by surprise when Chief Executive General Pervez Musharraf took over as the President on Wednesday.

However, they were of the view that the clock of history had been turned back and the nation was in an era when all honours and offices had been vested in the person of an individual. Leaders of different hues in their comments have also warned Gen. Musharraf against tinkering with the Constitution as it will have grave repercussions on the federation. The PPP coordination committee has termed the

assumption of office of the President by Gen. Pervez Musharraf as a violation of Constitution and contrary to democratic and legal requirements.

The committee, which met at the Bilawal House on Wednesday under the chairmanship of Syed Qaim Ali Shah, observed that this unconstitutional act of Gen. Musharraf was also contrary to the decision of the full bench of the Supreme Court which had given the mandate to the government to remain in power for an interim period under the law of necessity.

"This decision will not only cause immense damage to the country internally and externally

but will also further isolate Pakistan at the international level," the committee further observed. The committee recalled that the party already had pointed out that the unity of the country, Constitution, rule of law, and national integrity would be put to stake for the sake of power and had refused to bargain over its principles.

The PML Sindh (L) president, Ghous Bux Mehar, said that Gen. Musharraf's action of assuming powers of the President has brought an end to the ongoing suspense and uncertainty in politics and now he had to mould himself into a political entity. Capt. (ret'd) Haleem Siddiqui, the PML (L) sec-

retary general, said "This decision was expected and we have no other option but to accept it. We hope now that the road to democracy will be spelled out properly and the nation will be taken into confidence. I don't think this decision is going to contribute in any manner to make headway in the economy of the country."

PML (N) Sindh secretary general, Mamnoon Hussain, said that now when Gen. Musharraf has assumed all powers as President, the revival of democracy ought to be at the earliest. Pakistan National Workers Party said that the budget which was presented by a non-representative government could not

be expected to be manifestation of people's aspirations but on the eve of the budget dissolution of the Parliament had added further complicated the political situation in the country.

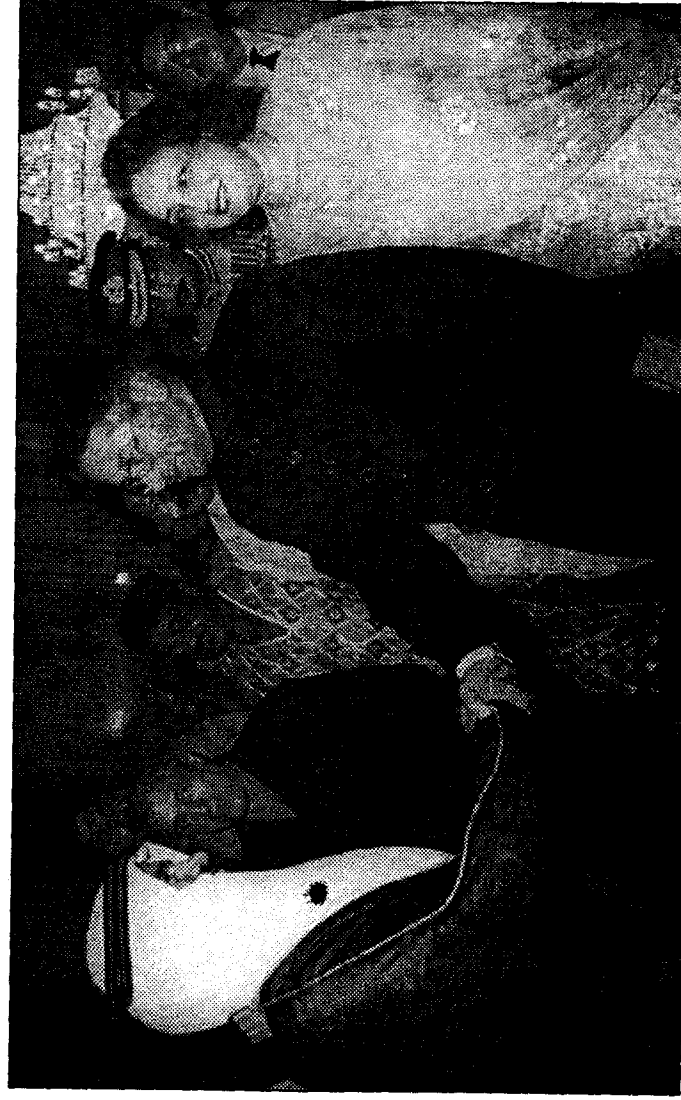
Mohajir Qaumi Movement chairman, Afaq Ahmad, said that the democracy, which was assassinated on October 12, had been buried on Wednesday as after October 12, 1999, Rafiqe Tarar was the last symbol of the democratic era. He said that Gen. Musharraf by assuming the power of the President has proved that he was no different from his predecessor generals and that his act was unconstitutional.

## Ordinance to curb terrorism approved by Pak Cabinet

By arrangement with Dawn

**Islamabad, June 21:** The federal Cabinet on Wednesday approved the promulgation of the Anti-Terrorism (amendment) Ordinance, 2001 to contain sectarian and ethnic violence and curb all forms of terrorism in the country.

The meeting which was presided over by President General Pervez Musharraf directed the provincial governments to draw an action plan to effectively implement the ordinance. The provincial governments will also ensure security and safety to the judges who are dealing cases relating to terrorism. General Pervez Musharraf while taking the Cabinet into confidence about his decision to assume the office of the President, said that the decision has been taken in the larger interest of the country and to ensure the creation of a politically stable environment in Pakistan. He said he had taken the outgoing President into confidence on this point a few days ago. General Musharraf said former President Rafiq Tarar had demonstrated a great sense of responsibility by agreeing to continue as President after the events of October 12, 1999 which provided continuity to the political system. He said he held the outgoing President in great esteem. The President said National Security Council will be re-constituted to make it an effective and purposeful.



CONGRATULATIONS: General Pervez Musharraf (centre), President of Pakistan, is greeted by Ali Bin Awad Aseeri (left), Saudi ambassador to Pakistan, on Wednesday after the swearing-in ceremony at the presidential palace in Islamabad. Gen. Musharraf took the oath as President of Pakistan. Sabha Pervez, wife of Gen. Musharraf, is seen on the right. (AP)

## C'wealth wants civil rule in Pak

**London, June 21:** Commonwealth secretary-general Don McKinnon criticised military ruler General Pervez Musharraf on Thursday for taking over Pakistan's presidency and said the military seemed to be strengthening its grip on the country.

"We do not think this is a very good sign," Mr McKinnon said after talks with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. General Musharraf had himself sworn in as President on Wednesday after ruling as "Chief Executive" since seizing power in a bloodless October 1999 coup. He also formally abolished the elected legislatures that he suspended on ousting PM Nawaz Sharif two years ago. He has promised civilian government by October

2002. "We believe they can do it earlier than the three-year timetable they set themselves. We know General Musharraf is determined to see that happen. We would like to see greater effort going on there," Mr McKinnon said. "At the same time I think people need a bit more hope, than seeing what has happened in the last 48 hours, which to most people would suggest that the military is reinforcing its presence in the country, not moving away from a determination to run the country."

Meanwhile, Pakistan has blamed Western countries for the present situation in Afghanistan and sought to refute the charge that it was propping up the Taliban regime. (Reuters, UN)



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## Welcome General

President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf has taken on an onerous responsibility. By showing the door to Mohammed Rafiq Tarar and donning the mantle of the President himself, General Musharraf has fallen in line with military rulers before him. He has also, in the process, established a place for the military in the new Pakistan he claims he is trying to create. President Musharraf assured his nation that elections will be held as directed by the Supreme Court by October 2002. He also let it be known, through official sources, that he would have a Prime Minister in position soon. When and if elections are held and a democratically elected government sworn in, General Musharraf can be expected to give up the chief executive post which he has presently retained, to the Prime Minister. At the same time as the President he will leave a supervisory and all seeing role for the army which will, through him of course, keep a close eye on governance. For the present the quick decision to become the President of Pakistan can be said to have been prompted by Delhi. Sufficient indications were being given by our policy makers that the rank of chief executive was undefined enough to ensure ambiguous protocol, in that many of the formalities could be dispensed with without question. This was obviously reported back to Gen. Musharraf whose foreign office had been bargaining hard for head of state protocol, which the Indian government was reluctant to concede. The General, with his penchant for quick decision making, took the matter out of everybody's hands and has now ensured that he will be received in India as a head of state and head of government with full ceremonial honours. The point to be made here is that Gen. Musharraf cannot be taken for granted. Comparisons with Zia-ul Haq and Yahya Khan are, in that sense, absurd as he is different player entirely. For one he is not fundamentalist. In fact, he appears to harbour a dislike for the right wing conservatives and has ensured that not a single person from this fairly influential block in Pakistan has been included in his Cabinet. Even hard line generals have been given posts far away from Islamabad, and although consulted about decisions cannot claim to be privy to the process of policy making. So by dismissing him as just another military ruler might sound good, but it is really more in the league of wearing blinkers and refusing to recognise reality. He is a master strategist as the Kargil episode has demonstrated. He is ruthless. And he is a nationalist. He is not coming to Delhi groping in the dark. He is coming to Delhi with a good sense of what he wants, how much he will give, and how much he wants to take. From all accounts the government here is still taking stock of the new President, and finalising the agenda on which there are several different points of view. What is required here is the same strength of purpose, direction and commitment. This has to reflect in the meetings, one to one or whatever. As Gen. Musharraf had said, an insult to him would be considered an insult to Pakistan. Well, at the same level, failure by Prime Minister Vajpayee to handle the talks and control the direction taken would be taken as an insult to India.

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THE HINDU

# Home and abroad, Pervez stands alone

S Rajagopalan & Agencies  
Washington/ Islamabad  
June 21

GENERAL PERVEZ Musharraf was an isolated man today, both at home and abroad. World leaders condemned him for pulling off yet another coup and political parties described the abrupt move as the last nail in the country's democratic framework.

Strong words of condemnation poured in from Washington, London and Moscow. The Bush Administration - apparently taken aback by General Musharraf's decision to elevate himself to the post of President - said the sanctions slapped on Islamabad after the 1999 coup would remain.

"The US is very concerned and very disappointed," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said. "Pakistan has taken another turn away from democracy, instead of a much-hoped step towards democracy."

"General Musharraf's actions severely undermine Pakistan's constitutional order. They cast Pakistan as a country ruled by decree rather than by democratic process," he said.

Virtually disapproving of Musharraf's "second coup", a Russian Foreign Office spokesman said: "Moscow believes that that the restoration of democratic norms and free and fair elections would be the best scenario for the development of Pakistan." He expressed his Government's concern over the way the Head of State was removed from office and elected legislatures dissolved. In London, Foreign Secretary Jack Straw too had strong words for Musharraf.

China, an ally of Islamabad, however was tepid in its reac-

## 'GOOD MORNING, MR PRESIDENT'

IN THE midst of Pakistan military ruler Gen. Pervez Musharraf's tense and hectic preparations on Wednesday to take over as President, he was pleasantly surprised to hear Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee greeting him over the phone saying "Good morning, Mr President" in "anticipation". As the local and foreign media made feverish attempts in the morning on Wednesday to get confirmation about speculative reports about Gen. Musharraf taking over as President, Vajpayee made the "goodwill telephone call" around 10.30 a.m., Pakistan newspaper *The Nation* reported.

The conversation, according to *The Nation*, went on something like: Vajpayee: Good morning, Mr President.

Musharraf: I am not the President, Mr Prime Minister.

Vajpayee: Yes, I know. I was just addressing in anticipation.

Musharraf: Thank you. I accept your felicitation in anticipation.

HTC, New Delhi

tion. "It is an internal matter. We have always respected the decisions made by Governments in other countries," Beijing said. Washington was particularly caustic because Musharraf's takeover came within hours of his Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar assuring Secretary of State Colin Powell that Islamabad was well on course to holding elections next year.

At home too the General was up against a barrage of criticism. "This is a naked demonstration of military might," Syed Zafar Ali Shah, vice-president of the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) said.

The 16-party alliance for restoration of democracy said Musharraf didn't have the mandate to hold negotiations with the Indian Prime Minister. It threatened to stay away from a June 30 all-party meeting called by the General to discuss his July 14-16 summit with Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

"Musharraf is today the President, Chief of Army Staff and Prime Minister of Pakistan. The only other office left for him is

that of the Chief Justice," Zafar Ali Shah said. "If Assemblies are dissolved, elections must be held within 90 days. So says the Constitution," said a prominent Jamaat leader Qazi Hussain Ahmed. "Through his actions, Musharraf has only tarnished the image of the Army."

**Tarar says he was forced out:** Rafiq Tarar, who was unceremoniously removed from Presidency yesterday, today said he was forcibly removed under a provisional constitutional order issued by Musharraf.

**Sattar embarrassed:** Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar, now touring the US, was a clearly embarrassed man. The State Department is sore with him, for he did not provide an inkling about what was coming. The minister himself sought to convey the impression that he was kept in the dark. At a Press meet, he initially tried to dodge queries on when he had come to know of the Musharraf move. Eventually, he said he learnt about it on Tuesday evening.

# Musharraf faces little resistance

REUTERS

ISLAMABAD, June 21. — Pakistani political parties will soon meet to devise a strategy to counter General Pervez Musharraf's decision to declare himself President, party officials said today.

While most politicians have sharply criticised Gen Musharraf's long-expected move, the country's political parties have been in disarray since his October 1999 coup and are relatively powerless to offer any real challenge to him.

Mr Farhatullah Babur, spokesman for self-exiled former Prime Minister Mrs Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party said the 14-party Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy would meet in coming days.

But he said options were limited for action to respond to what alliance leader Mr Na-

wabzada Nasrullah Khan described as "another coup" by Gen Musharraf, who sacked civilian President Mr Moham-mad Rafiq Tarar yesterday.

Gen Musharraf ousted Pakistan's last civilian Prime Minister, Mr Nawaz Sharif, in a bloodless coup in October 1999.

Mr Babur said the ARD may mount a legal challenge to Gen Musharraf on constitutional grounds, or it may try to mobilise public opinion and seek support from foreign governments.

But he said there was also little chance that people would take to the streets to demonstrate against Gen Musharraf.

"If the call is for change of the government. No (they won't protest on the streets). But if the call is for a serious problem...like water shortages, then yes (they will)," Mr Babur said.

The ARD's attempts to stage pro-democracy rallies since



President Pervez Musharraf

March have been foiled by the authorities who have detained thousands of political leaders and activists in line with a ban on public rallies.

Pakistan has experienced 27 years of military rule since Independence in 1947 and the country's largest English daily, The Dawn, today said in its lead comment that Gen Mush-

arraf was relatively secure.

"Domestically the General faces hardly any challenge," it said.

It said the the Pakistan Muslim League, the party of the exiled Mr Sharif, and Mrs Bhutto's PPP posed no threat to Gen Musharraf who has previously said there could be no future role in governing Pakistan for the two leaders.

Both Mrs Bhutto and Mr Sharif would have to face corruption charges if they returned to Pakistan.

The Dawn also said religious parties had toned down their rhetoric, but the newspaper sounded a note of caution.

"At a time when the military government is swept by heady feelings of triumph, is there any point in sounding a caveat? There is if we look at the grief attending the ghosts of previous military dispensations," it said. "Deviations from the demo-

cratic norm have not served Pakistan well. Constitutional tampering and fresh experiments — whether in the name of creating the mythical animal called 'real' democracy or for the sake of ushering in a self-serving balance of powers — have always boomeranged on their perpetrators." The daily said what Pakistan really needed was a good and honest government to help the country move into the future.

Gen Musharraf has pledged political and economic reform — promises also made by past military rulers who were unable to deliver. — and says he intends to adhere to a Supreme Court deadline to hold national elections by October 2002.

But, in public comments since taking the oath yesterday, Gen Musharraf has not indicated how long he intends to remain as President, a position apparently fraught with peril.

# Musharraf is President

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, June 20. — General Pervez Musharraf today got himself appointed President of Pakistan. The move is seen as an attempt to acquire constitutional status before the Indo-Pak summit and a tighter grip on the country.

The General summarily removed President Rafiq Tarar, who took office on 1 January 1998 and was scheduled to continue till January 2003, and dissolved the National Assembly and provincial legislatures. These were suspended after the General seized power in a bloodless coup on 12 October 1999.

Gen Musharraf has been functioning as Pakistan's Chief Executive since then.

He was administered the oath of office today by the Chief Justice, Mr Irshad Hassan, at the the President House. The function was attended by federal ministers, civilian and military officers and diplomats, including acting Indian high commissioner, Mr Sudhir Vyas.

Shortly after being sworn-in,



Gen Musharraf being sworn in as President by the Pakistan Chief Justice, Mr IH Khan, on Wednesday. — AP/PTI

Gen Musharraf said: "I've a role to play in the stability of the country. My main concern is the political stability and harmony...I pray to God that I should continue to serve the nation with all humility...I've a job to do...I'll not let this nation down. And that's the reason I've decided to assume the office of the presidency."

Observers see the General's de-

cision as a move to acquire constitutional legitimacy in the eyes of the world before visiting India. But it's unlikely to have the support of the political parties.

It's also seen as an attempt to ensure a place for the General in a future civilian government that the Supreme Court has decreed to be formed by October next year.

Observers said Gen Mushar-

raf may make sweeping changes in the Constitution, giving more powers to the President and ensuring Army's role in any future set up.

He told reporters: "Let there be no doubt that there is a change in our perception for the future. The Supreme Court order and judgement of holding elections in October 2002 is very clear. We will abide by

that.

"The provincial and national elections will be held on schedule next year. There's no change in that. Let there be no doubt on that score. The political activity and all activities will continue as before."

The state-run radio and TV, while announcing the presidential change, said two amendments have been made to the Provisional Constitutional Order through which Gen Musharraf has been running the country.

The General is the fourth military man to assume presidency in a country that has been ruled by the armed forces for 26 of its 53 years of existence.

**India's reaction:** In India too, Gen Musharraf's decision is seen as a move to give himself legitimacy for signing agreements with Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, SNS adds from New Delhi.

"It's not something out of the blue, we have been hearing about it for quite sometime", said a government official. For India, it doesn't make any

■ See MUSHARRAF: page 8

## MUSHARRAF:

(Continued from page 1)

difference as far as summit is concerned.

For its none but Gen Musharraf who'll call the shots in Pakistan.

What's worrying New Delhi is the negative statements that have been emanating from various quarters in Islamabad ever since Mr Vajpayee invited Gen Musharraf for talks.

Various leaders in Pakistan have called the Centre's unilateral ceasefire in Kashmir a "sham".

The Hurriyat, considered an extension of Pakistan, has alleged that about 75,000 people have been killed in J&K since 1979.

Sources here said that Pakistan is trying set the summit's agenda "unilaterally".

THE STATESMAN

# Rafiq Tarar forced to quit?

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 20. Did Muhammad Rafiq Tarar resign as Pakistan President or was he forced to quit to pave the way for Gen. Pervez Musharraf to step into his shoes?

This was the question uppermost in the minds of political observers and journalists as events unfolded at unbelievable speed here today.

A brief press statement put out by the military Government leaves little doubt that Mr. Tarar did not resign.

The first of the six-para statement announced that "Mr. Muhammad Rafiq Tarar has ceased to hold the office of the President with immediate effect".

The former President was conspicuous by his absence at the



brief swearing-in ceremony of Gen. Musharraf.

A former High Court judge, Mr. Tarar was elected President in 1998 during the regime of Mr. Nawaz Sharif and his tenure

in the normal course would have ended in January, 2003.

Reports said Mr. Tarar left his official residence around 2.30 p.m. and drove to his hometown of Lahore with his family, escorted by a police van.

There had been several press reports in the last few months suggesting that Gen. Musharraf was set to take over as President

and today's developments could not have exactly surprised Mr. Tarar.

A few weeks ago Mr. Tarar was quoted as telling reporters in Lahore that he was in perfect health, leading to interpretations that perhaps it was a signal on his ability to carry on with the responsibilities of the President.

Hours before he left for Lahore, Gen. Musharraf called on him at the Aiwan-e-Sadr (official residence of the President) and thanked him for the support he had extended him in the last 18 months.

Immediately after the meeting, Gen. Musharraf gave him a hug and Mr. Tarar left the official residence.

Pakistan Television quoted Gen. Musharraf as having told Mr. Tarar that he had no words to ex-

press his gratitude. The Chief Executive referred to the "unflinching and principled support" extended to him during the coup.

Gen. Musharraf told Mr. Tarar that he held him in "high esteem" and hoped that he (Mr. Tarar) would continue to guide him on matters of national importance.

Mr. Tarar on his part wished the General all the best and hoped he would succeed in his endeavour of making Pakistan prosperous.

In his brief speech after being sworn-in as President, Gen. Musharraf said, "the ex-President has been a man of honour and dignity. We have had the best of working relationship. He has kept Pakistan's interest supreme and above his own self. I honour and respect him for that."

Pak ①

'NO CHANGE IN PLAN TO HOLD ELECTIONS'

21/6

# Musharraf becomes President

By B. Muralidhar Reddy 5/1

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 20. In a swift operation ahead of the crucial summit meeting with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, the Pakistan military ruler and Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, today donned the mantle of the President of the country.

The pace of events in the last 24 hours was so fast that the representatives of political and religious parties were dumb-struck, struggling to understand the implications of the move which reminded them of the October, 1999 coup. Whatever the implications and repercussions of the latest developments on the domestic front, it is a clear signal to the world in general and India in particular, that Gen. Musharraf has come to stay.

The only difference between October, 1999 and today was that while the latter caught everyone unawares, Gen. Musharraf becoming President did not exactly come as a surprise. That he would become President was well-known but nobody anticipated the timing.

Even the occupant of the Aiwane-Sadr (official residence of the President), Muhammad Rafiq Tarar, perhaps did not expect to be out so soon. Significantly, Mr. Tarar was conspicuous by his absence at the swearing-in of Gen. Musharraf, having left earlier for Lahore — his hometown.

Several hours after the swearing-in, it was not clear if it meant a switch from parliamentary to the presidential form of system. Over the last several weeks, Gen. Musharraf had talked of the need for balancing the powers between the offices of President and Prime Minister under the Constitution. He argued that unbridled powers in the hands of the Prime Minister meant authoritarian tendencies



Gen. Pervez Musharraf being sworn in President by the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. Irshad Hasan Khan (right), in Islamabad on Wednesday. — AP

and autocratic rule.

The General's brief comments after the ceremony did not help clarify matters. He assured the nation (the leaders of political parties) that there was no change in his Government's plans to hold elections before October, 2002 as per the Supreme Court orders. He justified his becoming the President as in the "national interest" and said he had always held the national interest as supreme.

### Parties raise doubts

Representatives of political parties, however, raised several questions on the military regime's modus operandi in installing Gen. Musharraf as President. Parliament alone had the powers to amend the Constitution, they said and pointed to the parameters laid down by the Supreme Court on the limitations of the military regime in carrying out amendments to the Constitution.

The Chief Justice of the Pakistan Supreme Court, Mr. Justice Irshad Hassan Khan, administered the oath of office and secrecy to

Gen. Musharraf at the Darbar Hall in the Presidential Palace. The General's ministerial colleagues, the three service chiefs and the diplomatic corps based in Islamabad were present.

The operation for the anointment of Gen. Musharraf appears to have started on Tuesday. Of course, the legal managers of the military establishment were working on several scripts in the last few weeks to find ways to install Gen. Musharraf as the President. The managers were busy throughout Tuesday night working out the modalities for the appointment, according to a section of the press. At least one English daily, *The News*, published the news as the lead story.

### Crucial amendments

A Cabinet meeting presided over by Gen. Musharraf earlier in the day set the ball rolling. The Cabinet adopted two crucial amendments to the Provincial Constitutional Order (PCO), under which the military is governing. The first amendment says the

person holding the office of President (Mr. Tarar) shall cease to hold the office with immediate effect on the proclamation of the Emergency (Amendment) Order, 2001.

The second amendment relates to the dissolution of the National and the four Provincial Assemblies that stand suspended in the wake of the dismissal of the Nawaz Sharif Government on the night of October 12, 1999. It also says that the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Senate (Upper House) and the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the National and Provincial Assemblies shall also cease to hold office with immediate effect.

In a way, with one stroke of the pen, the Cabinet not only removed Mr. Tarar from office but dashed the hopes of the legislators of the suspended Assemblies on revival of the Houses. The splinter group of the Pakistan Muslim League (Like Minded Group) was born a few months ago on the hope of a revival of the Assemblies.

The Chief Executive did come out with an explanation for Mr. Tarar's ouster, saying with the dissolution of the Assemblies, the office of President, elected by the Assemblies, became untenable.

### Three posts

The press statement said the Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, was assuming the office of President and would continue to hold the office of Chief Executive. It was silent on whether Gen. Musharraf would continue as the Chief of the Army Staff.

The military government's chief spokesman, Maj. Gen. Rashid Qureshi, told *The Hindu* that Gen. Musharraf would continue to be the COAS. In other words he would hold the posts of President, Chief Executive and Army Chief.

More reports on Page 14

# I was removed, says Tarar

Bank 13

216

By Our Special Correspondent

**ISLAMABAD, JUNE 20.** Muhammad Rafiq Tarar is believed to have said that he was removed as President of the country under the Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO), issued on Wednesday.

In a statement reportedly issued in Lahore, the former President said the armed forces allowed him to continue as President after the October 1999 military coup to keep intact Pakistan's image as a democratic country.

Following is the text of Rafiq Tarar's statement:

"General Pervez Musharraf, soon after the military takeover on October 12, 1999, told me in our first meeting that the armed forces want I should hold my office keeping in view the country's situation. I kept into consideration this request and decided to remain on the state highest position in the best national interest after thorough consideration.

"I thought that continuation of the constitutionally-elected President will help maintain Pakis-

tan's democratic image. During this period the military leadership consulted me on various national issues, thus maintaining a relationship of respect.

"I was told several days ago that appointment of the Chief Executive as President is a must for the completion of the government agenda and achievement of several national objectives. I was removed under PCO as President on Wednesday.

"During my three-and-a-half-year stay, I always avoided confrontation and an adventurism. I tried to perform state responsibilities with the spirit of cooperation and goodwill. I strictly followed constitutional obligations.

"I thank the press and the people of Pakistan, who have been expressing good wishes for me. I pray to Allah Almighty for the prosperity and development of Pakistan so that it could become an Islamic welfare and democratic state in accordance with the wishes of founder of Pakistan and the hundreds of thousands of martyrs of Pakistan movement."

# New system in Pakistan is <sup>part 1</sup> likely to be Zia-like dyarchy

By Manoj Joshi

NEW DELHI: General Pervez Musharraf's decision to out himself as the President of Pakistan, citing "constitutional necessity", is not a surprise. But the timing has taken everyone aback, including New Delhi.

The general, who had widely advertised his intention of staying on as Chief Executive, would at any other time almost certainly have faced some flak not only from the down-and-out political parties in Pakistan, but also the Islamist formations. But with Wednesday's announcement coming fast on heels of that of the dates of his summit with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, the move appears to have gone down smoothly. This is because the Indian decision to invite Gen Musharraf is being touted as a victory of sorts for him.

As President, Gen Musharraf has saved New Delhi some angst. There will now be no worries about just how to play the visit of a general-turned-Chief Executive. He can, and will, now be greeted with the protocol befitting a head of state.

More important, it means that whatever Gen Musharraf commits on his country's behalf during his talks with Mr Vajpayee will have some sort of constitutional validity.

But this should not be overstated—rigorous observance of constitutional law has not been a strong point in Pakistan and it should not be forgotten that Gen Musharraf is President because of a military coup.

tional order introduced after his coup of October 1999.

In his remarks while taking charge as President, Gen Musharraf reiterated the fact that there would be no restrictions on political activity as well as his com-

planned this year.

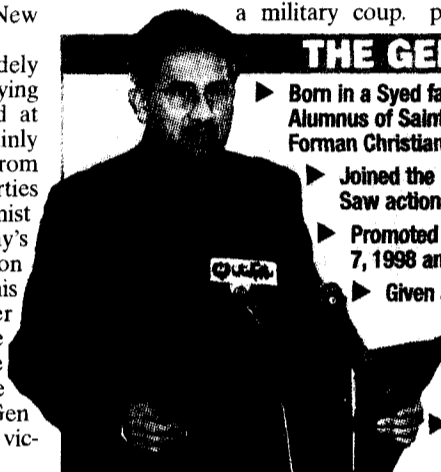
Significantly, Gen Musharraf will remain chief of the army staff. More than anything else, this is a pointer to the area from which President Musharraf really derives his powers. His system is likely to be a form of dyarchy where a military man remains President and a civilian heads the elected government, much in the same way that President and army chief Gen Zia-ul-Haq chose Mohammed Khan Junejo as Prime Minister in 1985.

The general has dismissed the national and provincial assemblies, but the senate remains in suspended animation. It is perhaps this body that will provide the fig-leaf of civilian legitimacy to the Musharraf presidency, at least to start with.

Gen Musharraf will almost certainly institutionalise the role of the armed forces through a national security council, a long-standing demand of the army. Indian observers say that the general continues to enjoy the support of the Pakistani army.

Most of the Pakistani elite also support the tough steps he has taken to rein in the fiscal deficit, including the freezing of military expenditure.

► See Edit: Sadr-e-Pakistan, Page 10



## THE GENERAL'S MARCH

- Born in a Syed family on August 11, 1943, in Delhi. Alumnus of Saint Patrick's High School, Karachi and Forman Christian College, Lahore
- Joined the Pakistan Military Academy in 1961. Saw action in the 1965 and 1971 wars
- Promoted to the rank of General on October 7, 1998 and appointed Chief of Army Staff
- Given additional charge of Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee on Apr 9, 1999
- May 1999, Indian army patrols discover Kargil infiltration
- On July 12, 1999, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif announces pullout from Kargil
- October 12, 1999: Musharraf assumes charge as Chief Executive of Pakistan; Nawaz Sharif is arrested, the provincial assemblies suspended
- May 23, 2001: The Indian PM invites the general for talks in India
- June 20, 2001: President Rafiq Tarar ceases to be president and Gen. Musharraf takes oath as the new president of Pakistan

Whatever legitimacy he has is through the Pakistan supreme court's invocation of a somewhat desperate "doctrine of necessity". He took his oath on Wednesday on the basis of a provisional constitu-

tionment to meet the supreme court deadline to restore a civilian government by October 2002. Parliamentary elections could be held some time early next year, and civic elections will go ahead as



# Musharraf pulls off another coup

- Pakistan CEO is now the President
- Stays Army chief
- Assemblies dissolved

Mubashir Zaidi  
Islamabad, June 20

THE EXPECTED happened in Pakistan today. Following in the footsteps of previous military rulers, General Pervez Musharraf today assumed the title of President, replacing figurehead President Rafiq Tarar.

The Chief Justice of Pakistan administered the oath of office to Musharraf at 4.15 pm at a ceremony in the President House, Islamabad.

Through an amended Provisional Constitutional Order, Musharraf has dissolved the suspended national and provincial Assemblies. He will continue to hold the offices of Chief Executive and Army chief.

Musharraf said it was not his personal decision to become President. "It was required to provide guarantee to stability and continuity of all reforms," he explained after taking oath. "My induction as President will provide this guarantee."

Conveniently, he will be President when general elections are held in the country next year if the Supreme Court's October 12, 2002 deadline is honoured. "Elections to the national and provincial Assemblies would be held as stipulated by the Supreme Court verdict," said the new President.

The news of General Musharraf becoming President has not surprised Pakistan's political parties. A Pakistan Peoples Party spokesman said that the move was expected. However, he added, the Alliance for the Restoration for Democracy might challenge the General's elevation to the presidency in the Supreme Court.

Newspapers in Pakistan see the development in the context of



A Pakistan soldier escorts newly sworn-in President Pervez Musharraf for a guard of honour in Islamabad on Wednesday.

AFP PHOTO

the July 14-16 summit between the General and Indian Prime Minister A B Vajpayee. They claim Musharraf wants to negotiate with India after assuming a constitutional role for himself.

But political analysts believe Musharraf actually wants to ensure the supremacy of the military establishment over politicians. Indications are that the military Government is working on various amendments to revive powers — similar to the Eighth Amendment — that allow a President to dissolve an elected Government without assigning any reason.

Related reports on pages 9 & 11

## For India, it's a *fait accompli*

Udayan Nambudiri  
New Delhi, June 20

INDIA, THOUGH initially taken by surprise by the news of General Pervez Musharraf taking over as the Pakistani President, has accepted the development as a *fait accompli*.

In its formal reaction, the MEA said: "Our acting High Commissioner in Islamabad, Sudhir Vyas, attended the oath-taking ceremony of General Musharraf. He will visit India as President when he

arrives here on July 14." Given India's policy of waiving the democracy clause when it comes to dealing with neighbours (Myanmar is a case in point), the businesslike tenor of the statement hardly comes as a surprise.

Even before General Musharraf upgraded himself, New Delhi had agreed to accord him a ceremonial welcome, reserved for visiting Heads of State. Last night's official announcement on the summit dates made this clear.

The President of India formal-

ly receives a visiting Head of State, the guest is given a 21-gun salute in the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan and accorded the right to inspect a guard of honour. A banquet too is hosted in his honour by the President.

General Musharraf will be the first Pakistani military ruler to be extended this honour. New Delhi's decision to roll out the red carpet for him is born out of the realisation that he fills a vacuum in Pakistani politics left by a self-destructive democratic process.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

## HF 10 Sadr-e-Pakistan M/6

The announcement on Wednesday about general Musharraf assuming the office of president will hardly come as a surprise to long-term observers of Pakistan's political scene. For some time now, it was expected in diplomatic circles in Islamabad that the general would follow in the footsteps of his ill-fated predecessors and invest himself with the honour while continuing to occupy the post of chief of army staff. The timing of the move — which was earlier expected to take place in August — lends itself to the explanatory gloss that it is meant to legitimise and strengthen the general's hand at the forthcoming Indo-Pak summit meeting in New Delhi in July. As head of state, general Musharraf would ostensibly find himself on a stronger wicket in setting the tone and tempo for the talks not to mention drive a 'hard' bargain with his Indian counterpart, prime minister Atal Behari Vajpayee. Yet there is ample room to discount such a simplistic thesis. For one, a self-appointed chief executive is, in no manner, in any better or worse position to represent his country's interests at a high-powered summit meeting than a self-appointed president. To that extent, the change in the general's designation amounts to no more than a symbolic gesture. In any event, the Indian government's decision to unconditionally invite general Musharraf for talks as also its stated position that it will regard the latter's visit as tantamount to one by a head of state, rendered the general's case for presidentship quite superfluous.

What then is the larger significance of the move? The answer probably is that general Musharraf has quite simply used the summit as a convenient pretext to take the first step in extending his reign beyond the three-year deadline set by the supreme court of Pakistan. A deadline which, it may be recalled, is slated to expire in October next year. The larger import of the general's latest manoeuvre then amounts to an open admission that he is unlikely to respect that deadline. Precedent suggests that if the supreme court cannot be trusted to find the required justification for the extension of the current army rule under the well-known Pakistani doctrine of necessity then it would not be beyond the newly-appointed president to find a new set of legal minds who might be prepared to think otherwise. From the point of view of democracy, one cannot but view such a possibility with a deep sense of disquiet. However, beyond the question of the Pakistani people's democratic aspirations, there remains the pressing issue of how the Indian government ought to react to the latest development. It should by now be obvious to all concerned that in matters of diplomacy, particularly in bilateral relations with 'sensitive' neighbours, it is neither wise nor always desirable — if nothing else, on grounds of strategic interests alone — to hastily take the moral high ground. Pragmatism and good judgment therefore require that the Indian government learns to deal with general Musharraf on a long-term basis, irrespective of the legitimacy or otherwise of his rule or the nomenclature of the office that he holds.

## 11-10-2007 Pakistan's Interest

To interpret Pakistan's first-ever defence budget cut as a meaningful gesture before the forthcoming summit in India would be to stretch the point. It's more a case of the IMF pushing general Musharraf to make the two-billion-rupee cut in a desperate attempt to shore up the country's floundering finances. Add to this the fact that rating agency Standard & Poor's has tied Pakistan's poor sovereign credit rating to its foreign policy, and the decision begins to make even more sense. For, despite the rhetoric on Kashmir, it is clear that the economy is the core issue for Pakistan at this time. However, it is not going to be easy for the general, with the shariat appellate bench of the Pakistan supreme court confirming an earlier judgment declaring all forms of interest-based banking as un-Islamic. Last December's judgment had set a six-month deadline for a change to a system in which all economic entities would be prohibited from charging or paying interest (riba) on loaned funds. The government had asked for the operation of the judgment to be suspended. Instead the court extended the deadline by a year and with the warning that the government would be "sadly mistaken if it were of the view that the judgment could be thrown in cold storage". The military government has appointed a 'transformation commission' to institute new systems of banking which would not violate the 'interest-free' injunction. The attorney-general pleaded before the court that no models exist of riba-free systems in the Islamic world.

However, an increasing number of banks in the Islamic world are offering 'halal' financial products designed to appeal to their orthodox Muslim clientele. Structured as mutual funds or venture capital funds yielding dividends or profit-shares in order to get around the proscription of interest, these are necessarily high-risk financial products. Whether a modern financial economy can function efficiently on the narrow base of such high-risk instruments is open to question. And what happens to foreign loans? The 'riba' judgment only adds to the woes of Pakistan's economy which is even otherwise in dire straits as the latest budget shows. Forty per cent of the outlays are taken up by debt service, and the national debt has ballooned to three times the GDP. The investment rate has plunged from 18.5 per cent in 1990-91 to 14.9 per cent last year; and the growth rate from five per cent to 2.6 per cent. The rupee has weakened over the last one year from Rs 50 to Rs 67 to the dollar. Foreign exchange reserves are down to a precarious \$1.2 billion and there has been a net outflow of foreign capital. Already under the discipline of a belt-tightening structural adjustment programme of the IMF, Pakistan has to arrange \$21 billion between now and 2004 to meet external debt obligations. It is against this dismal backdrop that general Musharraf arrives here next month. Kashmir notwithstanding, he has clearly also to focus on business with India. He has already signalled that he intends to clear the India-Iran overland pipeline project. Prime minister Vajpayee should be responsive, as trade and business relations could be the starting point for a lasting peace between the two countries.

## Talisman of Love

# Diplomacy brake on Pak defence

FROM IDREES BAKHTIAR  
AND AGENCIES

Islamabad, June 18: Ahead of the summit with India, Pakistan today froze its defence spending at last year's level. In real terms, this indicates a sharp cut as the country has seen a high inflation rate over the past few months.

The freeze marks a departure from successive increases in Pakistan's defence spending by about 15 per cent every year. Last year, Pakistan had claimed to have frozen the bill but some analysts had suggested that it was done by shifting some expenses to the civilian account.

"This (the freeze) reflects Pakistan's desire to reduce tension between the two sides," said a defence expert here.

Presenting the budget over radio and television, finance minister Shaukat Aziz also announced a 27.4 per cent rise in development expenditure. He froze defence spending at Rs 13,163.70 crore.

Besides an attempt to clear the air ahead of Pervez Musharraf's talks with A.B. Vajpayee, Pakistan's staggering debt burden, coupled with pressure from the IMF and World Bank, played a role in forcing the country to slam the brakes on defence expenditure.

The budget projected growth in gross domestic product rising from a meagre 2.6 per cent in the fiscal year ending this month to 5.2 per cent in fiscal 2003-04.

"This is indeed the path of endurance. Every citizen has to contribute to this process," Aziz said, adding that a difficult move to-

wards balancing government finances was inevitable after years of mounting debts.

"Undoubtedly that process of adjustment to a state where the government balances its budget is a bit painful but it is inevitable," he said.

"We are clearing the burden to remove the obligations that our previous generations have passed on to us. But we could be fortunate to bequeath a future free of such a burden to the coming generations."

Economic growth this year was about the same as the annual increase in Pakistan's 140 million population, meaning per capita GDP did not rise at all in a country where 35 per cent of the population is listed as living in poverty.

Pakistan is struggling under

more than \$60 billion in public debt, including \$37 billion in foreign debt. Servicing it takes more than half the state revenue.

This means the government cannot increase investment in development and stimulate the economy without breaching its agreement with the IMF on containing fiscal deficit.

The government forecast a budget deficit next fiscal year of 4.9 per cent of GDP, down from this year's 5.3 per cent which was already the lowest in 18 years despite repeatedly scaling back revenue goals.

However, the austerity has spawned widespread criticism by politicians and the media about tight spending controls forced by international lenders, which has hit development especially hard.

Sattar and Brajesh on briefing missions to Washington

THE TELEGRAPH

# Pakistan defence bill freeze signal

Islamabad, June 17 (PTI): Pakistan's military regime is expected to announce freezing of its defence expenses at last year's level of Rs 15,500 crore in its budget which is due tomorrow.

Pakistan's economy has been continuing with its downward slide following a drop in its growth rate to an alarming 2.6 per cent, the lowest in 20 years. The country's foreign debt accumulating to a staggering \$26.9 billion, according to the results of the economic survey released here yesterday.

The survey also said the outstanding, the medium and long term foreign debt has accumulated to \$26.9 billion, which amounted to 44.3 per cent of GDP.

The survey also pointed out that the total investment last year has fallen from 15.6 per cent to 14.7 per cent.

In view of depressing trends shown in the economy, the Pervez Musharraf-led regime is expected to keep its promise of freezing the defence budget at last year's level of around Rs 15,500 crore, with a provision to incorporate raise in inflation, which went up by 4.7 per cent from last year's 3.7 per cent.

The budget for 2001-2002 is scheduled to be presented by finance minister Shaukat Aziz over the state television tomorrow.

The survey said the growth of agriculture has fallen by 2.5 per cent due to drought and private sector's investments declined to a negligible 0.1 per cent.

TEL TELETYPE

# Bomb blast injures 2 as strike cripples Karachi



Police officers examine a crater and a damaged vehicle after a bomb blast in Karachi, Pakistan on Wednesday. AP PHOTO

Karachi, June 13 *HP 11/19/6*

TWO PEOPLE were wounded in a bomb blast in the tense Pakistani city of Karachi on Wednesday after a night of violence in which two people were killed and more than a dozen buses torched ahead of a strike.

"A small bomb was placed under a parked car and the car was destroyed completely," said a policeman.

Police and paramilitary units were out on the streets of the city, supported by Army patrols, as the strike began. Most shops and businesses were shuttered, roads were largely deserted and there was little public transport.

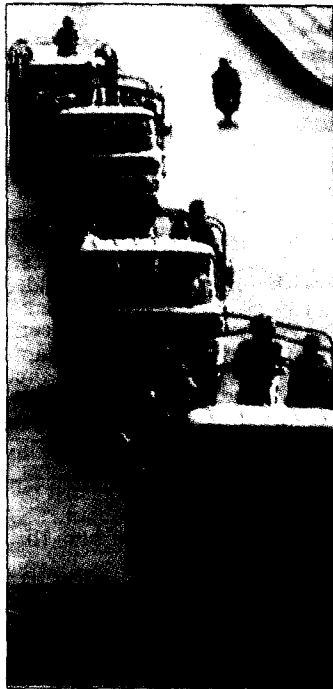
Some shopkeepers said they had either received visits or telephone calls from unidentified people warning them not to open their shops on Wednesday.

But early afternoon buses had begun to run a few routes and there were no further reports of violence.

The strike was called to protest against alleged police brutality on Sunday during demonstrations against shortages of irrigation water in Sindh province.

Two people were shot dead overnight, but the circumstances were unclear. "We shifted two dead bodies to the hospi-

tal in our ambulances," said a worker from the Edhi charity ambulance service. Police said at least 13 buses were set alight overnight.



Pakistani troops on patrol in the strike-sensitive areas of southern Karachi on Wednesday. AP PHOTO

The province-wide strike was called by the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and Jiye Sindh Qaumi Mahaz (JSQM).

The MQM, mainly comprising Urdu-speaking Muslim immigrants from India, together with the nationalist JSQM which represents Sindhis, the traditional inhabitants of Sindh province, are demanding greater autonomy for Pakistan's four provinces. Sindh's second-largest city, Hyderabad was completely shuttered with little traffic reported.

"Three vehicles were burned, two of them Government owned, in early morning violence and there was some shooting (into the air)," said a Hyderabad resident. The MQM and JSQM last called a province-wide stoppage against the water shortages in mid-April when Karachi, the capital of Sindh province, and other major cities were brought to a standstill.

That strike was accompanied by two small bomb blasts in Karachi and the burning of dozens of buses. The MQM blamed the violence on State agencies. Pakistan's military government has banned all public rallies and demonstrations and arrested thousands of political activists in recent months.

Reuters

# Unwelcome sign for Benazir

FROM PRANAY SHARMA  
IN NEW DELHI AND  
AMIT ROY IN LONDON

**June 11: India is not keen on having Benazir Bhutto here for a meeting before the Vajpayee-Musharraf summit, despite the former Pakistan Prime Minister's desire to come to Delhi for talks.**

Benazir wants to meet Atal Bihari Vajpayee before his session with the Pakistan chief executive. But going by indications in South Block, there are not too many takers for the tour proposal at the moment. Asked to comment, foreign ministry spokesman R.S. Jassal said: "I am not aware of any proposal by Benazir Bhutto to come to India."

In private, foreign ministry officials say that even if there is a formal proposal from the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) chairperson, it may not be entertained. Benazir's PPP is part of the Opposition Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy in Pakistan.

In recent interviews, Benazir has raised questions about the

legal status of Musharraf's military regime and has expressed displeasure at India's decision to invite the general. She feels Delhi has provided Musharraf with the legitimacy he has been desperately seeking ever since he assumed power.

Benazir was in Dubai today, but her hostile views about Musharraf's forthcoming trip were made clear through Bashir Riaz, her spokesman in London.

Riaz said she had a long-standing invitation from a parliamentary delegation which visited Islamabad in 1999. "Sushma Swaraj was in the delegation," he said. "But the coup happened on October 12, 1999." Other invitations, he added, had come from NGOs in India. "If she goes to India, I would accompany her," Riaz said. "I doubt very much whether she will go to India just now, maybe later in the year."

Benazir has also said that any agreement Vajpayee and Musharraf arrive at might not be honoured by future governments. "An agreement signed by an unelected and unrepresentative military

ruler would have no legal binding on a future parliament or government in Pakistan," she said in a recent interview with an Indian newspaper.

This is not the first time she is trying to force her way into a summit meeting between an Indian and a Pakistani leader.

In February 1999, when Vajpayee took the peace bus to Lahore and held discussions with Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister then, Benazir had tried to arrange a meeting with the Indian leader. But Vajpayee refused to give her time in spite of several reminders. Delhi's argument was clear: it would not send out any wrong signal that could be interpreted as an attempt to undermine Sharif's authority.

By the same logic, Vajpayee is unlikely to do anything that could antagonise Musharraf. More so, because one reason why Delhi invited him was its assessment that he is likely to be in control for at least the next three to four years and so would be better placed to normalise ties with India.

■ See Page 6

# Musharraf lacks mandate for talks, says Benazir

HQ-12  
12/6

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, JUNE 11.** The former Prime Minister and chairperson of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Ms. Benazir Bhutto, has said her party is not willing to lend any legitimacy to the visit of the Pakistan Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, to New Delhi for peace talks with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, in the absence of a firm date for elections and other conditions for return to democracy.

In an interview to the Pakistan daily, *Dawn*, Ms. Bhutto took exception to the decision of the Indian Government to extend an invitation to Gen. Musharraf and said that it was a reflection of "double mindedness" of India. "Since Gen. Musharraf lacks a mandate to represent the people of Pakistan, his position is weak in negotiating on easing of tension between the two countries."

Last week in an article to another Pakistani daily, Ms. Bhutto had said that Gen. Musharraf would be the weakest leader to travel to New Delhi for talks on outstanding issues and she did not expect any positive outcome from the dialogue.

She has now said: "As far as I can see, the visit will enable Gen. Musharraf to have coffee with Mr. Vajpayee, send smoke signals of peaceful intent to the west, visit his old home and do some shopping. I am willing to be proved wrong but I doubt that the visit

will lead to any substantive agreement regarding Kashmir." Ms. Bhutto is bitter that the military government has not consulted her party despite the fact that she has been an elected Prime Minister twice and leader of the "most popular party". While maintaining that the PPP favoured a dialogue between India and Pakistan for resolution of all outstanding issues, Ms. Bhutto said Gen. Musharraf was not the right person to hold talks.

"Nor would I be willing to lend legitimacy to the visit in the absence of a date for elections, the release of all political prisoners and a representative government," she said. The PPP had given a formula for improvement of relations with India before taking up the Kashmir issue, she said, and it was for both sides to agree to have open and safe border without prejudice to the Security Council resolutions with a view to building a South Asian trading block.

On whether Pakistan should take the All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) on board, Ms. Bhutto said she would not like to comment as she was not privy to the discussions on the subject.

"However, the APHC is a party to the dispute and if the Musharraf regime could have negotiations with New Delhi without the APHC, its leaders may feel that they too could negotiate with India without Islamabad," Ms. Bhutto said.

THE HINDU



## Pakistan told to restore democracy soon

HD-13 by Hasan Suroor 14/6

LONDON, JUNE 13. Pakistan has been told to accelerate the process of return to democracy and announce a date for national elections ahead of the Commonwealth's October deadline if it wants its international isolation to end. This was the message Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, got during his talks here yesterday and today.

Mr. Sattar had little joy if he hoped to buy time for the military regime in Islamabad and there were indications that the Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, might be forced to stay away from the meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) in Brisbane if there was no satisfactory movement towards restoration of democracy by then. As head of a country which stands suspended from the council of the Commonwealth, he cannot take part in CHOGM. PAKO

Mr. Sattar met the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr. Don McKinnon, here today and, though details were not known, sources indicated that the talks were held against the background of Pakistan's attempt to seek a revocation of its suspension. Mr. Sattar is reported to have explained the steps taken by Islamabad to restore democracy and stressed its commitment to democratic institutions. It was not known if he gave any assurance on a time-table for elections or got any sympathy from the Secretary-General, beyond a patient hearing.

Commonwealth sources reiterated the recommendation of the meeting of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group held here in March, that "stronger measures" against Islamabad could be initiated if no definite progress on a time-table for restoration of democracy was made by October.

At his meeting with the new British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Jack Straw, on Tuesday, Mr. Sattar was told that Pakistan must return to democracy without further prevarication and announce a date for elections. The coming Vajpayee-Musharraf summit in New Delhi was welcomed by Britain. The situation in Afghanistan was also discussed. Tomorrow, Mr. Sattar is to address members of the International Institute for Strategic Studies on the subcontinent's security environment.

# Pak court gives Benazir 3-year jail sentence

## Judge cites special anti-corruption laws of regime in convicting Bhutto

BY TAHIR IKRAM

Islamabad, June 10: A Pakistani court sentenced former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to three years in prison on Saturday for her failure to appear on corruption charges.

Court officials said the judge cited special anti-corruption laws of the military-led government of General Pervez Musharraf in convicting Ms Bhutto, who lives in self-imposed exile in Dubai and London. "By avoiding and evading service on herself of the process issued by this court, the accused is clearly guilty of the offence.... Consequently she is convicted under section 31 (a)

of coercive measures taken by the regime to remove her from the political scene ever since the former Prime Minister announced her decision to return home and chase the junta away." The NAB ordinance is a special law of the government against white collar crime and has been criticised as too harsh by human rights groups.

Under section 31 of the NAB ordinance any person who fails to appear before the court or avoids accepting any warrant is liable to three years imprisonment.

The same court last month also issued warrants for Ms Bhutto's immediate arrest if she returned

to Pakistan after she failed to appear in a case investigating her accumulation of assets. Pakistan's Supreme Court in April quashed 1999 corruption convictions that handed the Oxford-educated Ms Bhutto and her husband Asif Ali Zardari five-year jail terms, \$8.6 million in fines and bans from holding public office. It ordered a retrial, saying the verdict was biased. Zardari has been in jail since 1996 when Ms Bhutto was sacked by then President Farooq Leghari.

Ms Bhutto, who was abroad at the time of her 1999 conviction, has said she plans to return to Pakistan at a suitable time. Pak-

istan Peoples Party officials say Ms Bhutto, who was Prime Minister from 1988 to 1990 and from 1993 to 1996, plans to return by August.

Her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was ousted as Prime Minister in a military coup in 1977 and later hanged. Gen. Musharraf, who ousted the Pakistan Muslim League government of Nawaz Sharif in a bloodless coup on October 12, 1999, has said Ms Bhutto and Mr Sharif have no future in politics.

Mr Sharif was exiled to Saudi Arabia in December in return for a pardon on terrorism and hijacking charges related to the coup. (Reuters)

# 3-year jail term for Benazir

Islamabad, June 9 (Reuters): A Pakistani court sentenced former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to three years in prison today for her failure to appear on corruption charges, court officials said.

They said the court cited special anti-corruption laws of the military-led government of Pervez Musharraf for "convicting" Bhutto, who lives in self-imposed exile alternating between Dubai and London. "By avoiding and evading service on herself of the process issued by this court, the accused is clearly guilty of the offence... Consequently she is convicted under section 31 (a) of the NAB ordinance and is sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for three years," said the ruling of Judge Rustam Ali who heads the Accountability Court in Rawalpindi city, near Islamabad. The NAB (National Accountability Bureau) ordinance is a special law of the government against white collar crime and has often been criticised by human rights groups for being too harsh.

Under section 31 of the NAB ordinance any person who fails to appear before the court or avoids accepting any warrants is punishable by three years imprisonment. The same court last month also issued warrants for her immediate arrest if she returned to Pakistan after she failed to appear in a case investigating her accumulation of assets that allegedly could not be explained. Pakistan's Supreme Court in April 1999 quashed corruption convictions that handed Bhutto and her husband Asif Ali Zardari five-year jail terms, \$8.6 million in fines and bans from holding public office. It ordered a retrial, saying the verdict was biased. Zardari has been in jail since 1996 when Bhutto was last sacked by then President Farooq Leghari. Bhutto, who was abroad at the time of her conviction, said she was planning to return to Pakistan at a suitable time.

THE TELEGRAPH

THE TELEGRAPH

THE TELEGRAPH

## New tunes from Islamabad

**T**HE RECENT observations of General Pervez Musharraf and of his opponents on the forthcoming Indo-Pakistani talks are typical of subcontinental politicians who specialise in saying one thing when in power and its exact opposite when out of it. Who could have imagined that a day would come when the Pakistani CEO, author of the Kargil misadventure, will berate the *jehadis* for tarnishing the name of Pakistan? Yet, if he has done so, it is because the 20 months in power in a bankrupt country regarded as a pariah by the rest of the world have made him see the light. But the targets of his stern lecture are apparently still in the same darkness in which the general himself dwelt not long ago, mistakenly believing that India can be bled white by a thousand cuts.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the CEO is now at the receiving end of the *jehadis'* anger, with the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba warning him about paying the price for his "emerging friendship" with Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The Harkut-ul-Mujahideen, on the other hand, has spoken of India being a "very cunning country" and about the need for the general to understand the "Hindu

mentality", thereby reviving memories of Jinnah's description of Hindus as "devious". The reaction of these terrorist outfits is understandable, caught as they are in a cleft stick because of Pakistan's dilemma of pretending to be a moderate Islamic country while surreptitiously encouraging the *jehadi* enterprises with the Taliban's help. But Islamabad has now evidently realised the impossibility of combining the two.

In contrast to such predictable reactions, Benazir Bhutto's dismay over the legitimacy conferred by India on General Musharraf underlines her confusion. New Delhi cannot be expected to fight her political battles. Besides, she has to realise that such a battle cannot be conducted from abroad, for events will then pass her by. It is not for her to condemn an "agreement signed by an unelected and unrepresentative military ruler" even before the deed has been done. It would be more to the point to see the contents of the pact — if and when it is reached — before rejecting it. But her comments are typical of a person out of power, who is more concerned about her personal agenda than about the needs of the country.

# Pakistan's open reproach to terrorists proves just a veil

Our Political Bureau

NEW DELHI 8 JUNE

GENERAL

PERVEZ

Musharraf's open castigation of the Islamic jihad groups may seem like an indication that Pakistan wants to follow the route of moderation.

However, a UN Security Council committee discovered that things were really quite different on the ground, with Pakistan actively helping transportation of arms, finance and supply of "jihadis" to the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The committee, instituted to monitor the arms embargo to the Taliban after implementation of the resolution 1333 sharply criticised Pakistan for sending in young

extremist militants from the numerous madrasas which ensured that even if the ordinary Afghan was unwilling to get into this unending cycle of war and militancy, the Taliban could perpetuate themselves with the help of Pakistani recruits.

"Pakistan must be encouraged to regulate the curricula at the madrasas, particularly those situated near the border with Afghanistan and to actively control the movement of their own nationals and those of other countries in and out of Afghanistan," the committee reported sharply.

The UN secretary-general has been empowered to set up an international organisation to publicise and monitor terrorist camps within

Taliban-controlled Afghanistan.

There is also a sharp finger of accusation pointed at Pakistan regarding the transportation of arms, ammunition and other infrastructure like fuel etc. No matter how much they have stored these weapons, the panel remarked that with summer offensives under way, it is impossible to believe that the Taliban will not need fresh infusions of weapons, ammunition and fuel. This was a direct snub to Pakistan's claims of non-involvement in aiding supplies to the Taliban which will actually constitute a violation of the ban.

The panel, comprising experts from around the world also demanded that the Taliban take

immediate steps to expel "foreign terrorists", itself a problem as many of those concerned would be subject to prosecution in their countries of origin. However, those foreign recruits or mercenaries particularly the "summer offensive reinforcements" who are trawled from the madrasas in Pakistan, could be repatriated... But Pakistan also refused to be able to control movement on their borders. This earned them a rap on the knuckles from the international community, as the panel said, "the committee firmly believes that there are a number of measures and techniques that Pakistan could employ" to stop movements of terrorists and supplies across the border to Afghanistan.

The Taliban's "ban" on opium production has also come under sharp attack. Echoing an Indian position that the ban on the production was little more than an eyewash, the committee observed that it was possible to "question the sincerity of Mullah Omar's faith". They observed that Mulla Omar's ban coincided with the worst drought in Afghanistan in 30 years, and given that the Taliban produced 4,600 tons of opium in 1999, it "confirms the view that the Taliban has accumulated a sizeable stock of opium and heroin and wanted to stop production to prevent prices from spiralling downward." By squeezing the supply in the open market, Taliban has ensured international opium

prices have climbed tenfold.

Pakistan's protestations of innocence came under attack with the committee making damning observations about Pakistan's role in financing the Taliban. Revealing that "considerable financial support has been provided to the Taliban by individuals, private and semi-private agencies in Pakistan including political parties, religious institutions and business cartels much of it with the full knowledge of government officials," which is in addition to being the conduit for money and subsidised fuel for the Taliban transiting through Pakistan. There was veiled criticism of these countries for not signing the UN convention against financing of terrorism.

The Economic Times

# Musharraf briefs commanders

9/6 By B. Muralidhar Reddy 10/1

**ISLAMABAD, JUNE 8.** The top brass of the Pakistan military today, for the first time, formally deliberated on the invitation extended by the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, to the Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, to visit New Delhi for talks.

A statement at the end of the first day of the Core Commanders' conference presided over by Gen. Musharraf merely stated that "discussion also took place on India's positive response to Pakistan's desire for a dialogue on the issue of Kashmir".

The deliberations are considered significant as Gen. Musharraf was expected to apprise his colleagues about the agenda of his proposed summit with Mr. Vajpayee.

It is presumed that Gen. Musharraf took the Core Commanders into confidence on the stand he would adopt on Kashmir. More important, whether Pakistan would agree to sort out differences on other 'out-

standing issues' irrespective of the progress on the Kashmir front. Gen. Musharraf remarked on the appreciation shown by all the countries he recently visited on "Pakistan's position on Kashmir".

Speaking about his recent visits abroad and meetings with foreign dignitaries in Islamabad, Gen. Musharraf was quoted as saying "all the countries were exceptionally positive towards developing greater ties with Pakistan and appreciated Pakistan's principled position on Kashmir".

Barring the one-paragraph reference to the Indian invitation and the one-line quote attributed to Gen. Musharraf on Kashmir, the official statement does not throw any light on the nature of discussions.

On the security situation, the statement said: "The participants reviewed the prevailing geo-strategic environment in the region, the situation along the international borders, Working Boundary and the Line of Control."

PoK  
110 13

# JKLF kept off PoK polls

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 7. The nomination papers of all the candidates of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) led by Mr. Amanullah Khan, for the July 5 general election to the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir Assembly, have been rejected following the refusal of the candidates to sign the declaration that they are for accession of PoK to Pakistan.

In a press statement here, Mr. Amanullah Khan claimed that following the rejection of the nomination papers, the candidates of his party staged protest demonstrations and raised slogans in support of an independent Kashmir.

The JKLF had criticised the provision in the nomination form, which makes it obligatory for the candidates to support accession to Pakistan, as a gross violation of 'human and democratic rights'.

Contention of the JKLF is that the nomination form is contrary to the proclaimed stand of Pakistan in favour of 'right to self-determination' to people of Kashmir.

The provision has always been there and the JKLF has taken cognisance of it only now as it is for the first time it had decided to take part in the election.

In a recent decision, the JKLF has decided to fight in the coming elections in the PoK on the slogan of an 'independent Kashmir'.

The group has also decided to approach Mr. Yasin Malik for a 'reconciliation' and work for the cause of 'Greater independent Kashmir'.

In a letter addressed to the Pakistan President, the Chief Executive, the Foreign Minister, the Minister for Kashmir Affairs and the heads of all important political parties of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir, Mr. Amanullah Khan has protested against the provision.

He said Pakistan openly advocated right of self-determination for Kashmiris and has never claimed any part of Kashmir to be its integral part.

Thus the provision in the nomination form was in total negation of that stand of Pakistan.

He said this provision was tantamount to keeping the pro-independence candidates out of these elections and depriving thousands of their supporters of their right to vote for the candidates of their choice.

"If the last U.N. resolution on Kashmir did not provide for independence to Kashmir as some anti-independence elements argued in support of their refusal to accept Kashmiris right to independence, there was

no provision for bilateral or tripartite talks too in these resolutions.

"What, therefore, was the justification for Pakistan's demand for bilateral or tripartite talks on Kashmir Issue," he asked in the letter.

In a related development the decision of the PoK Government to promulgate an Ordinance prescribing minimum education qualification to contest the election has triggered a controversy. The Ordinance lays down that only those who are at least matriculates could be candidates in the election.

Among the other provisions of the Ordinance include declaration of assets and liabilities by the candidates at the time of filing of nominations.

It is believed that the Ordinance eliminates some of the senior leaders of the opposition Muslim Conference from the contest.

Some of the candidates of the ruling People's Party and its main rival, the Muslim Conference, had challenged the Ordinance in the Supreme Court. But the apex court of the PoK had upheld the Ordinance.

The outcome of the July 5 election would be watched with interest.

The main contest is expected to be between the ruling People's

Party led by the Prime Minister, Barristar Sultan Mahmood, and the Muslim Conference led by the former Prime Minister and President of PoK, Sardar Quayyum.

## Hurriyat ready to contest polls

SRINAGAR, JUNE 7. The Hurriyat Conference, an amalgam of 23 parties spearheading a separatist movement in Kashmir, has expressed its readiness to contest the elections under international supervision to prove its representative character.

"The conglomerate is ready to contest polls to clear misunderstandings of those doubting its following," the senior executive member of Hurriyat, Mr. Abdul Gani Lone said at Batmaloo in Srinagar yesterday.

Referring to the statement of the Government interlocutor, Mr. K C Pant, that the Hurriyat was not a representative body of the people of Kashmir, Mr. Lone said it had become the symbol of the feelings and sentiments of Kashmiris.

Mr. Pant needed a lot of time to know and understand the Kashmir issue, he said, adding that he would get nothing by criticising the conglomerate.— PTI

# 'A testing time for Musharraf'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, JUNE 7.** The stern warning by the Lashkar-e-Taiba chief to the Pakistan military ruler and the Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, that his new found love and friendship with the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, could cost him dearly, has once again brought to the fore the pitfalls ahead in the coming meeting between the leaders of India and Pakistan.

The strong language employed by the Lashkar chief and the implied suggestion that he could compromise on the interests of Pakistan on the vital issue of Kashmir has come as a grim reminder of how powerful the Pakistan-based militant and religious organisations have become in recent years.

Political observers and the diplomatic community are not exactly surprised at the outburst of the Lashkar chief, Prof. Hafeez Mohammad Sayeed, but they do believe that it is a matter of concern. "It is. He would have to assert his authority if the summit with Mr. Vajpayee has to lead somewhere", a senior Western diplomat remarked.

But there is a silver lining in the cloud and this is evident from the reaction of the press and intellectuals on the candid observations of Gen. Musharraf on the reckless and rash statements made by some of the extremist religious and militant outfits.

The dominant section of the Urdu press in

Pakistan has welcomed the speech of Gen. Musharraf but at the same time the refrain is the Government must demonstrate its will to take on the extremist forces.

The immediate fallout of the blunt warning by the Lashkar to Gen. Musharraf is the speculation on whether the militant outfit is speaking on its own or it has the backing of any other influential sections within Pakistan.

At least one Urdu newspaper, *Ausaf*, has echoed the sentiments of the Lashkar. The editor of the paper, Mr. Hamid Mir, in his column has asked Gen. Musharraf to ponder over his observations. "But, he should think as to whom he has benefited the most by making such a rhetoric — big powers or Pakistan? The General must talk against sectarianism and religious violence but linking these forces with Kashmiri Jihad would only endorse the allegations of anti-national forces". "The General is ready to talk to Mr. Vajpayee despite the latter's election manifesto talks about recapturing the PoK. And he gets irritated when anybody talks about raising flag on the Red Fort. Certainly, such statements of Jihadis would have created problems for Pakistan at diplomatic and political fronts. But this is not the way that the General accuses them in front of the international media of misusing Jihad funds. If he knows about such misdeeds, he should clearly tell the name. And if he doesn't have any evidence, he should refrain from

making such false allegations. Instead, the General should first read the file regarding ISI's misuse of secret funds," he said.

In editorial the largest circulated Urdu paper, *Jang*, said the religious parties should realise the pain behind Gen. Musharraf's statement and pay attention to his appeal to end sectarian hysteria in the country.

"We should also realise that the claims of raising flag on the Red Fort are contrary to the dignity of Islam and the nation. Such statements distort Pakistan's image. We should sincerely think about Gen. Musharraf's appeal and join hands to make our country economically prosperous".

Another Urdu paper said that Gen. Musharraf in his address to the Secrat Conference has given the impression that he is in favour of separating the religion from politics. But he has ignored the fact that Pakistan is an ideological state and Islam is the very foundation of it. The paper said the Pakistani nation had been rejecting those, who had been indulging in sectarianism, but, on the other hand, it could not shun the path of Islam. "If Gen. Musharraf himself had faith in the Prophet's teaching, he should first follow his path and restore democracy in the country."

They should identify such elements in their parties and groups, which have been damaging country's image abroad, and fulfil their responsibility towards the nation.



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# Musharraf's advice evokes mixed response 7/6

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, JUNE 6.** The Pakistan Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf's advice to the militant outfits and extremist religious outfits, to refrain from making reckless statements, has evoked a mixed response.

While the Al-Badar has refuted Gen. Musharraf's charges and urged him to act against elements indulging in rhetoric, rather than make 'vague' allegations, the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen has agreed with him partially.

Gen. Musharraf's remarks, in a function organised to coincide with the birthday celebrations of Prophet Mohammad on Tuesday, have not gone unnoticed in the diplomatic community. Senior diplomats feel the military ruler has at last 'mustered courage' to tell the extremist outfits and the militant organisations that the Government will not remain a mute spectator to their rash rhetoric. They see a link between the summit meeting between the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and Gen. Musharraf, and the tough posture of the General.

At the same time, the diplomatic community would like to wait for real action to see if the Government means business. "The proof of the pudding lies in the eating. All these years and months, the Government kept silent on the thunder from these or-

ganisations giving an impression that there is official patronage to statements, particularly against India and the Indian leadership. It is a good sign that the Musharraf Government has finally decided to check the reckless propaganda," a western diplomat said.

The Al-Badar chief, Mr. Bhakt Zamin, attacked Gen. Musharraf for making 'ambiguous' statements, accusing some extremist outfits of misappropriating funds collected for the welfare of Kashmiri refugees. He also denied that

the jihadi groups were behind sectarian violence in Pakistan.

Maintaining that his organisation had been prepared to submit audited accounts for the scrutiny of Pakistan's Interior Ministry following statements from the Interior Minister, Moinuddin Haider, earlier, Mr. Zamin said "we spend every penny of the contributions made by our brethren under an organised system." Gen. Musharraf's statement had injured the feelings of the heirs of the "martyrs and selfless mujahideen."

## Lashkar warning to Musharraf

By Our Special Correspondent

**ISLAMABAD, JUNE 6.** In a sharp reaction to the criticism against the extremist religious organisations and militant outfits for their "irresponsible statements," the Lashkar-e-Toiba tonight warned the Pakistani military ruler and the Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, that his new found love for and friendship with the Indian Prime Minister could cost him dearly.

In a statement here, the Lashkar chief, Hafeez Mohammad Sayeed, urged Gen. Musharraf not to be influenced by the Indian "sweet-talk" and forget the sacrifices made by 80,000 Kashmiris in their struggle for the right to self-determination.

He sought to remind the military ruler that the Kashmir issue had attracted international recognition in view of the attack by the Lashkar activists on the Red Fort in December last year. "Gen. Musharraf should learn to deal with the Hindu baniyas the same way that Mohammad Ali Jinnah had dealt with them".

Asserting that dialogue between India and Pakistan could never succeed without the involvement of the Kashmiris, he said Gen. Musharraf appeared to be singing the "Indian tune only for his survival."

THE HINDU

## Musharraf asks clerics to be more responsible

Islamabad, June 5 (PTI): Pakistan military ruler Parvez Musharraf today asked Islamic clerics to stop making "irresponsible statements" which led to Pakistan being dubbed as a "terrorist state".

"The world thinks that we are terrorists and responsible for violence around the world," Musharraf told a gathering of Islamic clerics at a religious conference here, adding that he would not allow religion to be used for political purposes. Musharraf said: "We are not tolerant and progressive and this is the situation we are living in now," he said.

"We have to achieve progress in the economic field in unison with our military power to get our point of view accepted at the international level," he told the conference attended by over 5000 ulemas and organised as part of the Milad Nabi celebrations.

He said because of the law and order problem, Pakistan is in danger of being declared a terrorist state.

### Baluchistan ban

The military government kept a rigid grip on Baluchistan province today, searching for any politicians intent on defying an official ban on planned pro-democracy demonstrations.

Police confirmed they had arrested a number of members of the 16-party Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (ARD) based in Baluchistan, a sprawling, impoverished province bordering Iran. But others, anticipating police raids, went into hiding before the authorities began the round-up.

THE TELEGRAPH

JUNE 5 1999

## ~~Pervez regime~~ legitimate till Oct 2002: CJ

2/6 11/11  
Islamabad, June 3

GENERAL PERVEZ Musharraf's military regime will lose legitimacy after October, 2002, media reports today quoted the Chief Justice of Pakistan as having said.

"The legitimacy given to the Musharraf government was conditional. It was inter-linked and inter-twined with the holding of general elections. It will lose its legitimacy if elections are not held in time," Justice Irshad Hasan Khan said at a function on Saturday.

But he dismissed fears that the General may not abdicate. "The Chief Executive has unequivocally said he would hold elections by that time. After that nothing is in doubt." The Supreme Court, while disposing of a host of petitions in May 2000 questioning the legality of the October 1999 military coup staged by General Musharraf, had accorded "limited legitimacy" to the new regime. The court said the new government should hand over power to an elected regime by October 2002. **PTI**

THE HINDUSTAN

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# Haider under fire for remarks on Jehadi outfits

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, MAY 31.** The Islamic Ideological Council of Pakistan has chided the Interior Minister, Lt. Gen. (retd.) Moimuddin Haider, for his statements against Jehadi (those engaged in the fight in defence of Islam) outfits.

The reported warning issued by the Council, a government body, assumes significance as the military government is all set to launch an ambitious 'de-weaponisation' programme from tomorrow to contain sectarian and extremist religious

organisations. The much-talked about plan envisages recovery of arms from the various outfits and individuals.

According to many surveys and estimates, illegal arms have come into Pakistan in a big way particularly in the aftermath of the Afghan war.

In the course of a three-day meeting, the Council has observed that Mr. Haider's attitude towards the Jehadi outfits is not appropriate and he and his Ministry should be careful in making statements on them.

It has said that the stand taken by these outfits is right and any operation against

them will be opposed. In the concluding session, it strongly criticised Mr. Haider for his recent statements and observed that he had been talking the language of the Indian Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani.

The Council also said that creating confusion about the outfits was contrary to Jehad and its objectives. It said that these outfits were completing national, Pakistani and Islamic mission.

"They (Jehadis) don't indulge in political or religious affairs and their main target are India, Israel, Russia and Serbia, where Muslims are being subjected to worst ever

atrocities," the Council is believed to have observed.

Mr. Haider had been engaged in a war of words with the Jehadi outfits for the last few months over the alleged forcible collection of funds and public display of arms. Annoyed with this, some of the outfits filed a writ petition in the Lahore High Court.

The Court in its oral observations in the course of the hearings said that no one had the right to stop collection of Jehad funds. In the wake of the controversy, the Interior Ministry had sought advice from the Council on the behaviour of the Jehadi outfits.

THE HINDU

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