

Pak Senate ratifies Musharraf's amendments

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Dec. 30. — Pakistan's Parliament today ratified General Pervez Musharraf's modified constitutional amendments and endorsed his election as President through a referendum with two-thirds majority, partially ending a year-long political deadlock between the government and the opposition.

The 17th constitutional amendment, consisting the provisions of his agreement with Islamist alliance Muttahida Majlis-e Amal (MMA),

was approved by the 100-member upper house called Senate with 72 votes to none.

The 342-member National Assembly already approved of the Musharraf-MMA pact two days ago.

The ratification, however, would only partially end the political deadlock in the country as the mainstream opposition parties, including Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N), denounced the agreement as the Mullah-Military pact to subvert democracy in the

country.

The two parties, which were part of the 15-member Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD), boycotted the voting in the Senate.

The MMA, till recently opposed to Musharraf's Presidency and having boycotted Parliament for over an year, agreed to approve of his controversial amendments and his election through a referendum last year, after he agreed early this month to quit as Chief of Army by December 2004.

The Bill would become part of Constitution after Musharraf for-

mally signs it.

Gen. Musharraf is, meanwhile, all set to get a confidence vote with a simple majority in all the four provincial assemblies before 1 January and would have the status as an elected President ahead of the January 4-6 SAARC summit.

Officials said Gen. Musharraf had abandoned his plans to visit the provincial capitals to address provincial assemblies in view of the recent attempts on his life.

Instead, he addressed the members of the provincial assemblies at his residence in Rawalpindi.

Under the newly amended constitution, Gen. Musharraf would have powers to dissolve the Parliament and Assemblies but his decision would be referred to the Supreme Court for a review within 15 days and the apex court would take a decision on it within 30 days.

The new law enables Gen. Musharraf to constitute the military-dominated National Security Council through an Act of Parliament.

He would also retain the power to appoint chiefs of the armed forces. Previously the power was vested with the Prime Minister.



Gen Pervez Musharraf

31 DEC 2003

THE STATESMAN

Jaish man among Pervez attackers

vt-5 28/12/03

Agencies
Islamabad, December 28

A DAY after India said the December 25 bid on President Musharraf's life was a fallout of Islamabad's abatement of terrorism, a Pakistani minister said on Sunday that Kashmiri and Afghan militant groups were behind the assassination attempt.

"Both the suicide bombers have been identified. One of them belonged to Kashmir (PoK) and the other was from the North West Frontier Province, Pakistan's Information Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed said.

Pakistan daily *The Nation* said investigations and interrogation of 20 people detailed since the attack had revealed that one of the suicide bombers, Jamil, belonged to the Jaish-e-Mohammad or its breakaway group Khudamul Islam. The other man was most probably a Chechen.

Jamil was a member of the JeM whose leader Masood Azhar was released by India some years ago in exchange for the safety of passengers on board an Indian Airlines flight hijacked to Kandahar, the Nation added. Jaish was banned last year after which Azhar floated Khudamul Islam, which too was banned recently by Musharraf.

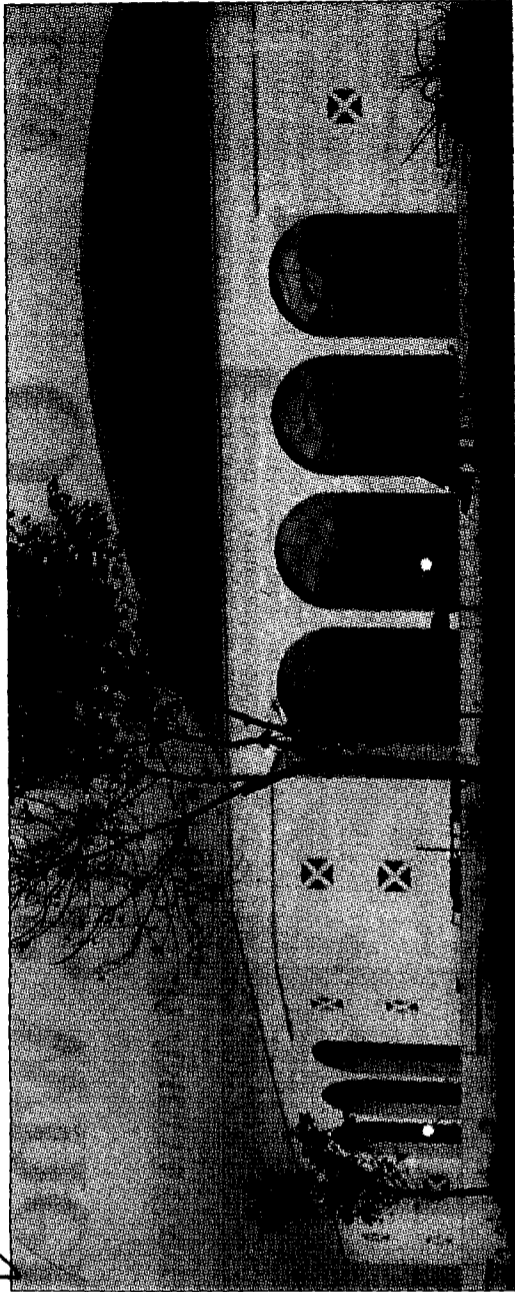
Other newspapers said the

local suicide bomber had been identified as Muhammad Jamil of Rawalkot in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir — a man who had links with al-Jehad, a little-known Pakistani militant group.

But there appeared to be some confusion over the identity of the Chechen militant, who was member of a Chechen group loyal to the al-Qaida. The JeM, though focussed chiefly on Kashmir, had al-Qaida and Taliban links. The Nation said the identification of the two suicide bombers, whose faces were found to be intact, had led to several arrests in Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Rawalakot in PoK.

The clues found at the blast site, including a chip of the cell phone carried by one of the attackers and the chassis and engine numbers of the two cars used in the attack had led to the arrests, *The Nation* said. The owner of one of the cars identified Jamil — from the engine and chassis numbers — as the man who had bought the car a few days ahead of the attack. Other newspapers said Jamil belonged to a religious party and had left home several years ago.

Two suicide car bombers tried to ram explosives-laden vehicles into Musharraf's car on Thursday in Rawalpindi.



A security guard sifs outside the convention centre in Islamabad on Sunday. This is the main venue for the coming Saarc summit.

REUTERS

What if the Pak President is killed

Pramit Pal Chaudhuri
New Delhi, December 28

WHAT WILL happen to the peace process if the next attempt on Pervez Musharraf's life proves successful?

For New Delhi, it would most certainly mean that the diplomatic momentum built up through this year would be lost. Any new Pakistani leader would need to go

through a period of consolidation of one to two years before recommitting himself to a dialogue with India.

The general view is that Musharraf's successor would be Army Vice-Chief Md Yusuf. He is seen as a moderate — and even more friendly to the US than Musharraf.

Yusuf would probably not have too many problems with his senior officers. Only two

or three of the 10 corps commanders are seen as Islamists. B. Raman, RAW's former Pakistan expert, says only one of the 30 officers of lieutenant-general rank and above is definitely a jihadi. Some Indian sceptics argue Yusuf would be a better bet for India than Musharraf, who showed his true colours at Agra. The tougher question would be the choice of the president.

If Musharraf dies, Mian Muhammad Sumroo would become the full-fledged president and elections would have to be held in three months. There is no question of the army going back to the barracks, say diplomatic sources. But the posts of president and army chief have to be separated within a year. Result: A hunt for a pliant civilian for the presidency.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2003

UNDER DANGEROUS SIEGE

HD-12
20/12

THE ATTEMPT ON the life of Pervez Musharraf, the unelected President of Pakistan, the second in 10 days, is shocking for how close his would-be assassins came to accomplishing their mission. Although it is not clear yet who is responsible for the assassination attempts, there is no doubt that ever since he aligned himself with the United States in the "war on terror", General Musharraf has antagonised several sections of people in his country. From his crackdown — under pressure from the Bush administration — on terror groups and Islamist radical organisations to his cooperation in a U.S. investigation against Pakistani nuclear weapons scientists for allegedly selling sensitive technology abroad, President Musharraf is perceived by hardliners in Pakistan as no more than a puppet of the West. Caught between those in his own country who believe he has capitulated to a U.S. hegemonist agenda and his Western allies who think he has not made good on his promise to create a terror-free, modern Muslim state, President Musharraf is today a besieged leader. His brush with death twice this month will certainly win him sympathy from the West. But his narrow escape and the failure of Pakistani intelligence to detect and pre-empt the threats to his life underscore the General's steadily weakening hold over his country in the aftermath of 9/11, particularly after the farcical April 2002 referendum that gave him a five-year term in office.

The Christmas Day attack on General Musharraf, which came soon after he announced his decision to step down as Army Chief by December 2004, raises several interesting questions for the future of Pakistan's domestic politics. The Pakistan President agreed to shed his uniform as part of a deal between the Government and the six-party Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), the main Opposition. In return, the MMA, which had paralysed the functioning of the Na-

tional Assembly in protest against General Musharraf's continuation as Army Chief and his self-serving amendments to the Constitution, agreed he could continue in office for the remainder of the five years he won in the referendum. While the agreement reached with the MMA gave the military ruler some political breathing space, there is no doubt that without the backing of his uniform, he will find his status and stock greatly weakened. The repeated attempts on his life might prompt him to rethink the decision.

Pak (1)

Given that Pakistan's present moves at *rap-prochement* are guided by General Musharraf, his continuance in power has obvious implications for India. However, it will be a cardinal folly to hitch the bilateral wagon to General Musharraf's star. Naturally, the assassination attempt has cast a shadow over the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation summit, which is to be held in Islamabad from January 4 to 6. It has raised legitimate concerns about the security of the event that will be attended by the leaders of its member countries, including Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. For his part, the Pakistan President has been at pains to emphasise that there was no lapse in security in the latest attempt on his life and that, in any case, he alone is the target. India, which condemned the attack, has not indicated any change in Mr. Vajpayee's plans to travel to Islamabad. The summit is an important event in the SAARC calendar. It provides the leaders of its seven member-countries an opportunity to exchange views on important regional issues, particularly trade. The summit also sets the agenda of the grouping for the next year. The members of SAARC must ensure that the Islamabad summit is held as scheduled — provided they can get credible guarantees that their leaders are not at risk.

THE HINDU

27 DEC 2003

2003

Another attempt on Musharraf

■ 14 KILLED, OVER 40 INJURED
■ AL-QAEDA HAND SUSPECTED

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 25. The Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, today escaped another attempt on his life, the second in 11 days, when suicide bombers rammed two cars into his motorcade and killed 14 persons in the high security zone of the Rawalpindi cantonment. The toll could mount as 45 others injured were receiving treatment.

There was panic and anxiety in the establishment as the attackers struck almost at the same spot where there was an attempt on the General's life on December 14. The Government's immediate worry seems one of ensuring that the SAARC Summit scheduled from January 4 to 6 is not jeopardised.

Like the December 14 attempt, no group has claimed responsibility for today's incident. The suspicion, however, is on the Al-Qaeda. A few weeks ago, a tape claimed to have been released by the outfit, had urged the "faithful" to target the General for his "collaboration" with the United States.

The Pakistan Information Minister, Sheikh Rashid, said in a statement that the windshield of Gen. Musharraf's car was hit by the debris of the car involved in the attack. However, the President was unhurt.

The attack occurred at 2.10 p.m. (IST) as Gen. Musharraf was travelling to his camp office in Rawalpindi. His official residence is just two km away from the scene of attack.

According to the Minister two blasts went off in succession after attackers in two cars tried to

ram the President's vehicle. It appears the attackers were waiting in two cars as the police had stopped the traffic to allow the General's convoy to pass.

Repeat of December 14?

The latest attack is almost a repeat of the December 14 bid on the President's life when his motorcade missed a powerful explosion on a bridge in a matter of seconds, also in Rawalpindi, the headquarters of the Pakistani military. A jammer device that did not allow the bomb to be triggered saved his life then.

"I have talked to the President after the blasts. He is safe and his staff also remained unhurt," Mr. Rashid said, adding that in his personal view, it would be better for Gen. Musharraf to appear on television

and scotch rumours about the incident.

The Minister said the attackers came from two different petrol pumps as the convoy headed towards Gen. Musharraf's residence. The people who died were civilians who were either passing by or filling up their cars at the petrol pumps.

"It was a security lapse, I would say. It was a Christmas Day and there was a worldwide alert. We should have made some extra arrangements. It's a serious incident. It is too early to pinpoint who were behind these attacks," he told reporters.

The General has incurred the wrath of the militant groups within and without after he chose to align with the United States in the war on terrorism.

Will Musharraf review decision? : Page 17

'I am their target'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 25. The Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, said tonight that he and not the leaders who are slated to be in Pakistan in January to attend the SAARC summit, was the target of the terrorists who attacked his convoy this afternoon.

It was wrong to conclude that every one in Pakistan was unsafe on the basis of the two attacks on him in the last two weeks, he told the state-controlled Pakistan Televi-

sion (PTV).

Also, there was no lapse of security, he said and argued that there was no way one could prevent suicide attacks. That some police personnel deputed on the route of his convoy were killed was proof of their dedication.

He said the attackers were terrorists and extremists who were hell bent on giving a bad name to Islam and Pakistan. He was not deterred by such cowardly acts and would continue to fight for elimination of such forces.

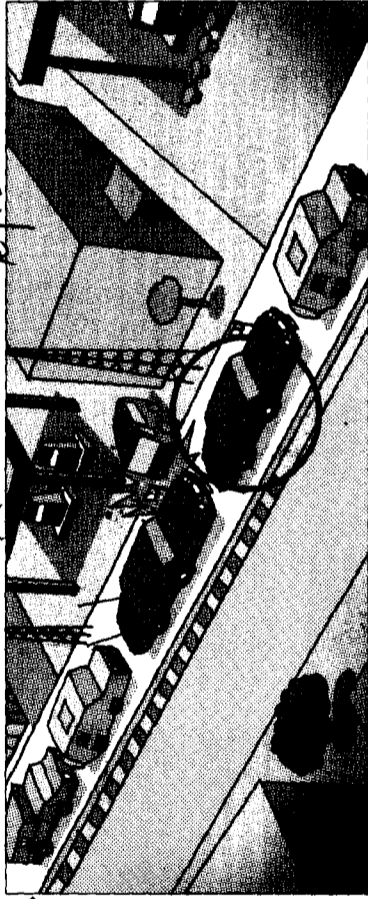
Musharraf survives twin blasts

Where → How →



Musharraf regularly takes the main road between Islamabad and Rawalpindi to shuttle between office and home

Graphic: JAYANTO and VINEY



2.15 pm IST Van with 25 kg of explosives rushes out of petrol pump on main Rawalpindi road and tries to ram Musharraf's Mercedes but hits the decoy car just behind. Blast damages President's car



2 Seconds later Back-up suicide van at another petrol pump, 50 metres ahead, tries to plough into convoy but hits a parked police vehicle. Massive explosion damages three cars

Mubashir Zaidi/Agencies Islamabad, December 25

PAKISTANI PRESIDENT Pervez Musharraf on Thursday survived a second assassination bid in 11 days when two car bombers attacked his motorcade, killing 14 persons and wounding 46.

The blasts, which took place on the same main road in Rawalpindi where the General narrowly escaped a massive explosion on December 14, damaged the President's Mercedes. "The windshield was hit by some splinters but the President was unhurt," government spokesman and Information Minister Sheikh Rashid said on state television.

Rashid said Musharraf was on his way to his residence in Rawalpindi after attending a function in Islamabad.

According to AFP, two explosives-laden vehicles, with suicide bombers at

their wheels, were waiting at two petrol stations just 50 metres apart.

An eyewitness, Nasir Siddiqui, told reporters at the site that he was at the first petrol pump when Musharraf's convoy passed. "I saw a Suzuki van suddenly appear on the road and hit a black Mercedes just behind Musharraf's car," he said. The explosion damaged several vehicles in the convoy. Siddiqui said: "After a few seconds, I heard another blast and saw human body parts flying in the air."

Both petrol stations were completely destroyed. The explosions shattered windows across a wide area and damaged overhead electricity cables, disrupting power supply in the area.

A senior police officer later told state media that each of the two vehicles which rammed the President's motorcade were carrying about 25-30 kilograms of explosives, reported AFP.

Why him, why now?



Saarc repellent Indo-Pak relations are on the mend. Interior Minister Faisal Hayat says disgruntled elements in Pakistan want to sabotage January Saarc summit

Al-Qaida backlash The General has too many enemies. His crackdown on terror has led to dozens of al-Qaida operatives landing in America's net

Most people who died were civilians either passing by or filling petrol, Rashid said. A soldier and three policemen were among the dead. "It was a security lapse. It was Christmas and there was a worldwide alert. We should have made some extra arrangements," Rashid told reporters.

Interior Minister Faisal Saleh Hayat said, "This may be an attempt by disgruntled elements who do not want to see the Saarc summit held and want Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to cancel his visit."

Appearing on state television, Musharraf said the attack on his life had only strengthened his resolve and mission to eliminate terrorism and extremism from Pakistan.

Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali called an emergency Cabinet meeting after the blast and appealed to

the public to identify the plotters.

Officials probing the December 14 assassination attempt said it was the work of al-Qaida. Investigators said five bombs planted on a bridge had failed to explode while Musharraf's convoy was passing over it because of radio-jamming device used by his security team had blocked all wireless communications within a radius of 200 metres. The bombs ripped up the bridge seconds after the convoy had passed.

India was quick to condemn Thursday's "heinous terrorist attack". Afghanistan's government also expressed relief that the plot had failed.

Thursday's blasts marked the third close shave for Musharraf. Three men were sentenced to 10 years' hard labour in October for their role in the first plot, in which a truck bomb was left on the path of Musharraf's motorcade.

Pakistan overhauls nuke command

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Dec. 24. — The Pakistani army has launched a “massive overhaul” of its nuclear control and command structure following allegations of proliferation of sensitive technology leading to investigations against its top scientists.

According to the new setup, the army has assigned two Lieutenant-



Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan. His daughter has told BBC that the prominent Pakistani scientist was being used as a scapegoat in a row over the alleged transfer of nuclear technology to Iran. — AFP

Generals to separately command the strategic force as well as the military units that exclusively handle the nuclear weapons, the newspaper *News* said today. A separate strategic planning and development cell has been set up to coordinate with and control the experts and scientists' community attached with the research and development of the country's strategic arsenal.

Currently, Pakistan's Strategic Force Command is led by Lt-Gen Ghulam Mustafa Khan, while Lt-Gen Khalid Kidwai headed the Strategic Planning and Division Cell.

Both organisations have devised exclusive intelligence, financial and administrative controls considered better than those enforced in Pakistani army, the newspaper quoted officials as saying.

Both Generals report directly to the Nuclear Command Authority that is under Gen Musharraf.

The NCA, formed in 2000, is responsible for policy formulation and exercises full employment and development control over all strategic nuclear forces and strategic organisations.

Reports of revamping of Pakistan nuclear command came amid allegations from International Atomic Energy Agency following revelations by Iran and Libya of Islamabad's collaboration in the nuclear programmes in both the countries.

Pakistan government as well as selective leaks in the media here during the past few days put the blame of proliferation squarely on the country's top nuclear scientists, including the father of its atomic bomb Dr AQ Khan, and cited the reasons like “personal greed” for the proliferation. The paper said it was these reasons that made Gen. Musharraf to replace Dr Khan with Dr Javed Mirza as the chief of Kahuta Research Laboratory in 2001.

NEWS DIGEST

Musharraf has a close shave

Islamabad: Pakistan President Gen Pervez Musharraf had a providential escape on Sunday night when a powerful bomb went off minutes after his highly-guarded convoy crossed a bridge in Rawalpindi.



Pakistan defence ministry spokesman Major General Shoukat Sultan told the media here that Gen Musharraf was safe and the blast had not caused any casualties but only damaged the bridge partially. Information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said the president was returning home to Army House in Rawalpindi, near here, from the city's airport after his visit to Karachi. PTI

Two Pak nuclear scientists held

Links with Iran suspected

Islamabad: Two scientists of Pakistan's top nuclear laboratory have been taken into custody for questioning, sources said on Thursday. The scientists at the Khan Research Laboratories (KRL) were being interrogated after complaints were made against them, said a government official and two Pakistanis affiliated with the country's nuclear programme.

All three spoke on condition of anonymity. Confirming reports in three Pakistani newspapers, the sources identified the two detained men as Yasin Chohan and Mohammad Farooq, former director general of the laboratories. Farooq also is a former aid to the founder of Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme, Abdul Qadeer Khan, who had the research laboratories named after him.

The sources declined to describe the complaints that were made against Chohan and Farooq, or where they originated. They also denied a story in Thursday's *The Nation* newspaper saying that the two men were being interrogated about their alleged links with Iran's nuclear programme. Pakistan, a nuclear-armed nation, has been accused of sharing its technological know-how with other nations, a charge it fiercely denies.

KRL is the country's

main nuclear weapons laboratory where uranium is enriched, according to the Federation of American Scientists. Working with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Iranian government recently agreed to sign the additional protocol of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, another step toward fulfilling its commitment to allowing unrestricted inspection of its nuclear facilities.

Pakistan, a nuclear-armed nation, has been accused of sharing its technological know-how with other nations, a charge it fiercely denies

The United States suspects Iran of conducting a secret programme to build nuclear bombs, and the IAEA has identified Russia, China and Pakistan as probable sources for equipment used by Iran for possible nuclear weapons development, according to diplomats. When word first began to emerge on Wednesday that at least one Khan Research Laboratories scientist had been taken into custody in connection with allegations that Pakistan had sold nuclear technology to Iran, Pakistan's ministry of foreign affairs would not confirm that. AP

Jamaat ✓ rejects hike in salaries of Pak MPs

IMTIAZ GUL

Islamabad, Nov. 20: The Jamaat-e-Islami, which is locked in a confrontation with the pro-Musharraf ruling coalition, has turned down the recent 130 per cent increase in the salaries of MPs as "political gratification".

While most members in the 342-member National Assembly accepted the raise, Jamaat chief Qazi Hussein Ahmed informed the assembly secretariat that he would forego the revised monetary benefits along with his colleague in the Senate, Khursheed Ahmed.

The adoption of the government-sponsored resolution means that salaries of members of parliament will now go up from Rs 17,500 to Rs 38,000 per month with allowances for utilities and maintenance of offices.

Though most legislators, including those from the Opposition welcomed the move, Qazi Hussein Ahmed rejected it saying it was "shameful to accept such massive monetary benefits in a situation where the public representatives virtually did nothing in the parliament".

"We disapprove the unprecedented increase in salaries and perks, which will put an additional burden on the national exchequer," Khursheed Ahmed said.

"There is no justification to increase allowances as most of the members are millionaires," he said.

The finance ministry has allocated Rs 150 million as arrears for the last four months, bringing the monthly average for this period to a whopping Rs 320,000.

A spokesperson for the party, which is a member of the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), a six-party religious alliance, said it was trying to persuade alliance partners to reject the raise.

The issue is likely to come up for discussion at the MMA's meeting in Islamabad.

"We also take exception to the impending purchase of 24 new cars for chairmen of standing committees of the Parliament," the spokesman said.

Pak. court rejects Hashmi's bail plea

Pak (1)
119-1A 18711 By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, NOV. 17. The Pakistan Lahore High Court bench has rejected a petition seeking the release on bail of the President of the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD), Javed Hashmi. He has been under detention for over two weeks now on charges of attempting to defame the army.

The Rawalpindi bench of the Lahore High Court today rejected the petition filed by Mr. Hashmi's daughter, Memona Hashmi, and asked her to file the same petition in the lower court, which remanded his father to judicial custody.

Opposition parties in Pakistan and several non-governmental organisations have been critical of the Government for the arrest of Mr. Hashmi and demanded his immediate release. However, the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, justified the action and said that some persons in the Opposition were exceeding the limit and targeting national institutions.

Opposing the bail plea, the prosecution lawyer, Shiber Raza Rizvi, told the court that Mr. Hashmi had distributed a fake letter to create a rift within the army and that he does not deserve any relief. Ms. Memona said she would wait to get a written copy of the court ruling and her lawyers will challenge the High Court verdict in the Supreme Court. Mr. Hashmi, who is also the Acting President of Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), was accused of releasing a fake letter, purportedly written by army personnel, to the media on October 29 calling for an inquiry into Kargil war and criticised the army top brass for continuing to dabble in politics.

Court rejects plea for Nawaz party leader release

IMTIAZ GUL

Islamabad, Nov. 17: The Rawalpindi bench of the Lahore High Court today dismissed a petition filed by the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) challenging the "illegal arrest and detention" of its acting president Javed Hashmi.

"The habeas corpus petition becomes irrelevant since an FIR has already been lodged and Hashmi has been sent to jail on judicial remand," Justice Mansoor Ahmad said in his short order after a week-long hearing.

Hashmi's daughter, Memona, also a member of parliament, had pleaded in her petition that her father had been forcibly picked up and taken to an undisclosed location without fulfilling legal requirements.

State counsel Munir Ahmad Bhatti had urged the court to dismiss Memona's plea as the petitioner's counsels have already obtained a copy of the FIR and remand order. However, defence counsel Aitzaz Ahsan sought Javed Hashmi's release on bail, saying the court had the jurisdiction to interfere if an accused is treated illegally or improperly.

Javed Hashmi had been arrested on October 29 from his residence after being charged with treason following a complaint by a private individual for "using provocative language against the armed forces and fanning hatred against them."

Hashmi had produced a letter at a press conference, which he claimed to have received from an army officer. The controversial letter, though rejected by an army spokesman as "fabricated", had called for an investigation into the conduct of the army in the political affairs of the country.

Reacting to the High Court's short order, Memona said: "We knew the court will not nullify the illegal detention of my father."

She said the PML (N) would move the Supreme Court against the Lahore High Court's decision after consultations with senior party leaders.

Memona said she had also written letters to members of the diplomatic corps in Islamabad and drew their attention towards the plight of her father.

Pak. bans renamed militant groups 16/11

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, NOV. 15. Pakistan tonight banned three militant groups, including the Jaish-e-Mohammad — which is functioning under a new name after it was proscribed in January 2001 — under the Anti-Terrorist Act.

The decision was taken today at a joint meeting presided over by the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, and the Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, and attended by the four provincial Chief Ministers at Rawalpindi.

Three days ago, the United States Ambassador to Pakistan, Nancy J. Powell, had said that Washington was concerned over the re-establishment of the banned militant outfits under new names and was working with Islamabad to check their activities.

India has been maintaining since the much-publicised speech of Gen. Musharraf on January 11, 2001 — in which he outlined the steps contemplated by his Government to crack down on militancy — that Isla-

mabad has not been serious in moving against terrorist outfits. However, Pakistan has contested the argument.

An estimated 2,000 activists of the banned outfits were then taken into custody from different parts of Pakistan after Gen. Musharraf's speech and these included the Jaish chief, Masood Azar, and the Lashkar chief, Hafeez Saeed. However, the Government had to release them a few months later as it had not filed formal chargesheets against them.

The latest decision assumes significance, as Pakistan is to host the SAARC Summit in the first week of January and has been urging New Delhi to come to the negotiating table for a formal dialogue to resolve all differences between the two countries.

The outlawed organisations after the nomenclature changes are the Shia Tehreek-i-Islami Pakistan, the Sunni Millat-e-Islami (sectarian militant outfits) and the Khudam-ul Islam (Jaish). Khudam-ul-Islam has been accused of sending mili-

tants across the Line of Control into Kashmir.

Another militant group, the Jama-ul-Dawa, which came into being as a substitute for the parent outfit of the then Lashkar, has been placed on a "watch list" under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997.

At today's meeting, Gen. Musharraf and Mr. Jamali were quoted as telling the Chief Ministers and officials to evolve a comprehensive strategy to address issues pertaining to improvement and maintenance of law and order.

An official statement said the meeting took stock of the law and order situation to streamline short, medium and long-term measures to improve the overall security environment.

Gen. Musharraf told the meeting that although a lot of effort was being made to put Pakistan on the path of progress, it was imperative that the outside world perceived a visible improvement in environment so that the country could realise its potential as a regional economic hub.

Zardari completes seven years in jail

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, NOV. 3. Asif Ali Zardari, husband of the former Pakistan Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, today created a record of sorts as he completed seven years behind the bars without conviction in a single case.

There are seven Accountability References (misuse of office, corruption and accumulation of wealth beyond known sources of income) pending against him at Rawalpindi and Attock Fort, and six criminal cases in Karachi since 1996. He is being tried in special courts under special laws.

Mr. Zardari was arrested on November 4, 1996. He has been in prison through the unfinished Nawaz regime, the three-year military rule of Pervez Musharraf and nearly one-year civil rule of Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali.

Strangely none of the regimes till date has been able to obtain a conviction against Mr. Zardari even in a single case. The law provides for statutory bail after two years in jail but this is denied to him.

It also provides for the release of a person on medical grounds, again denied to him though he claims to have provided necessary proof of ill-health to authorities.

Mr. Zardari is a special prisoner as he not

only monitors the functioning of the Pakistan People's Party but also guides it. He makes it a point to be available to the press every time he is produced in a court of law in connection with some case or the other.

The PPP has bestowed him the title of "prisoner of conscience" and misses no opportunity to publicise the plight of Mr. Zardari and his family. His children who stay with Ms. Bhutto, living in exile in Dubai, were recently flown for a union with the father and for the PPP it was an emotional moment.

Tomorrow, the party rank and file is holding a protest demonstration in front of Parliament House against the continued incarceration of Mr. Zardari. MNAs and Senators led by the vice-chairman, PPP, Makhdoom Amin Fahim will then march towards the Supreme Court building to protest against the "political" victimisation of Mr. Zardari and keeping him in jail for the eighth year.

The PPP claims that the establishment has used every trick in the book to implicate Mr. Zardari. "To pressure Mr. Zardari his old and ailing father was unjustly kept in jail for several years and his brother-in-law, Mir Munawar Talpur, was re-arrested eight times as each time a court freed him".

Hashmi arrest: Pak. Govt., Opposition on a collision course

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

40-12/ 1/11 Pak (1)

ISLAMABAD, OCT. 31. The Pervez Musharraf-Mir Zafarullah Khan government is on a serious confrontation with the Opposition over the arrest of a senior opposition leader on charges of maligning the Army.

Police arrested the President of the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD), a conglomerate of the mainstream Opposition parties and Acting President of the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), Makhdoom Javed Hashmi, in the early hours of Thursday on charges of spreading "hatred against the Army in public."

There were chaotic scenes in the National Assembly on Friday with the Opposition parties demanding the immediate release of Mr. Hashmi. However the Interior Minister, Faisal Saleh Hayat said Mr. Hashmi would have to face treason charges. Outside Parliament, the Opposition parties declared that they would launch a nationwide agitation if Mr. Hashmi is not released.

This is the first high-profile political arrest since Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali Khan took over as Prime Minister over a year ago and assumes significance in the context of the "mass contact programme" launched by the Alliance last week in support of its demand for the resignation of the President, Pervez Musharraf as Army chief.

In an operation well past midnight on Wednesday, Mr. Hashmi, right-hand man of the former Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, was picked up from Parliament Lodges. It appears the police did not inform the National Assembly Speaker about the arrest though the House was in session.

As the National Assembly met today the combined Opposition moved a privilege motion with the Speaker, Chaudhry Ameer Hussain, against the arrest of Mr. Hashmi. Earlier in the day, they tried in vain to prevail upon him to issue a "production warrant" to the Government, directing it to get Mr. Hashmi to the House.

According to a press note issued by the district magistrate, Islamabad, Mr. Hashmi was arrested based on a FIR registered by one Khurshid Ahmed.

It said Mr. Hashmi's arrest arises out of the press conference addressed by him and his associates on October 20 at the National Assembly Cafeteria, where Mr. Hashmi and his associates read out the content of the letter and circulated the same.

Hours before his arrest, at a press conference, Mr. Hashmi said the Government had prepared a treason case against him. He claimed that he was being implicated in a treason case for distributing a letter to newsmen which he and a number of other Opposition leaders received from the GHQ.

THE HINDU

1 NOV 2003

Go-Musharraf camp smells blood

IMTIAZ GUL

Islamabad, Oct. 31: Opposition MPs threatened to launch a "go Musharraf" campaign after Ramadan if the government continued the siege of "suspected areas" in the border region as part of its war against terror.

They also demanded the immediate release and the withdrawal of the treason case against Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) leader Makhdoom Javed Hashmi.

The Opposition MPs first held a demonstration inside the National Assembly and then walked out en bloc to protest outside the parliament premises.

Leaders from the alliance of religious parties, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), and the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD), of which Hashmi is the president, warned the military-backed government of Prime Minister Zafarullah Jamali of a political crisis if it failed to stop the "unjust" military operation in Wana, the administrative headquarters of South Waziristan.

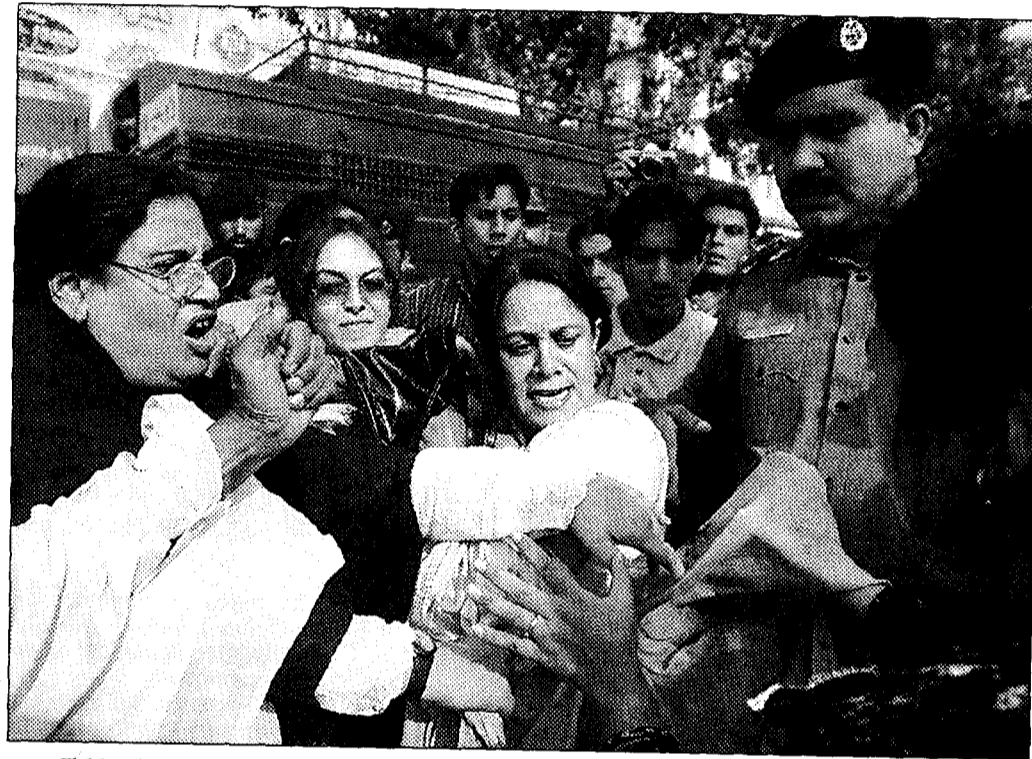
At least a dozen foreign militants were killed and another 19 arrested in an operation launched on October 2.

The authorities have since demolished at least 35 houses, impounded dozens of vehicles and arrested hundreds the government believes have been supporting or sheltering Taliban and al Qaida suspects.

The tribals have refused to allow suspected terrorists to use the border regions as a safety haven and have so far withstood the blockade by the military.

"With every passing day, the tension is mounting and the people are getting angrier," Abdul Sattar Wazir, an MP from South Waziristan, said in Islamabad.

The resentment is growing in the region and the people are becoming increasingly anti-army because of their heavy presence



Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) activists clash with the police during a demonstration in Lahore. (AFP)

and high-handedness, he said.

Aware of the explosive situation in the tribal regions, Wazir added, all political parties have called for the army's pullout from the South Waziristan. The Afghan authorities allege that most attacks against their forces and the American troops are being organised and conducted through the tribal belt between the two countries.

However, Pakistan denies this charge, saying that they have done everything they can to stop illegal cross-border movement by "undesirable elements."

The MPs also demanded the release of Javed Hashmi, a close aide of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who had been picked up late on Wednesday from his residence and charged with treason for "using provocative language against the armed

forces and fanning hatred against them."

Vice-president of the MMA Qazi Hussain Ahmad described Hashmi's arrest as a "political tactic" of the government aimed at diverting the peoples' attention from the real issues and to deter the Opposition from planning for national demonstra-

tions against the army and the government.

Condemning Musharraf as the "mother of all evils", Ahmad said the entire parliament had "literally become hostage to the dictatorial mindset of General Musharraf."

Ahmed said the government should produce Javed Hashmi at

least in the parliament and he should be given a chance to defend himself.

Hashmi has in recent weeks also been critical of the army's role and the Legal Framework Order (LFO) that gives sweeping powers to the President.

Musharraf says the order is part of the constitution. However, Opposition parties demand it be put before the National Assembly for debate and approval.

Chief of the Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP), Makhdoom Amin Fahim, said Javed Hashmi's arrest was "illegal and urged the speaker of the National Assembly, Chaudhry Amir Hussain, to immediately issue the order to produce Hashmi during the next session of the Assembly.

Memuna Hashmi, a PML (N) MP and elder daughter of Javed Hashmi, said: "We don't know where he has been taken."

She added that the Jamali government was involved in serious human rights violations — be it in Islamabad or South Waziristan. "Musharraf treats the entire Opposition as members of the al-Qaida and wants to deal with them at gun point," she said, adding: "We will frustrate his evil designs".

Pak Opp intensifies anti-Musharraf stir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 25. — Stepping up their agitations against President Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's mainstream Opposition parties today launched their public campaign to oust the General and pledged to take action against army generals and judges, who "legalised" military takeovers and subverted democracy, once they are in power.

Kickstarting the campaign, the 15-party Alliance for Restoration of Democracy, which spearheaded agitation against Gen. Musharraf during the last three years, held its first mass rally to galvanise public opinion against the General, military and the judges of superior courts.

"Judges who had legitimised the military coup and allowed changes of the Constitution would be tried along with army generals under Article six of the constitution when we take over power," senior PPP leader and ARD chairman, Mr Makhdoom Amin Fahim, addressing the rally said.

ARD comprised mainstream

and moderate political parties, which included Pakistan Peoples' Party and Pakistan Muslim League-N headed by exiled former Prime Ministers, Mrs Benazir Bhutto and Mr Nawaz Sharif.

Holding the judges of superior courts equally responsible for the successive military takeovers in the country, Mr Fahim said: "After every military coup, the judges had legalised it under the doctrine of necessity which caused a great damage to the democracy".

Accusing the President of compromising Pakistan's traditional stand on many vital issues under the American pressure, PML-N leader Mr Javed Hashmi said Gen. Musharraf and other generals had converted Pakistan into a "satellite state of the USA".

He said, in contrast to the way Gen. Musharraf "buckled on many issues after phone calls from President Mr George W Bush, former Prime Minister Mr Nawaz Sharif stood up to sustained pressure mounted by former US President Mr Bill Clinton to prevent Pakistan from going nuclear".

THE STATESMAN

26 OCT 2003

Pak conducts third test of N-missile

Islamabad: Pakistan on Tuesday conducted the third test of a nuclear capable missile in 11 days by testing the medium range surface-to-surface Hataf IV or Shaheen-1 and announced the conclusion of the fresh round of tests that began with testing of a short range missile on October 3.

Shaheen-1, which has a range of 700 km and was last tested on October 8, was successfully tested from an undisclosed location hours ahead of president Pervez Musharraf's departure for the OIC summit in Malaysia. A defence press release said that with Tuesday's test of Shaheen-1, the current series of tests have concluded. and new tests for the longer range Hataf missile would be carried out at a later date "whenever the technical parameters needed to be validated." PTI

THE TIMES OF INDIA

15 OCT 2003

Pakistan test-fires Shaheen-I missile

Islamabad: In the second such test in five days, Pakistan on Wednesday "successfully" test-fired an "indigenously" built surface-to-surface ballistic missile capable of carrying nuclear warheads having a range of 700 km, covering targets in India.

The test-fire of the Hatf-IV, also known as Shaheen-I, was conducted at 8:43 a.m. (IST) and "in a spirit of confidence building, Pakistan has given prior notification of the test to its neighbour", an official announcement here said.

"The test is part of an ongoing series of tests of Pakistan's indigenous missile systems," a military statement said, adding all technical parameters required to be tested were successfully validated.

"Pakistan had test-fired short-range Hatf

II 'Gaznavi' on Friday last, the first after Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee extended his hand of friendship in April to Islamabad.

"Pakistan defence spokesman Maj Gen Shoukat Sultan termed the missile test as "routine" one which was aimed at fulfilling technical requirements.

The medium-range missile is capable of reaching all Indian cities.

"Both Gaznavi and Shaheen-I have already been tested in the past.

Besides Gaznavi and Shaheen-I, Pakistan claims to have Shaheen-II with a range of 2,500 km, Ghauri-I with range of 1,500 km and Ghauri-II with 2,300 km range.

"In all Pakistan is reported to have about 50 long and short-range nuclear capable missiles. PTI



Medium-range, nuclear-capable missile Shaheen-I is launched on Wednesday at an undisclosed place near Karachi in Pakistan. //

Pak Sunni leader gunned down

Islamabad, October 6

PAKISTAN'S SECTARIAN violence took a turn for the worse on Monday when suspected Shia militants gunned down Maulana Azam Tariq, the chief of the banned Sunni extremist organisation Sipah-e-Sahaba, and four of his associates here.

Tariq, who won last year's National Assembly polls as an Independent from prison and later became a supporter of Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, was ambushed on the Kashmir Highway while he was driving down to attend the National Assembly session from his home constituency of Jhang.

The assailants' vehicle intercepted Tariq's car and sprayed it with bullets killing Tariq and his associates on the spot. His death was announced by Interior Minister Faisal Saleh Hayat in the National Assembly, which was then prorogued as a mark of respect.

The attack on Tariq followed a series of attacks on the minority Shia community in the recent past, specially during prayers in their designated mosques.

Pakistan's Geo television showed gruesome images of the

victims lying slumped in the car amid shattered glass. All the dead appeared to be men.

Nobody immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, but Tariq's party chairman Maulana Ali Sher Haideri, in an apparent reference to Tariq's Shia enemies, said, "it is obvious who did it".

"The police are on high alert," said the city's police chief Tariq Jamil.

The latest attack on Shias took place in Karachi three days ago when gunmen sprayed a bus carrying Shia muslims to a mosque. Seven persons were killed in that attack.

Police blamed Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, an armed wing of the Sipah-e-Sahaba for the recent attacks. Both the Sipah and Lashkar Jhangvi have been banned by Musharraf along with Shia militant out Terik-e-Jafriya, which retaliated the killings.

Officials here fear that Tariq's killing would flare up the sectarian attacks between the Sunni and Shia extremist groups.

Tariq's death was mourned by Jamali and senior ministers.

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

7 OCT 2003

Pak detains 32 in crackdown on tribe linked to al Qaida

Peshawar, Oct. 8 (Reuters): Pakistani forces detained 32 people today in a crackdown on a tribe accused of sheltering Taliban and al Qaida sympathisers, officials said.

Last week, the Pakistani military arrested 18 al Qaida and Taliban suspects and killed eight others after swooping on a hide-out near the Afghan border town of Angor Adda in the South Waziristan tribal area.

Authorities are looking for three men they suspect of help-

ing the al Qaida cell, and gave leaders of the small Zalikhel-Qarikhel tribe until yesterday night to hand them over.

When the deadline passed, paramilitary forces detained 32 members of the tribe, seized nearly 20 vehicles and sealed their shops to pressure them to give up the three suspects, Azam Khan, administrator of the area, said.

In talks with a tribal jirga (council) today he assured locals the suspects would not be hand-

ed over to the Americans and would be dealt with under Pakistani law inside the country. Talks were expected to continue tomorrow.

"We gave the tribesmen three days to hand over the culprits. The deadline has passed," Syed Anwar Shah, deputy administrator of the town of Wana, said, hours before the crackdown started in several areas of the tribal rim bordering Afghanistan.

"The tribe has failed to sur-

render the culprits. They say the accused have gone into hiding," Shah added.

Provincial authorities say the tribal leaders have violated an agreement reached with the government in May that they would deny sanctuary to "aliens".

The laws which govern Pakistan's tribal areas allow for tribes to be punished collectively if they fail to maintain law and order.

The military has already de-

molished the houses of the three wanted men in a village a few km from the border.

Local residents said last week's operation near Angor Adda had created resentment among the fiercely independent, conservative and heavily armed tribesmen of the area.

"People here are not happy over the operation, the killing of Arab mujahideen and the arrest of local people", a local journalist said.

Shah dismissed the resent-

ment as "quite natural," but said he did not expect any resistance to the crackdown.

Senators' praise

Five visiting US senators praised Pakistan's role in the fight against terrorism during talks with foreign minister Khurshid Kasuri, the foreign ministry said today.

The Republican senators met Kasuri late yesterday after they arrived here on a tour that will also take them to Afghanistan,

Iraq, Jordan and Turkey, a foreign ministry statement said.

The US lawmakers "commended Pakistan's contribution as a key partner in the ongoing global war against terrorism," the statement said.

The meeting also addressed US economic and security assistance to Pakistan and the situation in neighbouring Afghanistan and Iraq, it said.

Led by senator Mitch McConnell, chairman of a subgroup of the senate's appropri-

ation committee, the delegation are due to call on President Pervez Musharraf.

The tour comes days after visits by US deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage, assistant secretary of state Christina Rocca and US central command chief General John Abizaid which focused on the US-led hunt for Taliban and al Qaida members.

Pakistan has captured some 500 al Qaida activists since late 2001.

Pak senator denies General quit plan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, Sept. 6. — Denying reports that President Pervez Musharraf has agreed to quit as the army chief, Pakistani senator Mr SM Zaffar, who negotiated with the Islamist alliance MMA to work out a compromise to end the political deadlock over constitutional amendments, tonight said the general would only take a decision "at an appropriate time".

Earlier reports had quoted Mr Zaffar as having said that that Gen. Musharraf had "in principle" agreed that the posts of the President and army chief should not be held by one person and that the General would discuss the date to relinquish the post of army chief in consultations with other parties.

But late tonight, the official APP news agency quoted Mr Zaffar as saying: "The President, in the past, had

stated time and again that in principle he should not hold two offices simultaneously but had said that he would take a decision in this regard at an appropriate time."

A committee of second rung leaders of the ruling PML-Q and the six party Islamist alliance Muthahid Majlis Amal (MMA) which held several rounds of talks to defuse the crisis had reached a broad understanding to table the amendments, known as Legal Framework Order (LFO), in the National Assembly after necessary modifications.

It said proposed amendments would be presented to the Parliament soon after a meeting of all parties to be convened by Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali shortly. "Both the sides termed the outcome of the dialogue as a step towards a resolution of the problem," official APP news agency said.

Musharraf threatens to dissolve House



Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Aug. 27. — President Pervez Musharraf has threatened to dissolve Parliament and hold fresh polls if Opposition parties refuse to accept his constitutional amendments.

If Opposition parties do not accept the Legal Framework Order to legalise various amendments, then last year's elections will stand null and void and parliament and assemblies will be dissolved and fresh elections held, Mr Musharraf told reporters last night during a tour of the Sindh Province. Mr Musharraf's comments comes amidst intense speculation about open differences between him and Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali in dealing with the Opposition agitation. Mr Jamali reportedly

wanted Mr Musharraf to make some concessions to mollify the Opposition, while the President stuck to his stand to not quit as the Army chief. "The Opposition which paralysed Parliament for over 10 months has no choice but accept the LFO or face fresh polls," he said.

Mr Musharraf reiterated that he would not quit as the Army chief as demanded by the Opposition. He said he could amend the Constitution as Pakistan's Supreme Court allowed him to do so.

The remarks are being seen as a pressure tactic before he talks with leaders of the six-party alliance Muthhaida Majlis Amal. Mr Musharraf said the amendments included reduction of voter age to 18 and an increase in the seats for women in Parliament. "If the LFO is rejected, these decisions will lose effect," he said.

Reacting to Mr Musharraf's comment, MMA leader Mr Fazlur Rehman said the General's remark will create more complications for the government than the Opposition. "Mr Musharraf will be worst sufferer in case the system is wrapped up," he said in Lahore last night.

THE STATESMAN

28 AUG 2003

Military dictators like Pervez Musharraf can't make peace

The exiled Pakistani leader says the Mumbai blasts have raised questions about how serious the General is about peace. Musharraf should clarify reports that Osama is in Pakistan and arrest him if he is, she says

Vijay Dutt
London

BENAZIR BHUTTO is a rare politician. Despite being in exile, and out of power for so many years, she remains immensely popular in her country and abroad. She is bitterly critical of Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and believes there is no way he can talk peace with India.

Excerpts from an interview:

Everybody thinks that the US support sustains General Musharraf as President. How long do you think Americans would continue to help him?

It is difficult to guess. But the General is an indirect beneficiary of the fact that the US's hands are full at the moment with problems in Afghanistan and Iraq. But sooner or later, Americans would also realise that he is an architect of a new political structure that is not democratic and that people's unhappiness with him is deepening.

Tensions with Hamid Karzai have been growing because of the belief that the Taliban are regrouping in Pakistan. Musharraf is at loggerheads with political parties and the fragile hope of peace with India has been dashed because of car bombs in Mumbai.

The number of people who came for the rally called by the ARD (Alliance for Restoration of Democracy) on August 14 will put further pressure on Musharraf. Another turnout like that in September would make the US realise that the country needs consensus for lasting peace.

Who could be his major supporters in Washington?

So far the Defence Department was running the show for the Generals because it provided help. But the focus would shift to the Congress and Senate because of the aid that is being given. Unlike the Defence Department, the Congress and the Senate would be

scrutinising and checking the utilisation of the aid. So General Musharraf's conduct would be under check.

Americans could wonder soon whether Musharraf is the right man at the right place.

There was a report that a deal has been struck under which Musharraf would hand over Osama bin Laden to President Bush next year about the time of the Presidential election. Do you believe that bin Laden is in Pakistan?

I would like to call upon the General to clarify reports that Osama bin Laden is somewhere within the 120-mile radius of the northern area of our country. This is reported in the international media. It is said that Osama is in Pakistan. How did he flee from Tora Bora?

The contents of discussions between the West and Musharraf about Osama must be revealed because speculations have caused discontent. The perception that he (Osama) is in Pakistan is worrying me. It is important for the image of Pakistan that either the perception of him in the country is removed or he is arrested.

Are you not afraid of asking for his arrest?

I am, but I am more afraid for my country.

These are dangerous times for Pakistan. When the whole world is united against terrorism, the impression that he is there would not help in securing investments for development or tourism.

But as it is with most terrorists having being picked up from within Pakistan has led to the impression that it is a haven for them...

I get worried every time some one is picked up from there. I must also point out that the impression created that the northern areas are not easily accessible is incorrect. That kind of image has been created by vested interests that indulge in nar-

cotics smuggling and other kind of trafficking. On Pakistan's image depends investment. A cleaning up of its image is absolutely necessary.

Our people are fingerprinted and mugshots taken when they go to the US. We have to get out of such humiliation. We need friends. But shots were fired when people went for prayers in a mosque in Quetta and again in Islamabad when some went to pray in a church. There is a need for security of all communities and forces that can unite them.

What about the 19 terrorists whom India wants Pakistan to hand over?

I feel a lot of brinkmanship has been going on (on this issue). The recent demand by Mr Advani was a counter reaction to what happened in Bombay.

I believe that once borders cool down and there is less violence in the Kashmir region, such demands would also become muted and less significant.

Would you advocate an agreement on the LoC?

I feel that it all depends on the Kashmiri people and the Hurriyat, what they feel about it. We have for long been fixated about LoC being like a makeshift border. We need dynamism in our approach.

But I would first like the borders to cool down, lessening of violence and withdrawal of the forces from there and then opening the LoC for free travel. That should lead to a solution sooner or later.

You think the General is serious about peace with India?

I was hanging to the hope that he was. I was cautiously optimistic. I am unsure now. Car bombs in Bombay have raised some questions. One is unsure of the direction of those who initiated it. Whether it was some local group unhappy with the report on Ayodhya or was it something

else. Unless we know that there would be a lot of brinkmanship.

If the General really wants peace with India, he has to co-opt forces, the political parties, which would lead to peace. He cannot be in confrontation with such forces. Why does he seek to confront us? I would like the real Musharraf to come forward. I wonder whether a military dictator can make peace with India.

I am very happy that Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee has expressed a desire to talk to all Kashmiri groups. This is a very positive and good step. Communication can help resolve differences. I feel that there is a great enthusiasm for peace. People have been troubled by the intensity of violence.

How did you find the Indian leaders during your visit to India?

I was very happy to learn that recently many like Maulana Fazlur Rehman went across Wagah to visit India. When I went there I was savagely criticised. I am glad that that barrier is now broken. I met Mr Vajpayee, Mr Advani and Mrs Gandhi. Given the goodwill, a new era of regional friendship and peace can be ushered in.

But can it happen under Musharraf?

Military dictators cannot make peace with India.

Do you expect him to go soon? You said that by next March all those in exile would be able to get back and those held in jails would be free.

He will (go) if he does not honour Parliament. His threat to dismiss the Assembly is just bluff, brinkmanship. It took him three years to set up the Assembly. It will be a failure for him if he does not win its support. He will have to go, if Parliament goes.

I believe that dissensions within his own set-up and the growing disenchantment of the people and his failure to woo (political) parties would force him to step down. He cannot set up a Garrison state.



✓ Pak. Opposition boycotts National Assembly

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

18-15
18-15

ISLAMABAD, AUG. 20. As anticipated by political observers the National Assembly of Pakistan today began on a confrontational note with the opposition staging a boycott minutes after it began. They were protesting against the continuation of the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf as Army Chief and the controversial amendments he has made to the Constitution.

The decision of the opposition to stay out of the proceedings would, no doubt, leave the field open for the government to go ahead with any business it wants but the already question-

able legitimacy of the Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali Government would be further undermined.

The shape of things to come on the floor of the National Assembly was evident in the afternoon itself when the opposition consisting of the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD) and the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) decided to continue the 'protest' during the National Assembly session.

In a joint meeting of ARD and MMA here, opposition leaders said that lack of consensus

has caused failure of talks and political stalemate. The decision by the Jamali Government to go ahead with the National Assembly came after

Gen. Musharraf held a closed-door meeting with 40 representatives of the ruling combine on Monday and directed them not to waste any time in summoning the National Assembly.

He asked them not to be defensive and take the opposition head on. Opposition parties have threatened to continue with the agitation seeking the resignation of Gen. Musharraf as Army Chief irrespective of the consequences. Some of them said that they would not care even if it meant dissolution of the National Assembly.

They also wanted him to come through the route of Parliament for election as President and questioned the controver-

sial amendments to the Constitution. The opposition is insisting that the Government put them before Parliament for ratification while government maintains that they are already part and parcel of the statute.

Since the general election in October last year and election of Mr. Jamali as Prime Minister in November, the uniform of Gen. Musharraf and controversial amendments to the Constitution has been the bone of contention between the Government and opposition.

There have been several rounds of talks between the government and the opposition but they failed to produce any results.

Pervez again rejects call to step down as army chief

Islamabad, Aug. 19 (PTI): The 10-month old stalemate between the Opposition and President Musharraf deepened today with the general again refusing to step down as army chief.

"If I give any date for becoming a non-uniformed President, some people would begin a countdown. That would lead to destabilisation," he said at a meeting of the ruling pro-military Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam) here yesterday.

Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali and other pro-Musharraf leaders were present at the meeting.

In his address, Musharraf said the legal framework order (LFO), which incorporated his controversial constitutional amendments and legalised his election as President through a referendum, would stay.

He assured ruling party MPs that he has no plans to dissolve parliament and the four provincial assemblies despite the opposition's demand that he do so.

"The LFO is no more an issue and the issue of uniform should be left to me for a final decision," he said at the meeting. Musharraf said he would not give up his powers to dissolve parliament and constitute a military dominated by the National Security Council.

The Pakistan President has been rejecting the Opposition demand for over 10 months now even as the country's mainstream parties and the six-party alliance of Islamic parties Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal successfully blocked parliament ever since general elections were held last October. Since then Jamali and his cabinet have carried on with governance despite a permanent blockade of parliament.

Shadow lingers on Pak economy

IMTIAZ GUL

Islamabad, Aug. 17: Until 9/11, the world treated it as a pariah for its backing of the Taliban and militants in Kashmir. But today Pakistan is reaping unprecedented dividends from its "unconditional support" to the war on terrorism.

The events of 9/11 meant a virtual turnaround for the economy of the south Asian nation. When the suicide bombers struck, Pakistan was still reeling under western economic sanctions for conducting nuclear tests in 1998. Annual credit flows and investment had shrunk to a couple of hundred million dollars, foreign exchange reserves dwindled to less than \$300 million and most foreign investors had left the country.

Additionally, the International Monetary Fund had linked loans to a stringent

structural adjustment programme.

Today, international finance institutions are offering loans and grants. Major western donors have lifted economic sanctions and rescheduled Pakistan's debt. As a result its foreign exchange reserves have surged beyond \$11 billion. Foreign debt, once a staggering \$38 billion, is down by \$2 billion with the government even contemplating early repayment of some loans.

In July, the Bush administration paved the way for \$1.5 billion in grants and reprofiling \$12.5 billion of bilateral debt with the Paris Club, which provides credits to developing nations. Remittances by expatriate Pakistanis have also more than doubled from less than \$800 million a year to over \$3 billion since 9/11.

These factors have combined to revive investor confidence and recently sent the

Karachi Stock Exchange index beyond the 4000 mark for the first time in Pakistan's history.

Finance minister Shaukat Aziz believes the "expression of appreciation for Pakistan by President George W. Bush and the promised \$3 billion package would help enhance cash flows to Pakistan and attract fresh investments".

But economic experts see some external factors as major impediments.

"Negative travel advisories being issued by major countries to their citizens and exaggerated accounts of events have had a very adverse impact on the investment climate," claimed Ishrat Hussain, Pakistan's central bank chief.

Most western nations declared Pakistan unsafe following a string of attacks on Christian and western targets since March 2002 and advised its nationals not

to travel to this country unless necessary.

With a population growth of close to 3 per cent, Pakistan needs a couple of billion dollars a year investment to generate new employment. But money is hard to come by in view of the negative image that accompanies Pakistan's crackdown against radical pro-Taliban and pro-al Qaeda groups.

"Unless major countries remove their travel advisories and until the threats by anti-US and anti-Musharraf groups loom, fewer investors would be ready to risk investments," says Saqib Sheerani, chief economist with the ABN-Amro Bank in Islamabad.

"Wooing domestic and foreign investment remains a daunting task for the government because investors would still opt to play cautiously," says Shahidur Rehman, an economic affairs analyst.

Pak govt, Opp set for another round of conflict

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, July 6. — The Pakistan government and Opposition parties are set for another round of confrontation over the legality of General Pervez Musharraf's constitutional amendments tomorrow when the national assembly meets to take up the Opposition-sponsored no-confidence motion against the Deputy Speaker.

Gen. Musharraf, who returned yesterday after an 18-day-long foreign tour to the USA and three European countries, has summoned the assembly tomorrow to discuss the motion against Deputy Speaker Sardar Muhammad Yacub.

The Opposition parties,

who have been blocking parliament's functioning with a series of no-trust motions against the presiding officers held an all-party meeting in Lahore today to chalk out their strategy.

Gen. Musharraf has rejected the Opposition demand to quit as chief of army as a compromise.

Instead he and Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali have taken a strong stand that LFO is part of the constitution.

The Opposition comprising Pakistan Peoples Party, Pakistan Muslim League-N and Islamist alliance Muthahida Majlis Amal have declined to accept the stand of the government and vowed to carry their agitation to block parliament.

There is speculation in the media here that Gen. Musharraf plans to dissolve parliament and impose martial law if the Opposition continues its agitation. However, he did not reveal his plans to deal with the Opposition during his meeting with the media yesterday.

The Opposition at their all-party meet in Lahore accused Gen. Musharraf of making concessions during his recent US trip and opposed his policies.

"We are not ready to accept any sort of American mediation over Kashmir. We cannot make any compromises on our nuclear programme and there is no question of recognising Israel," Jamaat-e-Islami leader Qazi Hussain Ahmed said.

32 killed as suicide-bomber, gunmen strike at Pak. mosque

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JULY 4. Thirty-two people were killed and 40 injured when a suicide-bomber and two other killers struck inside a mosque in the centre of the capital city of Baluchistan, Quetta.

Reports suggest that the suicide-bomber blew himself up as hundreds gathered for the weekly 'jumma' prayers. Two bearded men fired on worshippers before the bomber blew himself up. There are conflicting reports about the fate of the two gunmen. Some say that they also blew themselves up.

A witness has been quoted on television channels as saying that two suicide-bombers entered the mosque before setting off explosives, while the Information Minister, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, said there were three attackers.

The incident sent shock waves in the city and there were reports of unrest. Angry crowds of Hazara Shias, some of them armed and firing shots in the air, took to the streets and gathered outside the hospital where the bodies were taken. Vehicles, shops and a wing of the hospital were set ablaze.

The Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan, who landed in the town just before the incident, sought the Army's help to meet any eventuality.

Crowds began to disperse af-



A person injured in an attack at a mosque in Quetta, Pakistan, on Friday being taken to hospital. — AFP

ter paramilitary troops used loudspeakers to announce a curfew.

This is the second major incident during the year targeting the Shia community. In the last incident, nine persons were killed as unidentified gunmen fired indiscriminately at a mosque in the port city of Ka-

rachi in February. Police believe that it is a sectarian attack. Baluchistan, in general, and Quetta, in particular, had been relatively free from either sectarian or other terrorist incidents witnessed in other parts of Pakistan, particularly since the decision of the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, to

align with the U.S.-led coalition against terrorism.

Gen. Musharraf, in Paris on an official visit, condemned the violence and vowed to punish the perpetrators. The incident took place while he was addressing a news conference to round off his 18-day trip abroad.

Sharif kin 'agree' to return to Saudi Arabia

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JULY 1. A drama which centred around the alleged "kidnap" of some of the family members of the former Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, ended today with the Lahore High Court dismissing the habeas corpus writ petition after the lawyer for the petitioner failed to turn up when the case was taken up.

The Pakistan Information and Broadcasting Minister, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, told reporters here that the family members of Mr. Sharif had agreed to return to Saudi Arabia. "I think they would catch the plane to Riyadh either today or tomorrow," he claimed.

There has been a drama of sorts outside the Model Town residence of the Sharif family with the police laying "siege" in a bid to persuade the family members to "honour their word" and return to Saudi Arabia as promised. The family lawyer filed a habeas corpus petition accusing the Government of kidnapping the Sharif kin and trying to deport them forcibly.

On Monday, the Punjab Government told the court that the family members were not in its custody. The court had adjourned the case today after appointing a bailiff to locate the missing family members. The petitioner was absent when the court began hearing of the petition this morning.

Indications are that the Sharif family and the Government have sorted out the matter and the former have agreed to leave Pakistan. The episode once again demonstrates the determination of the President, Pervez Musharraf, not to allow return of the two former Prime Ministers, Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto to Pakistan.

Ironically, the petitioner Ashtar Ausaf Ali arrived in court soon after dismissal of the petition. He told the court that he was engaged in another court. The court, however, directed him to file another petition as the earlier was already dismissed.

Indications from Lahore are that the Punjab police have taken into custody wife and daughter of the former Punjab Chief Minister, Shabaz Sharif,

and shifted them to an undisclosed location for possible deportation.

The case of the Government was that Mr. Nawaz Sharif and his clan had entered in to a deal with the Pervez Musharraf Government in December 2000 and went to Saudi Arabia on exile. The deal involved exoneration of all charges against the former Prime Minister. According to the Government, under the pact he or his family members could neither return to Pakistan nor dabble in Pakistani politics for 10 years.

However, the Government disputes the version.

A few female members of the Nawaz family were allowed to return to Pakistan after they gave a representation that their presence was essential for family and social functions. The Interior Minister, Faisal Saleh Malik, said the family has overstayed and would have to return. In fact, tickets for their return were handed over on Saturday. However, they suddenly disappeared and there was much drama outside the Nawaz villa in Lahore.

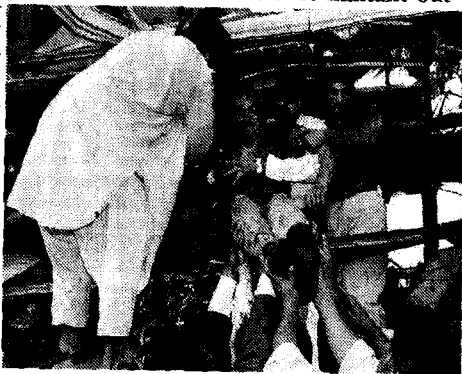
Pak (1) Karachi blast: death sentence for three ✓

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

foreign installations.

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 30. Three days before the high-profile visit of the Pakistani President, Pervez Musharraf, to France, an anti-terrorism court in Karachi today sentenced three persons to death for their alleged involvement in a suicide bomb attack in May last year that killed 11 French naval engineers and technicians.

The year 2002 was marked by a series of attacks on Christians and western targets. Most of the attacks were considered to be the handiwork of militant out-



A passenger being rescued from a bus after an explosion in Karachi in this May 8, 2002 file photo.

The verdict is good news for Gen. Musharraf as his talks with the French leaders would involve a desire for enhanced defence co-operation.

It would also help him "put at rest any apprehensions" in France about the security environment in Pakistan and the efficacy of the judicial system. Of course, the three have decided to appeal against the sentence and move higher court.

It might be a while before the case is decided one way or the other.

This is the second instance in recent weeks that Pakistani courts have sentenced the charged in cases connected with attacks on foreigners and

fits opposed to the decision of Gen. Musharraf to align with the U.S. led coalition in the so-called war against terrorism after 9/11.

In the present case, all the three are considered to be members of the banned outfit, Harkat-ul- Mujahideen Al-alam.

A car packed with explosives blew up outside the Sheraton Hotel in Karachi on May 8 last year, killing the Frenchmen, who were helping Pakistan build submarines.

1 JUL 2003

Little wars, little sense

Sr 8
20/6 Pervez's past and present P.M.D

With Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif revealing that they had failed to stop Pervez Musharraf plans to launch the Kargil offensives against India, such credibility as the general had has now disappeared. Benazir has said that Musharraf, then an army commander, had proposed an anti-India military skirmish which she used her prime ministerial authority to veto, not an easy task for a civilian head of government in de facto military-ruled Pakistan. Nawaz recalled his failure to stop Musharraf, army chief by then, from launching the Kargil offensive and effectively sabotaging a Kashmir solution. He has not revealed what those peace plans were. Taking Nawaz at face value and with Benazir's recollection, two very important tactical points emerge. First, a man who had at least twice wanted and once succeeded in creating mini wars over Kashmir could not have changed his fundamental position. Second, even if New Delhi does make the assumption, merely because Washington insists that it does, it needs to ask, does Musharraf need the army to back his rule. If he does, have the Pakistani corps commanders changed their spots about Kashmir and if they haven't, will they really tolerate progress in Indo-Pakistani talks beyond a point? The best answers are, respectively, yes, no and no. Taken together, the implication is that reform of Pakistani civil society will need to precede a solution to terrorism in the valley. The Pakistani army needs to become a professional force taking orders from civil authority. But Pakistan seems to face a choice between disguised military rule and chaos. It is probably a little foolish to expect anything concrete on Kashmir.

And that is without the good general asking America for a roadmap a la West Asia for the subcontinent. Washington has not taken the bait and it has been dismissed out of hand by the Indian foreign minister. But the fact that Musharraf articulates such nonsense shows that he thinks only of Kashmir. The roadmap idea dovetails with his earlier observations on Kashmiri "freedom fighters", and "Kashmiri independence". If this is the point of Musharraf's agenda on Kashmir, if he is more comfortable with waging little wars than talking a little sense, India should decide at some point of time to call his bluff. We have said this before and recommend it again — New Delhi should first get an internal political consensus on an agreement based on the line of control and then make an offer to Pakistan. Americans will be delighted with such a low cost solution and would probably want the general to accept. If he says no, India can simply say what is true even now: he is not worth talking to.

Prk ①

Jamali Govt. challenges Opposition to prove strength

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 27. The ruling combine led by the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, has decided to adopt a novel method of not taking part in the no-trust motion moved against the National Assembly Speaker, Amir Hussain.

Confident of its majority, the ruling combine challenged the Opposition to prove its strength. Under the rules, the Speaker can be removed when at least half the total strength of the House votes in favour of the motion.

Though it is easy to predict what will happen in the Assembly, the Government is not likely to emerge unscathed from the confrontation.

The Opposition parties have called for a march to Parliament House and the Supreme Court building tomorrow to protest against the Legal Framework Order (LFO), incorporating the controversial constitutional amendments made by Gen. Musharraf.

The march will start from the Parliament lodges. The legislators will converge on Parliament House to reiterate their rejection of the Government's "anti-people" policies, the Pakistan People's Party leader, Makhdoom Fahim,

announced. From there, they would move to the Supreme Court.

The protest coincides with the National Assembly session that will take up the Opposition-sponsored no-trust motion against the Speaker. Mr. Fahim alleged that the judiciary had been made "hostage" under the Provisional Constitutional Order.

As long as this situation prevailed, he said, the people's problems would be solved.

He claimed that the no-trust motion was based on principles and declared that the Opposition would continue its struggle.

In reply to a question, he said choosing a leader of the Opposition was secondary at the moment because top priority was the LFO. He denied that he was acting as a bridge between the military and the PPP leadership.

The ruling combine's decision has intrigued observers particularly coming against the backdrop of claims by the Opposition that some members of the ruling coalition would vote in favour of the motion.

The President, Pervez Musharraf, has summoned the National Assembly to meet on Saturday to decide on the Opposition move.

28 JUN 2003

THE HINDU

'We don't trust Indian Govt, you want to sideline main issue'

Pakistan President General PERVEZ MUSHARRAF spoke to NDTV's PRANNOY ROY about the latest Indo-Pak peace moves, Kashmir and resumption of sports ties. Excerpts:

■ From an ordinary person like me, we look at India and Pakistani leaders, like yourself, and they still seem to choose the sublime or the ridiculous to discuss — impossible issues like Kashmir or trivial issues like cricket. But the real issues like trade, how we can help each other economically, those are tractable, solvable problems. What happens if you say *Chalo*, this is impossible, we won't discuss it. The trivial too, we won't. Let's just get down and fix the machinery here.

There is lack of trust. Because, we don't trust, we don't trust the Indian government. We think you only want to do that and sideline the main issue. Now, if there was trust that we will... Has any leader in India ever said that, we want to resolve the Kashmir dispute? Nobody says that. How can we trust you? We don't trust you. We think your strategy is to put the dispute under the carpet, to sideline it.

■ I have great, great respect for the Pakistani media. One issue that all of them point to, and I don't want to ask this from India's point of view, they all say, Kargil hurt Pakistan's self-interest. So from Pakistan's point of view — forget India — was Kargil a mistake?

No, I don't think so at all. I think the main issue of what ever happened at Kargil, were the issue of Kashmir which is in the limelight now, and it has brought to fore, one major issue, that Pakistan and India cannot go to war, must not go to war. Therefore, this is an international concern.

■ I didn't quite get that logic — "must not go to war" — so Kargil war is good?

No not at all. This was not a decision, taken by us, but a decision taken by the Mujahideen, who were there, and we got involved into it.

■ Again, this is a denial. You were deeply involved there.

We got deeply involved. We did get involved because of the Mujahideen, the action of the Indian troops, because of concentration, because of Indian aircraft intrusion into Pakistan. We obviously did

TALKING WITH PERVEZ MUSHARRAF

■ One question was that, when there is a woman and her four children standing at a bus-stop and somebody guns them down, anywhere in the world, can you ever call that freedom fighting?

Terrible. Yes. That's not freedom fighting

■ Is that terrorism? Yes.

■ That's a slight change from Agra.. Did I say it's not terrorism there?

■ You said that these things happen in a struggle. I don't remember.

■ The other question I asked you was that in 40 out of the 55 years in Pakistan, you did not have democracy. But you are so bothered for these 40-50 years about the will of the people of Kashmir, when you are not bothered about, the will of the people of Pakistan. Isn't this a contradiction?

We are finding the will of the people of our country. I know how to manage things here. We know what is good and bad here. I know what environment exists in Pakistan, and what are the steps forward to having a democracy which suits us, and that's what we are doing. But you can't equate this with the will of the people in Kashmir, where there are 700,000 troops. How can you equate Pakistan, and derive analogies from Kashmir and Pakistan?

■ You want elections and vote and plebiscite in Kashmir, but you don't want voting in Pakistan.

With 700,000 people there killing people daily, that is how you want the voting to be done? With 700,000 troops killing them daily, burning their houses, this is how they should go for vote?

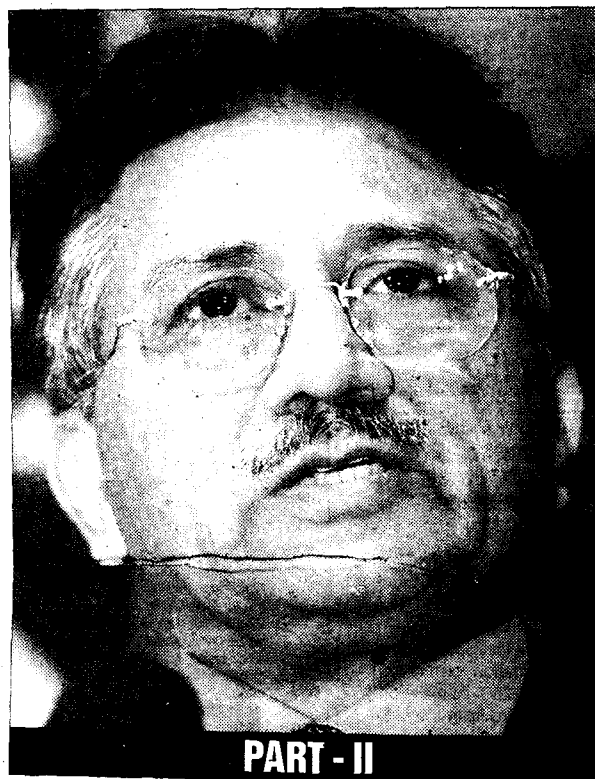
■ Well they certainly did. Ridiculous.

■ Do you regret things? I do regret, if I take any

■ The Prime minister of India, Vajpayee, recently said that this is his last try, third and last try, in Indo-Pak peace talks. You must have heard that. After that he is retiring from this process. What's your reaction to that?

I would say, the second one was a genuine try. The first one was not a try. I don't

"We did get involved (in Kargil) because of the Mujahideen, the action of the Indian troops. I am a strong believer that before Kargil, whatever happened in Kashmir was a dead issue"



PART - II

"I feel that after the Agra declaration, there was a campaign to malign me and my gov't. The Prime Minister (Jamali) maybe a better person to meet him (Vajpayee), but if

lieve that he is a man of peace. So I think that way our thoughts are similar. If he really, genuinely is for peace, now also.

■ You have said that (Mir Zafarullah) Jamali, the Prime Minister, will lead these talks. Very often Vajpayee says, when I next meet Musharraf, General Musharraf — If he wants you to be part of the talks, will you be a part of it? More than glad. I'd be more than glad.

■ To lead the talks? I feel, I really feel, that since that after Agra declaration, there was such a cam-

■ But, isn't this NWFP a spillover of these policies genuinely, seriously?

Musharraf: To an extent. No it's not a spillover only of Afghanistan, lot is happening in the Islamic world. It's a spillover of also Iraq and Palestine.

■ You have 10,000 US troops here. Is that a worry for you? Not from the mere existence... Who gave you these figures?

■ You don't have 10,000 troops? Ridiculous.

■ How many do you have? I don't know, But certainly not even a thousand.

■ So say, you've got a thousand in bases here... Much lesser. There is an American troop presence fighting here. They are here after 9/11. The agreement that we reached on fighting terrorism and being part of the coalition. The use of all the Pakistan air-space and the use one of our bases, for logistical support and rescue missions were allowed and is being allowed.

■ But do you think it reinforces the fundamentalists and the extremists you are so distant from? No this has not been an issue.



■ I remember seeing huge demonstrations on it, but anyway.

Yes, initially yes. I do agree American presence here is not liked. But sooner or later, once the Afghan issue is settled I think they should leave..

■ Is Pakistan part of the global war against terror? Yes.

■ Will you for example send Pakistani troops to Iraq? We've been asked to, but we need to see certain parameters.

■ You may? Yes we may. Yes we would like it.

Cricket has nothing to do with



"I don't know (how many US troops are present in Pakistan). But certainly not even a thousand. They are here after 9/11. I do agree US presence here is not liked. Sooner or later, once the Afghan issue is settled, they should leave"

triviality. We've got involved, India has got involved, for not playing cricket with us, not playing sports with us,

■ I have one suggestion. And I'd like to add that it's only cricket, and not hockey or other games. Why, because they were scared to be defeated by Pakistan.

■ But you lost in the World Cup? Yes.

■ I have a suggestion since we are on trivialities. Why don't we play a first match as a joint Indo-Pak team versus the Australians. Then, we all start by cheering the same side. And then, play each other. Would you support that?

Well, you've introduced something, having a joint team is all right. But having that as first match, one needs to give it a second thought.

■ You are not scared of the Australians. Are you? No, not at all, but that is not the issue. The issue is that cricket has not been played. It has been denied by the Indians, by your government that you've not played us. Why should we then play? The sen-

get deeply involved then. But this involvement is there in Siachen. Why are we not talking of that? Every day it's happening.

■ **A lot of people here believe that Kargil was a mistake.**

There are differing views, but I am not one of those. I am a strong believer, that before Kargil, whatever happened there, Kashmir I think was a dead issue.

■ **So you could have another Kargil?**

Depends on how we proceed on the peace track, on how things develop. One can't say.

■ **You are not ruling it out.**

Nobody can say yes, we will have another Kargil, but certainly we need to resolve disputes.

■ **Through violence?**

No we should resolve them peacefully. It's only when peace fails, violence occurs in any form.



“ I know how to manage things here. We know what is good and bad here. But you can't equate this with the will of the people in Kashmir, where there are 700,000 troops ”

■ **Two questions I asked you in Agra. The world has changed since then. I want to ask the questions again, and hopefully you don't remember the answers.**

Yes, I don't. Don't remember the question.

wrong decisions.

■ **Give us an example.**

The political scenario here in Pakistan, I thought it will emerge as something better, and it has not.

■ **So you regret the elections?**

No no, I don't regret. In fact, that was a very big positive. Everyone in Pakistan knows me to be a person who stands by his word. I don't regret the elections at all. I do regret that unfortunately the result is such, that we have this kind of hung parliament, and also....

■ **But that's unfair because you are regretting something you didn't have control of. I am saying, do you regret something that you have done. That's an outcome of an election—you can regret—it's at a distance from yourself. Self-regret?**

Self-regret, has been that in these three years we haven't been able to evolve a democracy which is functional, which

functions. We have tried to do that but unfortunately...

■ **Will it happen? Will it come to Pakistan? A functional democracy?**

Yes it can, yes absolutely it can.

he is willing to meet me I am more than happy

accept that as a try at all: if he made a bus journey to Lahore, if he visited Pakistan. That is not a try towards peace. When he is not prepared to address the core issues, so that was not a try.

■ **You don't think that was a huge step to come to Lahore? You didn't actually welcome him at that time.**

No no. That's absolutely wrong. Total misperception. I welcomed him. I was the first man to shake his hands, when he landed in a helicopter.

■ **You were not there at the border.**

I didn't go to Wagah. I thought, in uniform, standing there and all that wouldn't be...

■ **You have often said, there is a chemistry between you and Vajpayee. Has that helped in**

this whole process?

I feel that in Agra, yes I got an impression that he is a man of peace, because we drafted the declaration—really—the Agra declaration, was drafted by him and me and the two foreign ministers and so I he-

question which I've answered so many times I now feel that he is alive. Previously I used to think maybe he's dead. Now I feel that he is alive. But the question of where he is... I think most likely he is in Afghanistan.

■ **Was Pakistan's getting involved with Taliban a mistake for Pakistan?**

No, I think it was a dictate of the environment a dictate of the situation. In a country where 90 percent of Afghanistan was occupied by the Taliban, and the Taliban being the only Pakhtoons, at that time, with having obviously ethnic links with Pakistan.

■ **But it's not the kind of ideology you agree with. Many people see you as a major leader of the Islamic World who is not a fundamentalist. But now you have one area of Pakistan, the North-West Frontier Province, which has just voted in the Sharia law. Does this worry you?**

Well, it is a little worrisome, I am for a moderate, progressive and a dynamic Islamic state. I very much differentiate between a theocratic state and an Islamic state. We do not want a theocratic state.

■ **So if in the end the NWFP, they don't allow women to be educated, then they don't allow them to work, will you intervene in some way?**

Yes, indeed, I will. There is no doubt about it. But they are not doing that, and this is a misperception.

Cricket has nothing to do with the larger issue. In fact, cricket is a trivial issue. We do want cricket, we want all the games. (But) Our cricketers have told me we should never play them. That is the sentiment

■ **Are you hopeful that next time things are going to be better?**

Slightly optimistic.

■ **Why is that?**

As I said, if we think as you are thinking that we are only talking of Kashmir and we are going for other areas like sports and ignoring trade and economy, then I am afraid that if we go ahead with trade and economic ties without addressing the core issue of Kashmir, then again we will fail.

■ **So, how are you optimistic?**

I thought maybe there has been a change in heart on the other side.

■ **There's no change in heart on your side.**

Not at all.

■ **Chance hi nahin hain?**

Kashmir cannot be brushed under the carpet. No change whatever.

■ **So, we will play cricket and little else?**

Cricket has nothing to do with the larger issue. I feel, in fact, cricket is a trivial issue. We have given significance to

timement of the people, the cricketers is that we don't want to play them. Our cricketers have told me we should never play them. This is the sentiment.

■ **Maybe they are scared of losing?**

No, our boys are never scared.

■ **You don't want cricket also now.**

We do want cricket, we want all games. I know what the president of the cricket board thinks. But even now, your government keeps coming up with contradictory statements.

■ **Forget that, what do you want, do you want cricket to be played or not?**

Yes, yes, indeed. But as a starter a joint team...

■ **And at some point, a joint team?**

Yes, I don't mind that.

■ **And who would be the opening batsman?**

Tendulkar is a good batsman. He's world class. I enjoy watching him.

(Concluded)

NDTV's Prannoy Roy spoke to President Pervez Musharraf. Excerpts:

'Tailoring democracy'

Prannoy Roy: Are you a military man or are you a politician?

President Musharraf: Certainly the answer is very clear. I am a military man. I don't think I fit into the political role. I am absolutely a military man. Whatever politics I'm involved in, I do it in a military manner, I think.

☛ Sometimes you have to act as a politician. You don't like that side of you when you have to do that?

■ Yes. I have to be involved in it, yes, I am involved in politics. I don't very much like that. But for the nation one has to do many things, it's a compulsion.

☛ Do you have a kind of deep rooted dislike for politicians or a distrust? Is that one reason why you've held on to this power that you can dismiss an elected government if you want to?

■ No, I don't think, that's true. My dislike for politicians is not universal. But generally the way politics has been run in Pakistan — and I would say even in your country — I don't think there's very much to follow. We need to have a better democracy and better politics.

☛ You once said, about the 12 year experience between 1987 and 1999, you called it a so-called democracy, a disaster for Pakistan. Is this distrust for politicians also distrust for polls and democracy?

■ No, not at all. I am in favour of democracy. Very much. But I am a believer that democracy has to be tailored to an environment, to Pakistani environment. The issue is of checks and balances. Our democracy is not mature, and I think many politicians do not behave in a mature manner. Therefore the requirement of checks and balances on everyone.

In our environment there are three power brokers: the President and also the Army Chief. Which is not, may be not, in your country. So, therefore, we have to tailor it according to what environment is in Pakistan.

☛ With checks and balances? But there are no checks and balances on you.

■ At the moment, at the moment. But once everything comes up, once democracy is established, real democracy, true democracy with checks and balances is established, there will be certainly a check on me. The National Security Council is very much a check on me. I would not be able to execute or implement 58/2b, that is dismissing the Assembly, alone. I am going to submit myself to the National Security Council... That will be a check on the President, which includes me if I am the President.

☛ You said if you are the President...like you look forward to a day you can retire?

■ Yes, indeed, I do. Nobody's permanent and I even say that the issue of the President being also the Army Chief needs to be resolved. I do believe that one person should not hold two appointments. But I am holding it till I establish the democracy we are talking of. I don't want to destabilise Pakistan. So I will continue in uniform. But once these institutions start playing their role, this separation of uniform from presidency

must be ensured and I will do it.

☛ Do you have a time deadline for this?

■ No, I don't. I don't have a time deadline because I think once I give a time deadline, I believe in meeting it. I don't want to go back on my words.

☛ Many people say you are a great communicator, but you live in a state of denial. Like when there is a problem, you deny it exists. In Agra, you said there's no cross-border terrorism. Now of course it is there...You said that Pakistan was never involved in Kargil, then in 48 hours...And on the Al Qaeda, you said there's no Al Qaeda in this country...Isn't it better just to accept reality and then discuss a problem, rather than deny it?

■ There are grey areas, national interests have to be kept in mind. In every country these things take place. By the way, I never denied Al Qaeda. I have always

PART I



I am 100 per cent sure of one thing, Kashmiris do not want to be part of India... 70,000 people have been killed (in Kashmir). Do you think they can love you? Do you think they can be with India? Are they mad?

been saying they may be hiding in our hills, even now they may be there. But to think that Osama and the whole lot of Al Qaeda is here, that is what I was saying is wrong. But on the other issues, there are, I think, much larger perspectives to it.

☛ These are tactical issues?

■ I think within this Indo-Pakistan relationship, there are many areas which are grey and such denials are done by both countries to guard self-interests.

☛ It is difficult to have a dialogue when you deny a problem exists.

■ No, I am sorry. I don't accept this verdict at all about myself. I confront problems, I catch the bull by the horns straight.

☛ No, but you just said for certain national interests you do have to deny...

■ Every country in international relations guards its national interests and in do-

ing so there are areas where you have to be extremely diplomatic.

☛ Elections were held in Kashmir last year. Believe you me this was a remarkable election. The people of Kashmir were told that if you vote we would shoot you and your family. They came out in hordes voluntarily, international observers were there, this was a genuine election, don't live in denial on this...this time it was phenomenal to brave terrorists. Would you vote braving terrorists?

■ Well, I totally disagree with whatever you have said. Our information is it was the law enforcement agencies who were forcing: If you don't go to vote we will get hold of you.

☛ You don't agree? Then how can you discuss a problem?

■ I am 100 per cent sure of one thing, Kashmiris do not want to be part of India.

☛ But they vote, 45 per cent vote...

■ You as an individual couldn't be going all over Kashmir. I am sorry to say that.

☛ We do opinion polls, we do surveys.

■ No, no, no. Opinion polls can all be manipulated. Opinion polls are all managed when you have 700,000 army in an area. Everything is managed.

☛ One of the things about Kashmir, while we are on it, the Americans say that the LoC...

■ Would anyone want to be with India when they are killing them? Have you seen their graveyards?

☛ Now let's not get on to emotions. I am just talking about facts. 45 per cent...

■ I am talking about reality.

☛ Sir, these are old things.

■ It is old because you have said such a thing, trying to negate facts. The fact of the matter is 70,000 people have been killed. Do you think they can love you? Do you think they can be with India? Are they mad?

☛ Live in denial... I was just getting to the American's saying the LoC should become a soft border. Do you think it is a possible way forward? That the Kashmiri families can meet each other?

■ Yes, one should have people to people contact, but that is not the solution.

☛ You agree with that as the first step?

■ It could be a way forward. One needs to analyse that.

☛ How do you react when people say to you, that the core issue for Pakistan and India is poverty, hunger, education, water in villages... Kashmir won't get you out of poverty, hunger...

■ I disagree with you again. Kashmir is not standing in the way of improving your economy. Sir, in these 3 years, the maximum growth we have had is in the economy, in poverty alleviation...In the period of maximum confrontation on Kashmir, we have progressed. So Kashmir is not the issue.

☛ Without the Kashmir issue, you could have progressed much more.

■ Okay. All that you are saying are national issues. But when you are talking about bilateral relationship, Kashmir is the core of the problem, the core issue.

(To be concluded)

PAK 1
19-11

PPP assails verdict

13/6

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 12. The Pakistan People's Party has criticised the Lahore High Court's verdict that the decision of the President, Pervez Musharraf, to continue as Army chief does not violate any provisions of the Constitution.

A party spokesman said it deplored the judgment. "This ruling accords the dubious distinction to Pakistan as being the first state to declare that democracy and civil rule is the same as military dictatorship."

According to the ruling, the Constitution permits a serving Army chief to also hold the office of President. However, this runs counter to the different Articles of the Constitution. Article 43(1) states: "The President shall not hold any office of profit in the service of Pakistan or occupy any other position car-

rying the right to remuneration for the rendering of services".

According to Article 50, "the President is part of Parliament" and Article 63 (1)(k) states that "a person shall be disqualified from being elected or chosen as member of Parliament if he has been in the service of Pakistan... unless a period of two years has elapsed since he ceased to be in such service".

"In the presence of such clear-cut constitutional provisions, it is an unprecedented conclusion of the honourable Lahore High Court judges that none of the constitutional provisions is affected if the President remains in the uniform," the PPP said.

It said the verdict had come on the eve of Gen. Musharraf's visit to the United States. "The PPP has noted that the Pakistani judiciary suffered the most as a result of the intrigues by vested

interests against the elected Government of Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. The sacking of independent-minded judges in 2000 sapped the judiciary of its strength striking at the very principle of dispensing justice without fear.

"It is a measure of this sapping of the strength of judiciary that the state prosecutor held a press conference in the morning claiming that court had ordered the freezing of Bhutto assets while the judgment itself was announced later in the afternoon," the party added.

It said that Tuesday, June 10, 2003 would be remembered as a "dark" day in the history of Pakistan. "Let those who feel proud of their 'achievement' rejoice in it. The PPP will continue its fight for the restoration of the Constitution, the end of Bonapartism and the supremacy of Parliament."

Musharraf can continue as Army chief: HC

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 11. Just days before his crucial visit to the United States, the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, got a boost with the ruling by the Lahore High Court that his continuation as Chief of Army Staff (COAS) does not violate any provision in the Constitution.

The judgment should be a major disappointment for the Opposition, which stepped up its agitation in recent weeks, inside and outside Parliament, against the dual role of Gen. Musharraf as Army Chief and President.

The judgment has not come as a surprise to observers as in the third week of May, the Court had quashed a petition against the legal framework order incorporating controversial amendments made by Gen. Musharraf. The Court had held that Gen. Musharraf was entitled to make such changes by the Supreme Court in its judgment validating the October 1999 military coup.

The High Court verdict is an elaboration of its short order of

May 19. It said Gen. Musharraf's decision to remain in uniform till a date of his own choice, ruling that this announcement was not impeding the State's functioning nor contravening any provision of the 1973 Constitution. The Chief Justice, Iftikhar Hussain Chaudhry, who headed a Division Bench with Justice Akhtar Shabbir as the other member, delivered the judgment on a Pakistan Lawyers Forum's petition seeking trial of Gen. Musharraf on treason charges under Article 6 of the 1973 Constitution. The Bench had dismissed the petition *in limine* on May 19 through a short order. It had stopped the media from covering the proceedings and publishing of the short order.

In the petition filed in April, the PLF pleaded that Gen. Musharraf had made a show of force by announcing that he would hold offices of Army chief and President simultaneously till his own decision to take off the uniform. It argued that the announcement amounted to treachery. The PLF president, A.K. Dogar, had also questioned the legality of last year's Presi-

dential referendum and the President's authority to amend the Constitution, besides accusing him of not having transferred the power to a civilian government in violation of the Supreme Court order.

"We have not noted anything in the Constitution which would debar the President from remaining in uniform nor is his holding the two offices simultaneously creating any hindrance to the smooth functioning of the Government or any other institution," the Bench noted.

The court further ruled that, "none of the constitutional provisions is affected if the President remains in uniform. Therefore, the decision by the President that he would take off the uniform on a date of his own choice does not impinge upon any constitutional provision and the Article 6, in no way is attracted to this case."

The court refused to take into account the argument that the President was not chosen in accordance with the constitutional provisions and Article 41(7) did not confer any right on Gen. Musharraf to hold the President's office for five years. The

court declared the status of Referendum Order 2002 as unquestionable, ruling that this order was not based on any mala fide intentions and was promulgated in accordance with the Proclamation of Emergency Order 1999, which had already been validated by the Supreme Court in the *Zafar Ali Shah's* case.

Declaring the President's election valid, it observed: "The President was elected under the provisions of the Referendum Order 2002, as the Electoral College prescribed by the Constitution for the election of the President did not even exist. Therefore, the provisions of the Constitution on this subject would not attract to this case."

The court rejected the plea that Gen. Musharraf had subverted the Constitution by not transferring the power to the Prime Minister and the real power still vested in his office. "No material has been placed before us which could show that the Prime Minister was not exercising his powers vested in him by the Constitution nor the current civilian government was dysfunctional."

Musharraf cracks down on NWFP govt

Down/ ANN & AFP

ISLAMABAD, June 4. — The Pakistani government today removed two senior officials in the North West Frontier Province, where an Islamist-led leadership enforced Sharia law two days ago, officials said.

"The Chief Secretary, and I-G of NWFP police have been asked to report to Islamabad," the Pakistani federal minister, Mr Daniyal Aziz, said. The minister said Aziz the move to remove the provincial chief secretary, Mr Shakeel Durrani, and I-G Mr Saeed Khan was "completely under the law".

The removals coincided with the NWFP Assembly's passage of the Sharia Bill introduced by the ruling Mut-tahida Majlis-i-Amal.

But analysts said the controversy over the Legal Framework Order that gives sweeping powers to President Pervez Musharraf is at the heart of the new trouble, which has also sparked

fears about the future of the MMA's six-month-old provincial government.

Gen. Musharraf on Monday threatened to take "administrative action" to curb the religious fervour demonstrated by MMA vigilantes in acts such as tearing down "obscene" billboards.

Islamabad says it wants to curb the religious fervour of MMA vigilantes. Analysts, however, say the controversy over the Legal Framework Order that gives sweeping powers to President Pervez Musharraf is at the heart of the trouble

The MMA has complained of arm-twisting and vowed to resist it, with alliance leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman threatening nationwide protests. But the question remains over who will win the battle, although such Centre-province conflicts in the past have often

ended with the disappearance of a provincial Cabinet but also left the federal victors bleeding for a long time.

The conflict shows that Prime Minister Mr Mir Zafarullah Jamali's PML-Q and the Opposition, including the PPP and PML-N, are still divided over the LFO despite last month's negotiations in a joint parliamentary committee and that the establishment's efforts to revive old alliances with the MMA have still not borne fruit.

Opposition sources said a virtual revolt by all 24 district Nazims in the NWFP — staged in the shape of en masse resignations sent directly to the President over their complaints against the provincial government — and the threat of administrative action were the federal government's pressure tactics to force an MMA compromise over the LFO. "These are pressure tactics," PPP spokesman Senator Farhatullah Babar said the moves were aimed at breaking the MMA from the joint Opposition stand against the LFO, he added.

- 5 JUN 2003

Pervez acts on Shariat belt

PKA
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Islamabad, June 4 (Reuters): The Pakistani government today recalled the top bureaucrat and police chief of a province bordering Afghanistan that has adopted a series of radical Islamic reforms.

Critics say the reforms are modelled on policies of Afghanistan's ousted Taliban rulers.

"The federal government has called back the chief secretary and inspector general of police from North West Frontier Province," the official APP news agency quoted Daniyal Aziz, chairman of National Recon-

struction Bureau, as saying.

Some newspapers, in predicting the move, said it could be a tactic by military President Pervez Musharraf to limit the effects of the reforms by putting trusted figures in key posts.

North West Frontier's chief minister Akram Durrani said Islamabad should not have taken such a step without his agreement. Analysts said it would widen the differences between Islamists and pro-military government of Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali.

"It's very unfortunate. They should have consulted me and they should consult me in future," Durrani said.

The conservative North West Frontier region came under the control of hardline lawmakers from the six-party Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) alliance after October elections that critics say were manipulated by Musharraf to keep mainstream parties sidelined.

On Monday, it became the first province to pass a Bill to implement Shariat, or Islamic law, and plans a body to promote religious observance critics fear will resemble the notorious religious police of Afghanistan's former Taliban regime.

The MMA, traditional allies in the past of military rulers, are now proving an embarrassment for Musharraf shortly before he visits Washington to meet President George W. Bush on June 24, when he is expected to discuss cooperation in the war against Taliban remnants and al Qaida in Afghanistan.

Some analysts say the MMA is deliberately forcing the pace on Islamisation, not only to keep its own supporters happy, but as part of its campaign to force Musharraf to reverse controversial constitutional changes enshrining a military role in politics. Already the standoff with the opposition has almost paralysed the National Assembly and it also threatens smooth presentation of next fiscal year's budget on Saturday.

The budget Bill is expected to pass, given the small pro-military National Assembly majority, but the debate is expected to be noisy and uncomfortable for Musharraf and Jamali.

Analysts do not believe Musharraf's position as President is threatened.

5 JUN 2003

Crisis looms as Jamali orders transfer of NWFP officials

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 4. A political crisis appears inevitable in Pakistan with the Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, ordering the transfer of the Chief Secretary and the Director-General of Police of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), ruled by the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), an alliance of six religious parties.

The immediate provocation for Mr. Jamali's action is the complaint by the Nazims (equivalent of Zilla Parishad chiefs elected in the party-less election conducted by the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf) that the Provincial Government was out to "trample" on their powers and render the local bodies irrelevant.

However, the real reason behind the latest power struggle between the Jamali Government and the religious parties could be traced to their failure to arrive at an understanding on the dual role of Gen. Musharraf.

The Jamali regime is clearly embarrassed at the speed with which the MMA rushed through the Shariat Bill. With the budget session of Parliament due to begin on Saturday, the latest confrontation does not augur well for the Jamali Government.

In a dig at the MMA, Mr. Jamali asserted that a "progressive, modern and Islamic" Pakistan was the vision of his Government.

In a separate development, Gen. Musharraf held a much-publicised meeting with the Nazim of Rawalpindi and declared that the local bodies created by him was crucial to the return of "genuine democracy" — an implied warning to the NWFP Government not to fiddle with them.

The MMA has called for an emergency meeting of its highest body in Lahore tomorrow to take stock of the latest political developments and decide the strategy it should follow in the budget session.

Mr. Jamali's decision to act against senior officials in the NWFP has not come as a surprise. There have been indications that the Prime Minister would take "administrative action" to tackle the situation in the province and that he would make an announcement in this regard at the earliest.

Relations between the NWFP and the Centre have suddenly taken a turn for worse and observers see a linkage between the crisis and the refusal of the MMA to give up its demand for the resignation of Gen. Musharraf as Army Chief.

5 JUN 2003

THE HINDU

Pak province votes for Shariat

Peshawar, June 2 (Reuters): The parliament of a Pakistani province close to Afghanistan passed a Bill today to implement Shariat, or Islamic law, and its chief minister said those who failed to observe it were not welcome there.

The Bill was approved by the assembly of North West Frontier Province (NWFP), making it the only Pakistani province to take such a step. The assembly is dominated by the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), a six-party Islamic alliance accused by rights groups of trying to emulate Afghanistan's former Taliban regime. "From today, Shariat will be implemented in the province and there will be no place in the province for those who refuse to follow it," Akram Durrani, the province's chief minister, told the assembly.

Under Shariat, judgments are reached based on Islamic teachings and punishments can be severe, including amputations of hands for theft and stoning to death for adultery. Provincial law minister Zafar Azam declined to clarify what the move might entail. But an assembly official said a commission would be established to examine existing laws and bring them into line with Shariat, including its ban on interest-based loans.

Azam said the provincial government would introduce a new Bill tomorrow to set up a

Hasba (or accountability) department to promote religious observance, which critics say is modelled on the Taliban's notorious religious police.

On Saturday, the provincial government passed a directive ordering civil servants to pray five times a day and urging businesses to close at prayer times. It warned of unspecified action against those who failed to obey. Muslims are expected to pray five times a day, but this is not compulsory for government employees elsewhere in Pakistan, even though it is an Islamic state.

The NWFP came under the control of the Islamic MMA after October elections critics say were manipulated by military President Pervez Musharraf to keep mainstream parties sidelined. Saturday's prayer order follows curbs on the sale of music and videos, destruction of posters featuring women and advertising Western products, and the imposition of a complete ban on alcohol in the NWFP.

The MMA has also banned music on public transport, medical examinations of women by male doctors, male coaches for women athletes and male journalists from covering women's sports. Such moves are reminiscent of the religious fundamentalism of the Taliban in Afghanistan, overthrown in late 2001 by a US-led military campaign.

3 JUN 2003

THE TELEGRAPH

Russia, France eye nuclear power deals

BHARAT BHUSHAN

St. Petersburg, May 31: France and Russia want to enhance cooperation with India in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and want a review of the guidelines of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) which prevent them from doing so.

When Russian President Vladimir Putin told Atal Bihari Vajpayee that India and Russia were cooperating in "most sensitive areas", he did not mean military technology and space alone.

The two 1,000-MW units of the Koodankulam nuclear power plant have been built with Russian assistance. India would like to continue cooperation with Russia and France in the field of nuclear power. However, the guidelines of the NSG come in the way.

The NSG prohibits its members from supplying nuclear technology to any country which does not accept full-scope safe-

guards. This means transparent accounting of all the nuclear fuel used and the nuclear waste generated with inspections to prevent diversion for nuclear weapons.

Only those countries which have renounced their nuclear option, like South Africa and Brazil, have subjected their nuclear power facilities to full-scope safeguards. The attempt of the NSG is to prevent nuclear proliferation. However, India has not been accused of proliferation and wants to be recognised as such through an exemption of the full-scope safeguards provision.

The memorandum of understanding for the Koodankulam nuclear power plant was signed in 1988 — before the full-scope safeguards guideline of the NSG was introduced. While India may be willing to subject Koodankulam to full-scope safeguards, it would not want its other plants built earlier (say, the one at Tarapur, for example) to be opened up for inspection

and full-scope safeguards.

Before Putin met Vajpayee here, the Russian released a statement on the ple-nary session of the NSG held at Pusan in South Korea (May 19-23). The operative part of the statement was music to India's ears: "We believe that the activities of the NSG should not of course create obstacles for international cooperation in the field of peaceful use of atomic energy and take into account new realities in this field in an adequate and timely manner." It was against this backdrop that Putin was lauding cooperation with India in "sensitive areas".

The NSG guidelines were also discussed by Vajpayee with President Jacques Chirac when he met him here. France has been openly asking for a re-view of the NSG guidelines.

France believes that "nuclear power is a realistic and feasible option for India and the door (for cooperation) should be

opened", foreign secretary Kanwal Siba said briefing reporters on the bilateral meeting between Chirac and Vajpayee. He said both leaders expressed "satisfactor over our defence relations".

Vajpayee has managed to meet four out of the five permanent members of the Security Council here over the last two days — Chirac, Putin, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Chinese President Hu Jintao. He is expected to be at a small dinner where President George W. Bush will be present with some other world leaders. That would technically complete the tally — as no substantive discussion with Bush will be possible.

Putin's birthday bash for his home town has been used by India to exchange views with these world leaders on the Iraq question, the role of the UN in determining the future of Iraq, the developing situation in Iran and on India-Pakistan relations.

1 JUN 2003

Media HD-11

Pakistan 'blocks' website

2/15 The comin @pak

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MAY 30. The Pakistan Government has been accused of blocking the South Asia Tribune website (<http://www.satribune.com>) for Internet users in Pakistan with immediate effect.

The site, run by a former editor of a leading Pakistani daily from the United States, has been highly critical of the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf.

A few months ago, the Pakistan Government had put out an advertisement warning all concerned not to use the material appearing in South Asia Tribune on the ground that it was carrying on a systematic campaign against the interests of Pakistan.

The site was available till Thursday.

In a statement, the Editor of

the web site, Shaheen Sehbai, claimed that PTCL's Pakistan Internet Exchange (PIE), which provided full circuit international Internet bandwidth to customers all over Pakistan, blocked the site.

"Only those few ISPs who are not served by PTCL's PIE can still provide access to the site but they have also been told by the top officials to block it immediately. Thus almost all the ISPs in the country have been affected, thereby effectively cutting out access to the site throughout Pakistan," he claimed.

"This is a blatant attack on the freedom of the press as recently the South Asia Tribune had done a number of stories which exposed the Government policies," Editor of the South Asia Tribune, Shaheen Sehbai, said,

condemning the Government move in a statement from Washington DC.

He alleged that it was a simple case of a military government getting so unnerved by objective and honest reporting that they had decided to deny the Pakistani people their right to information and truth.

He urged all democracy and freedom-loving forces to condemn the ban and pressure the Musharraf Government to remove it immediately.

He alleged that last year besides harassing his family members, the Government in November published an advertisement in all Pakistani newspapers asking people not to visit the South Asia Tribune web site and warned Pakistani media not to reprint stories

published there.

"This is the second direct attack to silence the voice of freedom and professionalism, which exposes all claims of the Government allowing freedom of expression, access to international media and Internet".

The website was launched in July 2002 and in 10 months it claimed to have registered more than 11 million hits.

The latest major story was about the Centcom Data on Pakistan's support to the U.S. in the Afghan war.

Within hours of the publication of the story on the website, Centcom pulled out the entire data from its website, while leading international media picked it up and a major political controversy is already raging in Pakistan.

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Jamali Govt. faces a serious crisis

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MAY 30. Even as tensions on the external front have eased with improvement on the Indo-Pak. front, the Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali Government faces a serious political crisis on the internal front.

The extent of the stand-off between the Government and the Opposition could be gauged from the fact that the latter had threatened to block the presentation of budget, tentatively scheduled on June 7, on the issue of the dual role of the President, Pervez Musharraf.

As of now there is no meeting point between the Government and the Opposition on the continuation of Gen. Musharraf as Army Chief and political observers are worried that it could lead to a showdown with unpredictable consequences. At least one senior leader of the Mutta-hida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), alliance of six religious parties, has gone on record that they could not care less even if the crisis led to the suspension or dissolution of the National Assembly.

The gathering clouds were evident again in Lahore as the leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly, Qasim Zia, and dozens of Assembly members were arrested before the Punjab Assembly building.

In an unprecedented action on Tuesday, the Assembly Speaker had suspended 27 Opposition members and debarred them from taking part in the proceedings in the rest of the session as they rose to register their protest against Musharraf laws and the continuation of Gen. Musharraf as Army Chief.



A woman legislator being arrested in Lahore on Thursday. Thirteen Opposition lawmakers were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct for protesting against constitutional changes that increased the powers of the President. — AP

Observers see the events as a curtain-raiser to what could follow at the national level in the coming days. The Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, is scheduled to have a 'summit' with leaders of all parties in Parliament in the next few days to persuade them to give some more time to Gen. Musharraf to shed his uniform.

Unenviable position

Mr. Jamali is placed in an unenviable position with neither Gen. Musharraf nor the Opposition in a mood to relent. A few days ago, Gen. Musharraf had said that while he was conscious of the fact that the President should not be an army officer, his continuation as Army Chief for some more time was imperative in the 'larger national interest'. He said the timeframe as to when he should quit as Army Chief should be

left to himself.

The oddity of the situation could be seen from the simple fact that though the general elections were held in the second week of October last year, the National Assembly has not had a single 'normal' session till date. It had to be adjourned amid uproarious scenes several times.

In an informal talk with correspondents here, all that Mr. Jamali could say was it was the responsibility of all political parties to ensure the smooth functioning of Parliament. Interestingly, he said his Government did not provide the 'uniform' to Gen. Musharraf.

It has been reported in a section of the press that Gen. Musharraf chose to postpone his scheduled visit to Saudi Arabia in the last minute to deal with any contingency at home.

31 MAY 2003

Meet to discuss Musharraf's continuance as Army chief

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MAY 25. The Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, has called a "crucial summit" of leaders of all parties on Friday to discuss the political crisis triggered by the Opposition's insistence that the President, Pervez Musharraf, quit as Army Chief.

The meeting comes after a Government-Opposition committee constituted by Mr. Jamali to evolve a consensus failed to break the ice. While the Government wants the issue to be left to Gen. Musharraf, the Opposition is adamant that he resign.

Gen. Musharraf has acknowledged that his continuation as President in 'uniform' was odd, but has sought time to quit as Army Chief on the ground that the present situation demanded that he continue to be in effective charge of the armed forces.

Observers fear that if the deadlock persists, Gen. Musharraf

could be left with little option but to either suspend the National Assembly or dissolve it. Under the new laws made by him Gen. Musharraf is empowered to dismiss the Government and dissolve the National Assembly.

The seriousness of the situation can be gauged from the fact that though elections were held in October last year, the National Assembly has not had a 'normal' sitting even once. The Jamali Government finds itself in an awkward position as the annual budget is due for presentation next month.

Political observers believe that though there are very little chances of a consensus being evolved, a miracle may yet take the two sides to a mutually-acceptable formula to bail the country out of the "current crisis".

The ruling party, PML (QA) is keen on solving the crisis. Mr. Jamali has even opted for an in-

depth dialogue with the man who really matters in the MMA, Maulana Fazalur Rehman. He is inclined to be flexible, but one of the partners in the alliance and Jamaat-e-Islami chief, Qazi Hussain Ahmed, is in no mood for any compromise. In fact, he has set August 14 as the deadline for Gen. Musharraf to quit as Army Chief or face the "consequences".

Friday's meeting may result in a "decisive posture" for the continuation of a political regime in Pakistan. The outcome may also go the other way, as is being envisioned by the PML (QA), which has made its position crystal clear on all the issues.

Mr. Jamali also held closed-door informal talks with the PML (QA) president, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, and other leaders, exchanging views on his recent meetings with Opposition leaders. The Prime Minister will also chair a Cabinet

meeting on May 28, two days before the all-party meeting.

Mr. Shujaat, who is playing an active role behind the scenes, has met Qazi Hussain Ahmed thrice, Maulana Fazalur Rehman twice, and the Pakistan People's Party leader, Amin Fahim, once. However, PML (QA) circles say no serious dialogue was held with the PPP (P) or the PML (N), as Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, the untiring octogenarian politician, is trying to push these parties into staging street protests.

A PML (QA) leader said the report of the joint constitutional committee was nothing but a "bundle of rubbish recommendations", and that all the Opposition parties had taken the position they had been holding for some time. "The only difference is that the MMA has written its proposals in Urdu, while the PPP (P) and the PML (N) have written them in English. Nothing moved beyond that."

MMA threatens protest

MULTAN, MAY 25. Pakistan's influential Islamic alliance has threatened today to take to the streets if General Pervez Musharraf continued to hold the dual office of President and the Army chief.

"The Mutahidda Majlis-i-Amal (MMA) will be forced to

A South Asian Union is possible, says Sinha

By Our Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI, MAY 25. There is an increased emphasis on economic relationships and India is now developing closer relationships with its immediate and extended neighbours.

complimented the author for writing about contemporary foreign policy as also projecting it into the future.

However, he criticised the present tendency of blaming the Nehruvian era for everything

26 MAY 2003

Meet to discuss Musharraf's continuance as Army chief

By B. Muralidhar Kaddy

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The meeting comes after a Government-Opposition committee constituted by Mr Jamali to evolve a consensus failed to break the ice. While the Government wants the issue to be left to Gen. Musharraf, the Opposition is adamant that the resignation is a must. Gen. Musharraf has acknowledged that his continuation as President in 'uniform' was odd, but has sought time to quit as Army Chief on the ground that the present situation demanded that he continue to be in effective charge of the armed forces.

Observers fear that if the Government's offer to let Musharraf continue to be in uniform is not accepted, the Government will have to either suspend the National Assembly or dissolve it. Under the new laws made by him Gen. Musharraf is empowered to dismiss the Government and dissolve the National Assembly.

The seriousness of the situation can be gauged from the fact that though elections were held in October last year, the National Assembly has not had a normal sitting even once. The Government finds itself in an awkward position as the annual budget is due for presentation next month.

Political observers believe that though there are very little chances of a consensus being evolved, a truce may yet take the two sides to a mutually acceptable formula to haul the country out of the "current crisis". The ruling party, PML (QA) is keen on solving the crisis. Mr Jamali has even offered for an in-

depth dialogue with the man who really matters in the MMA, Maulana Fazlur Rehman. He is inclined to be flexible, but one of the partners in the alliance and Jamaat-e-Islami chief, Qazi Hussain Ahmed, is in no mood for any compromise. In fact, he has set August 14 as the deadline for Gen. Musharraf to quit as Army Chief or face the "consequences".

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26 MAY 2003

JEHAD WILL CONTINUE, SAYS SALAHUDDIN

Ban applies to Hizb too: Pak. Minister

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MAY 19. In a quiet move, the Pakistan Government is believed to have decided to treat the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen militant outfit on a par with the banned groups such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad. The decision has direct relevance to India's demand for a check on infiltration and the "destruction of terrorism infrastructure" particularly in the light of the latest peace initiative.

When contacted by *The Hindu* for confirmation of reports that the Government had placed curbs on the activities of the Hizb in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), the Interior Minister, Faisal Saleh Hayat, replied in the affirmative. "Yes, curbs have been

imposed on activities of all militant outfits and they cannot carry out any activities either from the soil of Pakistan or PoK," he said. Asked if that meant a ban on the Hizb, Mr. Hayat said, "yes, there is a ban". Last week, the Jaish-e-Mohammad chief, Maulana Masood Azhar, had been banned from entering PoK.

However, it is not clear when Islamabad decided to move against the Hizb. On April 30 when the U.S. State Department chose to place the Hizb along with four other organisations in Pakistan on its list of terrorist outfits, Pakistan had said it would not be guided by the American action.

A spokesman for the Hizb, Salim Hashmi, however, said that neither he nor any of the leaders of his outfit had any information about the latest

decision. "We are not a banned outfit. The Hizb is an outfit consisting of only Kashmiris. We have no militant camps in PoK. We are waging an indigenous struggle against the Indian forces," he said.

On Sunday, the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen chief, Syed Salahuddin, said in Rawalpindi that his organisation would continue its *jihad* (holy war) and that no pressure, international or from Pakistani authorities, would be accepted in this regard.

Talking to presspersons after a function organised to pay tributes to the 'martyrs' in Kashmir, he said Pakistan and India had agreed to hold negotiations over the Kashmir issue but that it would not have any impact on the activities of the *mujahideen* (holy warriors).

Accusing India of trying to malign the *mujahideen*

through a propaganda campaign, he said the just struggle was equated with terrorism and charges of infiltration were hurled at Pakistan. The international community, however, had realised the factual position and rejected the propaganda. Still, anyone having doubts about the activities of the *mujahideen* was welcome to visit Kashmir to see if any training camp for terrorism existed, he said.

Mr. Salahuddin said the morale of India had been lowered and it was struggling to wriggle out of the dispute. There were three parties to the dispute — India, Pakistan and the *mujahideen* — he claimed and said the issue could be resolved only if all those groups agreed. Bilateral talks could not resolve the dispute. He expressed the fear that Pakistan might be pressured to crack down on the activities of the *mujahideen* but said it would never be accepted. The supreme council of the "freedom fighters" would run its activities independently.

In a related development, the PoK Prime Minister, Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan, has expressed support for dividing the State between Hindu and Muslim majority areas and maintained that an independent Kashmir was not a viable alternative.

Talking to presspersons here, Mr. Khan endorsed the 'Chenab formula' under which Hindu-majority areas could go to India and the Muslim majority areas of Kashmir amalgamated with Pakistan. Mr. Hayat said he strongly opposed the idea of an independent Kashmir because a tiny state surrounded by India, China and Pakistan could neither defend itself nor guarantee its sovereignty.

Pak. for composite dialogue

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MAY 19. Pakistan today reiterated that a "composite and sustained dialogue" was the road map for talks with India. "We want composite, meaningful and sustained dialogue on all outstanding issues," the Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, Aziz Ahmed Khan, told newsmen here.

He was answering a question about contradictory statements by the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Khurshid Muhammad Kasuri, and the Information Minister, Sheik Rashid, about Pakistan having a road map to hold talks with India.

On the External Affairs Minister, Yaswant Sinha's proposal to have a structured dialogue, he said Pakistan had not received any such proposal. To a question if Pakistan was satisfied with the Indian response to the confidence building measures announced by the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, he hoped that the Indian response would be forth-

coming. Mr. Khan said Pakistan hoped they (Indian Government) would respond positively to all the CBMs announced by Mr. Jamali so that the two countries could quickly resume the dialogue process. There were some basic level contacts, but formal talks had not yet begun.

Reacting to questions on the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's comments that Pakistan should end cross-border terrorism, Mr. Khan said: "Pakistan has always claimed that it wants a composite dialogue in which all issues between the two countries can be discussed and we are ready for that dialogue."

At the same time, he maintained that India should agree for a verification mechanism by international monitors to ascertain its allegations. "As far as infiltration is concerned, our position remains the same. There is a verification mechanism in the form of U.N. monitors. We are ready to strengthen it. India should also accept it so that we can get over with the misperception that they have and get on with the business."

20 MAY 2003

THE HINDU

NWFP assembly asks Pak to allow Benazir to return

Islamabad: A provincial assembly in Pakistan has passed a resolution asking the government to invite self-exiled former premier Benazir Bhutto to take part



B. Bhutto

in the talks on improving relations with India.

North West Frontier Province (NWFP) assembly, on Thursday passed a resolution demanding the early return of Ms Bhutto, who heads the Pakistan Peoples party (PPP), from self-exile in Dubai to enable her to participate in the ongoing talks on Indo-Pak relations.

This followed a meeting between prime minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali and the opposition leaders early this week here to discuss steps to normalise ties with India.

The resolution, moved jointly by the PPP and the Awami National Party (ANP) legislator, was adopted in the house amid protests from the pro-military Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q) and its allies. PML-Q heads the coalition government at the centre.

PPP legislators also demanded the release of Ms Bhutto's husband Asif Ali Zardari who has been in prison for over six years. The house adopted the resolution with majority.

The resolution seeking her return followed as an 11-member government-opposition constitutional committee, holding talks on the legality of President Musharraf and his constitutional amendments, completed deliberations on the six out of seven issues of the legal framework order (LFO), an administrative order that notified the amendments.

10 MAY 2003

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Pak Assembly suspended to resolve Pervez row

Islamabad, April 30 (Reuters): Pakistan's lower house of parliament suspended its session indefinitely today to give the government and Opposition time to resolve a dispute over powers granted to President Pervez Musharraf.

Talks between the government and Opposition groups started last week and are set to resume next Monday in an attempt to unlock an impasse over constitutional changes introduced by former military ruler Musharraf before an election last year.

Musharraf seized power in a 1999 military coup and while the October election restored civilian rule, he still holds sweeping powers as President.

The speaker of the National Assembly, Chaudhry Amir Husain, said the session ended with the consent of the government and Opposition. "It is being done to keep the atmosphere congenial for talks," he said.

The Opposition, led by an Islamic alliance, wants Musharraf to step down as chief of army staff, and withdraw constitutional amendments, under a Legal Framework Order (LFO), that give him the power to dissolve parliament.

They also object to the creation of a powerful National Security Council, which includes military leaders as well as politicians, and which they say is an attempt to institutionalise the role of the military in state affairs.

Their noisy protests in parliament — thumping their wooden desks with leather file covers, and shouting "No LFO" and "Go Musharraf go" — have prevented any serious parliamentary business since the election.

Liaqat Baluch, a senior member of the Islamic alliance Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal, said that talks were to resume on Monday and would continue until May 15. Five members each from the government and Opposition will prepare a draft on the constitutional amendments. But political observers say a compromise is not in sight given the hardline positions of both sides.

Al Qaida arrests

Pakistan said today it had arrested six members of a high-profile al Qaida cell, including a Yemeni believed to have been involved in the October 2000 attack on the US warship *Cole* in Yemen.

The government said the group had been planning a major terrorist attack in Pakistan.

Interior minister Faisal Saleh Hayat said the six also included a nephew of al Qaida number three, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who was arrested in Pakistan in March.

A Pakistani government statement identified the *Cole* suspect as Waleed Muhammad Bin Attash alias Khalid Al-Attash, a Yemeni national.

It said the arrests took place yesterday during a raid in which 150 kg of high explosives was also seized.

1 MAY 2003

THE TELEGRAPH

Pak Opp-govt talks today to resolve stalemate

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, April 27. — Crucial talks between government and the Opposition to resolve differences over the presidency of General Pervez Musharraf and his constitutional amendments in Pakistan resume tomorrow amid reports of Gen. Musharraf evolving a joint strategy with Prime Minister Mr Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali to deal with the Opposition that has hardened its stand.

Mr Jamali, who began formal talks with opposition leaders over the weekend, met Gen. Musharraf yesterday at the general headquarters in Rawalpindi and is understood to have briefed him on talks with Opposition leaders and sought the President's suggestion to resolve the political stalemate.

Media reports quoted officials as saying that Gen. Musharraf was of the view that the Opposition should avoid striking an uncompromising posture in view of the country's internal and external security. He also gave suggestions to Mr Jamali to shape a consolidated strategy ahead of the next round of talks with the Opposition beginning tomorrow.

Mr Jamali told Gen. Musharraf that his government was ready to continue with the Legal Framework Order being part of the

constitution with the parliament's approval. He, however, added that there is a need to show flexibility on the government's stand to soften the Opposition, *The Nation* said.

Meanwhile the Pakistan Muslim League-N of exiled former Prime Minister Mr Nawaz Sharif hardened its stand and said it would not accept Gen. Musharraf as President even if he quit as chief of army "The PML-N will not be part of any dialogue with Pervez Musharraf even if he invites our party. Other Opposition parties can have their own viewpoint on the issues including the uniformed President," acting president Mr Makhdoom Javed Hashmi here last night after a PML-N parliamentary party meeting.

Benazir predicts mid-term polls: Predicting that Pakistan could be heading for a mid-term poll in view of the prevailing deadlock between Gen. Musharraf and the Opposition parties over the presidential powers assumed by him, former Prime Minister Mrs Benazir Bhutto has said she would return from her self-exile to contest elections.

"Make preparation for my arrival; this time I want you to get me a two-third majority, not just a simple majority," Mrs Bhutto told a meeting of top rung leaders of her Pakistan People's Party, which won the highest number of votes in last October's general elections.

28 APR 2003

THE STATESMAN

I want to be President and army chief for 5 years: Musharraf

Islamabad: Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf on Thursday said that he would continue to hold both the posts of the President and the chief of army for five years despite the opposition parties' demand that he give up his uniform for their acceptance of his presidency.

Addressing the editors and columnists of leading dailies here, Gen Musharraf said he "realised" that both the slots should not be held by the same person. But he implored the media "to please leave the issue, when I will be one and not the other, to my judgment".

He, however, said, he was willing to compromise on other issues. "I have a major role to play in uniform," Gen Musharraf said, adding that in view of domestic and external compulsions, he had recently spoken to the chiefs of air force, navy and army commanders. "If I am not in uniform, I can't have access to them," he said, adding, "I want to remain President and army chief for five

years because by the end of that time, the situation should have improved. I won't stretch it unnecessarily. I will take a very realistic view."

When pressed further if there was a situation in which he might consider giving up his army chief's post, he said, "A date before five years is possible." When asked if his hard-line stance would not affect talks between Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali and the opposition parties, Gen Musharraf said he was willing to be flexible. "There are some flexibilities in this contentious area and there is no reason why a meeting ground cannot be found," he said, adding, "Leave it to me. Don't bind me on this. On other issues, there is flexibility."

Gen Musharraf, however, ruled out any compromise with former prime ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif.

"What is their character. Members of their parties in the national assembly seek their guidance from outside. But both Sharif and Benazir don't talk of Pakistan, only about

Zardari, who has been in prison for over six years without any judicial conviction. He said Mr Sharif had been sent on exile to Jeddah "on his volition".

"Let me tell you, the Sharifs begged to be allowed to go. I didn't ask them to go. Look at the photos of them on the eve of their departure and on their arrival in Saudi Arabia. They look so happy. I was surprised to send them away," he said.

Denying that he dabbled with the Islamist alliance Muthahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) ignoring moderate parties, the President said, "At least the MMA can reason logically and is flexible. It believes in democracy. The problem of the non-functionality of parliament at the moment has to do with the personalised politics of the Pakistan People's Party and the Pakistan Muslim League."

Reacting angrily when asked if the US

would target Pakistan after Iraq, he said, "Why do we have this complex? We will not even be 100 on any such list. We are a nuclear and missile power, and we do not seek a confrontational role in world affairs in our own best national interest." Denying that a team of international experts would check a chemical factory as the beginning of inspections for weapons of mass destruction in Pakistan, he said, "It is a routine inspection and has nothing to do with WMD."

Sounding optimistic about the resumption of Indo-Pak dialogue, Gen Musharraf said Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee's offer of friendship was a good beginning and a victory for both the countries. "This is a delicate issue and I don't want to say anything because this is a good beginning and one shouldn't spoil it by saying it's a victory for one side or the other. Frankly, I think Vajpayee's gesture is genuine. I hope it is genuine." PT

"The Indo-Pak issue is a delicate one. This is a good beginning and I hope Vajpayee's gesture is genuine"



their personal interests." Accusing the middle-rung leaders of both the parties of being "plunderers and looters", Gen Musharraf ruled out the return from exile of Ms Bhutto and Mr Sharif.

Gen Musharraf also declined to release Ms Bhutto's husband Asif Ali

Gen told Sharif Kargil was a 'misadventure'

PTI
9/12/06
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ISLAMABAD, APRIL 14

PAKISTAN President Pervez Musharraf, who was the Army chief during the Kargil conflict, had admitted to the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif that the conflict was a "misadventure" and had urged him to initiate steps to save the country from an embarrassment, a top leader of Sharif's party was quoted as saying today.



Blaming Pakistan's generals for the 1999 Kargil fiasco, the acting President and Parliamentary leader of Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), Javed Hashmi said that after the bloody clashes with the Indian Army, the three services chiefs sought an emergency meeting with Sharif at the Governor's House in Lahore and admitted that they had committed a "misadventure".

After the meeting with service chiefs, Sharif took all necessary steps to save them from the impending embarrassment and finalised his plans to visit Washington, where he finally agreed for a ceasefire, Hashmi, a former minister, said Sunday.

On Sharif's return from US, Musharraf called on him and saluted him for achieving a ceasefire, Hashmi told a seminar.

The PML leader also charged that the present regime headed by Musharraf has greed to share command and control system of Pakistan's nuclear weapons with the US which, he said, would gravely hurt Pakistan's interest and the Army's prestige.

Parliament can amend statute

ISLAMABAD, April 11. — Lahore High Court has said that the Parliament is the supreme authority to decide on the legality of the Constitutional amendments promulgated by President Musharraf.

Dismissing an intra-court appeal filed against the Legal Framework Order, which incorporated Mr Musharraf's Constitutional amendments, a two-judge division bench of the Lahore High Court yesterday said it cannot decide on such issues as they have to be settled by the Parliament, which was the supreme body.

General Pervez Musharraf

The judgment came after Mr Musharraf said the LFO was legal as he has been authorised by the Supreme Court to amend the constitution. Besides recognising the election of Mr Musharraf as President through a referendum last year, the LFO also conferred power on him to dissolve the Parliament. Almost all opposition parties declined to recognise the LFO and asked the government to submit it for ratification by Parliament and the four provincial Assemblies as stipulated by the 1973 constitution.

On the question whether the Supreme Court has the power to give the right to Mr Musharraf to change the constitution, the Lahore High Court said the apex court can exercise its power under Article 187 of the Constitution to pass directions to any person. The Supreme Court also validated the military coup of 1998, headed by Mr Musharraf, it said.

The ruling came as the talks between the government and the MMA on LFO broke down. The LFO was challenged in the Lahore High Court by lawyer Mr AK Dogar. — PTI

12 APR 2003

THE STATESMAN

Petition challenging Musharraf laws dismissed

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, APRIL 10. The Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, got a shot in the arm today as a Division Bench of the Lahore High Court dismissed an intra-court appeal challenging the Legal Framework Order (LFO) also known as Musharraf laws.

The LFO incorporates all the controversial amendments made by Gen. Musharraf to the Constitution. Some of these include extension of his tenure as Chief of the Army Staff till 2007, election as President on the basis of April, 2002 referendum and constitution of the National Security Council (NSC), with representation to all service chiefs.

The Lahore Bench had reserved the judgment last Friday and allowed petitioner, A.K. Dogar to submit additional arguments in writing. After hearing the arguments, the Bench dismissed the appeal.

In the judgment, the court said the entire LFO 2002 was challenged before the Supreme Court in Wattan Party's case. While dismissing the petition, the apex court observed that all the major political parties fielded their candidates to contest the general elections 2002 under the Conduct of General Election Order 2002 and none of them had come forward with the petition to question any provision of the LFO.

The court said the precedent case law and decisions of the Supreme Court are binding and this court cannot review them as a Court of appeal. Article 189 of the Constitution mandates that any decision of the Supreme Court shall, to the extent that it decides a question of law or is based upon or enunciates a principle of law, be binding on all other courts in Pakistan.

The Bench said that as none of the political parties has challenged the LFO 2002 in court and are currently engaged in a dialogue for a consensual formula on the is-

ssues raised with regard to the LFO, the appeal is dismissed accordingly.

The verdict has come at a juncture when the Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali Government is bracing for another round of confrontation with the Opposition parties over the validity of the Musharraf laws. Gen. Musharraf has summoned the National Assembly session on April 15. No business could be transacted in the first session, as the Opposition disrupted the proceedings on the LFO.

There have been clear indications from the Musharraf camp in the last few days that Gen. Musharraf is in no mood to give in to the demand of the Opposition that he step down as the Chief of the Army Staff. The Opposition parties have declared that they do not approve of the amendments made by him to the constitution and insist on parliamentary approval.

It is immediately not clear as to what has prompted Gen. Musharraf to summon the National Assembly particularly at a juncture when every one expects him to address the joint session of National Assembly and Senate.

The risks involved for Gen. Musharraf in facing the parliamentarians was evident on Tuesday when the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), after an extraordinary meeting in Peshawar, declared that it would not allow a person in uniform to address the joint session as President.

In a bid to gauge the mood among leaders of various parties, Gen. Musharraf began last weekend what was termed as process of consultations. So far, he has met the representatives of the ruling party, the Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam) and its ally, the Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (Patriots). He is yet to meet any opposition group.

However, it appears he has ruled out the possibility of leaving the post of the Chief of

the Army Staff, on the ground that the country was passing through a transitional period and the regional and international situation was also not conducive for such an act.

Gen. Musharraf told the ruling party leader that the country was passing through a transition period, and it would be good if the same person held the posts of the President and the COAS. In a transition period, the person holding both the posts was in a better position to deal with the problems created in the process.

Gen. Musharraf reportedly said that the Army was also wary of the changing international scenario and his holding of both posts would be in the greater national interest. If he has indeed invoked the authority of Army in support of the case for his continuation in two posts, it would be difficult for any party to counter him.

On Article 58(2)(B), which empowers Gen. Musharraf to dissolve the National Assembly, the President told the ruling party members that the apex court on more than five occasions, had supported the presidential powers under 58(2)(B). The court had held that it was a "safety valve" against the imposition of martial law. On the National Security Council, Gen. Musharraf told them that it would not be a supra-constitutional body and its role would merely be consultative in nature.

The assertive tone of Gen. Musharraf about his regime and the need for continuation of his policies was evident today when he claimed that the economy has been strengthened and the country put on the track of progress, prosperity and development.

Addressing a representative tribal Jirga at Governor House in Peshawar, he claimed that this has been achieved due to the reforms and policies launched during the last three years.

1 1 APR 2003

DEE HINDO

6 APR 2003

Pakistan spills its nuke beans

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, April 5: The father of Pakistan's nuclear programme, A.Q. Khan, has finally yanked the veil off Islamabad's nuclear capability.

At an anniversary function of the Defence Residents' Society in Karachi last week, he said Pakistan's atom bomb was ready way back in 1984. The nuclear tests Islamabad conducted in May 1998, in response to India's Pokhran II, were only a formal announcement of its nuclear capability.

Khan, who was the Pakistani Prime Minister's special adviser on strategic programmes, is credited with developing Islamabad's nuclear arsenal. He claimed in Karachi that Pakistan had enough atomic bombs to destroy major Indian cities three times over. As the audience applauded, Khan said Islamabad could even nuke Delhi or Mumbai within five minutes.

"I have often been accused of making incendiary remarks regarding Pakistan's nuclear capability. The fact of the matter is

that I am requested to make such statements," he was quoted as saying by the *Nation*, an English-language daily in Pakistan.

"The late General Zia or deposed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif could not say that Pakistan could target Indian cities. So they asked me to do that. I can say that Pakistan can destroy Delhi and Bombay in five minutes and get away with it," Khan said.

According to Khan, he was a student in Germany when he wrote to then Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, urging him to do something after Pakistan's defeat at the hands of India in 1971.

"My wonderment knew no bounds when I actually received a reply from Mr Bhutto asking me to see him. In 1976, he and I agreed to initiate a programme aimed at making the atomic bomb. If then we had not started the programme, we would have been sitting in Bharat at the moment."

In 1984, he told General Zia-ul-Haq, the Pakistani President then, that the nuclear device was ready to be detonated. "I even urged the General to make it public that

Pakistan had made the atomic bomb." "But the foreign office dissuaded him on the plea that American aid to Pakistan would stop if the world learnt that the country had the atomic bomb in its nuclear arsenal," Khan said.

In May 1998, he said he wrote to Nawaz Sharif, then Prime Minister, urging him to detonate the nuclear device if he did not want to go down in history as a cowardly leader.

It was revealed later that Bill Clinton, the US President then, had promised a \$100-million deposit in the personal bank accounts of Sharif and his brother if Pakistan refrained from detonating the nuclear device, Khan said.

The Pakistani nuclear scientist's remarks and admission prove what Delhi has been saying for long. A major reason for India's May 1998 nuclear tests was to keep ahead of Islamabad's secret nuclear programme. According to Delhi, much of Pakistan's nuclear and missile technology was handed over by China and North Korea through secret deals.

THE TELEGRAPH

Twists and turns

§18 Pakistan's National Assembly in crisis

The predictable has happened — Pakistan's National Assembly is paralyzed by the controversial Legal Framework Order conferring extraordinary powers on General Musharraf. He isn't a very popular personage these days — the democratic parties don't like him because of his military coup and the fundamentalist Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal doesn't like his proximity to the Americans at a time when they are getting ready to invade Iraq. Musharraf is trying to walk the razor's edge commando-style. It looks as if Pakistan is going to abstain on the Security Council resolution vote on Iraq to create a little distance from America, while the arrest of Al Qaida chief Khalid Sheikh Mohammed was timed to keep Americans happy. The ISI has exhibited a video purporting to be of Mohammed's arrest, but most journalists have come away with the impression that it is only a crude reconstruction and not the actual event, not least because Mohammed's face is totally hidden. Many analysts, including Lt Gen Hamid Gul, once head of the ISI and conversant with its methods, have come to the conclusion Mohammed was arrested earlier and is only being produced now.

Of a piece with such tortuous tactics is the profession by Prime Minister Jamali's loyalist government that the LFO was part of the widely accepted 1973 constitution, which is clearly false. Such manipulation has cut little ice with opposition groups, all of whom are demanding a scrapping of the LFO, leading to the indefinite adjournment of the Assembly. The Opposition signals that it is willing to accept a compromise — Musharraf can continue as President provided he quits his post as chief of the army. But Musharraf refuses, sensing a trap, as his base is in the army rather than in civilian life; it is foolish to expect him to kick away the ladder he has used to climb where he is now. The situation is an impasse, which can only intensify in case of a war in Iraq. It will require more than Musharraf's customary dexterity to work his way out of the web.

THE STATESMAN

14 MAR 2003

Musharraf loyalist elected Senate Chairman

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MARCH 12. Muhammadmian Soomro, a loyalist of the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, was today elected Chairman of the newly established Senate (equivalent to the Rajya Sabha). Mr. Soomro was Governor of Sindh during the three-year military rule and recently joined the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam).

The opening day of the Senate turned out to be a tamer affair than expected with the Opposition members deciding to take oath while insisting that they did not recognise the Musharraf laws contained in the Legal Framework Order (LFO). The National Assembly had to be prorogued two days ago as the Government and the Opposition failed to reach an agreement on the contentious issues of LFO.

It became easy for the ruling combine to get Mr. Soomro and retired Commander Khalilur elected for the posts of Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Senate. The ruling combine has managed to secure a simple majority in the 100-member House with the help of allies and independents.

Anointment of his loyalist to the Senate Chairman post should be a matter of great

comfort to Gen. Musharraf.

Under the Pakistan Constitution, the Senate Chairman officiates as President when the first citizen is not available.

The standoff between the Government and the Opposition has serious implications as the impasse could even lead to the dissolution of the three-month-old Assembly.

At a hurriedly convened press conference minutes after the National Assembly was prorogued, the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, maintained that if there was no change in the "attitude" of the Opposition, it would be difficult for the National Assembly to survive.

Ironically it was the first normal session of the Assembly after the October general election. Right from day one, it was bogged down on the controversial LFO containing all the changes made by Gen. Musharraf to the Constitution.

Though Mr. Jamali has offered dialogue with the opponents of Gen. Musharraf, there is little scope for an understanding unless the President is prepared to step down as the Chief of the Army Staff and agree to come through the Parliament route for his election as President.

There are three main issues at the heart of the dispute

between the Opposition and the Government on the Musharraf laws. The Opposition says it does not recognise Gen. Musharraf as President. He is deemed to have been elected by the people as President through the April 2002 referendum for a period of five years. There is no provision in the Constitution for such an election and the Electoral College for choosing the President consists of Members of Parliament and provincial assemblies.

Second, the Opposition parties have objection to Gen. Musharraf's continuation as the Army Chief for a further period of five years. Their contention is that the Constitution explicitly bars any person in uniform from holding the high office. There has to be a gap of at least two years before a person in uniform could even contest for public office.

The third contentious issue relates to the "formalisation of the role of the military" in matters of governance through the newly constituted National Security Council.

Though Gen. Musharraf has sought to argue that the Council is purely consultative in nature, representation of the three service chiefs on the body has given room to apprehensions of a permanent role for the military in politics.

1 2 2002

THE HINDU

100-11
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Musharraf under pressure over Iraq

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MARCH 19. The Pakistan Government is under pressure from the Opposition parties to condemn the ultimatum given by the U.S. President, George W. Bush, to Saddam Hussein to leave Iraq or face war.

The Government finds itself in a bind, unable to say anything against America. Islamabad believes that while a harsh statement would have no impact on the Bush Administration, it could undermine its relations with Washington.

The special session of the National Assembly, to discuss the Iraq crisis, continued for the second day today with fiery speeches particularly from the representatives of the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) directed against the U.K.-U.S. combine. In contrast, the nominees of the ruling party were circumspect and lauded the diplomatic initiatives by the Government to avert a possible war.

The Pakistan Government has certainly been spared the agony of voting in the United

Nations Security Council (UNSC) on the abandoned second resolution. But its woes are likely to continue for some time as the Prime Minister is scheduled to visit Washington on March 26 at the invitation of Mr. Bush.

It would be a testing time for Mr. Jamali if the U.S. strikes Iraq. He would certainly like to avoid being seen in the company of Mr. Bush when Iraq comes under attack. There were suggestions from non-government quarters that Mr. Jamali reschedule his proposed trip but once again it is a risk that Islamabad must be willing to take.

In the National Assembly, leaders from the Opposition and Treasury benches agreed to adopt a consensus resolution. The Opposition did not press the contentious issue of validity of Musharraf laws.

The Opposition parties blasted what they called a failure of the Government's foreign policy in not being able to prevent war against Iraq, but had varied views about what Pakistan should do now. While the MMA and Pakistan Muslim League-N came out hard against what

they saw as American designs to dominate the world and capture its natural resources, the People's Party Parliamentarians (PPP) called for diplomatic moves to save Iraq.

"American designs are a danger to peace and aimed at pushing the whole planet into war," the MMA secretary-general, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, said in a hard-hitting speech. He said the U.S. stood politically and diplomatically isolated in what he saw as its quest to capture the world's natural resources like oil. He urged the Pakistani Government to take "a strong stand" to support Iraq in collaboration with other countries opposing the U.S. policy such as Russia, France, China and Germany.

The PPP's Aitzaz Ahsan said Pakistan's foreign policy had failed because generals controlled it. He urged the Prime Minister, Jamali, to bring back the exiled former Prime Ministers, Benazir Bhutto, and Nawaz Sharif to create a domestic consensus that could help the country's future moves to play a leading role in the Islamic world.

PRESIDENTIAL ROW / OPPOSITION TO ARMY CHIEF AS CIVILIAN HEAD

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Musharraf convenes Senate

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By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MARCH 9. Even as the standoff between the Government and Opposition continued over the controversial Musharraf laws, the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, has convened the newly-elected Senate (equivalent of the Rajya Sabha) to meet on Wednesday for its inaugural session.

Although the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, has offered dialogue with Musharraf opponents, there is little scope for an understanding unless Gen. Musharraf is prepared to step down as Chief of Army Staff and agree to come through the route of Parliament for his election as President.

The Senate like the Rajya Sabha is a permanent body but Gen. Musharraf had dissolved it along with the suspended National Assembly in June 2001. Elections to the Senate were to have followed the general elections in October last year but were unduly delayed for a variety of reasons.

A brief notification issued by the Senate secretariat said the 100-seat upper house had been summoned to meet in Parliament House at 9 a.m. on Wednesday. Senate members must take the oath at the inaugural session. But Opposition parties said on Friday their more than 40 Senators-elect would not take oath under the Constitution which has been amended by the Legal Framework Order (LFO).

The ruling coalition, led by the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid-e-Azam, has managed to secure a thin majority in the Senate with the help of its allies and independents. So it should not have any difficulty in getting its nominees elected as Chairman and Deputy Chairman. The post of Chairman is important as in the absence of President the Senate Chairman discharges responsibilities of the first citizen.

There are three main issues at the heart of the dispute between the Opposition and the Government on Musharraf laws. Opposition says it does not recognise Gen. Musharraf as President. He is deemed to have

been elected by people as President through the April 2002 referendum for a period of five years. There is no provision in the Constitution for such an election and the Electoral College for choosing President consists of members of Parliament and provincial assemblies.

Second, the Opposition parties have objection to Gen. Musharraf's continuation as Army Chief for a further period of five years. Their contention is that the Constitution explicitly bars any person in uniform from holding the high office. There has to be a gap of at least two years before a person in uniform could even contest for public office.

Third contentious issue relates to 'formalisation of the role of military' in matters of governance through the newly-constituted National Security Council. Though Gen. Musharraf has sought to argue that the Council is purely consultative in nature, representation of the three service chiefs on the body has given room to apprehensions of a permanent role for the military in politics.

How exactly the issue gets resolved is anyone's guess. There have been efforts since the last general election by the ruling combine to arrive at consensus on all these contentious issues but without success. There are worries among political observers that the crisis could undermine the return of civilian rule, however limited it is in real nature.

The hardline of the opposition was evident today when Naheed Khan, Member National Assembly and political Secretary to Benazir Bhutto, has said that there was no question of the PPP accepting the LFO in its present form as part of the Constitution.

Ms. Khan said she was shocked and bewildered at the statement of the leader of the Parliamentary Party of PML(Q) Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain. She accused him of justifying the holding of office of President by a serving army chief on the ground that the General wore Pakistani military uniform and not Indian military uniform.

"Such insensitive remarks only betrayed either the PML(Q) leader's own intelligence level or the regard he had for the intelligence of common

man." She said that the Supreme Court on the issue of referendum had left the consequences flowing from the referendum to be determined by the appropriate forum of Parliament at the appropriate time.

As such unless the LFO was taken up by Parliament and ratified as constitutional amendment in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Constitution itself, it could not be regarded as a valid part of the Constitution.

"LFO is a corrupt document sought to be appended to the Constitution to corrupt the basic law of the land," she said. It is aimed at rewriting the civil-military equation on the terms of the military alone and is a negation of all norms of democracy and parliamentary supremacy, which no political party dedicated to the cause of democracy, and supremacy of the people could accept", the PPP MNA said.

She said the PPP senators' elect would go the Senate on March 12 to take oath only under the 1973 Constitution as amended from time to time in accordance with the constitutionally-laid down procedure.

In a separate statement, Mian Raza Rabbani, Acting Secretary General, PPP maintained that it was incorrect in fact and law when the PML(Q) states that the elections were held under the LFO and by participation in the same the political parties have accepted the LFO.

"The PPP is committed to the principle that the Constitution can only be amended through the procedure provided in Article 238 and 239 of the Constitution and not by an individual. The party rejects the LFO as it seeks to change the basic structure of the Constitution, infringes on sovereignty of Parliament, and undermines the federal character. The LFO confers discretionary powers on the President without any check and balance; it impinges upon the independence of the judiciary", he said.

10 MAR 2003

SEE FINDU

Pak ①
9/3

'Pak. got \$891 million compensation'

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MARCH 8. Pakistan has received a direct compensation of over \$891 million from different countries in recognition of its "active cooperation" in the fight against international terrorism.

In a written reply to the National Assembly on Friday, Shaukat Aziz, Adviser to the Pakistan Prime Minister on Finance, said the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union, Japan and Saudi Arabia had paid compensation.

In addition, under the Paris Club, loans amounting to \$12.5 billion had been rescheduled.

And, \$62.2 million relating to debt from Denmark, the Netherlands and the Commonwealth Development Corporation of U.K. had been written off.

Earlier in the week, Mr. Aziz informed the National Assembly that September 11 and the U.S.-led coalition against Afghanistan had cost Pakistan over \$2 billion. In contrast, the "compensation" from the coalition for logistical support was below \$900 million.

The facts and figures revealed by Mr. Aziz, who was Finance Minister in the Pervez Musharraf Government, assume significance in the wake of a debate within a section of the Pakistan press whether Islamabad "sold itself cheap" when Washington sought its support for the war.

Pakistan being a frontline state in the Afghan operation received \$600 million in the form of cash grants and that the Government was also expecting \$0.5 billion in aid from the U.S. shortly.

The grants were for specific projects including strengthening of the security apparatus to check infiltration by militants of the Al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Asked about the payments made to the U.S. for F-16 jets, he said the Government had received some cash and the remaining amount was adjusted in purchase of commodities from that country.

In the early 1990's, Pakistan had made payments to the U.S. for purchase of F-16 jets but Washington refused to deliver them as a consequence of nuclear-related sanctions.

THE HINDU

9 MAR 2003

PAK 1

Jamali unable to emerge as credible player

9/3

By Amit Baruah

NEW DELHI, MARCH 8. The political emasculation of the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, has undermined the possibility of his emerging as an interlocutor with India. Unlike his last-elected, civilian predecessor, Nawaz Sharif (now living in exile in Saudi Arabia), Mr. Jamali has, so far, shown little inclination to play a role in foreign affairs.

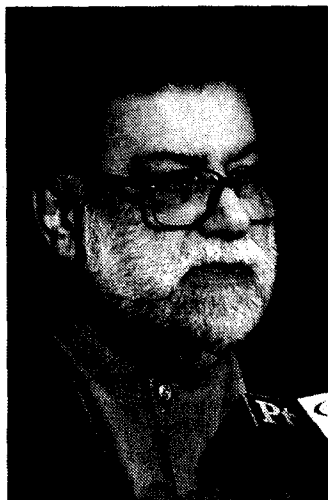
The Pakistan President and Chief of Army Staff, Pervez Musharraf, led the charge against India at the February 24-25 Non-Aligned Movement summit.

If past practice was to have been followed, when the military has not been in power, the "civilian" Prime Minister would have represented Pakistan at the NAM meeting.

Gen. Musharraf's presence in Kuala Lumpur was apparently triggered by Mr. Jamali's "pre-occupation" with the elections to the Senate, or upper House of Parliament.

But that's only a fig leaf. Gen. Musharraf is in complete command of foreign policy and even Pakistan's principal international interlocutors are aware of this.

Given the role that the mil-



itary has traditionally played in the politics of Pakistan, Gen. Musharraf's role is hardly surprising.

But what does come as some surprise that all pretence that the Prime Minister is the chief executive and handles foreign affairs has been dropped.

The "rubber stamp" rôle of Mr. Jamali has been evident in domestic affairs, but now it is being extended to the international sphere as well.

All this can only go to prove that the civilian Government is totally subservient to the mili-

tary.

In what appears to be an effort to give Mr. Jamali some "role", the Pakistan Prime Minister has been invited to meet the U.S. President, George W. Bush. But, at a time when the chief interest of the U.S. lies in anti-terrorist affairs, Washington will be aware that it's best to talk directly with Gen. Musharraf.

Returning to India and Pakistan, there appears to be little prospect for any dialogue in the near term at least. India remains steadfast that no dialogue is possible till cross-border terrorism ends. The release of Masood Azhar and Hafiz Saeed, lynchpins of terrorist activities directed against India, can only go to confirm that Islamabad is not serious about curbing anti-India violence.

The absence of trust at the top levels and the compulsions of domestic politics is likely to remain in the weeks and months ahead.

But, by ensuring that Mr. Jamali acts only in the sphere shown to him, Gen. Musharraf has reduced the possibility of a new interlocutor engaging India.

If there was a civilian Prime Minister who pulled some

weight in his own country, he would have been taken seriously in New Delhi and other capitals of the world.

But that hasn't happened and doesn't appear to be on the cards.

There were major differences of approach between Gen. Musharraf and Mr. Sharif on how to deal with India.

Whatever he knew or did not know about the 1999 Kargil incursion planned by the General, Mr. Sharif did act to end it with an "accord" signed with the then U.S. President, Bill Clinton.

Today, there appears to be little possibility of Mr. Jamali emerging as a credible "pole" in Pakistani politics, who can provide a different and healthier approach to relations with India.

Had the Pakistani Prime Minister shown some spunk, some appetite for foreign affairs, there could have been the prospect of a change, albeit small, in India-Pakistan relations.

Unless there is a major shift in gear from the "civilian" Prime Minister, the President, who is now running foreign affairs on a "de jure" basis as opposed to "de facto" before he took power in 1999, the emasculation of Mr. Jamali can only continue.

SEE HINDU

9 MAR 2003

Pressure mounts on Pakistan

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

HD-1A
4/3
Pakistan
ISLAMABAD, MARCH 3. As a newly inducted non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, Pakistan finds itself under intense pressure from the lobbies in favour and against war on Iraq.

After the 40-minute telephone call by the Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov to the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Khurshid Mahmood Kasuri on Saturday, today it was the turn of the British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw.

While Mr. Ivanov appraised Mr. Kasuri about the memorandum tabled by Russia, France and Germany in response to the second resolution of the United States and United Kingdom, Mr. Straw reportedly explained the Pakistan Foreign Minister the rationale behind the new resolution. Obviously both sides wanted Islamabad to back their respective initiatives.

That is not all. Syrian President, Bashar al-Assad, phoned his Pakistani counterpart, Pervez Musharraf, to discuss boosting cooperation in the U.N. Security Council to prevent a war

against Iraq. "Mr. Assad called on Pakistan, as a Muslim country and member of the U.N. Security Council to boost efforts and cooperate with Syria and other council members to unite against any initiative or effort aiming to give the United States pretexts to attack Iraq," the official Syrian news agency said.

The Syrian leader also informed Gen. Musharraf of the results of the Arab summit in Egypt on Saturday, during which the Arab states stressed their "firm refusal" of any strike on Iraq.

Pushed from within and without Islamabad so far chosen the middle path.

Gen. Musharraf has repeatedly said that 'peace ought to be given the best chance through a diplomatic solution' while maintaining that Pakistan would like to wait for the new report of U.N. inspectors before taking any decision.

The 'anti-American' sentiment on the home front was evident from the impressive 'million march' organised by the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, alliance of religious parties, in Karachi on Sunday.

4 MAR 2002

THE HINDU

Setback to Musharraf Jamali Govt.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy *pk 1*

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 11. The Pervez Musharraf-Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali Government suffered a setback on Monday with the Supreme Court striking down a law promulgated by the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, barring defeated candidates in the general election from standing for the Senate polls scheduled in the last week of this month.

The amendment to the Constitution through what is known as the Legal Framework Order (LFO). The apex court verdict is of enormous political significance as opposition parties have questioned the right of Gen. Musharraf to amend laws and the Constitution.

In its judgment, the court held the law as "discriminatory" and "violative" of Article 25 of the Constitution.

Incidentally, this is the first decision of the apex court disproving of any act of Gen. Musharraf. It had first validated the military takeover on October 12, 1999, invoking the 'doctrine of necessity', and all subsequent actions were approved on the touchstone of this Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO) Constitution after the October 1999 coup.

The Government had defended the legislation, saying that Gen. Musharraf was empowered by the Supreme Court to prescribe any qualification or disqualification for Members of Parliament. The Supreme Court made no mention of the LFO 2002, whose legality was called into question by a number of petitioners, including the Millat Party senior vice-president and Information Minister in the Musharraf Government, Javed Jabbar.

The Government, 19 days after the hold-

10-12 12/2
ing of general election, had amended the Conduct of General Elections (Eighth Amendment) Order 2002, and added Article 8AA, providing that "a person shall be disqualified from being elected or chosen as, and from being, a member of the Senate if, having been a candidate for election to the National Assembly or a Provincial Assembly at the elections held under this order, he has not been elected to such Assembly."

The verdict of the apex court is bound to make the opposition as well as the lawyers' community to challenge the controversial amendments made by Gen. Musharraf to the Constitution.

In the course of the arguments in the current case, the Jamali Government had informed the Supreme Court last week that the amendments made by him were now a part of the Constitution and did not need validation by Parliament.

The LFO has been a major source of friction between the Opposition parties and the Jamali Government since the October general election.

The former not only dubbed the amendments illegal and unconstitutional but also proclaimed that they do not recognise the amended Constitution.

Tension, on account of the LFO, came to the fore at the inaugural session of the National Assembly when the Opposition insisted that it had taken oath under the 1973 Constitution. Subsequently, talks for a coalition between the 'king's party' led by Mr. Jamali and the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), alliance of six religious parties, fell through on the question of the amendments.

The contention of the MMA and other opposition groups was that Parliament alone had the right to amend the Constitu-

tion. Among the amendments to the Constitution made by Gen. Musharraf are creation of a National Security Council formalising the role of the military in governance, his own continuation as President and Chief of Army Staff for a further period of five years and powers to the President to dissolve the National and Provincial Assemblies invoking the clause of "national security and interest".

The Jamali Government is certain to face the heat on the LFO when the National Assembly meets in the last week of February after the elections to the Senate — the equivalent of Rajya Sabha.

The Government, in its statement, said that the LFO was both legal and valid and was enacted by the President by exercising his powers granted by the Supreme Court in the Zafar Ali Shah case.

The case relates to validation of the October 1999 military takeover under the doctrine of 'necessity'.

The Government argued that all the candidates from all political parties took part in the October elections.

"The electorate has voted and Parliament has been elected under the Constitution as amended by the LFO." The statement said that no provision of the LFO needed Parliament's sanction or approval either for its validity or continuity.

The Government further stated that the President's powers of amending the Constitution did not end on October 10, 2002, and he was fully empowered to promulgate any law and had acted lawfully. Certain provisions of the Constitution were revived on November 16, and other provisions are to be revived after the holding of the Senate elections.

1 2 FEB 2003

Pak hardliners root for sharia law

Rory McCarthy
Islamabad, February 3

POLITICIANS FROM Pakistan's most radical Islamic parties, emboldened by an unprecedented election success, are preparing to impose sharia law on the country's already conservative northern province.

In general elections in October an alliance of religious parties riding a wave of anti-American sentiment swept to a majority in the Parliament of the North West Frontier, next to the Afghan border.

In the National Assembly in Islamabad, the religious parties, which had traditionally won barely a handful of seats, became the third — largest party and a signifi-

Karachi blast kills one, injures seven

A BOMB hidden in a motorcycle detonated in Karachi on Monday in the parking lot of a state-oil company, killing one person and injuring at least seven.

The explosion, which could be heard for kilometres, shattered glass and overturned motorcycles in the parking lot of the State Oil Company.

AP

cant Opposition force.

Since the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal took over in the frontier, some banks have been told to stop charging interest on loans, and music has been banned on buses. Now the provincial government is planning a ministry for the promotion of virtue and prevention of vice, an unwelcome reminder of

Afghanistan's religious police force under the Taliban.

But these politicians are very different from the poorly educated Taliban students, whom they appear to be emulating.

Several, like Siraj-ul Haq, the provincial Cabinet's deputy leader, are highly educated and careful to appear conciliatory. "Sharia means

the supremacy of law, the provision of justice, the provision of healthcare facilities," Haq said. "It means education, providing food and shelter, and satisfying people spiritually. We can claim to have in the frontier province the most ultra-modern and democratic government in the world."

However, it also offers a support base for Taliban and al-Qaida remnants.

Of the FBI presence in the region, Haq said: "Pakistan considers operations conducted in the name of the hunt for al-Qaida as false operations. "We hope that no one will displease us, otherwise it will be very harmful for everyone. It could become more serious."

The Guardian

Pak madrasas raided, clerics charge FBI

Islamabad, January 16

PAKISTANI AUTHORITIES accompanied by English-speaking foreigners raided at least three Islamic schools in the capital looking for al-Qaida and Taliban suspects, school officials said on Thursday.

About six religious leaders filed a complaint with the Islamabad police demanding charges of unlawful interference in Pakistani religious schools be brought against the foreigners, who they said were American FBI agents.

"We want these people charged. They illegally entered our madrasas and are interfering in the affairs of our religious institutions," Abdul Rashid Qasi, the deputy head of another school that was not raided.

Islamabad Police said they received the demand from the clerics but refused to say whether any charges would be filed. Pakistani Government officials would not confirm the raids or the identities of the English-speaking agents.

Pakistani police described as "baseless" the allegations by the clerics and several witnesses that the raids took place.

"There is no proof that any raid took place or there were foreigners involved in a raid," said Islamabad SP Kaleem Imam. Pakistan denies that the FBI is involved in raids on the homes of suspects, despite numerous witness accounts to the contrary.

The clerics insisted that the mosque and seminary were raided and that foreign agents were present.



REUTERS

Pakistani students eat lunch at an Islamabad madrasa, which was said to have been raided by authorities and foreigners on Thursday.

"I demand that a First Information Report be registered against these people because they were from the FBI," said the application from Abdul Razzaq Haideri, prayer leader of Abdullah bin Masood mosque in Islamabad. Haideri said in his complaint that his mosque was raided at about midnight on Wednesday.

Maulana Fida Mohammed, administrator of Madrasa Darul Uloom Subhania, said his school was raided shortly after midnight on Wednesday. "What are they doing? Why were foreigners there? This should not happen," he said.

The other schools raided were Jamia Misbahul Uloom and Masjid Abdullah bin Masood.

Khaista Gul, a 37-year-old cook at Madrasa Darul Uloom Subhania, said he was blindfolded and taken for a 10-minute drive. Questions were posed in English by the foreign men and translated, he said.

"They blindfolded me and took me in their car. After driving for about 10 minutes they started asking me about al-Qaida and Taliban. They were asking me if there were any al-Qaida and Taliban students here," Gul said. The schools do not have any known affiliation with militant groups. None of the students or teachers were detained, he said. However several student registers were taken, he said.

Bypoll results

Pakistan Muslim League (Qaid-e-Azam) party won four National Assembly seats in the bypolls securing a comfortable majority for the Government. Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal, riding on an anti-US plank, bagged three in the bypolls in which three activists of the Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians were killed.

Agencies

17 JAN 2003

Pervez threatened me: Imran

Islamabad, Jan. 2 (PTI): Cricketer turned politician Imran Khan accused President Pervez Musharraf of threatening him with serious consequences before the October elections and said he committed a "big mistake" by supporting the military establishment and now repented it.

Khan said he was threatened by Musharraf and the officials around him with "serious consequences" when he refused to "toe their line" before the general elections.

"Let me clearly state that I made a big mistake by supporting the military establishment in the hope of dawn of a new era in the country and I do repent over it because I was used by them", Khan said in an interview to *The News* daily published today.

A strong critic of former Prime Ministers, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, Khan said he supported Musharraf with a hope that the general was serious about bringing political, social and economic reforms to the

people. Khan said when he criticised Musharraf's referendum last year, he was threatened and told that his party Tehreek e-Insaf would not manage even a single seat.

He said Musharraf raised some hope in the people's minds when he overthrew the "corrupt" Nawaz Sharif government but had now made "ugly compromises" that would ruin Pakistan in the coming days.

The former cricketer said in the name of pragmatism, Musharraf has released all the outlaws from jails and made some of them Cabinet ministers.

"The only difference between the jailed criminals and sitting ministers facing charges was that the jailed ones had no vote bank, otherwise they could also secure their release", he said.

Criticising the role played by the secret agencies in Pakistan, he said they were "busy in serving their own selfish interests in the name of great supreme national interest."

The wife of a Pakistani doctor detained for suspected al Qaida links today challenged the government's claims that her husband, brother-in-law, nephew and sons had practised "anti-state activities".

Ahmed Javed Khawaja's wife Amatul Jalil filed a petition with the Lahore High Court rejecting the five men's two-week detention under the national security act as illegal.

3 JAN 2003

ANTI-DEFECTION LAW TAKES EFFECT

Jamali govt in for trouble

part 1
SR 2

The Dawn/ ANN & PTI

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 1. — The fledgling Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali government in Pakistan faces an uncertain future with the anti-defection law, kept in abeyance by President Pervez Musharraf, coming into force today.

The anti-defection law came into effect as General Musharraf's Ordinance keeping it in abeyance lapsed last night and was not revived.

The existing law on defection provides that the process of unseating a member would have to complete within four months from the date of filing of declaration by the party leader till the decision of the Supreme Court.

After the first meeting of the National Assembly in the third week of November, Gen. Musharraf revived the constitutional rule but at the same kept the anti-defection law suspended to enable Mir

Jamali to secure majority.

It was only after the anti-floor crossing law was made in-operational that Mir Jamali was elected with majority after 10 of the 81 members of the Pakistan Peoples Party headed by



Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali

Mrs Benazir Bhutto voted for him.

The Prime Minister subsequently managed to win the vote of confidence with 16 votes early this week as more PPP members along with members from other parties voted for him allegedly under pressure exerted by the government.

Besides 21 defectors from PPP, two from the Islamist

alliance Muthahida Majlis Amal and two from the Pakistan Muslim League-N headed by deposed Mr Nawaz Sharif voted for Mir Jamali.

The 25 defectors, of whom six have been made ministers, appeared to be in trouble following the re-activation of the anti-defection law as it would enable their respective parties to go to court challenging their defection.

But officials here said the defectors need not worry as Gen. Musharraf has already amended the anti-defection law to permit conscience vote.

Welcoming the restoration of anti-defection law, the PPP said it would soon challenge the defections in higher courts.

"From now on it would not be easy for the defectors to have a field day. They have to face the music in the courts. We hope to mount a major challenge to Jamali govt during Budget session," PPP spokesman Mr Faratullah Babar said.

THE STATESMAN

2 JAN 2003