



AFP

Supporters of Asif Ali Zardari celebrate after he was granted bail in Lahore on Wednesday.

Zardari released on bail

Mubashir Zaidi
Karachi, December 22

ASIF ALI Zardari, the husband of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, was granted bail on Wednesday after his surprise arrest in a murder case, and he accused the government of victimising its political opponents who are campaigning for democracy. Zardari was arrested on Tuesday just before he was to address a major opposition rally that could have been politically embarrassing to President Gen Pervez Musharraf, who has come under criticism for reneging on his vow to give up his post as head of the army.

Zardari denies plotting the 1996 slayings of a former judge and his son — one of a series of cases against him that supporters contend are politically motivated.

The order for his arrest came just a month after he'd been freed on bail from eight years in jail over a slew of cases, mostly related to allegations of corruption during his wife's two governments in the early 1990s.

His arrest sparked a clash on Tuesday between his supporters and police at an airport near Islamabad where he'd been due to address the rally. Police said 71 opposition workers were detained in the unrest, and several people were injured.

It also set back hopes of reconciliation between Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party and Musharraf, who took power in a bloodless coup in 1999 and is accused of backtracking on promises to restore full democracy.

As Zardari waited in his sprawling Karachi residence for his bail to be posted and his release from house arrest, he hailed Wednesday's ruling. But he accused the government of victimising its political opponents. "Such tactics cannot stop us from waging efforts to restore the rule of law and ensure the supremacy of the parliament," he said.

Zardari capital flight ends in house arrest

Islamabad, Dec. 21 (Reuters): The husband of Pakistani Opposition leader Benazir Bhutto was placed under house arrest today on arrival from Karachi, less than a month after his release from jail raised hopes for reconciliation with President Pervez Musharraf.

Asif Ali Zardari, freed on bail on November 22 after eight years in jail on charges of corruption, murder and drug smuggling, was detained at Islamabad airport after arriving from Karachi.

Hours earlier, an anti-terrorism court in Karachi ordered his arrest for failing to appear at a bail hearing in a case in which he is accused of involvement in the murder of a high court judge and his son in Karachi in 1996.

The Karachi court judge, Pir Ali Shah, while ordering the withdrawal of the bail also issued a non-bailable arrest warrant against Zardari.

The arrest dimmed hopes of reconciliation between former Prime Minister Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and military leader Musharraf, a key ally of Washington in the war on terror.

"We're just following the court's orders," interior minister Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao told state television. "When he was released on bail it was the order of the court and we abided by that and now the court in another case has cancelled his bail."

PPP parliamentary leader Makhdoom Amin Fahim said the party planned protest rallies tomorrow: "It's an insult to democracy. It's the worst ex-

ample of dictatorship."

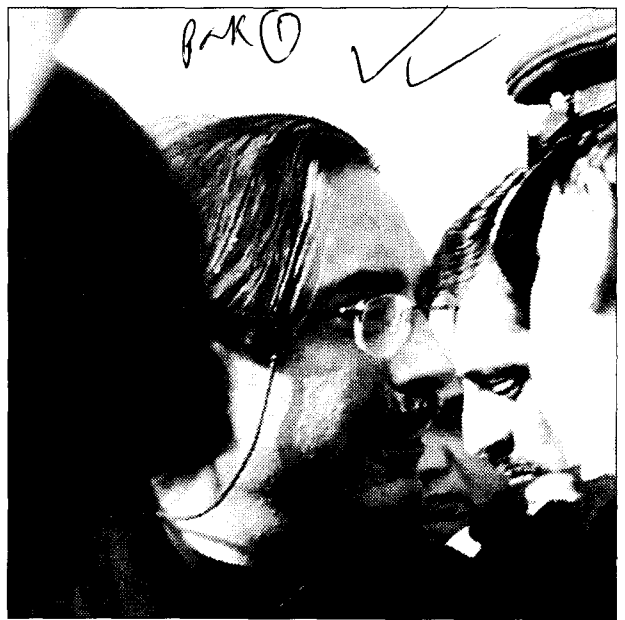
Zardari, investment minister in Bhutto's government that ruled until 1996, holds no formal position in the PPP but had planned his trip to Islamabad to rally support for the party. Zardari could not be arrested in Karachi as he had already boarded a plane for his first visit to the capital after his release from jail.

Before alighting from the plane, Zardari told TV networks over the phone that the aircraft was held up for over two hours during which he learnt that his bail was withdrawn. He described the move as a pressure tactic by the government. The plane was later allowed to travel to Islamabad where he was arrested.

Zardari was flown back to Karachi under police guard and would be held under house arrest at his residence, Mushtaq Shah, a Karachi deputy police chief, said. Court officials said a new hearing would be held on January 8.

Zardari called his arrest "political victimisation". "The government has gone panicky. We have the support of the masses," he said. He maintained there had been no hearing in the murder case for the past five years, implying that it might have been scheduled to interfere with his planned trip. "I see the hand of government behind this," he said.

He called on supporters to remain united. "We are ready to face the music. We have faced such ploys and tactics by the government in the past and are ready to face them in future."



Asif Ali Zardari (centre) surrounded by policemen at Islamabad airport. (AFP)

Pervez not to shed uniform

Karachi, Dec. 18 (Reuters): Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf has said he will stay on as army chief, reneging on a pledge to quit the powerful post by the end of the year.

"I will remain in uniform even after December 31. I am telling you this for the first time," Musharraf said in an interview with the private Kawiish Television Network late yesterday.

Musharraf pledged last year to shed his military uniform by the end of 2004 in return for support for constitutional changes validating his rule and giving him extensive power under a deal with an alliance of Islamist parties.

Musharraf promised to tell Pakistan why he had changed his mind.

"I will talk to the nation in a few days. ... and tell them some reasons, and explain that," said Musharraf, who took power in a bloodless coup in 1999.

Musharraf previously signalled that he believed quitting as army chief would undermine Pakistan's support for the US "war on terror" and

his efforts to make peace with India. The military has ruled Pakistan for more than half of the 57 years it has been an independent nation.

Political opponents lambasted Musharraf for going back on his word to step down as army chief.

"This is a violation of the constitution and a violation of a pledge he made to the 150 million people of Pakistan," said Liaquat Baluch, a leader of the Islamic Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA).

"He is practically bringing an end (to) the constitution," Baluch said, adding that the conservative Islamic alliance would "take all possible measures to remove" Musharraf from the government.

Pakistan's parliament passed a law last month that allowed Musharraf to retain both positions, giving early warning that he was unlikely to leave the army, infuriating Islamist and other Opposition parties.

The MMA held two rallies last week as part of a campaign to force Musharraf to quit as army chief and was set to hold another on Sunday in

the garrison city of Rawalpindi, near Islamabad.

Raza Rabbani, a central leader of the Pakistan People's Party of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, said Musharraf's decision would "increase political instability in the country".

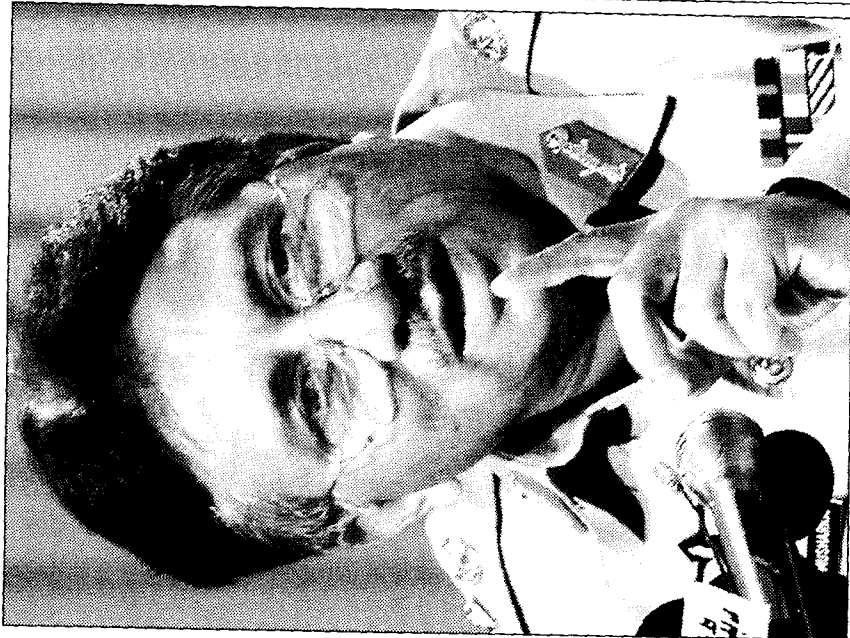
"Democracy is going back to the back burner. Democratic institutions will now become more and more redundant," he added.

But political analysts say the Opposition protests are unlikely to pose a challenge to Musharraf's rule given the parliamentary majority of the pro-military ruling party and its allies.

Musharraf has survived at least three assassination attempts — two last December — which security officials blamed on extremists incensed by Musharraf's US ties.

Quetta blast

An explosion rocked a multi-storey building housing offices of ministers in the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta today but no casualties were reported.



Pervez Musharraf: Uniform move

VICTIMS INCLUDE SOLDIERS ■ NO CLAIM OF RESPONSIBILITY

10 killed in Quetta blast

Associated Press

QUETTA, Dec. 10. — At least 10 people were killed, including a soldier, and 27 wounded in an explosion near an army truck here today.

The time bomb, weighing about 12 kg, was strapped to a bicycle when it went off by the parked truck in a crowded market area, Quetta police chief Mr Rehmat Ullah said. The injured include four soldiers.

No one has claimed responsibility for the bomb, which severely damaged the truck and blew out windows in nearby buildings.

Gen. Pervez Musharraf said the explosion was perpetrated by people "working against peace and development in the country". Information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed blamed "enemies of Pakistan who wanted to destabilise one of Washington's key allies in the war on terror".

Baluchistan has been hit by a series of low-level bombings in recent years, most of which have been blamed on feuding tribals. However, there are signs that the region has become a base for Taliban and Al-Qaida militants.

Access to scientist ruled out

Pakistan today said it would not allow any foreign country or agency directly or indirectly to question disgraced



The targeted army truck was carrying soldiers visiting a Quetta market for weekly shopping on Friday. — AFP

nuclear scientist Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, adds AFP. "Pakistan has full confidence in the efficacy of its investigative system and procedures," foreign office spokesman Mr Masood

Khan said. His comments followed a report in London's *Financial Times* that Pakistan was expected to allow UN nuclear investigators to put questions in writing to Dr Khan.

11 DEC 2004

THE STATESMAN

Law confirms Musharraf as Army Chief

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

170-121
110

ISLAMABAD, NOV. 30. The Bill adopted by the Pakistani Parliament to enable the President, Pervez Musharraf, continue as Chief of Army Staff (COAS) became law today with the Acting President and Senate Chairman, Mohammedmian Soomro, appending his signature to it.

Gen. Musharraf is on a tour of Latin America and would return here after December 5. It is immediately not clear why he sat on the Bill for over four weeks and under what circumstances it was sent to the Acting President.

Observers feel that Gen. Musharraf has avoided signing it to avoid legal problems and to deprive the Opposition parties a debating point that he had signed a bill that benefited him.

The Information and Broadcasting Minister, Shaikh Rash-eed Ahmed, said the Bill was sent to the Acting President as the President must sign a bill within 30 days after approval of the National Assembly and the Senate. The Senate passed the Bill on November 1.

Bone of contention

Holding of the two offices has been a bone of contention between the Opposition and the

Government since the October 2002 general election.

Gen. Musharraf attained the age of superannuation in October 2001. At that time, he was holding the offices of Army Chief, Chief Executive and President. He extended his tenure as Army Chief for an indefinite period. The order coincided with the U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan. Parliament was paralysed throughout 2003; the Opposition refused to cooperate pending resolution of the uniform issue. In December 2003, Gen. Musharraf entered into an agreement with the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) to end the stalemate.

As per the pact he promised to leave the army job by December 31, 2004 and in return the alliance of religious parties endorsed several of the controversial amendments he had made to the Constitution and facilitated ratification of his election as President through referendum held in 2002.

The Opposition parties have threatened to take to streets if Gen. Musharraf does not shed uniform. The MMA kicked off its campaign from Karachi on Sunday and the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD), an umbrella outfit of parties, is holding its demonstration on December 7.

01 DEC 2004

THE HINDU

Gen not to sign dual office bill

Islamabad: Apprehensive of the constitutional and legal problems if he signs a bill approved by parliament authorising him to hold the posts of the president and army chief beyond this year, Pakistan President Gen Pervez Musharraf has left it for senate chairman and acting President Muhammad Soomro to sign it in his absence.

The bill will be signed by Soomro shortly, Pakistan's parliamentary affairs minister Sher Afghan Niazi was quoted as saying in the media on Monday. The government has sent the Uniform Bill 2004, approved by parliament, to Soomro, currently the acting president in the absence of Musharraf, who is touring



Latin American countries, fearing legal complications if the general himself signed it, local daily The News said.

According to Pakistan's constitution, the chairman of the senate would officiate as president in his absence. The bill allows Musharraf to retain both the offices, president and chief of army staff, beyond 2004. Minister for parliamentary affairs Sher Afgan Niazi sent

the uniform bill with his signatures to the presidency last weekend for its formal approval, it said.

Musharraf refrained from signing earlier after an opposition senator pointed out a clause in the constitution barring the president to sign any bill that solely benefited him, it said. PTI

30 NOV 2004

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Pak SC grants Zardari bail

Amidst Talk Of PPP Support To Shaukat Aziz

Islamabad: The Pakistan supreme court on Monday granted bail to Asif Zardari, the jailed husband of exiled former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, paving the way for his release after some eight years in jail, lawyers said.

The three-member bench of the supreme court, headed by Chief Justice Nazi Hussain Siddiqui, in a short judgment ordered Zardari's release. Amidst reports of a rapprochement between Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and Benazir Bhutto, Zardari, 49, was granted bail in connection with several cases of corruption against him.

Zardari was arrested on November 4, 1996, when the government of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) led by Benazir Bhutto was dismissed by then President Farooq Ahmed Leghari. In September, a court overturned Zardari's conviction for receiving kickbacks from the state-run Pakistan Steel Mills in 1995, during his wife's tenure, for which he was sentenced for seven years. He has, however, remained in custody, awaiting trial in at least nine other corruption and criminal cases, all registered against him since 1996.

The last case against him involved the import of a bullet-proof BMW car. The country's National Accounts Bureau (NAB) had charged Zardari with fraudulent import of the car, saying Zardari allegedly kept the car in his use but it remained in the name of a fictitious person. Zardari had denied the

charges and described the case as "political victimisation".

Barrister Aitzaz Ahsan, defence counsel of Zardari told reporters that all bail documents will be submitted to the jail authorities for the release. Information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said the government will not block the release of Zardari and that he will be released after the relevant documents are submitted to the jail authorities.

Zardari is in a Karachi hospital and his lawyer says he is ill.

Benazir, who lives in exile in Dubai and in London has been accusing Musharraf's regime of pressurising her party by continuing the detention of Zardari.

Zardari's release apparently came after intense speculation that a rapprochement between Musharraf and Bhutto is expected to herald a political realignment of forces in Pakistan, where PPP may extend support to a Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz government, following political understanding behind the scenes.

"Now that a beginning has been made, PPP will redraw its strategy vis-a-vis the government," PPP sources said.

The release also comes after the 14-party Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD) headed by senior PPP leader Mukhdoom Amin Fahim announced its plans to conduct mass agitation against Musharraf's continuation as army chief beyond December 31. PTI



Asif Zardari

25 NOV 2004 THE TIMES OF INDIA

Bill allowing Gen's dual role challenged

Islamabad:



P Musharraf

Pakistan's supreme court has admitted a petition seeking nullification of the bill which permits President Pervez

Musharraf to continue as the chief of army beyond this year on the ground that it "violative" of the Constitution.

The petitioner, Shahid Orakzai, alleged that an attempt had been made through the bill to distort the highest office of the state.

He urged the apex court to declare the bill as "violative" of the Constitution which does not allow the President to hold "any office of profit in the service of Pakistan".

The petitioner also asked the court to direct Musharraf to withhold his assent to the bill passed by both Houses of Parliament on November 1.

Musharraf has not yet signed the controversial "President To Hold Another Office Bill-2004", which had drawn considerable flak from the opposition parties, leading to speculation that he is still undecided about retaining uniform beyond this year.

The bill authorises him to remain as army chief and President beyond December 31 and nullifies legal problems arising out of his public promise last year to quit uniform by the end of this year. PTI

9 NOV 2004

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Commonwealth retreats after Musharraf reneges

The Times, London

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 22. — Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf received a significant political boost today when the Commonwealth signalled that his decision to renege on a pledge to step down as head of the army would not affect the restoration of his country's

membership. On his first visit to Islamabad since the decision this summer to readmit Pakistan, Mr Don McKinnon, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, said that Pakistan had made democratic progress and it was in the interest of the group to re-engage an important nation. It was for Pakistani courts and legislators

to decide the legality of Gen. Musharraf's decision to retain both posts of army chief and President.

The Commonwealth suspended Pakistan's membership after Gen. Musharraf seized power in a bloodless coup in 1999, but readmitted the country in May, citing its progress towards restoration of full democracy. It said then

that it would monitor further reforms and expected the military leader to keep his commitment to stand down as head of the Pakistani army by the end of this year.

Mr McKinnon said after meeting Gen. Musharraf, "The important thing is that the issue is taken to the Parliament and the Parliament debated that issue."

President Musharraf, who has held the dual posts since 2001, had said that shedding his uniform would undermine his authority in the war on terror and in pushing forward a peace process with India.

The Pakistani parliament passed a Bill endorsing his decision last week.

Mr McKinnon said he raised the uniform issue with Gen.

Musharraf during the meeting and told him that the Commonwealth wanted "some clarity". However, he said, the group also underlined the need for maintaining "supremacy of the parliament and the constitution".

The Pakistani Opposition said that the Bill violated the Constitution and has threatened nationwide protests. The

Bill has been criticised by the Independent Human Rights Commission of Pakistan.

Mr McKinnon said that he appreciated Pakistan's role in the war on terror.

"I am here to ensure that the engagement between the Commonwealth and Pakistan reaches once again its full breadth and depth," Mr McKinnon said.

THE STATESMAN

23 OCT 2004

Pervez vows to nab leader

Pak in hunt for kingpin

Islamabad, Oct. 15 (Reuters): Pakistan will hunt down a former Guantanamo Bay inmate who masterminded the abduction of two Chinese engineers, one of whom died after a rescue operation in which five kidnappers were killed, officials said today.

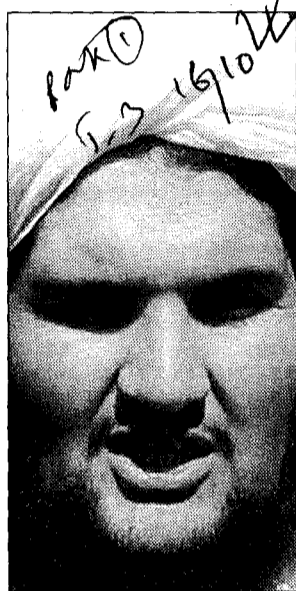
Al Qaida-linked tribesman Abdullah Mehsud directed the six-day hostage drama — which caused consternation in key ally China — from a hideout in the hills of the South Waziristan tribal region along the border with Afghanistan, they said.

After Pakistani commandos killed the kidnappers in the nearby Chagmalai area yesterday, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf promised Chinese President Hu Jintao the masterminds would be “pursued relentlessly and meted out the most severe punishment”.

The last young militant to cock a snook at the military in the tribal zone bordering Afghanistan was killed by a missile attack on his house in June when his location was pinpointed by tracking of his satellite telephone.

Nek Mohammad, who like Abdullah was in his 20s, had set himself up as a sort of latter-day Robin Hood, leading a group of tribesmen helping to shelter hundreds of al Qaida-linked militants.

Abdullah was likely to share his fate. “We have to hunt him down. Now we will evolve a strategy and do some planning,” a security official said. “The man has become



Abdullah Mehsud

too big for his shoes.”

Abdullah, freed from Guantanamo in March after the Pentagon said he was no longer a threat to the US, has made little effort to keep a low profile, giving interviews to local journalists throughout the kidnap drama.

Journalists have been taken to meet him at secret locations by tribal go-betweens and he could prove more difficult to find than Nek Mohammad, as he has been using a long-range cordless telephone harder to detect than a satellite phone. But Abdullah may find it difficult to evade capture too long after angering members of his own tribe who tried unsuccessfully to negotiate the release of the Chinese.

THE TELEGRAPH

15 OCT 2004

Bill on Musharraf dual posts passed

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 14. — Amidst stormy Opposition protests, Pakistan's National Assembly today passed a Bill allowing General Pervez Musharraf to hold the dual posts of the President and the Army Chief despite his pledge to shed the uniform by the end of this year.

The 342-member National Assembly approved the Bill titled "The President to Hold Office Bill, 2004" with a simple majority

after a day of debate as opposition members shouted "Go Musharraf Go" and "Go lotas (sycophants) Go".

The opposition parties, consisting of the 14-party Alliance for Restoration of Democracy, and Islamic alliance Muttahida Majlis-e Amal moved to the well of the House and protested vehemently to speaker Mr Amir Husain as he ordered a quick voting on the Bill at the instance of the members of the treasury benches.

Some opposition members even attempted to grab the mi-

crophone of the Speaker.

The protest began as minister for parliamentary affairs Mr Sher Afghan Niazi urged the speaker to speed up the process of debate, which began on a stormy note last night.

As the treasury benches pressed the speaker for quick voting, the Bill was put to voting clause-by-clause and was approved with voice vote.

As soon as the order for voting was issued, opposition members rushed towards the well of the House to protest.



Pak 1
11-12
18/10

Pak test-fires medium range ballistic missile

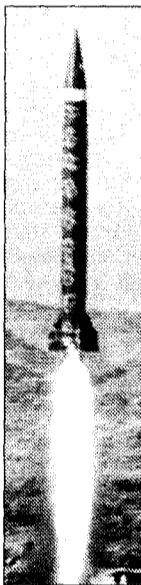
Islamabad: Pakistan on Tuesday "successfully" carried out yet another test of its intermediate range ballistic missile Hataf-V, with a strike range of 1,500 km capable of carrying nuclear and conventional warheads and targeting most of the Indian cities.

The test of Hataf V, also known as Ghauri, was successfully carried out as part of a series of tests planned for the Ghauri missile system, a defence press release here said.

"The test completely validated all the design parameters. The successful flight test bears testimony to the fact that the Ghauri weapon system is based on the highest standards of scientific and technological advancements," it said.

Claiming that the missile was indigenously built, it said the missile incorporates highly refined guidance and control systems and superior technology capable of achieving the greatest accuracy.

The Ghauri missile has a range of near-



ly 1,500 km and can carry nuclear and other warheads. It was handed over to the army strategic forces command in 2003.

The test carried out from an unknown location was witnessed by Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, the new chairman of joint chiefs of staff committee General Ehsan-ul Haq besides other senior military officers and scientists.

India and other neighbouring countries have been given advance notices as per standard practice, it said.

It said President Pervez Musharraf and Aziz have expressed satisfaction at the "outstanding results" achieved and complimented the scientists and engineers of the country's premier nuclear installation the Kahuta Research Laboratories (KRL).

The press release quoted Musharraf and Aziz as saying that the nation is proud of its scientists and holds them in the highest esteem "for making the national defence impregnable." PTI

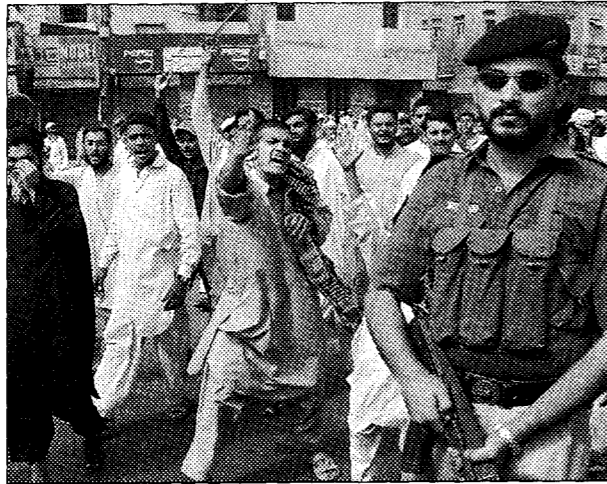
Suicide-bomber kills 7 at Lahore Shia mosque

Agencies
Lahore, October 10

AT LEAST seven people were killed when a suicide-bomber shot his way in to a Shia Muslim mosque in Lahore on Sunday and detonated the explosives he was carrying, a Shia leader said.

A local resident quoted witnesses as saying that a man opened fire on a security guard who tried to stop him entering the mosque, then blew himself up inside. Khawaja Basharat, a Shia community leader, said seven people, some of them children, had been killed. The bomber shot and killed two guards when they stopped him, Basharat said.

"As soon as he entered, he blew himself up. The casualties could have been greater if the guards hadn't tried to stop him. He couldn't reach the prayer hall, the bravery of the guards saved many lives", he said. An official from the private Edhi emergency service said three or four bodies had been taken out of the



Supporters of slain Sunni Muslim cleric Mufti Jamil chant anti-government slogans during his funeral in Karachi on Sunday.

mosque and some people had been wounded.

The attack was the latest in a string of religious violence to hit Pakistan in recent days that has fuelled fears of a flare-up in sectarian violence between minority Shias and majority Sunnis.

Earlier on Sunday, protesting Islamic students thr-

ew stones at police who replied with tear gas in the southern city of Karachi ahead of the funeral of a leading pro-Taliban cleric and an associate assassinated by unknown gunmen on Saturday.

Those killings followed two deadly attacks on religious gatherings this month

in which more than 70 people, both Sunnis and Shias, have been killed.

A car bomb attack on a crowd of radical Sunni Muslims in the city of Multan on Thursday killed at least 42 people and a suicide-bombing at a crowded Shia mosque killed 30 in the city of Sialkot on October 1. Shias make up about 15 per cent of Pakistan's 150 million people.

Funeral violence

Meanwhile, Pakistani police fired teargas shells at stone-throwing students in Karachi ahead of the funeral of a leading pro-Taliban cleric and an associate who was assassinated in the southern city on the weekend.

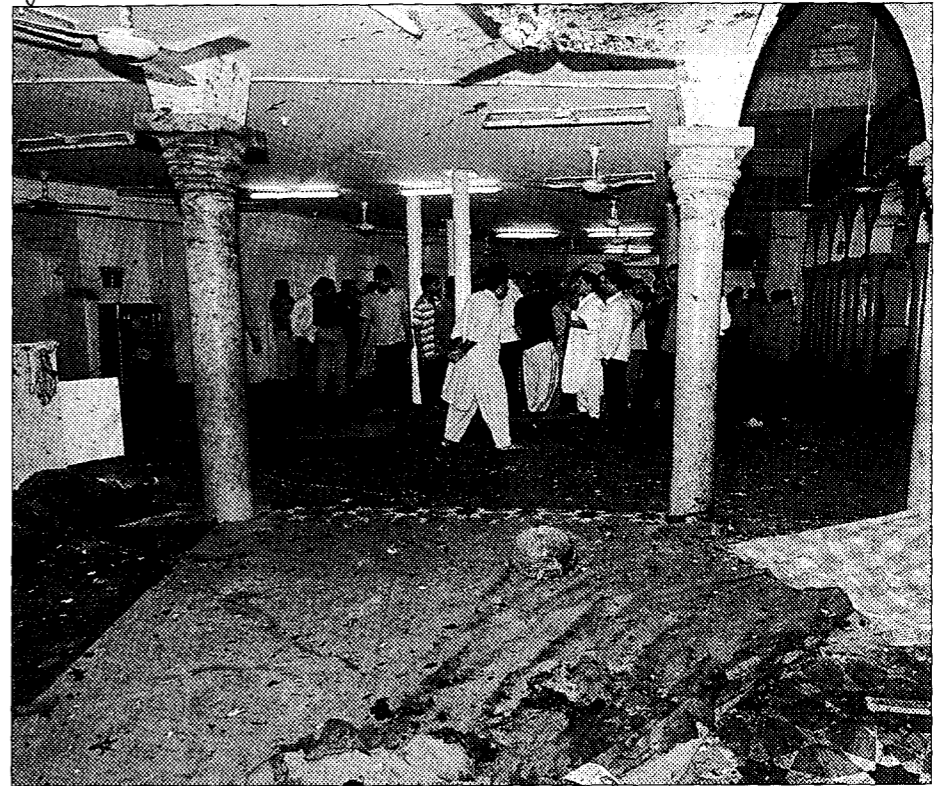
The students, who chanted slogans against the government and minority Shia Muslims they blamed for the killings, dispersed after the police followed up teargas rounds by firing into the air.

Karachi's city police chief Tariq Jamil said the funeral of Mufti Jameel Ahmad Khan then went ahead

peacefully. He said security had been beefed up across the city after his killing on Saturday and more policemen had been deployed to guard mosques.

Khan was a close to Mufti Nizamuddin Shamzai, a leading pro-Taliban cleric shot dead in Karachi in May and also belonged to the radical Deobandi school of Islam, of which most Taliban leaders were students.

Saturday's killings followed two deadly attacks on religious gatherings in Pakistan this month, in which more than 70 people have died, both majority Sunnis and minority Shias. Khan was a member of the leadership council of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, part of Pakistan's main Islamic Opposition bloc, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal. On Saturday, the police said they had arrested more than 50 members of outlawed Islamic militant groups in central Pakistan as part of investigations into the two deadly attacks on religious congregations earlier this month.



People gather after the bomb blast inside a Shia mosque in Lahore on Sunday.

AFP

Car bombs rock Multan, 40 killed

Sunni leaders point fingers at Shiite terrorists

Associated Press
Multan, October 7

TWO BOMBS planted in a car and motorcycle exploded at a gathering of Sunni Muslim radicals here today, killing at least 40 people and wounding about 100 others. Police suspected it to be a sectarian attack.

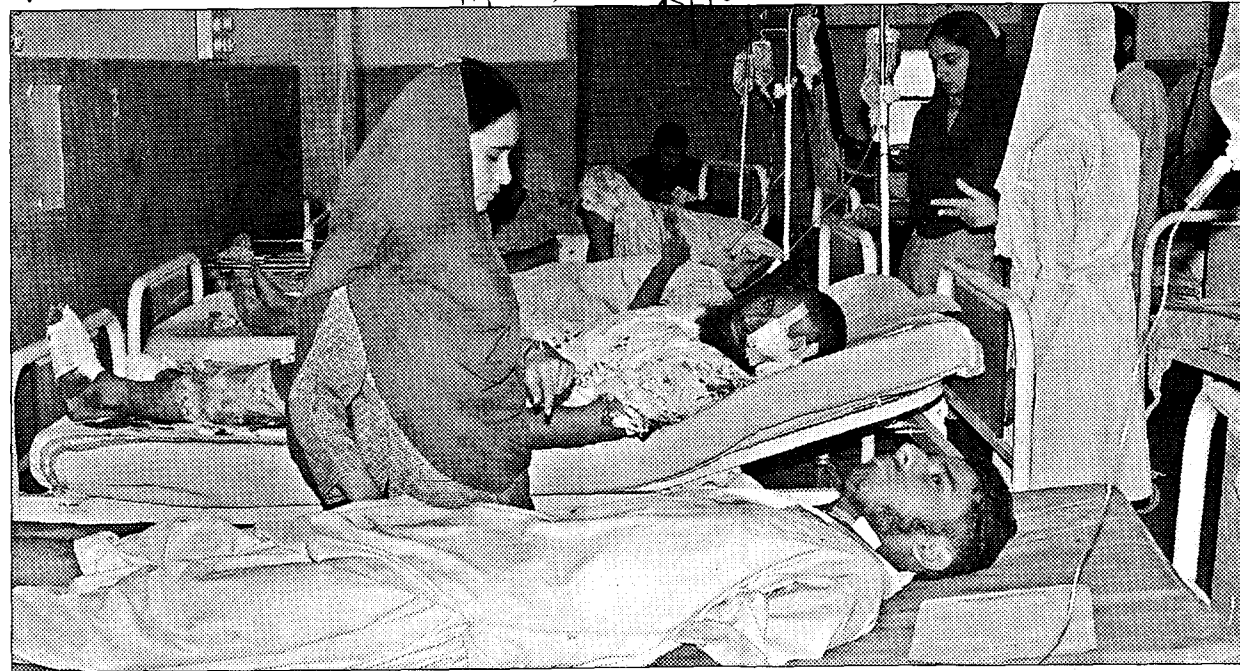
About 2,000 angry Sunnis gathered outside a hospital where victims of the explosions were taken, shouting: "Shiites are infidels!" and slogans against the government, witnesses said. The bombings came less than a week after a suicide attack left 31 dead at a Shiite mosque in an eastern city.

About 3,000 people had gathered in a residential area of Multan to mark the anniversary of the death of the leader of the outlawed Sunni radical group Sipah-e-Sahaba killed in an attack last year. A car bomb exploded near the venue as people were starting to disperse after the overnight

meeting, and two minutes later a second bomb attached to a motorcycle went off, deputy city police chief Arshad Hameed said. "It seems to be an act of sectarian terrorism, but we are still investigating," he said.

Officials at the Nishtar government hospital said at least 39 people were killed and more than 100 were wounded, about 50 seriously. Some 50 others were treated for minor injuries and later discharged. Other people were taken to other clinics. Pools of blood and shoes of the victims were scattered at the scene, near the remains of the car.

Jamil Usmani, 26, who had been standing in a nearby parking lot with friends, said a stampede after the bombing caused many injuries. "The explosion numbed our ears, we saw people falling on each other, everybody was crying, everybody was running," he said. "Many people were injured in the stampede, we



A blast victim being treated at a Multan hospital on Thursday.

started picking them up and asked passing cars for help."

Talat Mahmood Tariq, police chief for Multan region, said the car bomb, estimated to weigh about 15 pounds, was set off by remote control and most injuries were

caused by flying metal from the vehicle. It did not appear to be a suicide attack as no body parts were found inside the car, Multan police chief Sikander Hayyat said.

Witnesses said the Sunni protesters who gathered

outside the Nishtar hospital attacked two ambulances, shattering the windscreens with sticks. Nearby, others burned tires, casting a pall of black smoke. Inside the hospital, bloodied victims were crammed into an

emergency ward, some lying two to a bed. Dozens of dead were placed on the floor of another ward.

Officials said about 1,000 police, including reservists, were called from other districts, and soldiers were pa-

trolling the city to stop Sunni and Shiites from clashing. Multan has suffered sectarian violence in the past. Sunni Muslims make up about 80 percent of the 150 million people in Pakistan, and most of the rest are Shiites. The vast majority of both sects live in harmony but radical elements on both sides carry out attacks.

"We condemn this terrorist attack. This is tragic," Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said Islamabad. "The government will continue its mission against terrorism."

Thursday's blasts came six days after a suicide attacker detonated a bomb inside a crowded Shiite mosque in the eastern city of Sialkot during Friday prayers, killing 31 people and injuring more than 50.

The attack also came hours after the burial of an alleged top al-Qaida operative and Sunni Muslim militant Amjad Hussain Farooqi at a village in eastern Punjab province. He was a member of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, and had been accused in attacks on Shiites, and in the 2002 beheading of American journalist Daniel Pearl.

King Norodom Ranouk has abdicated, says president

Agence France-Presse
Phnom Penh, October 7

CAMBODIA'S KING Norodom Ranouk has abdicated while in self-imposed exile in Beijing, plunging the country into a new political crisis, his son, the national assembly President, said today. "According to a royal message we've received and read to the national assembly, the King has abdicated", said Prince Norodom Ranariddh, adding that he hoped the King could be persuaded to change his mind.

"The King said Chea Sim (the Senate president) will be the acting head of state and he has written that, from now on, Norodom Sihanouk is retired", the emotional prince said.

The King, 81, had been due to return to Cambodia today after repeated threats to abdicate after being sidelined during a year-long political crisis and amid concerns about his succession.

He said the throne council, which is supposed to elect the King's successor, should meet soon and ask him to reconsider.

Pak scribes swallow bitter pill of 'communalisation'

Vishal Thapar
Jammu, October 4

WHEN THE bus carrying a group of Pakistani journalists rolled into Lakhampur, the entry point to Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday night, Imtiaz Alam, leader of the delegation, was handed over a welcome note. It read: "You bastards, you're welcome!"

On his arrival at the Wagah border, Alam had hailed the maiden visit of Pak journalists to J&K as an opportunity to report on the 'core issue' from "the other side".

The "other side" of the militancy, encouraged by Pakistan as a 'freedom struggle', confronted the visitors in no time when they were taken to the Muthi (Phase-I) migrant camp on the outskirts of Jammu today. The shantytown is home to some 1,500 families of Kashmiri Pandits ousted from their homes in the Valley since 1990. An estimated 350,000 Pandits were uprooted from the Valley as a consequence of the unrest.

Pushkar Nath Razdan was among the scores of displaced Pandits who came out to tell the 'other side' of the story. "You call this a freedom struggle? Had it been one, wouldn't I have been part of it?" he asked, referring to the composite culture of Kash-



OTHER SIDE OF THE STORY Pakistani journalist Muniza Jahangir interviews Kashmiri Pandits at a migrant camp in Jammu on Monday.

mir, now in disarray. "It's only about the communalisation of Kashmir, it's religious cleansing," Razdan thundered, recalling bitterly how he was driven out of his Pulwama home, allegedly by his Muslim neighbours. "We want to see what the Pakistan Press writes about this," the old man challenged. The visitors did not utter a word.

P. K. Bhan, a 45-year-old bank official, painted the "atmosphere of terror" that forced his family to flee Tangmarg. "The chants of some of our neighbours were terrifying. They would say: 'We want Kashmir to be with Pakistan, without the Pandits, but with their women'," he recalled.

The Bhans had fled Tangmarg giving their neighbour-

s a slip. They left behind a beautiful home nestled in a huge orchard. At the Muthi camp, the Bhans, part of the migrants, live in squalor in claustrophobic nine feet by nine feet hutments. They have to make do with community kitchens and toilets.

The tragedy is best illustrated by the case of Maheshwar Nath, whose father was

killed by Pak raiders at Baramulla in 1947, and his son and brother by militants in 1990. Militants have killed the kin of 87 families at the Muthi camp; the migrants have 70 widows in their midst. "What have you done to Kashmir's Sufi Islam?" a man hollered at the visiting scribes.

"I was not angered by their accusation but felt sympathetic towards them," said veteran Pakistani journalist Raja Asghar of the Dawn. He confessed that the exposure to the migrants had breathed life to his understanding of the Kashmir problem. Ejaz Haider of the Friday Times agreed that the coverage of this problem by the Pakistan media has been inadequate. "Kashmir has been tackled more in terms of statecraft. There's need to focus more attention on the human dimension of the conflict," he said. Haider, however, felt that India's refusal to involve the UN to resolve the problem has complicated the issue.

Ajay Chungoo, leader of Panun Kashmir, tried to put the issue in perspective. "The militancy you recognise as freedom struggle destroys the freedom of my community. The main yardstick of the peace process must be the reversal of communalisation of Kashmir," he said.

Separatists sniff compromise

Rashid Ahmad
Srinagar, October 4

ALARM BELLS have started ringing in separatist circles in Kashmir with the visit of the Pak journalists, giving credence to the feeling that Islamabad and New Delhi were moving towards a tacit agreement on Kashmir. Separatist circles feel that India and Pakistan were testing the waters for turning the LoC into an International Border.

Asiya Andrabi, chief of the Dukhtaran-e-Millat, has called for boycott of the visiting journalists. Asiya termed the visit as a complete reversal of Pakistan's 57-year-old foreign policy, which had barred Pakistani nationals visiting Kashmir on Indian documents. Pointing to a tacit understanding between the two countries, Asiya expressed surprise that India, which has even barred international human right activists from visiting Kashmir, cleared this visit.

Syed Ali Shah Geelani, chairman of the hardline Hurriyat faction, appreciated Andrabi's views, but said he would not boycott the scribes. "Her apprehensions may be true, but aren't reason enough to boycott them (the scribes)," he told *Hindustan Times*. Geelani, who meets the visiting journalists on Wednesday, said he would raise these issues with them. "I will ask them why they are not meeting the common people, avoiding villages and hundreds of graveyards bearing testimony to the ongoing freedom struggle."



Dukhtaran-e-Millat activists protest against the visit of Pak scribes in Srinagar.

The JKLF chief Mohammad Yaseen Malik, scheduled to host a dinner for the journalists, too, shares the apprehensions. "I will raise the points with them," he said. Andrabi said the journalists, after returning to Pakistan, would toe a line suiting Musharaf's "sell-out" policy on Kashmir.

Freedom knock

Family members of photo-journalist Maqbool Sahil have appealed to the visiting Pak scribes for urging the J&K government to set him free. The police had arrested the scribe of a local Urdu daily on September 18 under the Official Secrets Act for allegedly passing sensitive defence-related information to Pakistan.

5 OCT 2004

Thousands riot at Pak funeral

Sialkote mayor's office, police station torched by rampaging mobs

HR-13
8/10

Agencies
Sialkote, October 2

THOUSANDS OF Shia youths rioted in eastern Pakistan as mourning relatives buried the dead from a suspected suicide bombing which killed at least 30 people at a mosque in Sialkote. Tensions flared as the police launched investigations into the blast that ripped through a Shia mosque in the city during the Friday prayers.

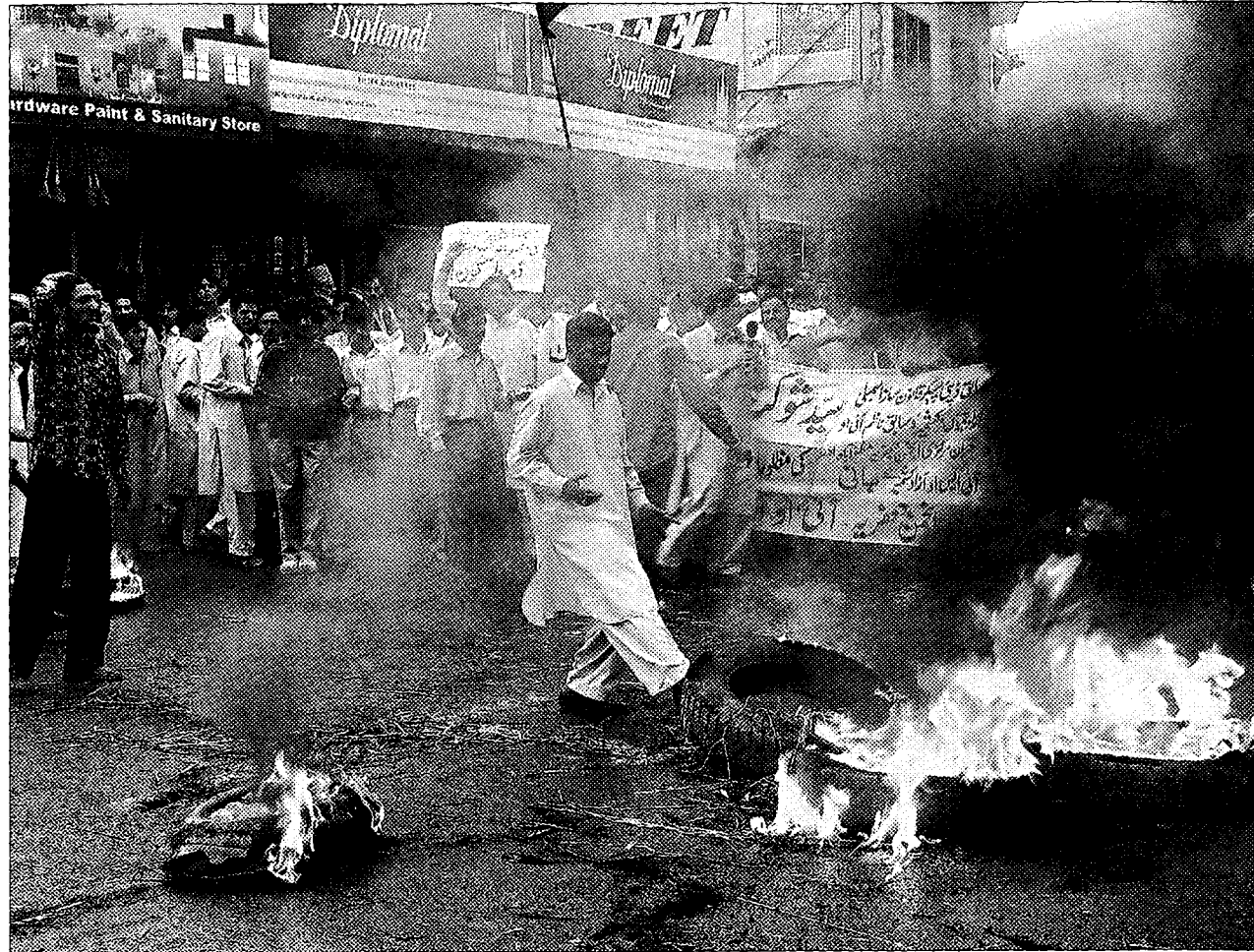
Members of the Shia Imamia Students Organisation on Saturday staged violent protests and burned tyres at various locations after the police blocked entry points to the city and soldiers stepped up their patrols. "We'll continue our protest until the culprits behind the attack are arrested", organisation president Nasir Shirazi said.

Witnesses said vehicles were set alight and crowds attacked government buildings after thousands of people carrying black flags attended funeral prayers for nine of those killed in the mosque blast.

An angry crowd of about 2,000 people carrying rifles, iron rods and batons ransacked the offices of Pakistan International Airlines, a state-owned National Bank branch, district courts and the district jail, the witnesses said.

The crowd torched the office of Sialkote's mayor and besieged a police station, with officers from a commando unit responding with gunfire and teargas to disperse them.

Hundreds of youths burned tyres and blocked traffic on a busy road in



A rescue team fights the blaze at the Sialkote mayor's office after an angry mob went on the rampage in the city on Saturday.

AFP

Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistani Kashmir, to protest the killing of a politician in the Sialkote blast.

Former speaker of Pakistani Kashmir's legislative assembly Syed Shaukat Hussain Naqvi, of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party, was killed in the explosion as he had gone there to meet his family.

Security officials said earlier the mosque blast, which also left dozens of people injured, was the work of a suicide-bomber. "We believe the bomber carried the explosive into the mosque in a briefcase which he detonated while sitting among the worshippers and also blew himself up", a security official, who did not wish to be identi-

fied, said. "It's an act of terrorism...", police chief Nisar Ahmed said. "We believe a suicide-bomber carried out the dastardly attack at a time when hundreds of worshippers were present inside the mosque for Friday's prayers".

The attack came five days after the Pakistani security forces killed the country's most-wanted Sunni Muslim

extremist, Al-Qaida operative Amjad Farooqi, in a shootout in the south of the country. Farooqi, the alleged mastermind of several attempts to kill Musharraf, was an activist in the Harkatul Jihad-e-Islam, a Sunni Muslim militant group blamed for the 2002 murder of US reporter Daniel Pearl. killing of Farooqi.

Shi'ite riots in Sialkot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 2. — Army was deployed in Pakistan's volatile Sialkot town today as thousands of angry Shi'ite mourners set afire the mayor's office and a police station during the funerals of the 33 people killed in Zainabia mosque blast yesterday.

A heavy bomb reportedly carried by a suicide bomber exploded in the midst of a 1,000-strong prayer congregation yesterday, killing 33 persons and injuring around 70. The attack came less than a week after Pakistani security forces killed Amjad Hussain Farooqi, a top Pakistani Al-Qaida operative who was a member of a radical Sunni Muslim militant group, fuelling speculation that the bombing was in retaliation for his death.

A nationwide alert was sounded amidst fears of



Inside the main hall of the mosque in Sialkot on Saturday. — AFP

suicide attacks on mosques, as the provincial Punjab government declared a Rs 1 crore reward for the identity of the militants responsible for yesterday.

ay's bomb blast in Imam Dargah in Sialkot.

Some of the 15,000 Shi'ites who poured into the streets beating their chests and crying, also

burned a record room of a court in Sialkot and torched several vehicles parked at the police station. Troops are trying to control the situation.

Pakistan's interior minister Mr Aftab Sherpao ordered a judicial probe into the bomb attack.

Mr Sherpao also said over state-run PTV that a nationwide alert has been sounded among the security agencies to reinforce security arrangements at mosques, specially around Shia mosques, as some of them came under similar attacks in the past.

Stray incidents of violence by Shia community was also reported in Karachi today in protest against the attack.

Security officials view yesterday's attack with concern as it was the first time that a major sectarian attack took place in Punjab province, the biggest among Pakistan's four provinces. Such attacks in Shia mosques have occurred in Karachi, capital of Sindh and Quetta, headquarters of South-west Baluchistan province.

Pervez tightens grip on army.

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 2.

— Consolidating his hold on the military, Pakistan's President Gen. Pervez Musharraf today appointed chief of the country's powerful espionage agency ISI, Gen. Ahsanul Haq, as chairman of the joint chiefs of military staff after promoting him to the rank of four-star General.



Gen. Musharraf also promoted Karachi corps commander Ahsan Saleem Hayat, who escaped an assassination attempt in June, and appointed him as vice-chief of army. While Gen. Haq will be replacing Gen. Muhammad Aziz Khan, Gen. Hayat will be taking over from Gen. Yousaf Khan, who is also retiring.

The appointments by Gen. Musharraf, who has given strong and open hints in recent weeks to continue in uniform, were seen as key to retain his hold on the army if he were to continue as President and chief of army till 2007. The appointments were seen as a first phase of a major exercise of reshuffle of top commanders by Gen. Musharraf to prepare the army for a "paradigm shift" in thinking and orientation to fit into the modern, progressive and welfare Islamic state he envisaged. A major reshuffle of Corps Commanders is also expected soon. — PTI

Musharraf elevates ISI chief to top post

Press Trust of India
Islamabad, October 2

CONSOLIDATING HIS hold on the military, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf today appointed chief of the country's powerful spy agency, ISI, Gen Ahsanul Haq as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of military staff after promoting him to the rank of four-star General.

He also promoted Karachi corps commander Ahsan Saleem Hayat, who escaped an assassination attempt by militants in June, and appointed him as Vice-Chief of the Army.

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A major reshuffle of Corps Commanders was expected to follow in the coming days. Significantly, Musharraf has recently said he will await the retirement of Gen. Aziz and Gen. Yousaf before announcing his decision on whether to continue as Chief of the Army or not.

The retirement of Gen. Aziz without extension was seen as significant since he had played a key role as Corps Commander in the 1999 Kargil conflict, which ended up in a major debacle for Pakistan. Hailing from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), Gen. Aziz was known for his strong views against India.

Both the retiring generals were appointed by Musharraf to their posts hours before the US military action in Afghanistan weeks after the 9/11 attacks in 2001, which prompted Pakistan to reverse its pro-Taliban policy.



AFP

A file photograph of Pak President Pervez Musharraf conferring military honours on ISI head Lt-Gen. Ehsanul Haq (centre). He was appointed chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee.

The two superseded then ISI chief Gen. Mahmood and Deputy Chief of the Army Staff Gen. Usmani, considered as pro-Taliban generals, who resigned in protest.

Also, Gen. Haq was appointed as ISI chief after the 9/11 attacks and his elevation was seen as a reward for his loyalty and for ensuring smooth transition after the fall of the Taliban government in Afghanistan and the crackdown on the Al-Qaida and jihadi militant groups.

Interestingly, Gen. Haq is due for retirement in April 2005, while Gen. Hayat is slated to retire in December 2004. However, by the virtue of rule that all the top generals of the Pakistan Army serve in their posts for three years, the two would virtually continue till 2007 covering the tenure of Musharraf. Haq has superseded at least seven lieutenant-generals, while Gen. Hayat is listed as No. 4 in the army's seniority hierarchy.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES 3 OCT 2004

Suicide blast in Pak mosque

30 killed in third attack on a Shia holy site in 5 months

Mubashir Zaidi & AP
Karachi, October 1

A SUICIDE attacker detonated a huge bomb inside a crowded Shia Muslim mosque in an eastern Pakistani city during Friday prayers, killing at least 30 people and wounding dozens, officials said.

Police said that hundreds of people were inside the Zainabia mosque in the city of Sialkot at the time of the blast, which severely damaged walls and left body parts scattered inside.

No group claimed responsibility for the attack, which comes less than a week after Pakistan killed a top al-Qaida suspect in a shootout in southern Pakistan — leading the government to claim it had broken the back of the terror network in the country. Witnesses reported that a man with a briefcase entered the mosque shortly before the blast and the briefcase had exploded, Sialkot police chief Nisar Ahmed said.

“We are almost certain it was a suicide attack,” he said. He said bomb disposal experts were examining remains of the briefcase, and their initial assessment was that it contained explosives.

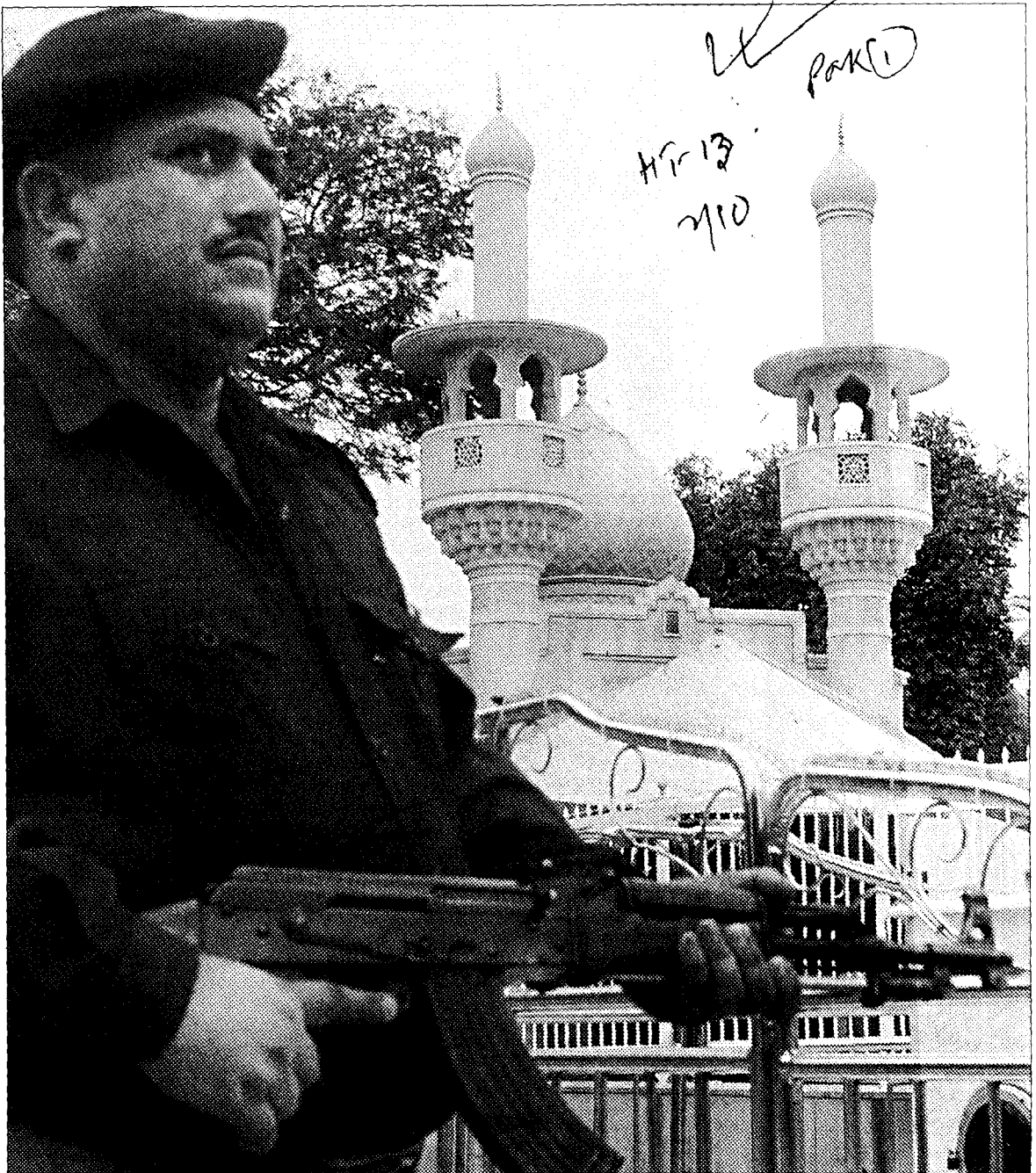
He said that at least 30 people were killed. “Dozens of people have been taken to hospital in critical condition, and I think the casualties and death toll will rise,” he said.

A security official in Islamabad, who requested anonymity, reported 30 deaths and nearly 70 injured. Another official at the police control room in Sialkot, about 145 miles southeast of Islamabad, said the blast left a crater inside the mosque and had caused severe damage to the walls and shattered windows. Witnesses said many of the injured suffered burns.

Ahmed said a mob initially prevented police from entering inside. People had started pelting police with bricks and stones and wrecking property, torching at least one motorbike. “I’m trying to handle the situation, I’m holding talks with their elders. I’m telling them we’ve come to help them,” Ahmed said.

Murid Hussain, who lives near the mosque, said human remains were scattered inside the mosque and smoke everywhere. One of his relatives was injured in the blast and just remembered hearing a blast and then waking up in hospital.

Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed confirmed the blast but said he had no details on casualties. “This is the work of enemies of Pakistan and enemies of Islam, and



A Pakistani policeman stands guard in front of a Shia mosque in Karachi on Friday.

AFP

we condemn it,” he said.

Mosques of Pakistan’s Shia minority have often been targeted in sectarian violence with majority Sunni Muslims. Most of Pakistan’s 150 million Muslims live in harmony, but there are radical elements on both sides of the sectarian divide.

Pakistan has been a key ally in the US-led war on terrorism since the 9/11 attacks. That support has triggered an angry backlash by Islamic militants who have launched

repeated attacks across Pakistan.

The al-Qaida operative killed last weekend, Amjad Hussain Farooqi, was believed to be behind the kidnapping and beheading in 2002 of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl, and two failed assassination attempts on President Gen. Pervez Musharraf that left 17 other people dead in December 2003.

Officials said Farooqi was a recruiter for al-Qaida in Pakistan and had masterminded previous bomb-

ings against Shia Muslims. He was also member of the Sunni Muslim militant group, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.

A Shia leader in the main southern city of Karachi claimed Friday’s bombing was retaliation for the police shooting of Farooqi. “Definitely, it was the work of the friends Farooqi,” cleric Allama Hassan Turabi said, adding, “the people who planned this attack perhaps don’t understand that we are not supporters of America. ... We are also against America”.

Counting the cost

sr. b
20/9
Another encounter in Pakistan RPK

The Pakistani military expedition into South Waziristan to nab Al Qaeda rebels had yielded little fruit, but a breakthrough is now being claimed with the elimination in an encounter, supposed to have taken place in Nawabshah, of Amjad Hussain Farooqi, a "terror mastermind" with a price of Rs 20 million on his head. Farooqi is being touted as Al Qaeda's main Pakistani contact; he had been implicated in the kidnap-murder of Daniel Pearl as well as the assassination attempts last December on General Musharraf. It is noteworthy that Farooqi's career in militancy began with the Kashmir insurgency; he is also, at one stage, supposed to have served as a personal bodyguard to Maulana Masood Azhar who had been released from an Indian jail. Islamabad's military establishment had once been under the impression that pursuing militancy in Kashmir was a "low cost" option but it ought to be counting the cost now — in Farooqi's case alone, several assassination attempts on its head and a red alert for terrorist violence in Karachi following Farooqi's death. Hopefully, some of that experience has rubbed off on Islamabad and translated into the falling off of stridency with regard to Kashmir that has been in evidence lately.

Given the murky atmosphere in which the "war on terror" is being conducted, the timing of high-profile arrests and shooting deaths of Al Qaeda members in Pakistan does, however, raise certain questions. The announcement of the arrest of Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, Tanzanian Al Qaeda operative on the list of the 22 most wanted terrorists in the US, in the city of Gujarat in Punjab, came when John Kerry was named as President Bush's challenger at the Democratic convention in Boston. The shooting of Farooqi came just after Musharraf went on a lengthy US trip to win approbation for his role in Pakistan, and received a pat on the back from Bush in New York. Could such announcements be timed to influence the presidential contest in the US, the quid pro quo being that a re-elected Bush raises no cavil when Musharraf refuses to shed his uniform in December, as he had earlier committed himself to doing? In that case, there should be plenty to look forward to in October, before America goes to the polls on 2 November.

THE STATESMAN

311 000 1101

Pervez's de Gaulle alibi for military role

S. Rajagopalan
New York, September 21

MUCH TO the chagrin of critics at home and abroad, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf has sought to compare himself with General Charles de Gaulle in a bid to justify his plan not to step down as army chief by December 31.

As American media guns started pounding him on his moves that have also landed the Bush administration in a spot, an unfazed Musharraf began speaking in terms of a "need for continuity".

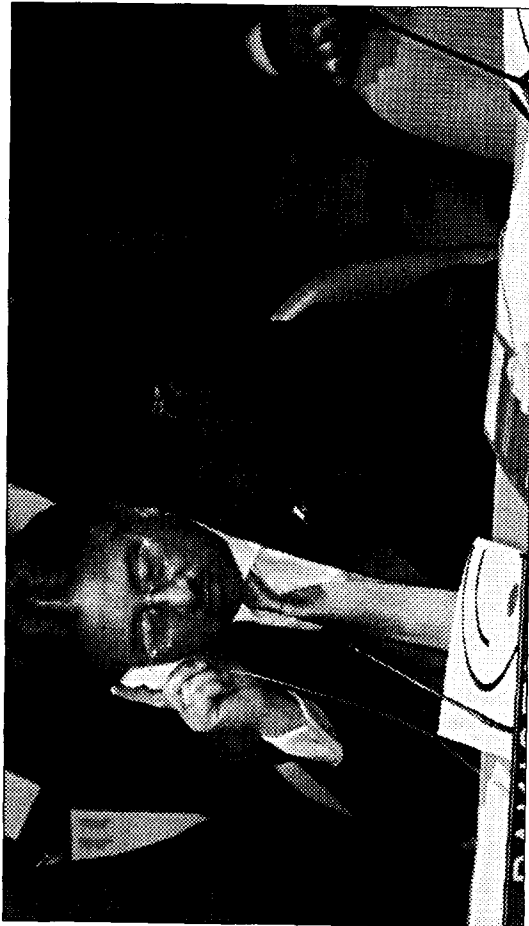
He, however, maintained that he was still to take a final view on the subject.

One of the parameters taken into account by the Bush administration while lifting the democracy-related sanctions against Pakistan was Musharraf's solemn promise to give

up the top-army post by the year-end. When *The New York Times* brought up the issue during an interview, Musharraf turned to the legendary French leader for cover. "How did General De Gaulle continue in uniform all through his period as President of France... and France is a democratic country?" he countered.

"Yes, I gave my word that I would (give up the uniform), but the issue is now far greater than this," he said and held forth on Pakistan's continuing offensive against al-Qaida, netting some 600 terrorists and ending the network's illicit fund raising. This effort, he said, required "continuity".

Whatever his decision about donning the uniform, Pakistanis were fully enjoying the fruits of democracy, he claimed and added: "I'm sorry to boast about myself, but there is a renaissance, there is a big change we are trying to bring about."



AP

ISLAMABAD CALLING: Pervez Musharraf at the United Nations on Monday.

Pak House passes Bill on nuclear export controls



President Pervez Musharraf at a defence exhibition in Karachi. (Reuters)

Islamabad, Sept. 14 (Reuters): Pakistan's parliament passed a Bill today tightening controls on the export of nuclear and biological weapons technology and missile delivery systems, part of efforts to curb proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Pakistan has admitted that Abdul Qadeer Khan, its top nuclear scientist revered as the father of its atomic bomb, smuggled nuclear secrets to North Korea, Iran and Libya.

The scandal raised fears that weapons of mass destruction could fall into the hands of militants bent on terror attacks, as well as what Washington has called "rogue" states. The National Assembly, parliament's lower house, adopted the Bill on export controls on nuclear and biological weapons and their delivery systems.

"This law provides a

framework to deal with sensitive technologies and proliferation," state minister for foreign affairs Makhdoom Khushro Bakhtiar told the Assembly.

"Pakistan respects its international obligations as a nuclear-capable state. This Bill will further enhance Pakistan's image as a responsible nuclear state."

The Senate, or upper house, is expected to pass the Bill later this week, before it is formally signed into law by President Pervez Musharraf. Its passage through the Senate should be a formality given a majority enjoyed by the ruling coalition. "By adopting this bill, Pakistan would fulfil its international obligation and strengthen its credentials as a responsible nuclear weapon state," the Bill said.

It envisages a prison sentence of up to 14 years or a fine of up to five million rupees

(\$85,000), or both, for anyone spreading nuclear technology or hardware, although this does not apply retroactively to Khan.

Khan, who made a televised apology for his role in the proliferation scandal in February, is closely guarded at his home in Islamabad, although authorities deny he is under house arrest.

Musharraf pardoned the popular scientist, who said he and a few associates acted alone. Western diplomats argue that he could not have acted without support from the powerful military. Global criticism of Musharraf for the scandal, and his decision to pardon Khan, was muted, perhaps in recognition of his key role in the US-led war on terror. But Pakistan has been under pressure to strengthen the safeguards around its nuclear weapons programme.

PKK ①
HD-8

Shaukat Aziz sworn in

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, AUG. 28. The newly-elected Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shaukat Aziz, was administered the oath of office and secrecy minus his Council of Ministers by President Pervez Musharraf.

The new Council of Ministers is expected to be sworn in on September 1. A nominee of Gen. Musharraf, the new Prime Minister is bound to go by the wishes of the President in selection of his team. Later in the evening, he got a vote of confidence in the National Assembly.

Under the Constitution of Pakistan, a person elected Leader of the House in the National Assembly becomes the Prime Minister. After being sworn in formally, the person is expected to obtain a trust vote of the Assembly within 60 days.

Political observers are surprised as to why the swearing in of Mr. Aziz has been de-linked from naming his Council of Ministers since he was nominated as Prime Minister-in-waiting in the last week of June.

Indications are Gen. Musharraf is keen on induction of younger faces and change some of the major portfolios of senior Ministers in the previous Government. Former Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri designated as Ambassador-at-large, pending completion of government formation, is expected to return in the same slot.

Politicians upset

There is a sense of despondency within and outside the ruling combine over the anointment of Mr. Aziz, an international banker-turned politician, to the top post. They



Shaukat Aziz (right) being sworn in Pakistan Prime Minister by President Pervez Musharraf in Islamabad on Saturday. — AFP

view it as yet another indication of the contempt in which Gen. Musharraf holds the mainstream political leaders.

In an informal talk with correspondents after the swearing-in, Gen. Musharraf said the "smooth transfer of power" would augur well and hoped that the country would have excellent governance.

"I see this change auguring well and my expectations are that we will now have excellent governance in Pakistan," he re-

marked. He hoped that a new political culture would be introduced in the country.

The smooth transfer of power, he said, reflected the Pakistan Muslim League's maturity. "It reflects the maturity of the PML that the transfer of power has been smooth. I am pleased at this."

Peace process

In response to a question on the dialogue process with India, he said "in my view it is moving

forward." Gen. Musharraf said Pakistan would be in a better position to comment on it (the peace process) after the talks between Foreign Ministers of two countries next month.

In his brief remarks, Mr. Aziz said his Government would attach highest priority to good governance, further improvement of the national economy and overall better performance. "This change shows that democracy has been strengthened in the country."

HD-11
26/8

NDA's list of objections to budget proposals

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, AUG. 25. The suggestions and comments by the National Democratic Alliance to the Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, today called for making the senior citizen savings scheme with a nine per cent interest rate tax free and restoring the 9.5 per cent interest on Employees Provident Fund deposits. It also demanded the withdrawal of the service tax on the goods booking agents as well as on a host of financial transactions, including lending, issue of pay order, demand draft, cheque, letter of credit and bill of exchange.

The NDA also objected to the automatic rebate of income tax on every taxpayer with a taxable income of Rs. 1 lakh. This rebate would result in an anomaly because persons with income of even Rs. 1,01,000 would have to pay income tax which would in effect reduce their income below Rs. 1 lakh, the NDA memorandum said. Higher income earning persons would have a lower post-tax income than a lower income earning person.

Another demand is restoration of the tax exemption on income earned by the Non-Resident Indians on their bank deposits since withdrawal

of the exemption had "already caused a great deal of heartburn and resentment among the NRI community. The NDA also wanted restoration of [the] exemption on leasing of aircraft since withdrawal of the exemption would hurt Indian Airlines and Air India which are planning to take aircraft on lease. This is clearly an anti-public sector stand by the Government..." it said.

Retrograde step

On the proposal for taxing gifts above Rs. 25,000 from unrelated persons, the NDA said this was a retrograde step as the proposal in the Finance Bill was "dangerously worded."

Similarly, the proposal to provide punishment for falsification of the books of accounts or documents has been objected to because "an innocent mistake by the assessee or any other person connected with the tax proceedings of the assessee can thus be brought to book without proving guilt." It felt that provisions in the IPC were sufficient to deal with such offences. It objected to the proposal to report specified transaction above Rs. 50,000 in the annual information return, saying it would bring back the 'inspector raj' in a big way.

Pakistan foils Al-Qaida plot

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Aug. 22. — Pakistan today said it has foiled attempts by Al-Qaida operatives to kill top leaders and bomb the Presidential palace, parliament building, the army headquarters and US embassy here by arresting nine militants.

A nationwide hunt has also been launched for four more, terrorists, including one who had come from Afghanistan to carry out these attacks, information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed told PTV tonight.

Nine militants included the main operators of the planned attacks "Mustafa and Usman" had planned to destroy important buildings and assassinate important personalities in the country. "We are looking for five more and sooner or later they are going to be arrested and tried," he said.

Intended targets

- The President's office
- Prime Minister House
- Convention Centre
- The US embassy
- Army General Headquarters
- Chief of Army Staff House
- Lal Haveli in Rawalpindi

Mr Ahmed said security agencies tracking the militants have seized large quantities of weapons including rocket launchers and explosives. He said police were on the lookout for a militant, believed to be an expert, who had come from Afghanistan to launch the attacks.

Late last night, Mr Rashid had said five terrorists, which had planned to attack the President's office, Prime Minister House, Convention Centre, the US embassy

and General Headquarters, Chief of Army Staff House and Lal Haveli in Rawalpindi, were arrested over the past week in different parts of the country. The gang was being master-minded by two Egyptian nationals identified as Qari Ismael and Sheikh Essa, who continued to be at large and a nationwide hunt was on to arrest them, he said.

The two Egyptians belonged to the Al-Qaida, interior minister Mr Faisal Saleh Hayat said. "We hope to catch him and the rest of the gang members soon," he was quoted as saying by the official APP news-agency in Lahore.

Mr Hayat said the terrorists had plans spreading over a week to cause huge devastations and massive killings in Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

He said a number of vehicles, which were to be used in the attacks, have been traced by the security agencies.

THE STATESMAN

23 AUG 2004

Aziz set to become Premier

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ND-16
PAMI
MS

ISLAMABAD, AUG. 19. It is all clear for Shaukat Aziz, Pakistan Finance Minister and chosen nominee of the President Pervez Musharraf, to take over as Prime Minister after he was declared elected to the National Assembly from both the constituencies where bye-elections were held.

Mr. Aziz's victory was never in doubt thanks to the divisions among the Opposition groups and the backing of Gen. Musharraf. With the imminent elevation of the banker to the job of Prime Minister, the mainstream political parties lose even the limited prominence they gained after the last general election in October 2002.

Mr. Aziz won from Attock in Punjab and Tharparker in southern Sindh province defeating the PPP candidates by a huge margin.

The bye-elections were marred by allegations of rigging and voter intimidation by the ruling combine. The Opposition parties, a section of the media and civil society have raised eyebrows over the 50 per cent voter turn out projected in both the constituencies and said there was no evidence of voter enthusiasm. The process of anointment of Mr. Aziz is expected to be completed by next week. Gen. Musharraf has already set the ball rolling for yet another change of Government by summoning a special session of the National Assembly from Friday.

Mr. Aziz, a senior executive with the Citibank for three decades before he was chosen to manage the finances of Pakistan by Gen. Musharraf months after the 1999 military coup, is to succeed Chaudhary Shujat Hussain. Mr. Hussain was elevated to the position as a stopgap arrangement after Zafarullah Khan Jamali was shown the door in June.

There is a great deal of resentment in the ruling combine over Gen. Musharraf's anointing a "non-political entity" as Prime Minister.

Al Qaida link in attempt on Aziz



Shaukat Aziz at a hospital in Islamabad. (AFP)

Islamabad, July 31 (Reuters): Pakistani investigators sought today to identify a suicide bomber from his bloodied head after a failed assassination attempt on Prime Minister-designate Shaukat Aziz.

Police have yet to blame any group. But a previously unknown group claiming to be linked to al Qaida said it had carried out the attack against one of the men of the "American infidel in Pakistan", and threatened more attacks.

Aziz, 55, currently the finance minister, escaped unhurt in yesterday's attack near Fateh Jung, in the central province of Punjab, where he was campaigning for a by-election.

Police found a grenade at the scene of attack, which killed Aziz's driver and six others, and

wounded at least 45 people. The body of the attacker was blown into several pieces. Police have found his head, hands, legs and mutilated parts of his torso, and say he was clearly a strong, well-built man.

"His face has been damaged,

but it is still intact," Zafar Iqbal, senior superintendent of police, said. "The bomber was a young man in his early twenties."

After his near escape, political colleagues said Aziz recounted to them how a bearded man had run up against the driver's

door of his car and blown himself up.

"We have found an unexploded hand grenade at the site," Iqbal said. "Apparently the suicide bomber was carrying it with other explosives. The bomb disposal squad has defused it."

The attack on Aziz, which came the day after Pakistan announced the arrest of a top al Qaida suspect, underlines the grave challenge posed by shadowy Islamic groups furious over their government's support for the US-led "war on terrorism".

President Pervez Musharraf, who is leading the drive against extremists, has himself survived at least three assassination attempts, most recently a suicide car bombing on December 25.

The previously unknown Islamabad Brigades of al Qaida said in a statement posted on an Islamist website today the attack was a message to the "treacherous" Musharraf. "Yesterday's attack will be followed by more painful blows if you do not stop blindly obeying the orders of that lowlife Bush," it said.

Terror suspect harmless, says mother

rest in March 2003 of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the suspected mastermind of the September 11, 2001, attacks on the US.

"The day he left, he hugged me and said he was going for studies," Bunkubwa Said Abdallah said in the Tanzanian Indian Ocean island of Zanzibar, which is overwhelmingly Muslim.

"He was a quiet boy and reli-

gious, so he is not capable of hurting people.

"He did not show any signs of being violent."

Ghailani is accused by the US of being a key member of the al Qaida network, and had a \$5 million bounty on his head for his role in the 1998 bombings of two US embassies in east Africa that killed 224 people.

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Shaukat Aziz survives suicide attack

Agence France-Presse
Islamabad, July 30

PAKISTAN'S PRIME Minister-designate Shaukat Aziz survived a suicide car-bomb attack on Friday that killed seven people, including his driver and the attacker, and injured 30, officials said. A vehicle exploded after hitting current finance minister Aziz's car, police officer Ishtiaq Ahmed said, adding: "It appears to be a suicide car-bomb attack". The blast killed Aziz's driver and the attacker, he said.

An interior ministry spokesman said "seven people died in the attack, while 30 people, including seven policemen, were injured".

The attack occurred in Jaffar, near Fatehjang, about 45 km from the capital where Aziz was addressing an election rally, a senior security official said earlier. "It was a murder (attempt) on the minister. We're still investigating the circumstances under which the attack occurred", he said.

After the attack, Aziz appeared on national television, saying his "determination to serve Pakistan and the Islam-



REUTERS

Pakistan PM-designate Shaukat Aziz's driver lies slumped in the car after a suicide-bombing attack on Friday.

ic world has enhanced".

"This is a very tragic incident and I'm deeply grieved that some people have lost their lives while some got injured", Aziz said. "I sincerely commis-

erate with the families of those who were killed in the attack".

A national television report said two blasts occurred in a car at 7:15 pm. "I was with Shaukat Aziz and we had just started moving in the car when suddenly a car appeared from driver (right) side and exploded," Mayor of Attock district Tahir Sadiq said at an Islamabad hospital, where he is supervising arrangements for the injured people.

"With the blessings of Allah we were not hurt at all. It is a miracle," Sadiq said. Ruling Pakistan Muslim League party secretary-general Mushahid Hussain also claimed the suicide attack was directed at Aziz. "A suicide-bomber blew up the car to kill Shaukat Aziz, but he has survived miraculously", Hussain said. Hussain blamed religious extremists for the attack, saying: "They're trying to destabilise Pakistan".

A senior police official said Aziz was in the car that had just started moving slowly amid a tight security cordon when the car driven by suicide attacker detonated. "That's why there are seven policemen among the injured", Rawalpindi police chief Iftikhar Ahmad said.

Musharraf loyalist chosen new Pak PM

Associated Press
Islamabad, June 29

CHAUDHRY SHUJAAT Hussain, the head of Pakistan's ruling party and a loyal ally of the nation's military ruler, was elected caretaker prime minister in a rubber-stamp vote in parliament on Tuesday.

Hussain was expected to stay in office only for a matter of weeks, until political manoeuvring is completed that will allow respected Finance Minister Shaukat Aziz to assume the premiership. There was little drama in the vote, with Hussain beating his only challenger 190-to-76.

Opposition lawmakers co-

plain that the process has been manipulated behind the scenes by President Gen Pervez Musharraf, the nation's ultimate powerbroker. They say it underlines the lack of real democracy in this country, five years after the general took power in a coup.

Hussain won with the support of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Q party and other smaller groups. He was expected to be sworn in by Musharraf within the next 24 hours. Hussain replaces Zafarullah Khan Jamali, who served for 19 months but had reportedly fallen out with Musharraf. He tendered his resignation on Saturday, without giving a reason.

Aziz, an international banker, is widely believed to be favoured by Musharraf. Aziz is credited with salvaging Pakistan's near-bankrupt economy after international sanctions were imposed in 1998 in reaction to the testing of nuclear missiles. Standing against Hussain was Amin Fahim, the choice of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's opposition Pakistan People's Party. An opposition religious alliance, Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal or United Action Forum, which has 68 seats, stayed away from voting and did not field a candidate, said MMA lawmaker Hafiz Hussain Ahmed. PML-Q

party officials have said Aziz, a member of the upper house, or Senate, will be nominated as premier once he secures a seat in the lower house, a requisite for any candidate as prime minister.

A Musharraf loyalist will have to resign from the lower house, setting up a election that Aziz can win, a process derided by opponents as an affront to democracy. The change in prime ministers was unlikely to dramatically alter Pakistan's commitment to either the US-led war on terror or fledgling peace talks with nuclear rival India — matters that are firmly in Musharraf's hands.



AFP
STOPGAP: Shujaat Hussain in Islamabad on Tuesday.

শুজাত হুসেন মুয়া পাক প্রধানমন্ত্রী

ইসলামাবাদ, ২৯ জুন: পাকিস্তানের পরবর্তী প্রধানমন্ত্রী পদে নির্বাচিত হলেন শুজাত হুসেন। আজ জাতীয় সংসদে এই সংক্রান্ত নির্বাচনে হুসেনের পক্ষে ১৯০টি ভোট পড়ে। তাঁর প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বী মখদুম আমিন ফাহিম পেয়েছেন ৭৬টি ভোট। প্রেসিডেন্ট পারভেজ মুশারফ দু'এক দিনের মধ্যেই শুজাত হুসেনকে প্রধানমন্ত্রী হিসাবে নিয়োগ করবেন বলে জানা গিয়েছে।

মুশারফের সঙ্গে তীব্র মতবিরোধের কারণে শনিবারই ইস্তফা দেন জাফারুল্লা খান জামালি। তাঁর জায়গায় প্রধানমন্ত্রী হলেও এই পদে হুসেনের মেয়াদ অবশ্য বেশি দিন নয়। প্রধানমন্ত্রী হিসাবে মুশারফের পছন্দ দেশের বর্তমান অর্থমন্ত্রী শৌকত আজিজ। কিন্তু তিনি পার্লামেন্টের নিম্ন কক্ষের সদস্য নন বলে এখনই প্রধানমন্ত্রী হতে পারছেন না। আজিজ নির্বাচিত না-হওয়া পর্যন্ত শুজাত হুসেন অন্তর্বর্তী প্রধানমন্ত্রী হিসাবে কাজ চালাবেন। — রয়টার্স, পি টি আই

A PALACE COUP

THE PALACE COUP that saw the exit of Pakistan's Prime Minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, reminds everyone that real power vests in the military-dominated establishment — not in the elected representatives of the people of the country. The change is ostensibly being carried out in accordance with constitutional proprieties and parliamentary norms. The processes that were set off with Mr. Jamali proposing Chaudhari Shujaat Hussain as his interim successor are expected to unfold in a smooth enough manner over the next few weeks. Mr. Hussain is expected to step aside once the current Finance Minister, Shaukat Aziz, wins a seat in the National Assembly and gets elected as leader of the Lower House of Parliament. While the parliamentary wing of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (Qaid-e-Azam) is apparently prepared to live with these developments, there can be little doubt that Mr. Jamali was forced to quit office. He declared only on June 25, the day before he announced his resignation, that his Government was not under threat since the President had not levelled charges against it as a collective entity or against any of its members. However, the deposed Prime Minister is not likely to do anything more than complain in private since he lacks political clout and won the post two years ago only because he represented the most convenient choice for President Pervez Musharraf and the rest of the establishment. Mr. Hussain, the supreme realist of Pakistan politics, is also unlikely to create any problems when the time comes for him to hand over the premiership.

A genial leader from Balochistan, Mr. Jamali possessed few political assets other than his acceptability to the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA). This conglomerate of six religious parties achieved remarkable success in the 2002 general election; it emerged as a significant bloc

in Parliament, became the ruling combine in the North West Frontier Province, and the leading political force in Balochistan. The Pakistan establishment, which was then under pressure from the United States to launch a drive against militant extremists, believed that it needed to placate the religious parties at that juncture. Mr. Jamali failed in this task especially since he was unable to make the MMA change its position that General Musharraf should quit the post of Chief of the Army Staff if he wanted to continue as President after December 2004. General Musharraf might also have reckoned that he did not need to accord undue importance to the MMA since the religious parties, for all their protests, were unable to disrupt the spasmodic campaigns carried out against the militants.

Mr. Jamali's performance as Prime Minister was not bad at all, notably his handling of the process of *détente* with India. While his forced exit will not evoke any strong sentiments, the summary treatment he received at the hands of the establishment serves as a disquieting reminder to the Pakistani people that they are not free to choose or change their leaders. The Opposition parties led by former Prime Ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif are likely to overcome their distaste for Mr. Jamali and his subservience to the President as they try to exploit the opportunity to highlight the establishment's machinations. Both Ms. Bhutto and Mr. Sharif are known for being autocrats while in power and turning advocates of democratic principles when out of office. However, they still command popular support and wider sections of the Pakistani polity might become receptive to their message that the non-existence of a true and healthy democratic order is attributable more to the military establishment's disdain for politicians rather than to the failings of the political class.

PKK ①
10-10-2004
20/6

Jamali resigns

Political system not up to scratch

Prime Minister Jamali's sudden resignation, when there was no public demand for it when indeed, the previous day he pooh-poohed speculation that he might not continue, shows the contradictions of guided democracy put in place by General Musharraf in 2002. Musharraf wanted compliant politicians able to face down the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy, but made-to-order politicians are not available overnight. The prime ministership went to a nonentity like Jamali who lacked a political base or the skills of a professional politician. In the end he failed to deliver what Musharraf wanted — an articulate defence of the establishment in the face of loud criticism from opposition politicians. While Shujaat Hussain is acting as a stop-gap Premier, Shaukat Aziz, a technocrat, will take over later. Aziz is an interesting choice: he had a Wall Street career with Citi-group which he left to join Musharraf's post-coup cabinet as finance minister.

Aziz's economic background suggests that he may be more than the figurehead that Jamali was when he took over. Musharraf may leave him to run the economy while the army looks after politics. Aziz has promised to make Pakistan the next Asian tiger which, though, is scarce possible unless Islamabad does two things. First, it has to take on the many *jehadi* groups running amok which would target a Western business planning to enter. Second, it would have to improve relations with Delhi, which means compromises on Kashmir. Both are interrelated — cracking down on domestic *jehadi* groups would ease the situation in Kashmir, and has been a long-standing Indian demand. The question is whether Islamabad is willing to deliver. That Aziz's focus is the Pakistani economy is a good sign, another is that the fundamentalist Muttahida Majlis-e-Amman (MMA) is harshly critical. But none of this will fix the fundamental anomalies of the political system, and Aziz will find it difficult to rally support for any move he contemplates, even if it happens to translate for beneficial policies for Pakistan. There will be too many to accuse him of being Musharraf's stooge, and to shore up support for itself, the army and intelligence establishment may strike up crude, jingoistic postures on Kashmir. For true reform to happen the army's political monopoly of the system must be ended.

THE STATESMAN 29 JUN 2004

Jamali quits, rebels strike
as Pak emissary lands

Turmoil & terror set talks stage

OUR BUREAU

June 26: Leaving behind an unsettled Islamabad, Riaz Khokar arrived for crucial talks in Delhi to an eruption of violence in Jammu and Kashmir.

The militancy-racked state, where 12 people were gunned down in their homes and 60 civilians trapped in a mosque where militants had holed up, is on the agenda of the meeting between the Pakistan foreign secretary and his Indian counterpart Shashank.

On the eve of the talks, Pakistan's Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali handed in his resignation, ending a 19-month term, in a dramatic turnaround from a show of confidence yesterday. Delhi said the move would have no impact on its dialogue with Islamabad, spearheaded by Pervez Musharraf.

While both sides want to give an impression of business as usual and success because the talks are too important and too high profile in the eyes of the world, there is no denying that a degree of uncertainty has been added to the proceedings by today's events in Islamabad.

Jamali is to be replaced by Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain as interim Prime Minister and, after completion of his term, by Shaukat Aziz, an economist who was finance minister in the outgoing cabinet. Hussain, a known hardliner on India, is suffering from cancer.

The key players in the dialogue, the two national security advisers J.N. Dixit and Tariq Aziz, remain unaffected. At their secret meeting in Amritsar a few days ago, the two men had sealed the outcome of Sunday's talks, leaving the foreign secretaries to merely go through the formality of discussing what had already been decided.

It is unclear whether Jamali's resignation will also mean changes in the cabinet and a new foreign minister. What remains to be seen is whether Khokar, who was out of the picture in Amritsar this month, will assert himself and try to put his stamp on the talks on Sunday in view of the government changes. Khokar and Dixit have a long history of animosity and mistrust for each other.

Khokar said the change of Prime Minister will have no bearing on the talks. At a reception hosted in his honour by Pakistani high commissioner Aziz Ahmed Khan, he said: "Why sho-

uld it affect? This is part of the democratic process."

The foreign secretary set the tone of the two-day dialogue, saying he was here to discuss "the fundamental issue of Jammu and Kashmir", besides confidence-building measures, peace and security. The comments made it clear where Pakistan's emphasis lies.

Renewed violence today is being seen as an attempt by militants to grab attention as the two sides head into talks, the first on Kashmir since the failed Agre Summit of 2001.

Twelve people, among whom four were children, were killed as they were sleeping when militants barged into their homes at a Poonch village in Jammu early this morning.



Pakistan Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali resigned on Saturday fuelling fresh concerns about the state of democracy in Pakistan and raising questions whether the pace of peace process with India will be affected

In Jammu, militants massacred 12 people, including four children, in vendetta on village defence committees

In Kashmir, over 60 civilians including 40 women, were trapped in a mosque when militants took shelter there. 10 militants were killed and the civilians freed

In a village near Srinagar, 60 devotees were trapped inside a mosque when militants on the run took shelter there. Security forces on the trail of the killers of railway engineer Sudhir Pundir and his brother Sandeep, whose bodies were found in the area yesterday, exchanged fire with the militants and evacuated the civilians. An army jawan was killed in the operation at Pulwama, 70 km from the state capital. Two militants also died.

Khokar began his visit with a two-hour meeting with separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani. The pro-Pakistan leader is believed to have been told to align with Itihadi force, an amalgam of neutral separatist leaders against direct talks with the Centre.

■ See Pages 4 and 6

Pak Opp leader gunned down in broad daylight

Pak (1) HC-17 27/6

Agencies
Lahore, June 26

AN OPPOSITION politician of exiled Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League was shot dead by two motorcycle riders in Lahore on Saturday, police said.

He was coming out of his party office when the gunmen fired on his car with AK-47 rifles, police were quoted as saying by reports reaching here. The assailants fled after the attack.

"Two men riding on a motorcycle opened fire on Pir Binyamin Rizvi's car in front of Punjab University," police superintendent Faran Baig said. "It appears to be a terrorist attack and we have launched investigations," Baig said.

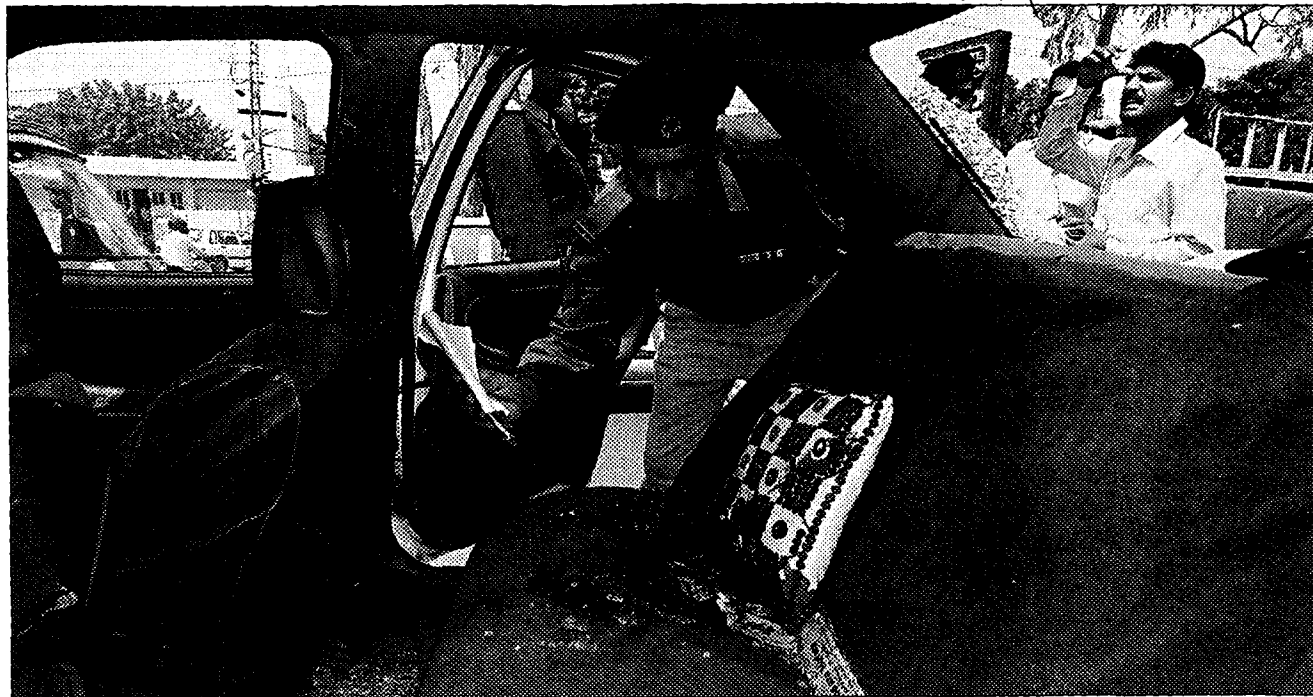
Pir Binyamin Rizvi was the vice-president of PML-Nawaz in Punjab province.

"Two other men traveling with Rizvi died at hospital," Zaeemul Haq Qadri, a party official and spokesman for Sharif said.

"We strongly condemn this brutal killing of our leader," Zaeem said. "It is not yet clear who could be behind Rizvi's killing," he said.

Zaeem said he feared that it could be a sectarian attack on Rizvi, a Sunni Muslim.

Parliamentary leader of



A Pakistani police officer examines the damaged car of slain opposition leader Bin Yamin Rizvi in Lahore on Saturday.

PML-Nawaz Senator Ishaq Dar in a television interview said Rizvi's killing was not a sectarian killing but a "targeted murder".

Dar said last week gunmen shot dead a provincial leader of ex-prime minister Benazir Bhutto's opposition party in the restive Pak-

istani port city of Karachi.

"This shows a complete breakdown of government," Dar said.

Two men attacked Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader for Sindh province Munawwar Suharwardi, a close confidante of Bhutto's, as he parked his car on

a main road in eastern Karachi on June 17.

Vice-Chairman of PPP Makhdoom Amin Fahim said Rizvi's murder was targeted killing aimed at "eliminating" leaders of democratic opposition. "This is targeted killing aimed at sending a signal to the democratic op-

position," Fahim said.

Leader of the Democratic Alliance Senator Raza Rabbani said: "there is a pattern in recent incidents of political murders". The real perpetrators of the crime must be exposed "if the steep downhill slide towards a civil war is to be arrested," Rabbani said.

2 MMA leaders banned from House

Press Trust of India
Islamabad, June 26

IN AN apparent retaliation for Islamic alliance MMA's decision to boycott the newly formed National Security Council (NSC), pro-Musharraf Sindh government in Pakistan has banned the entry of two of its leaders in the province.

The provincial government banned the entry of Muttahida Majlis-e Amal (MMA) leaders, Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Qazi Hussain Ahmed, to attend a peace rally being organised by the alliance in Karachi. The Sindh government, however, said that the ban was necessary to prevent further violence in Karachi unleashed by pro-al-Qaida and sectarian militant groups.

Both Rehman and Ahmed strongly criticised the ban and threatened to defy it and go to Karachi. Both leaders termed it as retaliation by the government for MMA's decision to boycott the NSC.

Rehman, who apparently promised to attend the inaugural meeting of the military-dominated National Security Council (NSC), decided to boycott it in the eleventh hour along with the Chief of Minister of the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) Akram Durani, who heads the MMA government in the province. The Sindh government's ban followed Rehman's designation as leader of the opposition.

The NSC became controversial as the opposition objected to the presence of the



A file photograph of MMA Secretary General Maulana Fazalur Rahman (right) with Jamaat-i-Islami chief Qazi Hussain Ahmed in Islamabad.

AFP

Chiefs of the Army, Navy and Air Force along with Chiefs of Joint Staff Committee (CJSC) as its members instead of Defence Minister. Presided over by President Musharraf, its members included three service chiefs, CJSC chiefs, Prime Minister, Speaker of the National Assembly, Senate Chairman, Chief Ministers of the four provinces and Leader of the Opposition. The NSC was constituted after MMA helped Musharraf to get his controversial constitutional amendments approved last year.

Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain interim Prime Minister

Jamali quits as PM



Mr Jamali (centre) chats with PML chief Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain (right) while outgoing finance minister Mr Shaukat Aziz looks on during a meeting in Islamabad on Saturday. — AFP

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ISLAMABAD, June 26. — Pakistan's Prime Minister Mr Zafarullah Khan Jamali announced his resignation and the dissolution of his Cabinet today, after months of speculation that his relationship with the country's military ruler was strained.

"I resigned from my post as Prime Minister today," Mr Jamali told a packed gathering at the headquarters of the ruling PML-Q party. "Long live Pakistan."

Mr Jamali named a military loyalist from one of the country's most influential families as the man to replace him — at least temporarily.

Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, lawmaker and leader of the ruling PML-Q party, is to head the government until August, when finance minister Mr

Shaukat Aziz is expected to replace him. Mr Aziz must first obtain a seat in the Lower House.

Mr Jamali said he hoped the decision would help the nation's political process, but didn't elaborate.

As recently as yesterday, Mr Jamali had sought to quash rumours that he was on his way out and that his relationship with Gen. Musharraf had chilled. The two men had met earlier today, but Mr Jamali gave no indication of what was discussed.

Observers say Gen. Musharraf had grown impatient at Mr Jamali's inability to rein in opposition lawmakers and to effectively defend the government's approach.

"It takes courage to resign," Mr Jamali said. "But I am not feeling that bad because I have resigned from other positions in my life. I will be glad if it

improves the party, system and the atmosphere."

The move was not likely to have a significant impact on Pakistan's foreign policy — including its support for the US-led war on terrorism and its tentative peace talks with India.

Mr Jamali, one of Pakistan's most seasoned politicians, became Prime Minister in November 2002.

Gunmen on a motorcycle sprayed bullets at a car carrying Bin Yamin Rizvi, a local PML-N leader, killing him along with his driver and bodyguard in Lahore today. The Lahore police chief said he had no leads on who was behind the attack.

Hijack threat: Authorities stepped up security today at Pakistan's largest airport in Karachi after receiving a tip that terrorists might try to hijack a plane.

27 JUN 2001

সরতে হল জামালিকে, পরবর্তী পাক প্রধানমন্ত্রী শওকত আজিজ

ইসলামাবাদ, ২৬ জুন (পি টি আই)— পাক প্রধানমন্ত্রী মির জাফরুল্লা খান জামালি অবশেষে পদত্যাগ করলেন। মুশারফের সঙ্গে তাঁর বিরোধিতা তুঙ্গে পৌঁছেছিল। রাজনৈতিক মহলে গত কয়েকমাস ধরেই শোনা যাচ্ছিল, জামালিকে সরিয়ে প্রধানমন্ত্রীর তখতে মুশারফ অন্য কাউকে বসাতে চাইছেন। পরভেজ মুশারফের সঙ্গে বৈঠকের পর জামালি আজ তাঁর হাতে ইস্তফার চিঠি তুলে দিলেন। আপাতত অস্তবর্তীকালীন প্রধানমন্ত্রী হলেন পাকিস্তান মুসলিম লিগের নেতা চৌধুরি সজাত হুসেন। কিন্তু, স্থায়ী প্রধানমন্ত্রী হিসাবে নিয়োগ করা হবে শওকত আজিজকে। অর্থনীতিবিদ, অর্থমন্ত্রী ছিলেন জামালির মন্ত্রিসভায় অর্থমন্ত্রী। একসময় ছিলেন ব্যাংক পরিচালক। রাজনীতিতে আসার পর গত পাঁচ বছর ধরে পাক অর্থনীতির হাল ফেরানোর চেষ্টায় আছেন। ভারতের মনমোহন সিংয়ের মতো পাকিস্তানও পাচ্ছে এবার

একজন অর্থনীতিবিদ-প্রধানমন্ত্রী। অস্তবর্তী প্রধানমন্ত্রী সজাত হুসেন ছিলেন নওয়াজ শরিফ সরকারে স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রী। পর্যবেক্ষকদের ধারণা, জাতীয় নিরাপত্তা পরিষদ এবং সেনাবাহিনীর ভূমিকা নিয়ে তীব্র মতবিরোধের ফলেই জামালিকে সরতে হল। চলতি বছরের শেষে সেনাধ্যক্ষের দায়িত্ব ছেড়ে দিচ্ছেন মুশারফ। প্রেসিডেন্টের দায়িত্ব শুধু হাতে রাখবেন। তার আগে প্রধানমন্ত্রীর গদিতে অন্য কাউকে বসিয়ে নিজের হাত শক্ত করতে চান। পাকিস্তানে সাধারণ নির্বাচনের পরবর্তী অধ্যায়ে মাসখানেক রাজনৈতিক অস্থিরতা চলার পর ২০০২ সালের নভেম্বরে মির জামালি প্রধানমন্ত্রী হন। বালুচিস্তানের প্রধানমন্ত্রী এই নেতার সঙ্গে প্রেসিডেন্ট মুশারফের ক্রমে মতপার্থক্য দেখা দেয় এবং সম্মতি বাধে। উল্লেখ্য, পাক নির্বাচনে বালুচিস্তান ও উত্তর পশ্চিম সীমান্ত প্রদেশে কটরপন্থী বা তালিবান সমর্থকরাই ক্ষমতা দখল করে।

AAJKAL * 27 JUN 2002

Don't push us around: Pervez

VICTORIA SCHOFIELD

Islamabad, June 20: Suggest that President Pervez Musharraf has used up at least five of his nine lives and he brushes the thought aside. It may be that the English phrase is unfamiliar to the Pakistani leader; more likely, he realises that you can only die once and there is no point "thinking about such things".

Yet the list of near-misses is undeniably long. In December last year Pakistan's military ruler narrowly escaped two concerted assassination attempts in Rawalpindi, a heavily guarded garrison town near the capital, Islamabad. In April 2002 an ambush in Karachi — probably set up by radical hardliners opposed to his crackdown on religious extremists — also failed when a car bomb did not detonate.

There are more, the President recalls. He once decided not to catch an aircraft while returning from northern Pakistan; it crashed. Back in the 1980s, meanwhile, if he had accepted General Zia-ul-Haq's invitation to be his military secretary, he would have died in the mysterious 1988 crash alongside the last general to seize power in a coup and become Pakistan's President.

Significantly, we are meeting not in the vast, impersonal presidential palace in Islamabad but in the "Camp Office", his military bolt-hole in Rawalpindi.

It is just 10 miles from Islamabad but a world away from the

They (the Commonwealth) should leave Pakistan alone in deciding on what is the best form of democracy for us, and they should not base our inclusion in the Commonwealth on any future actions of mine

Pervez Musharraf

diplomatic dance of the capital. There, President Musharraf wears a suit, attends functions and dinners, meets and greets foreign VIPs. Here, General Musharraf personally directs Pakistan's military operations against al Qaida and Taliban fighters in south Waziristan, a lawless tribal area bordering Afghanistan.

Predictably, perhaps, he appears today in the drawing-room of the Camp Office wearing his army uniform. It is a controversial outfit, one that the Commonwealth nations would like him to cast off. Last month, when they voted to readmit Pakistan to full membership after five years in the wilderness following the coup in 1999 in which he seized power, they made it clear that they expected him to step down as the head of the country's army.

The Commonwealth minis-



ters should brace themselves for disappointment. The President is thinking of defying them. "We will take our decisions in accordance with Pakistan's dictates, not according to the Commonwealth's dictates," he tells me, in the blunt language of the soldier, not the diplomat.

Musharraf suggests that the Commonwealth should acknowledge that greater democracy has been introduced in Pakistan than previously existed.

"They should leave Pakistan alone in deciding on what is the best form of democracy for us, and they should not base our in-

clusion in the Commonwealth on any future actions of mine."

He takes a similar stance — courteous but uncompromising — during a wide-ranging discussion of the main issues confronting Pakistan, including terrorism, the search for Osama bin Laden, and democracy. His message is clear: Pakistan is not going to be pushed around by anyone.

Other international allies are more forgiving of the general's desire to remain in uniform. President Bush upgraded diplomatic relations, formally naming Pakistan as a "major non-Nato ally" in reward for Islamabad's efforts in fighting al Qaida. It coincided with a major victory in the battle against militants: the death in Waziristan of a troublesome warlord and former Taliban commander, Nek Mohammed, who was accused of sheltering hundreds of foreign fighters.

His death by mortar fire was good news for Musharraf the military ruler — alleviating intense pressure from Washington to tackle militants — but a worry for him as a political leader whose opponents argue that Pakistan is in America's pocket.

"There is concern domesti-

cally with people thinking that we have become the puppet of the US," he admits. "This is not true. There are many areas where we have followed a different line — for example on nuclear issues and Iraq. But if our interests in handling terrorism are the same as US interests, that is perfectly fine."

His pledge to remove his uniform was part of a deal to end a stand-off with hardline Islamist opposition politicians who refused to support constitutional changes he had made since 1999 — most important of which was the President's authority to sack the Prime Minister and national and provincial assemblies.

The agreement, he admits, was made out of expedience. "I will cross that bridge when it needs to be crossed," he says, adding he has received "many letters and telephone calls from ordinary Pakistanis" alarmed by suggestions that he would surrender his military status.

"The truth is that no one else wants his job," a Karachi businessman said. "Once he goes, his problems in terms of looking after the country's interests may be over, but for us they will begin."

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

Pakistani
5/12/91

Pakistan missile attack kills tribal leader



Nek Muhammad

ISLAMABAD, June 18. — In a targeted missile attack on a mud-brick fortress near the Afghan border, Pakistani army overnight killed a renegade tribal

leader and former Taliban commander, who was wanted for sheltering foreign militants, along with four of his associates.

“Nek Muhammad was one of the leading men who had sheltered foreign militants” and was killed in military operations, Pakistani interior minister Mr Faisal Saleh Hayat told the National Assembly today.

Earlier, a defence spokesman said Muhammad, who was in his late 20s, and his four colleagues were killed when the security forces bombed a hideout of the

militants in South Waziristan. “Security forces were monitoring movement of Muhammad.”

Local officials in South Waziristan said that Muhammad was hiding in a house of his friend Sher Zaman in Dug area, five km away from Wana.

Reports said the intelligence agents intercepted Muhammad’s satellite phone conversation last night with a friend.

“A missile was fired on the house where he was staying,” a local official said. — PTI

10-10
17/10

INCONSISTENT CAMPAIGN

10/10

PAKISTAN HAS TRIED to demonstrate that it is serious about hunting down elements of the Al-Qaeda network by carrying out air strikes on selected targets and deploying nearly 20,000 troops in the tribal areas of the North West Frontier Province. However, there is bound to be some scepticism about its intent. Exercises of a similar nature undertaken earlier this year were abruptly wound up with no significant success being achieved. Stout resistance by the holed-up militants had slowed down the operation but what snuffed it out was opposition from religious parties and the military-dominated establishment's reassessment of its own stakes in the campaign. Now it also appears that the Pakistan military, which has displayed the ability to ignite and sustain violent uprisings across the eastern and western borders of the country, lacks the equipment and skill for counter-insurgency operations. For these reasons, the possibility that Islamabad might soon revert to less direct methods cannot be ruled out. In the past, military action was suspended as steps were taken to coax the people of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas to hand over the militants by threatening to impose collective fines on the tribes. But, instead of following through on the threat when the tribesmen rejected the demand, the Pakistani security forces preferred to negotiate agreements under which the wanted men would be allowed to slip across to Afghanistan.

Is the Army sufficiently motivated this time? The recent attempt to assassinate the corps commander in Karachi made allegedly by an Al-Qaeda cell will not necessarily fire the Pakistan Army to pursue with vigour its operations in the NWFP. Though both groups are supposedly linked to Al-Qaeda, Pakistan's military still appears to draw a distinction between those militants who attack it and those who do not. After all, the efforts launched in the NWFP earlier were not

taken to a logical conclusion even though at least two attempts had then been made on the life of the Army chief and President, Pervez Musharraf. To an extent, the Pakistan Army seems to have deliberately overlooked the connection between its operations in the tribal areas and the assassination attempts on its commanders. The speed with which it tracked down and captured those alleged to have participated in the murder plots contrasts starkly with the whimsical fashion in which it has proceeded against the extremists in the border areas. However, it is aware that the other countries involved in the campaign against Al-Qaeda, especially the United States, do not distinguish between one affiliate of this terror network and another. Under these circumstances, Islamabad appears to go after terrorist cells in the tribal areas only when it anticipates pressure from Washington.

U.S. President George W. Bush and his officials apparently believe that the workload of their military formations in Iraq will ease once sovereignty is transferred to an interim government. Faced with a tough re-election battle and mounting criticism that he neglected the campaign against terror in his obsession with Iraq, Mr. Bush might be tempted to refocus attention on the situation in Afghanistan and its neighbourhood. If the U.S. reorients its policies, General Musharraf will be under pressure to deliver. Since Pakistan has unrealised ambitions in Afghanistan, it would prefer a carefully calibrated approach in dealing with extremist outfits that it believes can be cajoled to do its bidding in the future. Such an approach is consistent with a policy of tolerance towards religious fundamentalists inside the country and *jihadis* who are active in Kashmir. Despite the assassination attempts on its commanders, the Pakistan military does not appear to have realised that extremists will follow their own agenda.

10/10

Pak calls off bloody hunt for al-Qaida

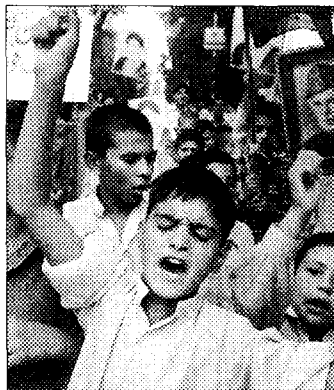
Agencies
Islamabad, June 14

PAKISTAN TODAY called off its military operations against al-Qaida militants holed up in tribal areas bordering Afghanistan saying the militants were either flushed out, died or dispersed after the offensive, that left 76 dead. The nephew of top al-Qaida terror planner Khalid Sheikh Mohammad and eight members of a new al-Qaida-trained group who were allegedly behind an attempt to kill Karachi's top general and other attacks were arrested on Monday.

"The criminals were either flushed out, died or dispersed and our troops have taken total control of the area," Pakistan defence spokesman, Maj. Gen. Shoukat Sultan said. His comments followed reports that four paramilitary scouts were killed and three others injured when their vehicle was hit by a remote controlled device at Miran Shan in North Waziristan tribal agency. Pakistan pressed in a large number of troops and conducted aerial bombardment of suspected hideouts of the militants in Shakai area in the agency using its war planes as well as helicopter-gunships.

As many as 55 militants and 21 security personnel were killed in the operations so far.

The arrests of Khalid Sheikh Mohammad's nephew and other militants in the violence-wracked Karachi at the weekend



REUTERS

Pakistani Shias chant anti-terror slogans during a protest in Islamabad on Monday.

coincided with the ongoing offensive against the al-Qaida.

Southern Sindh province's police chief Kamal Shah identified the new terror organisation as Jund Allah, meaning "God's Brigade", and said its members had trained at an al-Qaida camp near Wana.

Eight of its members were seized in raids in Karachi at the weekend along with Mohammad's nephew Musabir Urumchi, whose nationality is unclear.

Mohammad, one of the chief planners of the September 11, 2001 attacks, was arrested in Pakistan in March 2003.

"The Jund Allah group is a new terror group which has links with al-Qaida, and their members have been trained in Wana," Shah said today.

Top Pak general's convoy attacked

Press Trust of India
Islamabad, June 10

LIEUTENANT GENERAL Ahsan Saleem Hayat, the Karachi Commander of the Pakistan Army, escaped unhurt after unidentified gunmen attacked his convoy in Karachi.

At least 10 people, including seven soldiers, were killed when unidentified gunmen attacked a military convoy in the volatile Karachi today.

"Seven army men were among 10 people killed in the attack," military spokesman Major General Shaukat Sultan told Geo TV. Besides seven soldiers, three policemen were killed while three others, including the Commander's guard and driver, were injured, they said.

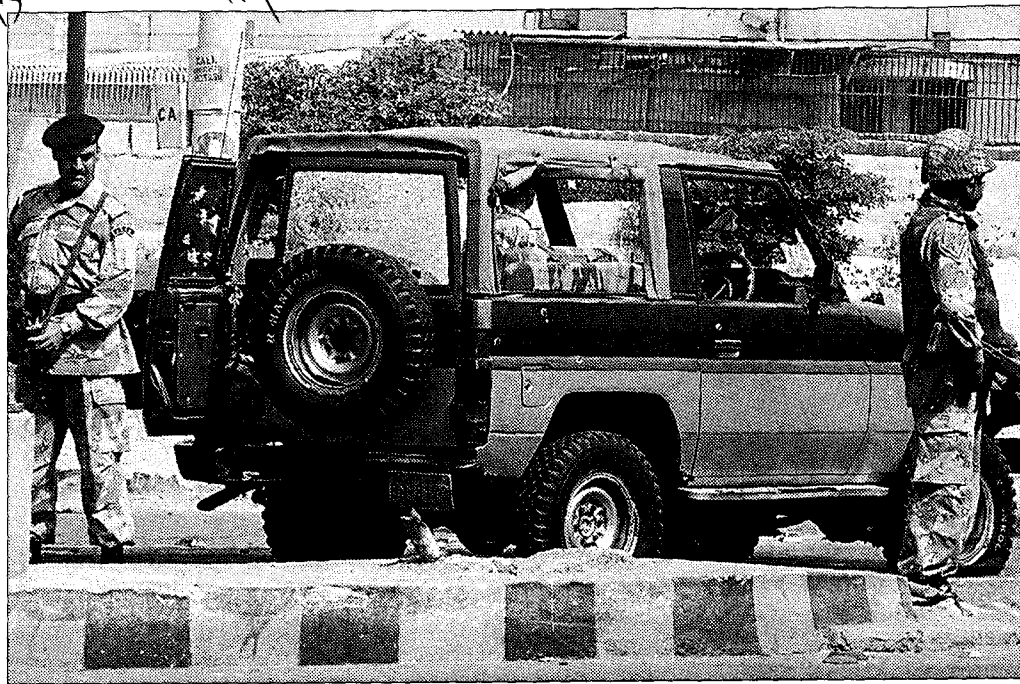
This was the first time that a top military commander of Pakistan army came under attack from the militants. Militants attacked the convoy at the entrance of a bridge in the busy Clifton area in the city with AK-47 rifles. They also reportedly used bombs during the attack.

The windows of nearby shops and apartments were shattered by the gunfire and the subsequent explosion, police said, adding one bomb was defused while the attackers fled firing in the area.

Security forces surrounded the Clifton area after the incident and ambulances shifted the bodies and injured.

No one has yet claimed responsibility for the attack, but police suspect that it was carried out by militant groups owning allegiance to al-Qaida.

The assailants used two stolen cars to carry out the attack, Sultan said.



Pakistani troops at the scene of the attack in Karachi on Thursday.

Al-Qaida men clash with Pak forces, 24 killed

A FIERCE gunbattle between Pakistani security forces and al-Qaida-linked fighters near the Afghan border left at least 24 people dead.

Around 20 foreign militants were among those killed when fighting erupted on Wednesday in the rugged tribal border region thought to be a possible hiding place for Osama bin Laden.

"More than 20 foreign

militants have died so far," the tribal territory's security chief Brigadier Mahmood Shah said. The firefight started in Shakai village, 35 kms north of Wana, the main town in the tribal South Waziristan district after militants holed up in the area fired rockets at military personnel.

"We have recovered six bodies while seven others were

buried in Shakai," said Shah. He said another seven or eight fighters' bodies were lying at the site of the clash. One injured foreign militant was arrested. Residents said militants launched a fresh attack on a military post in Wana before dawn on Thursday but details of any new casualties were not available.

AFP, Wana

Reagan scripted own funeral to last detail

Press Trust of India
Washington, June 10

RONALD REAGAN, whose State funeral is evoking a groundswell of love and admiration throughout the US for his role as the 40th President of the country, had himself scripted it to the last detail more than 20 years ago, when he first entered the White House.

Reagan began planning the ceremonies shortly after taking office in 1981, a ritual which became customary after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, whose lack of funeral preparations left organisers unsure how to proceed, *The Washington Times* reported.

Shortly after Reagan left office, he finalised the plans. "President Reagan gave us a substantial 300-page plan for his State funeral in 1989," said Capt. Peter Kerr of the Military District of Washington, which is in charge of the organisation and execution of State funerals.

The Reagan plan, which is being followed, called for having an official funeral service in the District and a sunset burial in California, where he served two terms as Governor, acted in many films and served for a time as a trade union leader organising Hollywood stars.

"The plan for a State funeral is 90 to 95 per cent scripted. Usually, only 5 to 10 per cent of such a plan is changed" to accommodate the preferences of the deceased's family, Capt. Kerr said.

In this case, the former President lay in repose in California for a full extra day beyond the original schedule to accommodate the crowds of mourners who wanted to pay tribute.

Another change was made by the



LAST RESPECTS: Margaret Thatcher pays tribute to Ronald Reagan in the Rotunda of the US Capitol on Thursday.

Reagan family. They requested the placement of a pair of the President's own boots, reversed, in the stirrups of the riderless horse that marched down Constitution Avenue in his funeral procession in Washington. The reversal of the boots indicates that "the warrior will never ride again".

"A State funeral is for a President or someone he designates. It is one of the highest honours the nation can bestow," Capt. Kerr pointed out.

The last State funeral for a President in the capital was for Lyndon Johnson in 1973. Many of the rites at Reagan's funeral will be the same as those used in 1865 when Abraham Lincoln lay in state in the Capitol Rotunda. Lincoln was the first American President given a full State funeral, though national days of mourning had been declared upon the deaths of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin.

Pak consensus to curb clashes

Pakistani
2/6

Islamabad, June 3 (Reuters): Scrambling to contain a surge in militant violence, Pakistan's ruling party today invited the Opposition to share power in a key southern province wracked by bloody attacks in the past month.

The offer came as police blamed the latest sectarian attack in the port city of Karachi on a local group linked to al Qaida. In the far north of the country, meanwhile, a suspected al Qaida militant was killed in an explosion which also wounded three paramilitary members at a checkpoint near the Afghan border; one of the wounded men said. The Pakistani military said the "foreign miscreant" was shot dead by the troops after lobbing a grenade at them. Three armed foreigners disguised in burkas were also detained in the same region along with a Pakistani.

The ruling Pakistani Muslim League made the offer to the Opposition — unprecedented in this administration — to join a "consensus" government in Sindh after a spate of attacks in the provincial capital Karachi that has claimed more than 50 lives. Muslim League head Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain said the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), a six-party Islamic alliance, backed the proposal. But a spokesman for the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) said its leader Benazir Bhutto — forced to remain in exile by the threat of prosecution for corruption by Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf — had rejected it.

British teacher shot in Multan

A British teacher was shot dead in the central Pakistani city of Multan today, but police said the attack did not appear to have been carried out by Islamic militants.

Police identified the teacher as Alan Cox, who had been teaching secondary school-level students in the city for the past six to seven years. They said he was shot at his home during the evening.

Multan police chief Hamid Mukhtar Gondal said 14 people had been detained for questioning in connection with the attack.

KARACHI MOSQUE BLAST TOLL 20 ■ POLICE-MOB CLASHES KILL TWO

Shi'ite mourners turn violent

PTI & AP 5/21/6

ISLAMABAD, June 1. — At least two persons were killed in clashes between police and protesters in Karachi today when thousands converged to attend the funeral of 20 people who died in a suicide bomb explosion at a Shi'ite mosque.

Thousands of people, mostly from the minority Shi'ite community, gathered to attend the funeral of those killed in the explosion last evening, which, the Karachi SP, Mr Manzoor Mughal, confirmed was a work of a suicide bomber, reports reaching here said. "We did not see any crater in the mosque, which shows that it was a suicide attack," the officer said.

The suicide bomber, who was yet to be identified, struck the Imam Bargah Ali Raza mosque yesterday when people were offering evening prayers. The blast left 20 people dead and over 50 injured, several of them critically.

Angry Shi'ite protesters also attacked several shops and threw stones when a big funeral procession turned violent on a main road in the port city. Several vehicles, including buses and cars, were burnt in stray violence by angry mobs.

Two people were killed in clashes between police and angry protesters, the reports said.

Police chief Mr Tariq Jameel said police fired tear gas when protesters ransacked and burnt

shops and pelted stones at security personnel. Mr Jameel said paramilitary force was also deployed in the city to check any further violence.

Meanwhile, President Pervez Musharraf vowed action to stop violence in this commercial city. The President will take tough decision to restore normalcy in the city, information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said.

Last night's attack led to overnight violence by hundreds of angry Shi'ite youths who set ablaze shops, cars, a bank and a government building and blocked highways and the main rail line.

No one claimed responsibility for the bombing. But Karachi has been wracked by violence between Sunni majority and Shi'ite minority, and the attack was seen as revenge for the assassination on Sunday of a senior Sunni cleric, Nazamuddin Shamzai, that also triggered street battles between youths and police.

Mr Jameel said police and paramilitary force were kept at a distance from the venue of the funeral to avoid any provocation by the mourners. "We were assured by the leaders that the funeral would be peaceful, but the mourners attacked shops, threw out goods and burned tyres on roads."

A worshipper inside the mosque, Mr Ghulam Ali, said he thought a bomb had been thrown inside from a passing car. He described hearing a thud and seeing a speeding car drive away before the explosion.



RUNNING RIOT: A man hurls back a tear gas shell fired by police as others flee during clashes between police and Shi'ite mourners in Karachi on Tuesday. — AFP

JUN 2004

Blast in Karachi Shia mosque kills 14

Islamabad, May 31: Fourteen persons were killed and 35 injured when a powerful bomb exploded in a Shia mosque in Karachi this evening, hospital sources said.

A state of emergency has been declared in all the city's hospitals, they added. The police blocked all roads leading to and from Ali Raza Mosque where the explosion occurred while people were preparing for evening prayers.

Karachi had feared fresh sectarian violence after the killing yesterday of Mufti Nizamuddin Shanzai, a radical Sunni preacher, and thousands of police were on duty at the city's mosques in anticipation of a backlash.

The government's chief spokesman told Geo Television that President Pervez Musharraf planned to take tough measures to restore order in the city. This was the fifth terror inci-

dent in little over 20 days in Karachi. On May 7, a powerful bomb blast at a Shia mosque left 23 dead. A similar attack on another Shia mosque in the southwestern town of Quetta also killed over three dozen worshippers in March this year.

Pakistani information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad con-

demned the "ghastly incident" while talking to reporters. He said: "This is unfortunate that the people were not safe even in the mosques and being killed in the name of Islam by unscrupulous elements".

He said President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali had

also condemned the incident.

"The government had taken a very serious view of the latest incident and will take an important decision to curb terrorism," Rashid quoted Musharraf as saying.

Karachi is the home of not only Urdu-speaking migrants from India but also of ethnic

Rocket attack in minister's hometown

Quetta, May 31 (Reuters): Nearly 20 rockets were fired into the home town of Pakistan's education minister in the southwest of the country today, killing two people and wounding three.

One of the rockets hit the home of a servant of education minister Zubaida Jalal, killing the servant's 14-year-old son and wounding four people, said Jalal, who was in the capital Islamabad at the time of the attack.

part of a campaign to hurt my resolve," Jalal said in a statement. "I will not be unnerved by such cheap tactics." Jalal said 18 rockets were fired into the town of Mand, which is close to the border with Iran. A government official said the attack lasted for about half-an-hour and appeared to have come from different directions. Several of the rockets landed at a paramilitary camp though no one was hurt.

Later one of the injured died in a hospital in the town of Turbat nearby, a government official in Quetta said.

Jalal, whose efforts to modernise Pakistan's education system have angered conservative Islamists who say she and President Pervez Musharraf have a pro-western agenda, said the attackers wanted to intimidate her.

Pashuns and Sindhis.

One worshipper, a man called Saddiqan, said he was on his way into the mosque when the explosion knocked him off his feet. "I saw two dead bodies without limbs lying on the ground," he said.

Anger among the several hundred people gathered outside the bombed mosque spilled over and a mob set fire to a nearby petrol pump, a police van and a private car. "I can hear gun shots and the angry crowd is torching cars and tyres, while a gas station has already been burnt," a witness said.

Police were unable to get near the mosque because the crowd was letting in only ambulances.

The situation in Karachi worsened after Musharraf banned five extremist and sectarian militant outfits in January 2002.

IMTIHAZ GULAND AGENCIES



A man injured in the bomb blast in a Shia mosque lies on a hospital bed surrounded by his relatives in Karachi. (AFP)

Summi cleric shot in Karachi

Agencies

ISLAMABAD, May 30. — A senior Summi Muslim cleric, Maulana Nizamuddin Shamzai, with close links to Afghanistan's ousted Taliban, was gunned down in Karachi by unidentified gunmen early today, triggering violence in different parts of Pakistan's southern metropolis, police said.

Shamzai, a religious scholar at Jamia Uloom-e-Islami, Karachi, was travelling in his car when unidentified gunmen riding in two cars and a motorcycle opened fire around 8:30 a.m. (IST), killing him and injuring four others, including his son, police said. He was rushed to hospital where he died, police said. The assailants managed to flee from the spot. But one of them sustained injuries when a guard fired at him, police said. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack yet.

As the news of his murder spread, an agitated



A demonstrator throws back a teargas shell at police (unseen) as others throw stones during a stir to protest the killing of Mufti Nizamuddin Shamzai, in Karachi on Sunday. — AFP

mob attacked the Binori police station and set it on fire. A red alert was declared as the killing could trigger sectarian violence. Violence erupted in several parts of Karachi, forcing the Deputy IG (Karachi) Mr Tariq Ameer to put the police force on high alert to check any backlash. Angry supporters of Shamzai set Jamsheed Quarters police station on fire and prisoners locked in the jail managed to escape, sources said and added that some vehicles parked outside the police station were torched.

Terming the killing as a "terrorist act" the governor of Sindh, Mr Isratul Ibad, said: "Security forces will make all efforts to nab the culprits... and steps have been taken to maintain peace in the city."

He also appealed to the followers of Shamzai not to loose cool and cooperate with the authorities.

Acting chief of the MMA has condemned the murder and said the government must provide security to religious scholars.

Govt crackdown

Pakistani security forces have detained 59 tribesmen and imposed a complete economic blockade on the South Waziristan tribal agency as a result of which over 5,000 shops have been closed in Wana, the headquarters of the agency, state-run PTV reported.

The local people of the tribal area bordering Afghanistan were earlier asked by the government to get all foreign militants residing there registered.

Pak set to test *Ghauri-III*

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, May 21. — Pakistan is all set to test-fire its new long-range ballistic missile *Ghauri-III* on 3 June. The missile is capable of carrying a nuclear warhead and having a range of 3,500 km covering all major cities in India.

The missile would be launched from the firing range near Nowshehra into the Arabian Sea, official sources were quoted as saying today by the English daily *Nation*.

Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali was informed of the details of the test when he visited the country's premier nuclear installation Khan Research Laboratories yesterday, the *Nation* reported. According to officials the missile could be tentatively test fired on 3 June, close on the heels of a new government headed by Dr Manmohan Singh assuming office in India.

Based on liquid fuel, *Ghauri-III* is a ground-to-ground ballistic missile. If test fired, it would be the second



The previous Pakistani long-range missile, *Shaheen-II*. — A file photograph

THE NEW MENACE

- Range: 3,500 km, covering all major cities in India.
- Date: 3 June, close on the heels of a new government headed by Dr Manmohan Singh assuming office.

long-range missile developed by the KRL. It had test fired the 2,500-km range *Shaheen-II* in March.

The announcement about the long range missile test followed repeated assertions by both President Pervez

Musharraf and Prime Minister Jamali in the recent months that there would be no roll back of Pakistan's missile programme in the light of confessions by country's top nuclear scientist Dr AQ Khan of clandestinely transferring nuclear technology to Libya, Iraq and North Korea.

Addressing the nuclear scientists and engineers of KRL during his visit yesterday, Mr Jamali said the nuclear deterrence is corner stone of the nation's security policy and it was non-negotiable.

The Prime Minister also said the policy of credible minimum deterrence had national consensus and had withstood the test of time and even over the past several years, "even if we continue to monitor our security environment critically".

Besides *Shaheen-II*, Islamabad has so far test-fired short and medium range missiles — *Shaheen-I* with a range of 280 km, *Hataf-I* also called *Ghaznavi* (range 600 km) and *Hataf-III*, a short range missile which could carry nuclear or conventional warhead up to 290 km.

THE STATESMAN

29 MAY 2001

শক্তিশালী পরমাণু ক্ষেপণাস্ত্র পরীক্ষা করল পাকিস্তান

ইসলামাবাদ, ২৯ মে— ভারতের নতুন প্রধানমন্ত্রী মনমোহন সিংহের শপথ গ্রহণের আট দিনের মাথায় ঘাউরি ৫ নামে অত্যাধুনিক ক্ষেপণাস্ত্রের সফল পরীক্ষা করল পাকিস্তান। ১৫০০ কিলোমিটারের পরিবহন ক্ষমতা সম্পন্ন এই ক্ষেপণাস্ত্রটির আওতায় ভারতের প্রায় প্রত্যেকটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ শহরই পড়ছে। পাক মেজর জেনারেল শৌকত সুলতান জানিয়েছেন, যে কোনও ধরনের পরমাণু অস্ত্র বহন করার ক্ষমতা আছে এই ক্ষেপণাস্ত্রটির। পাকিস্তানের এই ক্ষেপণাস্ত্র পরীক্ষার পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে প্রতিরক্ষা মন্ত্রী প্রণব মুখোপাধ্যায় জানিয়েছেন, দিল্লিতে ফিরে তিনি এ বিষয়ে আলোচনা করবেন। প্রণববাবু আজ পশ্চিমবঙ্গে ছিলেন। ভারতীয় প্রতিরক্ষা দফতরের এক অফিসার অবশ্য জানান, এই পরীক্ষা প্রত্যাশিত ছিল।

ভারতের নতুন সরকার শপথ নেওয়ার এক সপ্তাহের মধ্যে এই ক্ষেপণাস্ত্র পরীক্ষা বিশেষ গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বলে মনে করছে বিশেষজ্ঞরা। তাঁদের মতে, শক্তি প্রক্রিয়ায় অংশগ্রহণ করলেও পাকিস্তান ভারতকে যে বার্তা পৌছাতে চাইছে তা হল, প্রতিরক্ষা ব্যবস্থাকে কোনও রকমেই দুর্বল করতে রাজি নয় তারা। এই ব্যাপারে ভারতের সমকক্ষ হতে চাইছে পাকিস্তান। পাকিস্তানের প্রাক্তন সেনা জেনারেল কামাল মতিনুদ্দিন জানিয়েছেন, এই পরীক্ষা কিছুটা কারিগরি কারণে, কিছুটা সরকারের উপর অভ্যন্তরীণ চাপ হাঙ্কা করতে, কিছুটা ভারতকে দেখাতে, যে সামরিক ভাবে আমরা অত্যন্ত শক্তিশালী। গত মার্চেই ইসলামাবাদ জানিয়েছিল, ভারতের যে কোনও অঞ্চলে পরমাণু অস্ত্র পৌছাতে সক্ষম তারা। কিছু বিশেষদেজের ধারণা, উত্তর কোরিয়াকে পরমাণু তথ্য পাচার করার প্রতিদান হিসাবেই তাদের থেকে শক্তিশালী ক্ষেপণাস্ত্র তৈরির কারিগরি সহায়তা পেয়েছে পাকিস্তানে।

অন্য দিকে, আব্দুল কাদির খানের বিশ্বস্ত সঙ্গী ও তাঁর পরমাণু চক্রের গুরুত্বপূর্ণ কর্মী বৃহারি সৈয়দ আবু তাহির মালেশিয়ায় গ্রেফতার হওয়ায় খুশি আমেরিকা। আমেরিকার বিদেশ দফতরের মুখপাত্র রিচার্ড বাউচার জানিয়েছেন, শ্রীলঙ্কার শিল্পপতি তাহির ছিলেন কাদিরের অর্থনৈতিক উপদেষ্টা ও চক্রের প্রধান পান্ডাদের একজন। তাই তাঁর গ্রেফতার কাদিরের পুরো চক্রের হৃদয় দিতে সাহায্য করবে বলে মনে করে আমেরিকা। তিনি আরও জানান, খান চক্রের খোঁজে বিভিন্ন দেশের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ রাখছে আমেরিকা। আজই এক ঘটনার জন্য কাদিরের উপর নজরবন্দি শিথিল করার সিদ্ধান্ত নিয়েছে পাক সরকার। তবে তিনি পরিবারের লোকের সঙ্গে দেখা করতে পারেন।

— রয়টার্স

Pervez lifts veil on 'very junior' army plot

Islamabad, May 27 (Reuters): Pakistan's President and army chief, General Pervez Musharraf, said junior army and air force personnel were involved in attempts to kill him last December.

Speaking to private Pakistani television channel Geo in an interview broadcast today, Musharraf said several personnel had been arrested and would soon be tried in open court.

Musharraf said all those involved were "very junior" and there had been no involvement of senior military figures. "There are some people in uniform, junior level, people in uniform, air force and army," he said.

He said the men were directly involved in the first of two attacks on him, on December 14,

when an explosion blew up a bridge in the city of Rawalpindi near Islamabad moments after his motorcade passed over it.

He said the men were not directly involved in a second attack, also in Rawalpindi on December 25, in which 15 died, but did not make clear whether they had participated in any way.

Diplomats have long suspected that the December attacks, both of which involved powerful explosions detonated close to Musharraf's motorcade, must have been carried out with the help of inside knowledge of the President's movements.

Some Islamic elements in the army are thought to be angry about Musharraf's policy of backing the US-led "war on terror" and concerned about his moves towards peace with India.

Asked if he was concerned that some senior ranks might have been involved, Musharraf replied: "No, no, not at all. Hundred per cent sure. Two hundred per cent sure."

Musharraf said all those involved in the attacks, apart from the Pakistani mastermind and the two suicide bombers who carried out the second, had been arrested. Musharraf declined to name the mastermind, whom he described as "very clever," saying it would compromise the investigation. "But we will get him," he said.

Military spokesman Major-General Shaukat Sultan declined to say how many military personnel were being held or what they were charged with. But he said the number was "less than 10".

"None of them is of officer rank — all of them are junior people, privates or corporal," he said. Musharraf suggested that religion was not the motivation of some suspects. "Some of them are for money," he said.

Shaukat said Musharraf had reiterated that Osama bin Laden's al Qaida had been the overall mastermind. But the spokesman said this did not mean al Qaida had infiltrated the military.

"He did explain that there is a mastermind in al Qaida somewhere, some foreigner, and he is the mastermind who had recruited some local Pakistani who recruited the guys to work for him," Shaukat said.

"So those people who were working for him, whether in the air force or army, might not have

known exactly who they were working for." Al Qaida has vowed to overthrow Musharraf and in March the President said a Libyan linked to the network was a prime suspect in the plots against him. He did not identify the man.

In February, authorities arrested a Tunisian, Khalifa bin Hussain, and a Pakistani, in connection with the attacks.

They and other suspects have been linked by police to Jaish-e-Mohammad (Army of Mohammad), an outlawed militant group which carries out terrorist attacks in Kashmir.

In the past 10 days, authorities have arrested seven members of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen al-Alami, an al-Qaida-linked group that tried to assassinate Musharraf in 2002.



Pervez Musharraf

28 MAY 2004

THE TELEGRAPH

পান্ডা পাকিস্তানি, এখনও ধরা পড়েনি আমাকে খুন করতে চেয়েছিল কিছু জুনিয়র সেনা অফিসার: মুশারফ



ইসলামাবাদ, ২৭ মে (পি টি আই)— পাকিস্তানের সেনা ও বিমানবাহিনীর একদল জুনিয়র অফিসার জেনারেল পরভেজ মুশারফকে খুন করার চেষ্টা করেছিল। চক্রান্তকারীদের বেশিরভাগই ধরা পড়েছে। তবে পান্ডাকে এখনও ধরা যায়নি। সে পালিয়ে বেড়াচ্ছে। পাকিস্তানেই আছে। জানালেন পাক প্রেসিডেন্ট পরভেজ মুশারফ নিজেই। আজ বেসরকারি 'জিও' টিভি চ্যানেলে সাক্ষাৎকারে। মুশারফ বলেন, 'গত ডিসেম্বরে আমাকে খতম করার পরিকল্পনা যার মাথা থেকে বেরিয়েছিল, সে পাকিস্তানি, অন্য কোনও দেশের নয়। তার নাম বা পরিচয় এখনই বলা যাচ্ছে না এই জন্যে যে, সে খুবই চালাক এবং জাল কেটে বেরিয়ে যেতে পারে। আমরা ওকে কিছুদিনের মধ্যেই ধরে ফেলব।' এখানে উল্লেখ করা যেতে পারে, গত মার্চে পরভেজ মুশারফ বলেছিলেন, 'খুনের ষড়যন্ত্রের মূলে আছে আল কায়দার এক নেতা। সে সিরিয়ার নাগরিক।' আজ মুশারফ তাঁর পুরনো বক্তব্য থেকে সরে এলেন। তাঁর ভাষায়, 'আমি ২০০ শতাংশ নিশ্চিত যে, কোনও উচ্চপদস্থ সেনা অফিসার এই ষড়যন্ত্রে নেই। এবং অন্য কোনও দেশের লোক এই চক্রান্তে লিপ্ত নয়।' মুশারফ আজ আরও বলেন, 'ধর্মীয় কারণে নয়, টাকার জন্য কিছু জুনিয়র অফিসার এই চক্রান্তে সামিল হয়।' এ পর্যন্ত যে ৬ জনকে ধরা হয়েছে তারা হল কর্নেল আবদুল খালিদ, লেফটেন্যান্ট কর্নেল আবদুল গফর, মেজর মহম্মদ আদিল, মেজর মহম্মদ রোহেল, মেজর আতাউল্লা ও ক্যাপ্টেন উসলমান জাফর। প্রসঙ্গত, প্রেসিডেন্ট মুশারফকে খুনের চেষ্টা হয় দু'বার। প্রথম, ১৪ ডিসেম্বর রাওয়ালপিন্ডিতে। প্রেসিডেন্টের কনভয় পার হয়ে যাওয়ার পরই ভয়ঙ্কর বিস্ফোরণে উড়ে যায় সেতু। চক্রান্তকারীদের সময়ের সামান্য ভুলে রক্ষা পান জেনারেল মুশারফ। দ্বিতীয় আক্রমণ হয় কয়েক দিনের মধ্যেই। মুশারফের কনভয়ে বিস্ফোরক-ঠাসা গাড়ি নিয়ে ঢুকে পড়েছিল ২ মানববোমা। প্রেসিডেন্ট বেঁচে যান। প্রাণ হারান ১৬ জন, যাঁদের বেশিরভাগই পুলিশকর্মী। মুশারফ সাক্ষাৎকারে বলেছেন, 'প্রথম আক্রমণের সঙ্গে যুক্ত ব্যক্তির দ্বিতীয় আক্রমণে সরাসরি জড়িত ছিল না। তবে পরোক্ষ যোগাযোগ ছিল।'

Lahore sectarian clash takes barbaric turn

Page 1
T-3

15/5

Lahore, May 14 (Reuters): Six members of a Shia family, including two women and two children, were found shot dead in their house in Lahore today in a suspected sectarian attack.

The hands and feet of the victims, including a seven-month-old baby girl, were bound. All had been shot in the head. Police said the words "Shias are infidels" was spray painted on the walls of the house on the outskirts of the city. No one claimed responsibility for the attack, but police said they suspected sectarian motives.

"Our first suspicion is that it is sectarian terrorism," police investigator Shafqat Ahmed Chaudhry said. The killings came exactly a week after 15 people were killed and 125 wounded when a suicide attacker set off a powerful bomb at a Shia mosque in Karachi.

Pakistan has been racked for decades by violence between militants from the majority Sunni and the minority Shia sects. At least 140 people have died in sectarian violence in Pakistan in the past year, most of them Shias.

Karachi strike

In Karachi, Islamist Opposition parties called a strike today forcing many shops and businesses to close in protest against vote rigging in violence marred by

elections earlier this week.

Sporadic violence was reported today, but no deaths.

"Other than some minor skirmishes in the city's outskirts, no major incidents of violence had been reported," said Salahuddin Haider, the provincial Sindh government's spokesman. The Islamist alliance of the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) mourned six dead among nine people killed during clashes with supporters of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM). The MQM, an ally of Prime Minister Zafarullah Jamali, appeared to win the three National Assembly seats and one provincial assembly seat contested on Wednesday.

But the Election Commission of Pakistan stopped the results from being declared because of reports of "grave irregularities" and "various incidents of violence" during the polls.

The MMA blamed the MQM for triggering violence and accused it of massive vote fraud. It also blamed the MMA for the violence and dismissed the rigging charges. Protestors burned tyres on main roads to stop public transport today and traffic was thin, while major commercial and shopping centres closed fearing violence. The national seats fell vacant after the MQM forced three of its lawmakers to resign.



Police arrest a Shia protester in Lahore. (Reuters)

Shahbaz deported on arrival

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, May 11. — Defying government warnings not to come, Mr Shahbaz Sharif, top Pakistani Opposition leader and brother of deposed Prime Minister Mr Nawaz Sharif, returned home today after three years of forced exile, but was immediately deported to Saudi Arabia.

A Gulf Air plane, carrying Shahbaz and a number of national and international newsmen, landed at Lahore airport at 6.30 p.m. IST. However, he was immediately deported to Jeddah, information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad said.

Prior to his return, 1,000 to 1,100 activists of his PML-N party were arrested as part of the government's intense crackdown.

Mr Rashid told TV networks here that

Shahbaz alighted from the Gulf Air plane, taken into custody and underwent medical check-up at the airport.

He claimed that Shahbaz was deported on the basis of an agreement he reportedly signed along with Nawaz giving an undertaking that he wouldn't return for 10 years. Refusing to release copies of the deal, Mr Rashid swore on his post and said he would resign if it was proved otherwise that there was no such agreement.

Both Shahbaz, who is the president of the Pakistan Muslim League-N, and Nawaz were exiled along with their families in 2000 after the military coup by President Pervez Musharraf.

Shahbaz arrived after the country's Supreme Court said exile is illegal and as a Pakistani he has the right to return home and face any cases against him.

Arroyo to be President: exit polls

The Philippines Inquirer/
ANN

MANILA, May 11. — Ms Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was heading for a fresh six-year term in office after an election victory over challenger Mr Fernando Poe, an exit poll said today.

The poll by the independent Social Weather Stations group said Ms Arroyo won 41 per cent of the vote in yesterday's elections, compared to 32 per cent for Mr Poe. Former police chief Panfilo

Lacson won nine per cent, while reformer Mr Raul Roco and television evangelist Mr Eddie Villanueva each won five per cent. Eight per cent of those polled refused an answer. The group said about 81.5 per cent of the 43.5-million voters in the elections. The poll questioned 4,627 voters and the error margin was given as 1.5 per cent.

The SWS survey has accurately predicted previous presidential polls. The projected winning margin represents over 3 million votes.

The predicted margin of victory is higher than opinion polls estimated in the run-up to the vote. The last SWS poll gave Ms Arroyo a lead of around seven percentage points over Poe, the Philippines' biggest film star.

The exit poll also said Ms Macapagal's running mate Mr Noli de Castro would win the direct election for vice-president with 47 per cent of the votes compared to 39 per cent for Opposition candidate Ms Loren Legarda.

Sectarian violence in Karachi, one killed

KARACHI, May 8. — A suicide bombing at a mosque triggered sectarian clashes in Karachi today, as Sunnis and Shi'ites exchanged gunfire, killing at least one passer-by, police said.

Two other people were wounded in the unrest which occurred after Shiites mourning worshippers killed in yesterday's blast pelted a Sunni mosque with stones in Karachi's Sohrab Goth district, said police officer Latif Siddiqui. Police fired tear gas shells to disperse the crowds.

Yesterday's bombing, which killed 15 people, was the latest in a series of sectarian and terrorist attacks in Karachi, Pakistan's largest city. Police have released a sketch of the suspected suicide bomber, dressed like a Shiite Muslim cleric, according to survivors.

Earlier today, police detained 50 Shiite youths, as unrest triggered by the attack continued with arson and stone-throwing around the city.

Meanwhile, a red-alert was sounded in the diplomatic area in Islamabad and security tightened in all important cities of Pakistan following the blast.

The government initiated an inquiry into yesterday's blast and police commandos were deployed at mosques and offices of multinational firms, official reports said.

— AP & PTI

THE STATESMAN

8 MAY 2004

13 killed, 80 injured in Karachi mosque blast

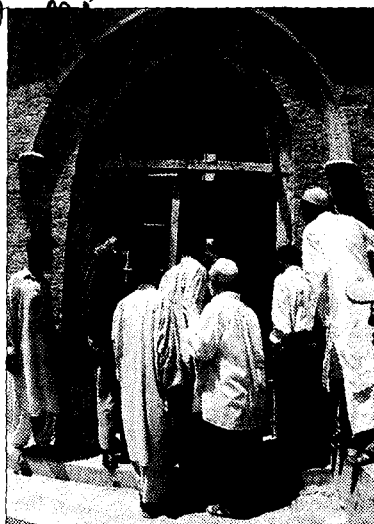
AAMIR ASHRAF
KARACHI, MAY 7

A SUSPECTED suicide bomber blew up a crowded Shi'ite mosque in Karachi's business district on Friday, killing at least 13 people and wounding more than 80, police and officials said.

More than 100 people were packed into the mosque for prayers when the blast rocked the building in the fourth bomb attack in five days in Pakistan. The mosque was badly damaged.

Karachi police chief Tariq Jamael said at least 13 people were killed and more than 80 wounded. "This is a big incident," said provincial security adviser Aftab Sheikh. "It is a blatant act of terrorism. It's the work of enemies of peace. They targeted innocent worshippers." Police and paramilitary troops cordoned off the area, while Shi'ite protestors hurled stones and set fire to cars while shouting slogans demanding protection for their community.

Earlier on Friday, three people were wounded in Quetta, when a small bomb exploded opposite a hotel due to host a



Onlookers at the main entrance of the mosque. Reuters

weekend investment conference. PM Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali had been expected at the city's Serena Hotel on Saturday to chair the meeting. However, Jamali cancelled his plans to attend before the blast due to commitments in Islamabad, an official said. —Reuters

Pervez okays a leaner army

ISLAMABAD, April 28. — For the first time in its 57-year history, Pakistan will reduce its half-a-million-strong army by 50,000 soldiers this year, a step that would also improve its "teeth-to-tail" ratio and combat efficiency. Besides, the move will help the country save millions of dollars.



The decision was taken at a two-day meeting here of top generals, chaired by President Pervez Musharraf. "The restructuring plan envisages the army to be lean but lethal

and hard-hitting. It'll improve the teeth-to-tail ratio, in which the tail is being reduced by about 50,000 men," a defence statement issued last night said.

"This reduction in manpower will in no case affect the fighting potential of the army, it'll rather transform the army into more potent, enhance its response capacities and result in a fine balance between quality and quantity."

Officials said the policy would enable Pakistan to effectively argue before the world that it was drastically cutting down its defence spending as well as defence forces despite large scale increase in defence spending by India. (New Delhi refused to comment on the Pakistani government's decision.)

Move for peace in Siachen

With the thaw in Indo-Pak relations, there is an international effort to extend the peace initiative to Siachen to study the impact of changing climate and human intervention on the biggest glacier in the Himalayan ranges, a report from Delhi adds.

Former US ambassador to India Mr Harry Barnes is working on an initiative to convert Siachen into a "demilitarised zone" and involve Indian, Pakistani and American scientists to study the environmental impact on it, said Prof. SI Hasnain, vice-chancellor of Calicut University and one of the top experts on glaciers. — PTI

Pakistan frees 50 tribesmen

Agencies
Wana, April 25

PAKISTAN ON Sunday released 50 tribesmen arrested last month during a major counter-terrorism operation near the Afghan border, saying investigations had proved them innocent.

They were freed a day after five powerful tribal leaders who had been targeted in the same operation for allegedly harbouring al-Qaida fugitives were granted amnesty in return for a promise to live peacefully and not help terrorists.

The deal could end months of bloody confrontation between tribesmen and Pakistan's army in the lawless region of South Waziristan, but may disappoint the United States, eager for more tough action by Pakistan in the war on terrorism.

The operation left 124 people dead, including 46 troops and 63 militants. At least 15 civilians died in the clashes with militants resisting the operation in March. More than 163 people were rounded up and officials said 50 of them were found innocent.

The release was part of a deal under which the authorities pardoned five top suspects on Saturday.

Military spokesman Major General Shaukat Sultan said the wanted men from the Zalikhel clan had renounced militant activity, promised loyalty to the country and pledged not to harbour

foreign terrorists.

He said the political solution to end militant activity in the area was worked out by local deputies, tribal elders, administration officials and military authorities.

General Sultan denied the amnesty marked a shift in government policy. "This reconciliation does not indicate any let up in the government's war on terror," he told reporters.

"The security forces will be ready to strike anywhere whenever they get intelligence," he said, reiterating that foreign militants must surrender by Friday otherwise the military would take action against them.

"There will be no compromise on foreign nationals." He said al-Qaida elements were on the run as their stronghold in the tribal belt had been destroyed in the 12-day March operation.

Residents said life returned to normal in South Waziristan's main town Wana and business activity resumed after remaining suspended for several weeks.

Meanwhile a media report said, a truce between a Pakistani General and a tribal leader, whose pro al-Qaida fighters killed around 80 Army men, could be a severe setback to the Bush administration which was leaning on Islamabad to carry out a clean sweep of the terrorist group from the tribal territory.



REUTERS

Nek Mohammad, leader of five tribesmen who surrendered to the Pakistan army (right), is greeted by a local tribesman in Shakai on Saturday.

Pak House nod for security council Bill

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, April 14. — Cementing military's role in the governance, Pakistan's parliament today adopted a controversial Bill to create the National Security Council amid vehement opposition from the country's beleaguered political parties.

Backed by President Pervez Musharraf, the Bill was passed by a simple majority in the Senate. The National Assembly had already adopted the Bill last week.

The National Security Council (NSC), firmly advocated by President Musharraf as an "insulation" to prevent future military coups, consisted the President, Prime Minister, joint chiefs of staff, chiefs of army, navy and air force, Speakers of the National Assembly and Senate and chief ministers of the four provinces.

The NSC Bill, which has

Nuclear network

WASHINGTON, April 14. — The United States has said it was working closely with Pakistan to dismantle the nuclear proliferation network of disgraced Pakistani nuclear scientist AQ Khan and had received "significant amounts of information" about the activities of his associates. "The US has been working very closely with Pakistan to dismantle the A Q Khan network," state department spokesman Mr Richard Boucher said yesterday. — PTI

been sent for the assent of the President, was adopted by the Senate amid protests by Opposition parties which alleged that they were not allowed to speak on the Bill and walked out of the House.

"This is not National Security Council, but in fact it is an insecurity bill," Prof Khurshid, a senior leader of the Islamist alliance Muttahida Majlis-

e-Amal (MMA), said.

He described the National Security Council as contrary to the constitution and said it would harm the country.

Mian Raza Rabbani of Pakistan Peoples Party said the treasury benches showed loyalty to President Musharraf and violated the constitution by adopting the Bill. He said the Opposition members were not allowed to speak in the House.

Musharraf to quit army

President Musharraf will abide by his vow to quit the army and become a civilian president by the end of this year, information minister Mr Sheikh Rashid said today, adds AFP.

Mr Rashid said he was speaking on behalf of President Musharraf, following requests from a group of Musharraf-backed politicians that he break his vow and continue to hold the dual posts of army chief and president.

Pervez rejects call to stay on as army chief

Islamabad, April 13 (Reuters): Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf today rejected a call from within his ruling coalition to stay on as head of the army despite a pledge to step down by the end of the year.

Musharraf, who seized power in a bloodless coup in 1999, agreed last year to quit the army post by the end of 2004 in a deal with an Opposition Islamic alliance that will keep him in power as President until 2007.

The deal, sealed by a constitutional amendment, ended a standoff with the Opposition that had virtually paralysed parliament after the October 2002 elections.

A group made up of politicians who broke away from former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's party after the polls urged Musharraf, an important ally in the US-led war on terror, to review his decision. But information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said Musharraf would stand by his promise.

"I am speaking on behalf of the President, who has said that



Police take the captured militants to a Karachi court. (Reuters)

he will stand by the 17th Amendment," Ahmed said, referring to a constitutional provision that binds Musharraf to quit either as President or army chief by the end of 2004.

"The President has categorically said... he will retain office by the end of December 2004," Ahmed said. Defence min-

ister Rao Sikandar Iqbal and several other former allies of Bhutto to meet Musharraf yesterday and urged him not to stand down as army chief.

"Keeping in view the international situation, particularly the hunt against al Qaida, we think he should continue as chief of army staff," Iqbal said. Iqbal's

stance has drawn strong criticism from the Opposition. Ahmed quoted Musharraf as describing the debate as "unnecessary" and "unfortunate".

Analysts say a severing of Musharraf's links to the military could weaken his position at a time when he faces Opposition from Islamists over his support for the US-led war on terror and from secular parties angered about being shut out of politics.

The Opposition earlier

vowed to oppose any move by Musharraf to continue as head of the military.

"It is unconstitutional," said Liaquat Baluch, a leader of the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal Islamic alliance. "We will oppose it inside the parliament and will also put pressure from outside the parliament."

Militants arrested

Pakistani police have arrested six Islamic militants in Karachi

and seized weapons from them, including grenades, officials said today.

The arrests were carried out yesterday evening during a raid in a southern neighbourhood of the city, Fayyaz Leghari, a deputy inspector general of police, said. Police seized hand grenades, automatic weapons and some bomb-making material, he said. "These six men were the newly recruited volunteers," Leghari said.

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Bill moved in Pakistan to institutionalise role of Army

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, APRIL 2. A bill to institutionalise the role of the Army in governance was introduced in the National Assembly of Pakistan today amidst a walkout by the entire Opposition.

The Bill, referred by the Speaker to the Standing Committee, envisages the creation of a National Security Council (NSC) with representation to the three service chiefs and with powers to make recommendations to the President on all matters of "national importance." Though the recommendations are not mandatory, the Opposition parties are of the view that the Council negates the concept of parliamentary democracy and provides a role to the military in governance against the spirit of the Constitution.

The creation of the NSC was among the reforms sought to be introduced by the President, Pervez Musharraf. His argument is that the Chief of the Army Staff was one of the three "power brokers" and repeatedly politicians in the country have compelled the COAS to intervene in matters of governance.

The NSC, as outlined in the Bill, will deal with issues of national interest, defence and any crisis situation. The bill is expected to be passed as an act of Parliament as agreed by the Government and the MMA during the resolution of the LFO issue.

It appears that the MMA chose to boycott the session today on account of differences over some provisions and not the concept as such.

Under the proposed Bill, the President will be the chairman of the NSC. Its members will include the Prime Minister, the Senate Chairman, the Speaker of the National Assembly, the Opposition leader in the National Assembly, Provincial Chief Ministers, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and services chiefs.

Pak to lift Qaida cordon

Wana (Pakistan), March 28 (Reuters): Pakistan forces retrieved 12 captive government men today after smashing an al Qaida-linked militant den and the troops agreed to lift a cordon around mud-fortresses that sheltered the Islamic radicals.

The 12 were captured by foreign fighters and their local allies last week at the start of a clash on Pakistan's desolate Afghan border in which more than 100 people were killed and a notorious Uzbek al Qaida leader seriously wounded.

Two men still held captive would be released later today, said a tribal elder involved in the negotiation of their freedom.

"The army cordon is to be withdrawn today. We have almost achieved our set targets for the operation," Mahmood Shah, the region's security chief, said.

After cordoning off the area with 5,000 troops and losing about 50 soldiers in the 12-day offensive, the Pakistani military said yesterday it smashed a den of fighters believed to include Uzbeks, Chechens, Arabs, Afghans and local Pashtun clansmen.

A senior al Qaida leader, Tahir Yuldashev, was wounded but escaped, military officials said. Yuldashev, the charismatic



Security officials from Wana after securing the release of the 12 captives on Sunday. (Reuters)

leader of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, was accused of a series of bomb blasts in the Uzbek capital, Tashkent, in 1999.

"We have information that he is severely injured," said Shah. "He is in our tribal area, we have information that this high-value target has not crossed the Pakistani border."

Around 60 of the militants were killed and 162 captured in Pakistan's biggest-ever offensive in its semi-autonomous tribal re-

gion. More than a dozen civilians are believed dead.

"Their hideouts are finished and the army is destroying their houses. Bulldozers are there," information minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed said. "We will continue to hunt Yuldashev."

Many of the militants are believed to have fled to other parts of the barren frontier, where about 50,000 Pakistani army troops have been deployed to hunt them. US forces are hunt-

ing the other side of the mountainous border in twin operations that come amid heightened worldwide anxiety over al Qaida attacks.

Troops had held fire in recent days to let a delegation of tribal elders talk peace and to negotiate the release of the 14 captured men, a move aimed at defusing tension by allowing local leaders to act as intermediaries under ancient tribal custom.

Pakistan, while supporting the US war on terror, had come under pressure for not doing enough to flush out militants who have been blamed for a campaign of violence in Afghanistan.

A wave of violence in which 600 people have died since last August in mainly southern and eastern Afghanistan was one reason why Afghan President Hamid Karzai had agreed to delay presidential and parliamentary elections to September from June.

The recent fighting was sparked when paramilitary forces hunting for Osama bin Laden and his al Qaida fighters ran into a hail of bullets on March 16 while approaching a suspect's house near Wana, capital of the rugged South Waziristan region.

Pak steps up assault, 100 held

Agencies
Wana, March 20

PAKISTANI FORCES used artillery and helicopter gunships on Saturday to pound some 400 diehard fighters believed to be protecting a top al-Qaida leader in a bitter siege near the Afghan border.

"The mission is to get these people dead or alive," military spokesman Maj Gen Shaukat Sultan vowed. The fierce resistance of the deeply-entrenched and heavily armed fighters, now trapped in a 50 square km cordon of army and paramilitary troops in Pakistan's northwest tribal region, indicated they were defending a "high value target," officials said.

Some officials said it could be Ayman al-Zawahiri, al-Qaida's number two, because of the level and sophistication of resistance and the vast number of fighters. "We believe some important al-Qaida operatives are hiding in the area," Brigadier Mahmood Shah, senior security commander for the tribal zone hugging Pakistan's northwest border, said.

AP quoted a commander as saying that the military has arrested more than 100 suspects. Some of the prisoners had already been tak-

en for interrogation to Peshawar.

Security officials said the men included Pakistanis, Arabs, Chechens, Uzbeks and ethnic Uighurs from China's predominantly Muslim Xinjiang province, where a separatist movement is simmering. No senior al-Qaida leaders were believed to be among them, but authorities hoped they would provide a better picture of the terrorists' heavily fortified lair.

Lt. Gen. Saifur Hussain, who is in charge of the sweep, said 400 to 500 militants are believed to still be fighting from within the heavily fortified compound, using mortars, AK-47s, rockets and hand-grenades in a face-off with troops. "These people have been here for a long, long time. They are extremely professional fighters," he said. "They have tremendous patience before they open fire."

The military showed journalists 40 prisoners, all blindfolded and with their hands tied, who were sitting under heavy guard in the back of a military truck in Wana, the main town in the tribal South Waziristan region, where the battle was raging. The army also displayed the body of one suspected militant wrapped in a white blanket.



Pakistani soldiers unload prisoners from a truck at a base near Wana on Saturday. AP

Mystery al-Qaida member not al-Zawahiri

A SUSPECTED senior al-Qaida member whom the Pakistani army thought it had surrounded in a remote area at the Afghan border is probably a Chechen or Uzbek militant leader, a Pakistani commander said on Saturday.

Commanders said the fierce defence the rebels mounted suggested they were trying to protect a "high-value target," who officials said was possibly Osama bin Laden's deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri. But intercepted rebel radio communications suggested the mystery militant leader was an Uzbek or a Chechen. Zawahiri is Egyptian.

He is most probably a Chechen or Uzbek because all the interviews that have been receiving have been in the Chechen or Uzbek language," Lt. Gen. Saifur Hussain said. But he didn't say whether the Chechen or Uzbek militant was al-Zawahiri. "Speculation Zawahiri had been with the militants was widespread," he said.

A senior Pakistani official said two Chechen militants were among the rebels in Wana, the main town in the tribal South Waziristan region, where the battle was raging. The army also displayed the body of one suspected militant wrapped in a white blanket.

Troops pound 400 boxed-in militants

Zawahri has not escaped: Pak

Wana (Pakistan), March 19 (Reuters): Pakistani forces said they were fighting a fierce battle today with 300-400 foreign militants and Pakistani tribal allies after encircling them near the Afghan border.

Troops pounded the besieged militants, who might include Osama bin Laden's second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahri as well as many other al Qaeda fighters, with artillery for most of the day while helicopters attacked them from above.

"They are surrounded and they are trying to break the cordon and get away," military spokesman Major-General Shaukat Sultan told a news briefing in Islamabad. He dismissed reports that Zawahri had managed

to escape yesterday the ferocity of the resistance led generals to believe the rebels were shielding a "high-value target".

Government officials have said the prominent figure might be Zawahri. But Sultan said authorities had been unable to determine if Zawahri was actually there. Zawahri, an Egyptian doctor, is regarded as the brains of al Qaeda. He is believed to be one of the key figures behind the September 11, 2001, attacks on the US.

The fighting, pitting thousands of government troops against several hundred militants, is in the remote, often lawless and largely autonomous region of Waziristan, centred on an area to the west of the town of Wana that includes Shin Warsak village. Western intelligence sources say Zawahri and bin Laden are believed to be close to each other, somewhere in Waziristan. A government official in the border region who asked not to be named said 15 soldiers had been killed in the fighting since yesterday. "There's ferocious resistance but a house-to-house search has started on the outskirts of Shin Warsak," the official said.

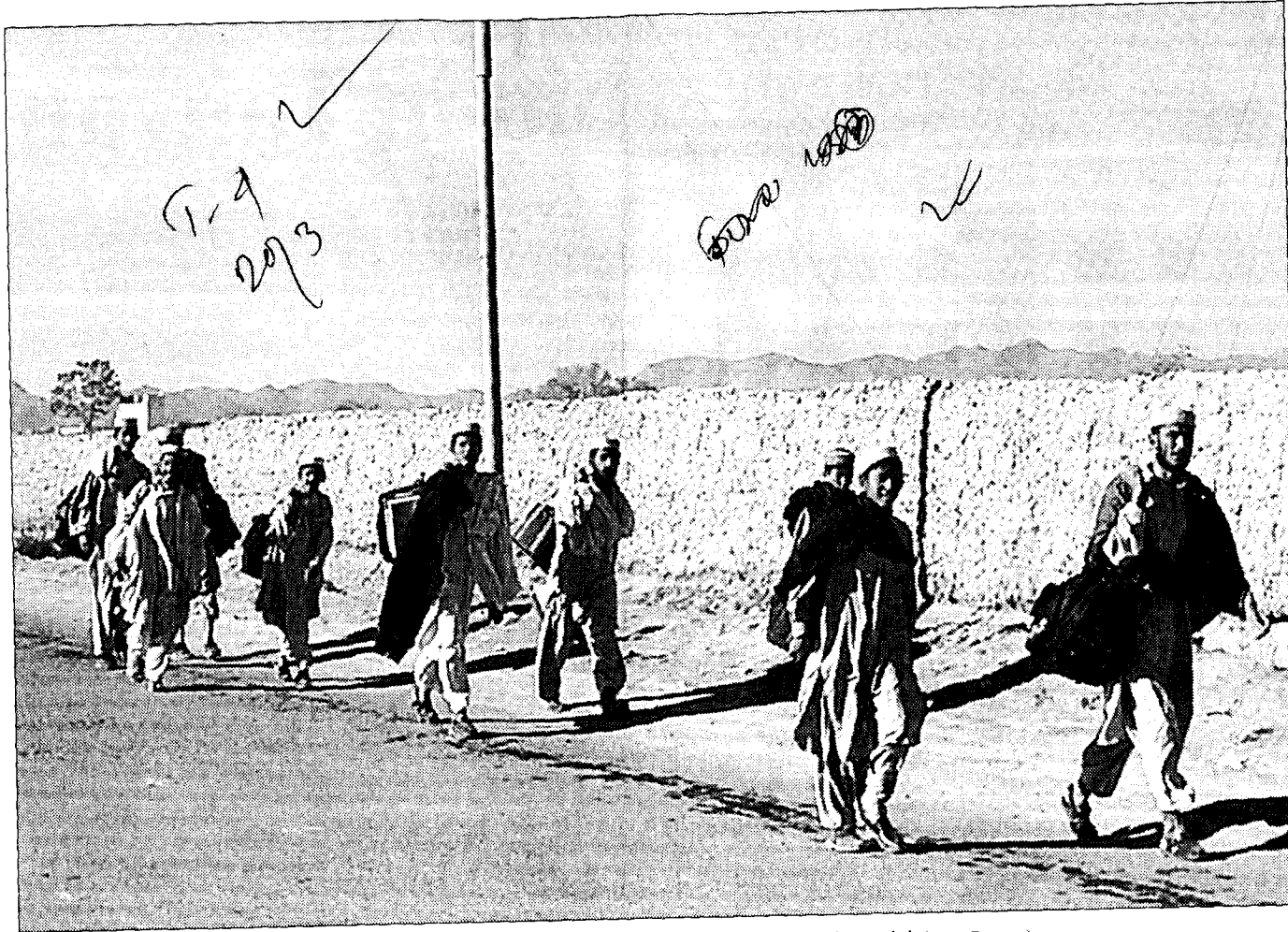
Sixteen soldiers and 24 suspected militants, including some foreigners, were killed on Tuesday, the first day of fighting.

"We are closing in on them. Their defence seems to be dying down," said senior security official Brigadier Mehmood Shah.

"Either they've run out of ammunition or they want to surprise us when we get closer," he said. Shah denied that 15 more Pakistani soldiers had been killed, saying the government side had suffered no losses.

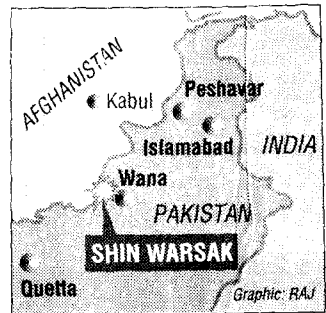
US-led troops are also striking from the Afghan side in what the Pentagon is calling a "hammer and anvil" operation.

Brigadier Shah also denied financial market rumours today that Osama bin Laden had been captured on their territory. "There is no truth in this report," he added.



Local tribesmen flee from the offensive near Wana in South Waziristan. (Reuters)

Blasts echo across Baghdad

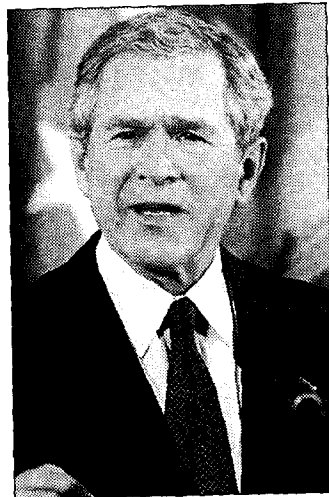


to get away. "From the cordon we have put around these places, we are certain nobody would have escaped," he said.

Other Pakistani officials denied financial market rumours that bin Laden himself had been captured.

A Taliban spokesman was quoted as demanding that US and Pakistan forces call off the hunt for Taliban and al Qaeda militants along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. "We will carry out more attacks against international coalition forces if they continue to chase us," he said in taped comments reported by Al Jazeera television. Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar, ousted from power in Afghanistan by US-led forces in late 2001, was safe, he said.

President Pervez Musharraf



George W. Bush in the East Room of the White House. (Reuters)

Baghdad, March 19 (Reuters): Blasts echoed across central Baghdad and warning sirens sounded in the headquarters of the US-led administration today, the eve of the anniversary of the invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein.

At least two blasts followed the sound of mortars or rockets being fired. A US military spokesman said there were no immediate reports of any casualties or damage. The US headquarters compound, which is known as the "Green Zone" and is one of Saddam's former palace complexes, has been targeted repeatedly by guerrillas firing rockets and mortars.

Today's attack came less than an hour after US President George W. Bush ended a speech calling for unity and determina-

tion in the fight against terrorism. Iraq's US governor, Paul Bremer, spoke live to CNN from inside the Green Zone shortly after the blasts: "We think they are outside the green zone but we just don't know yet. It's only just happened."

US secretary of state Colin Powell had spent several hours in the headquarters compound earlier today before leaving for Saudi Arabia.

Bush told officials from 83 nations today on the anniversary of the start of the Iraq war that differences over the conflict were in the past and urged no concessions in the broader war on terrorism. "No concession will appease their hatred," Bush said of al Qaeda and its supporters. "No accommodation will satisfy their endless demands. Their ul-

imate ambitions are to control the peoples of West Asia and to blackmail the rest of the world with weapons of mass terror."

Bush devoted much of a speech marking the anniversary of the US-led invasion of Iraq to the fight against terrorism.

Earlier, Iraqi journalists gave Powell a hostile reception in Baghdad today, walking out of his news conference in protest at the killing of two of their colleagues by US troops.

Powell urged US allies to stay the course in Iraq after Spain vowed to pull out troops and South Korea refused to take on a combat role. About 30 Arab journalists quit the hall in anger over yesterday's shooting of two Iraqis who worked for the Dubai-based satellite television channel Al Arabiya.

Pak 18/3

39 dead in Pak army offensive against ultras

Islamabad: With seven more soldiers succumbing to injuries, the death toll in the military operation against suspected Al Qaida and Taliban militants in the tribal regions bordering Afghanistan rose to 39 on Wednesday.

A clash broke out on Tuesday when Pakistani troops raided a militant hideout in remote South Waziristan tribal region. The soldiers, who were injured in the exchange of fire, died in hospital. Twenty-four suspected militants were also killed in the operation. According to reports, the operation in the volatile tribal region was the bloodiest in the hunt for Al Qaida militants so far. The ultras, who reportedly number between 400 and 500 fought about 700 troops. "The militants fought like professional, trained people. The way they were firing at our troops, lobbing

grenades and shooting rockets, jumping from one place to another and changing positions took us by surprise," an official in the regional headquarters at Wana said.

The official said the raid, coming a day before US secretary of state Colin Powell's visit to the country, would continue until the tribal areas were purged of foreign terrorists.

Army spokesman Shaukat Sultan said a few of those killed appeared to be tribesmen suspected of sheltering terrorists. He, however, added that several of the dead were foreigners, presumed to be Al Qaida members. It is not known if any senior Al Qaida or Taliban leader was among the dead.

The Pakistani military has conducted a series of sweeps in the tribal regions, where it has deployed some 70,000 forces. President Pervez Musharraf on Monday vowed to rid

the areas of suspected terrorists, and acknowledged for the first time that 500-600 foreigners were sheltering in the region.

Meanwhile, angered by the army offensive, attackers set military vehicles ablaze and terrified people streamed out of Kaloosha village after mosque loudspeakers blared a warning from the authorities that residents must leave the besieged village because of the violence.

A villager said hundreds of people had left the village in an exodus that began on Tuesday night. "People are scared. They are worried," Eid Gul said after arriving in Wana, the main town in the tribal South Waziristan region. Eight army trucks—some loaded with ammunition—three pick-up trucks, two armoured personnel carriers and two artillery guns were set ablaze by the attackers. Agencies

The Pakistani plan that bombed!

To protect itself, Pakistan's desperate military establishment has chosen to sacrifice Dr Khan. Yet his public confession and apology are unlikely to end the matter, says **Pervez Hoodbhoy**

MOST new revelations about Pakistan's nuclear scandal focus on the clandestine supply of uranium enrichment technology to Iran, North Korea, and Libya by the celebrated bomb-maker Dr A Q Khan. (Dr Khan earned his Ph D in metallurgy, not nuclear physics or nuclear engineering, yet journalists usually refer to him as a "nuclear scientist"). But the documents that Libya turned over to the International Atomic Energy Agency, and subsequently to the US, show that Pakistan supplied more than just equipment for making bomb fuel. Dr Khan allegedly also supplied a detailed nuclear weapon design that US experts say is of a 1964 Chinese vintage passed on to Pakistan two decades ago.

This disclosure raises interesting new questions because Dr Khan was peripheral to actual weapons-related work. Pakistan's nuclear establishment has essentially two divisions. One, once headed by Dr Khan, is responsible for producing bomb-grade uranium gas that, when converted to metal, provides the crucial fuel for a nuclear explosion. The other division, which falls under the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission and the National Development Complex, has a much wider range of responsibilities — conversion of uranium gas to metal, weapons design and manufacture, and nuclear testing.

Dr Khan was barely mentioned by the head of the NDC, Dr Samar Mubarakmand, in his speeches after the successful May 1998 nuclear tests. Thus the mystery: how could Dr Khan — who had no need to possess weapons design information — hand over detailed bomb design documents to Libya?

Dr Khan's televised confession and acceptance of sole responsibility for proliferation activities has not reduced suspicion that there is more here than meets the eye, and of the Pakistani military's complicity in proliferation. Dr Khan's export of centrifuge technology was unknown to successive governments in Pakistan,



BONNY THOMAS

says the country's leader, General Pervez Musharraf. But for over a decade, Dr Khan had openly advertised his nuclear wares.

Year after year — including 2003, when the proliferation controversy was already red-hot — Islamabad was festooned with colourful banners advertising workshops on "Vibrations In Rapidly Rotating Machinery" and "Advanced Materials," sponsored by the Dr A Q Khan Research Laboratories (also known as the Kahuta Research Laboratories). These had obvious and immediate utility for centrifuge technology, essential for producing weapons-grade uranium.

In earlier years, Dr Khan and his collaborators published a number of papers detailing critical issues regarding the balancing of centrifuges and magnetic bearings. These dealt with technical means for enabling centrifuge rotors to spin close to the speed of sound without disintegrating — essential for making bomb-grade urani-

um. Dr Khan's proliferation activities could scarcely be more blatant. But to make it absolutely certain, Kahuta issued glossy brochures aimed at "classified organisations."

TO protect itself, Pakistan's desperate military establishment, fearful of being labelled a proliferator and ultimately being deprived of its nukes, has chosen to sacrifice Dr Khan. Yet his public confession and apology are unlikely to end the matter. The US is certain to apply intense pressure for on-site inspection and monitoring of Pakistani fissile material production at the enrichment facility at Kahuta, the plutonium production reactor at Khushab, and elsewhere. Although Pakistan will publicly resist this demand, it may secretly agree to allow installation of cameras and various sensing devices in these nuclear facilities.

For the moment, the efforts of some Pakistani bomb makers to peddle nuclear

secrets appear to have been stymied. But, having invoked solidarity with Islamists all over the world, these experts have created a high demand for their skills. While it is inconceivable that any Muslim country will now ask Pakistan for nuclear weapons, non-state actors are clearly more enthusiastic.

One recalls that two years ago, highly placed members of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission wanted to play a role in the jihad against America. In a fit of Islamic solidarity, they went to Afghanistan and met with Osama bin Laden and the Taliban. It is difficult to believe that they were the only ones so inclined.

As a result, Pakistan's bomb makers have seriously jeopardised the safety of their country. Imagine, for example, the horrific consequences of an atomic explosion in some American city. Blinded with grief and rage, the US would exact a terrible revenge. Mere suspicion might form the basis of action.

It is possible that America would bomb Pakistan first — perhaps with nuclear weapons — and look for justifications later. Iraq stands as a reminder of America's furious desire to avenge the terrorist attacks of September 2001 and punish even those unconnected with the perpetrators. The failure to discover either weapons of mass destruction or connections with Al-Qaeda, have both been shrugged off by George Bush and his neo-conservative cabal.

It is time to give up the fantasy of an Islamic Bomb, and it is past the time to rein in Pakistan's rogue bomb makers. Their illegitimate nuclear commerce has created a nightmare for the reputation, safety, and security of their country. It is difficult to know what Dr Khan meant when he said he had acted in "good faith." After all, what kind of faith allows putting instruments of mass murder on sale in the black market.

(The author is professor of nuclear and high-energy physics at Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad)

(C): Project Syndicate, February 2004

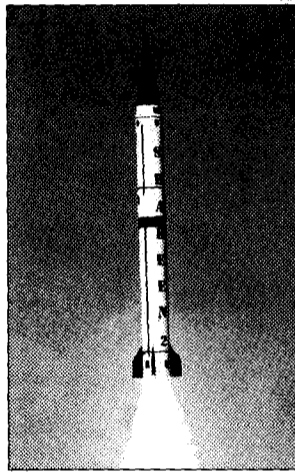
Pak test-fires ballistic missile

Islamabad: Pakistan on Tuesday test-fired its first 2,000-km range surface-to-surface Shaheen-II ballistic missile, capable of carrying a nuclear warhead and hitting targets deep inside India, apparently to match the neighbour's Agni-II missile.

"Pakistan today successfully carried out the maiden test-fire of Shaheen-II surface-to-surface ballistic missile," an official statement said.

The launching of Shaheen-II or Hataf-VI missile reflected "Pakistan's resolve to maintain minimum credible deterrence as the cornerstone of its security policy," it said, adding "by the grace of Allah, all the planned technical parameters were successfully validated during the test-fire".

The test-firing of the missile came in the midst of the Indo-Pak peace process and was apparently aimed at matching India's Agni-II ballistic missile having a strike range of over 2,000 km. India is also developing Agni-III, which is expected to have a range of 3,000 km.



The Shaheen-II ballistic missile is launched at an undisclosed location in Pakistan on Tuesday

AP President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali congratulated the scientists for the "successful" flight test of the "indigenously" built missile, the statement said.

This was the first time Pakistan test fired a 2,000 km long range missile, which, officials here claimed, has the ability to hit a number of Indian cities.

Claiming that the missile was "indigenously" made, the statement said

"the test demonstrates Pakistan's advanced scientific capability in the strategic field and is a tribute to their brilliance and hard work".

Unofficial reports said the missile was test fired from Pakistan's sea coast.

The test followed assertions by Gen Musharraf that the country's nuclear and missile programme would not be rolled back despite pressure from the international community in the light of admission by a top scientist A.Q. Khan that he transferred nuclear technology to Iran, Libya and North Korea. As per the MoU signed with India, Pakistan informed its neighbour about the test-firing in advance.

According to information provided to India and other "key" countries in the region, the missile was to be test fired between March 6 and 9. Pakistan opted to test the missile on the last day as Gen Musharraf went on a sudden two-day trip to Saudi Arabia, and returned on Monday.

This was the first time that it test fired a 2,000 km long range missile, which international media reports said, resembled the North Korean "Nongdong" missile.

According to Pakistani officials, Shaheen-II is a two-staged solid fuel missile which could hit targets in the 2000-2500 km range and carry 1,000 kg multiple payload.

Islamabad has so far test-fired short and medium range missiles — Shaheen-1 with a range of 280 km, Hataf-1 — 600 km and Hataf-3 — 290 km. Agencies

30 killed in Pak Muharram riots

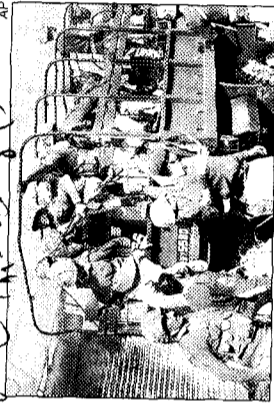
Quetta: Armed men opened fire on Shiite Muslim worshippers during a religious procession in a city in southwestern Pakistan on Tuesday, killing at least 30 people and wounding 33 others, authorities told The Associated Press. The city mayor declared an immediate curfew. Officials reported an explosion and gunfire in a congested area of Quetta, the main city in southwest Baluchistan province, as a procession of hundreds of Shiite Muslims marking the Muharram holiday passed by. Soon after, a Sunni Muslim mosque, a television network office and several shops were set afire as Shiites rioted in parts of the city, and an exchange of gunfire took place near the scene of the initial attack, police said.

Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed told AP in a phone in-

terview from the capital, Islamabad, that 17 people were dead, and dozens more injured. Samim Durrani, medical superintendent at the central gov-

ernment hospital in Quetta, said it had received 10 dead and 33 injured, some in critical condition. Other hospitals in the city also received casualties.

Mayor Abdul Rahim Kakar told AP that he had imposed an immediate curfew in the city of 1.2 million to maintain law and order. He said troops and paramilitary forces had been deployed and were bringing the situation under control. "I was present near the procession when we first heard an explosion and then some people fired shots," he said. "We still do not know what kind of explosion it was." No arrests have been made. The violence occurred hours after a series of coordinated blasts in Iraq struck major Shiite Muslim shrines in Karbala and Baghdad, killing scores of religious pilgrims. AP



Troops of Pakistan army arrive in Quetta on Tuesday after armed men opened fire on Shiite Muslim worshippers during a religious procession

11 killed as Pak troops fire on suspected militants

Back
1-5-29

Wana (Pakistan), Feb. 28 (Reuters): Pakistani troops opened fire on a van carrying suspected Islamic militants today, killing at least 11 people in a region where forces are hunting Osama bin Laden, officials said.

An intelligence official said those killed in the South Waziristan tribal region may not have been militants and that it was "mistaken fire", but a military statement said some may have been "terrorists". The incident took place after a base of Pakistani soldiers who have been hunting fighters from bin Laden's al Qaida came under attack.

The Pakistani military said the deaths occurred in crossfire after the army post came under mortar attack and a checkpoint came under fire from two to three vehicles. "The chances of some civilians having been killed cannot be ruled out," it said.

Witnesses said the dead were five local tribesmen and six Afghans. A military statement confirmed 11 reported deaths and said 16 people had been arrested.

Fiercely independent tribesmen in the region bordering Afghanistan are sympathetic to al Qaida and bin Laden. They have been angered by the Pakistani operations and reports of civilian deaths will not make the military's task easier.

"The situation in Waziristan is very tense after the incident, the people are very angry," a resident said.

The intelligence official said four armed men travelling in a car fired in the air as troops were trying to defuse rockets in Shulam, a village near Wana, capital of South Waziristan.

He said troops radioed a message to a nearby military post and troops fired on the van, mistaking it for the fleeing car.

Today's incident came as US and Pakistani officials denied an Iranian state radio report quoting "an informed source" as saying bin Laden had been captured in the border region.

A senior US defence official called the report "another piece of stray voltage that's passing around out there" while the US military spokesman in Kabul Lieutenant-Colonel Bryan Hilferty said he had heard

nothing about it.

Pakistan's foreign minister Khursheed Mehmood Kasuri said he was aware of the Iranian report, but added: "We cannot confirm it at all".

Pakistani troops earlier this week arrested 20 suspects in an operation against al Qaida and Taliban militants in South Waziristan. Officials said none were leading al Qaida militants.

But US military officials in Afghanistan have spoken of a renewed urgency in hunting down key terror figures, including bin Laden and have previously expressed confidence that the world's most wanted man would be captured this year.

They have said that US-led troops in Afghanistan and Pakistani troops were moving toward coordinated operations — "a hammer and anvil approach" — to prevent fleeing al Qaida fighters escaping across the border. Elsewhere in Pakistan today, a suicide bomber blew himself up and slightly wounded three people when his explosives detonated prematurely at a minority Shia mosque in the city of Rawalpindi adjoining Islamabad, officials said.



Pakistani soldiers make a mock arrest of their colleague posing as a terrorist in Multan. (AFP)

Pak begins crackdown on al-Qaida suspects

Reuters
Wana (Pakistan), February 24

PAKISTANI TROOPS detained at least 25 suspects, including women, and blew up two houses in a new offensive against al-Qaida and Taliban militants on Tuesday in a remote tribal area near the Afghan border, officials said.

A day earlier, US and Pakistani officials had said the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden remained a mystery despite a British newsreport saying his location had been narrowed down to Waziristan.

Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said Tuesday's operation was launched near Wana, 300 km northeast of where bin Laden was reported to be hiding. Asked whether the operation was targeting bin Laden, he only said: "It is against foreign terrorists."

Seven suspects were seen being driven away, but it was unclear if they were foreigners or local tribesmen. "We are trying to establish their identity. Initial queries suggest

Laden deputy's threat

BIN LADEN'S right-hand man Ayman al-Zawahri said in a tape aired by al-Jazeera TV on Tuesday that George Bush had lied when he asserted most of the al-Qaida was crushed, and warned the US to prepare for more attacks.

The tape said: "Bush, strengthen your defences and security measures for the Muslim nation which sent you the legion of New York and Washington has determined to send you legion after legion seeking death and paradise."

Reuters, Dubai

there could be Uzbeks, Chechens and Arabs among them," one said.

At least 14 helicopters were seen flying overhead in the early morning when the operation was launched. The operation followed a tip-off on "foreign terrorists" who failed to surrender by the Feb. 20-deadline.

Pervez hands over missile

IMTIAZ GUL

Islamabad, Feb. 21: President Pervez Musharraf today handed over the indigenously developed Hatf-3 missile to the army strategic force command.

A solid fuel, short range missile, Hatf-3, which has a range of 290 kms had been first test-fired in 2002 and later in 2003.

The system now forms an integral component of Pakistan's operational deterrence system which also include the Shaheen missile series and the Ghauri intermediate range missiles.

Musharraf had earlier this month announced that an intermediate range ballistic solid fuel missile, Shaheen-2, would also be ready for a testing soon.

Pakistan has been testing different versions of short and medium range delivery systems since April 1998 when it tested the Ghauri-1 intermediate range missile.

Addressing military officials, Musharraf ruled out any compromise on Pakistan's nuclear programme and said it was here to stay "being a vital national security interest."

"Far from misplaced notions of a roll back, we will continue to develop our capability in line with our minimum deterrence needs," he declared.

He urged the nation to come out of the mindset of the 1980s when the nuclear programme was in its infancy and could be threatened with roll back.

"Today, Pakistan is an acknowledged and established nuclear power," Musharraf said.

Emphasising on the need to further enhance security by drawing appropriate lessons from unfortunate events of proliferation in the past, the Pakistan President said that since the establishment of institutionalised command and control system in the last four years, adequate checks and balances had

been put in place to prevent the recurrence of such lapses.

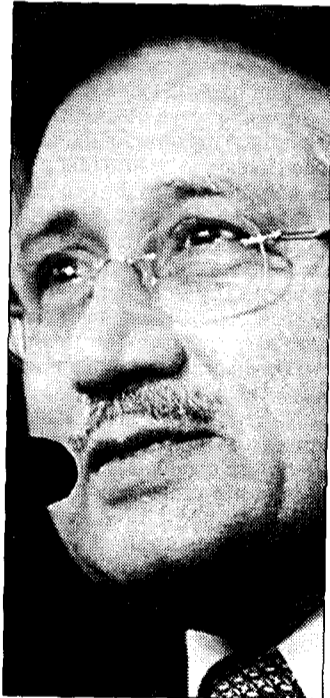
He said additional restructuring was being undertaken to further modernise the security system around the country's strategic assets.

"Pakistan fully shares international concerns on proliferation and reiterates its resolve to ensure that there will never be any type of proliferation from its soil," Musharraf assured.

He said what unfortunately happened in from 1989 to 1999 were individual actions based on personal greed and gross misuse of autonomy and authority.

"It was a betrayal of the nation's trust... it was compounded by an ineffective and inefficient security system and an absence of institutionalised oversight".

He, however, assured the world that the network had been uprooted within Pakistan.



Prevez Musharraf

Pak rejects foreign nuke inspections

Press Trust of India

LONDON, Feb. 18. — Pakistan would never allow foreign inspection of its nuclear facilities and “never stop” its nuclear and missile programme. President Pervez Musharraf has said insisting that disgraced scientist Dr AQ Khan acted alone in selling nuclear technology without the government’s or military’s knowledge.

“This is a very sensitive issue. Would any other nuclear power allow its sensitive installations to be inspected? Why should Pakistan be expected to allow anybody to inspect?,” he said when asked whether Islamabad would permit foreign inspectors to monitor its nuclear facilities. “We are not hiding anything...what is the need of any inspection,” he said in an interview to a British daily.

Gen. Musharraf also denied that nuclear weapons technology had been exchanged for North Korean ballistic missile, and said Pakistan bought conventional surface-to-air missile from the communist state in 2002 after paying money.

Speaking to the *Financial Times*, Gen. Musharraf said Pakistan has no intention of freezing its nuclear weapons programme. “We will never stop our nuclear and missile programme... that is our vital national interest. It is totally indigenous now. Whatever had to be imported and procured has been obtained.”

He also insisted that Dr Khan together with six other scientists and officials currently in custody, acted alone in selling nuclear technology without the government’s or military’s knowledge and Islamabad’s nuclear programme was not under the aegis of the military.

“It never was and it is not now... We have a (nuclear) National Command Authority with the President as the boss and there are a number of ministers and the military men also.

“This is not a military body, it is the highest body



Gen. Musharraf: “We will never stop our nuclear and missile programme... that is our vital national interest.”

of the nation... I believe in the army dictum that a commander is responsible for all that happens or does not happen in his command — and to that extent any President is responsible for what happens in the country,” he said, adding: “But otherwise, if you are hinting at any direct responsibility, no not at all.”

Gen. Musharraf’s comments came less than two weeks after he pardoned Dr Khan, the “father of Islamic bomb”, following the scientist’s public confession that he had passed on nuclear technology to other countries — believed to be Iran, Libya and North Korea.

Gen. Musharraf also revealed that Dr Khan had signed a written agreement two weeks ago in which he pledged not to resume any contacts with the “nuclear underworld” outside Pakistan.

Shaheen II test soon

Claiming that Pakistan would not try to match India’s nuclear weapons development, Gen. Musharraf has said in the next few weeks Islamabad would test-fire its *Shaheen II*, a missile with a range of 2,000 km. “We aren’t interested in competing with India,” Gen. Musharraf told the *Financial Times*. “If they want to reach 5,000 km or have intercontinental ballistic missiles, we are not interested in those. We are only interested in our own defence.”

Khan keeps Pervez bombshell

MASSOUD ANSARI AND
VICTORIA SCHOFIELD

Karachi, Feb. 15: The Pakistani scientist behind a worldwide blackmarket in nuclear technology is involved in high-stakes brinkmanship, refusing to hand over potentially incriminating documents demanded by the Pakistani authorities.

The documents and a tape-recorded statement, which are said to demonstrate that senior Pakistani army officials — including President Pervez Musharraf — were aware of Abdul Qadeer Khan's nuclear proliferation activities, are believed to have been smuggled out of the country for safe keeping by the scientist's daughter, Dina.

Pakistani intelligence officials said that Khan first agreed to surrender the documents in return for a blanket pardon, but

has failed to do so.

They believe that his daughter is prepared to disclose their contents if legal action is brought against him by the country's military government. Last night Khan, 68 — a national hero in Pakistan — remained under house arrest in Islamabad. More than a week after President Musharraf granted the scientist clemency after he confessed to selling nuclear technology to Iran, Libya and North Korea, he is still in legal limbo.

Pakistani officials said he faced 24-hour surveillance for the rest of his life.

The country's foreign office confirmed that the pardon granted to Khan was conditional. "It is not a blanket pardon. It relates only to his television confession," said Massoud Khan, a spokesperson.

The pardon was granted on

the grounds that Khan "had co-operated with the investigation begun by the government in November last year, and that he will continue to co-operate". It would not extend to any activities that may yet be revealed as the investigation into Khan's actions continues.

The spokesperson said that the scientist should accept that the security restrictions would continue "indefinitely". He added: "What we have ensured is that he and his network of associates would never again be able to operate. They have effectively been demobilised."

Intelligence officers, however, said the scientist remained resistant. "The government has been trying to retrieve the documents since Khan was offered a presidential pardon last week but they are yet to receive them, even though he promised," one

official said. He said the government had decided to negotiate a deal with Khan only after it found out his daughter had left Pakistan with the potentially incriminating material.

The scientist is said to claim that all the chiefs of army staff since 1977, including the then General Musharraf, were aware of his actions. The discovery derailed plans to put the scientist, and a number of his associates, on trial over their role. Last month three senior government officials, including the head of the ISI, Pakistan's intelligence agency, held meetings with Khan in which they convinced him to apologise unconditionally and surrender the documents in return for a pardon.

"The government's concern was genuine," said one intelligence official. "First because they were unaware of the exact

nature and details of these documents, and second, because of Khan's knowledge of all the secret nuclear dealings. "If his daughter reveals this secret information in retaliation, it could create problems both for the country and its nuclear programme," he said.

Meanwhile, relatives of six scientists who worked with Khan, and are being detained at undisclosed locations without access to lawyers, yesterday accused the Pakistani government of indulging in a cover-up to protect the country's military from scandal. They said that they would present evidence tomorrow to show that the scientists could not have smuggled plans or components from nuclear research laboratories without being detected by soldiers or by the ISI.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

That Pakistan was playing the nuclear game was evident even before A.Q. Khan's confession

Radioactive nation

By J.N. DIXIT

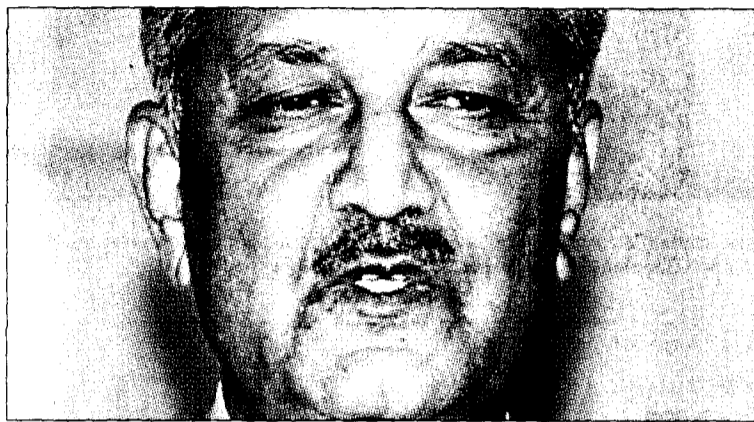
ABDUL QADIR Khan, publicly confessing on February 4 that he had clandestinely sent nuclear weapons material and information about nuclear weapons technology to foreign countries, has caught intense public attention. The substance of the concession should not come as a surprise to India, the United States or others.

Nuclear weapons and their delivery systems falling into the hands of non-State actors and terrorist groups has been a matter of concern for the international community since the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The concern of the US in this regard became greater after September 11, 2001. Washington focused particularly on Islamic countries like Iran and Libya, which were interested in acquiring nuclear weapons for nearly three decades.

American anxieties about non-State actors sharing such WMDs increased because the personality profiles of cadres of the various terrorist groups indicated that many of them were educated and tech-savvy. CIA Director George Tenet, addressing Georgetown University in Washington early this month, confirmed that the CIA has been engaged in investigative activities to unravel clandestine activities of horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons by countries like Pakistan, North Korea, China.

Tenet stated that investigations led to the discovery of a wide network of commercial companies' front organisations, and State agencies of these countries engaged in the illegal transfer of nuclear weapons material and nuclear technology stretching from West Europe to North America to Malaysia and North Korea in south-eastern and eastern Asia. The first to be caught in the investigative net prompted by the US were senior scientists engaged in Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme working under Khan at the Kahuta nuclear facilities — A.Q. Khan Nuclear Laboratories — near Islamabad. The trail led the investigators to Khan himself.

Investigations revealed the Pakistani nuclear weapons establishment exported weapons grade nuclear material, metallurgical components and engineering items to Libya and Iran. Similar exports were made to North Korea in exchange for the assistance that Pyongyang provided to Islamabad to develop its military missile capacities. Khan also



DR STRANGELOVE: Abdul Qadir Khan

created a network of engineering and commercial organisations in Pakistan, Malaysia and in the Gulf. Reports indicate that a Malaysian oil and gas company supplied high quality nuclear components to Libya. These exports were made by a company, SCOMI Precision Engineering, based in Selangor in Malaysia, whose largest shareholder happens to be the Malaysian PM, Bidawi Kamaluddin Abdulla.

The company exported centrifuges and uranium enrichment machines under Dr Khan's orders to front organisations which he had set up in Dubai. There are also reports that he utilised his old connections in western Europe for these clandestine activities, connections which had contributed to the covert acquisition of nuclear weapons capacities by Pakistan itself in the Seventies and Eighties.

What is even more alarming is that Pakistani scientists transferred sets of drawings, sketches, metallurgical specifications and hexa-fluoride gas to North Korea and Iraq. Once the supplies to Iran came to be known to the IAEA, its inspectors insisted that Iran give additional undertakings under a new protocol to abide by the terms of the NPT and nuclear safeguards arrangements.

Soon after the military defeat in 1971, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was clear in his mind that Pakistan should acquire nuclear weapons and related delivery systems to match India's military capacities. Even as a number of senior Pakistani nuclear scientists opposed Bhutto's nuclear ambitions, Dr Khan showed a willingness to do the needful. He acquired the wherewithal along with sophisticated equipment from France, Britain, the US, Hol-

land, Germany, Italy, Scandinavian countries, China and North Korea. China emerged as the main supplier for Pakistan's nuclear weaponisation programme and sold special industrial furnaces and high technology diagnostic equipment to unsafe-guarded nuclear facilities in Pakistan. Between 1972 and 1974, Pakistan had persuaded Libya, Saudi Arabia and Iraq, to fund its nuclear weapons programme. By 1977, Pakistan went into high gear to become a nuclear weapons State after having collected the basic materials necessary to acquire nuclear weapons. The first Pakistani nuclear device was tested at China's testing site at Lopnor in Sinkiang in 1987. By 1992, Dr Khan openly confirmed that Pakistan was a nuclear weapons capable State.

The funding from Libya, Iraq and Saudi Arabia was rooted in the significant political orientations of Pakistan's nuclear weapon policies. Pakistan was not acquiring nuclear weapons capacity only to counter India's conventional military superiority. Bhutto had told leaders of the OIC in 1974 that Pakistan's bomb would be an 'Islamic bomb' and could be the foundation for Islamic countries acquiring strategic military capacities to counter other nuclear weapons powers. Second, Pakistan's nuclear capacities were built with the support of a number of West European countries and the US who were signatories of the NPT.

The additional question arises as to why the US and western powers did not monitor and counter Pakistan's nuclear weapons aspirations in the late Seventies and the Eighties. The fact of the matter is that western powers were fully knowledgeable about the nuclear weaponisation programme. They turned a

blind eye to the programme because of their desire to utilise Pakistan to resist the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan. This connivance by the West continued more or less till 9/11. It was only after the direct attack on the US that Pakistani nuclear weapons activities came under scrutiny and was subjected to investigation.

Though Dr Khan has been relieved of his post as advisor to the prime minister and has confessed to his illegal activities, the speed with which he was pardoned by Musharraf clearly indicates the obfuscations which Pakistan is indulging in to meet the international pressure on its nuclear proliferation activities. Dr Khan and all his colleagues have been subjected to cosmetic punitive action. No prosecution or punishment is likely. It is inconceivable that Dr Khan and his colleagues could have indulged in extensive proliferation activities for nearly a decade without the knowledge of the Pakistani government, particularly the military high command.

Musharraf has exonerated former army chiefs, including General Aslam Beg, for being involved. There are reports that Dr Khan had sent documentary proof of the military authorities being aware of his illegal proliferation activities to his daughter Dina in Iraq, with instructions that she should go public with that evidence if Pakistan, under pressure from the US, took any drastic action against him.

Dr Khan's confession is essentially an exercise to ensure mutual safety between Musharraf and him. It is relevant to note that senior US officials and analysts have acknowledged that India's track record of adhering to commitments about not participating in any horizontal proliferation activities has been impeccable. That India's assessments and anticipations regarding Pakistani's nuclear mischief stands confirmed is not enough. A matter of continuing concern should be as to what stage a development of nuclear weapons capacity might have been reached by the countries to which Pakistan exported nuclear material and nuclear know-how.

A point which emerges from these critical developments is that horizontal proliferation can't be prevented unless the nuclear powers themselves move towards ending a vertical proliferation and then eliminate WMDs in a specific — even if it's gradual — time-frame.

Pak wants Khan's evidence back

Vijay Dutt
London, February 15

SOME DOCUMENTS and a tape-recorded statement which allegedly prove that senior Pakistani army officials, including President Pervez Musharraf, were aware of Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan's nuclear proliferation activities, are said to be in the safe-keeping of his daughter Dina.

Pakistan now wants these documents back as a quid pro quo for Khan's presidential pardon.

Dina had smuggled the crucial evidence out before the presidential pardon was brokered. She was initially reported to be in London, but now intelligence

sources believe she is in Europe, possibly in France.

According to Pak analyst Victoria Schofield, Khan is refusing to hand over these potentially incriminating documents demanded by the Pakistani authorities.

A report in the *Sunday Telegraph* said although Khan, now under a protective "house arrest" in his palatial mansion in Islamabad, has been pardoned, he is still in a legal limbo. The Foreign Office in Islamabad has confirmed to the newspaper that the pardon granted was conditional. "It is not a blanket pardon. It relates only to his (Khan's) television confession."

It is now believed that the par-

don was granted on the grounds that Khan "had cooperated with the investigation begun by the government in November last year, and will continue to cooperate".

Pakistani authorities have been quoted as saying that although Khan had agreed at the time of securing the grant of pardon to hand over all the incriminating documents, he has so far failed to honour his commitment.

The report also said that the government agreed to negotiate with Khan only after it became known that his daughter had fled the country with the potentially incriminating documents. Khan, it is believed, is holding on to them as if they were a lifeline.

Musharraf admits sitting on doubts about Khan

DAVID ROHDE AND
AMY WALDMAN

Rawalpindi, Feb. 10: President Pervez Musharraf has acknowledged for the first time that he had suspected for at least three years that Pakistan's top nuclear scientist was sharing technology with other countries, but argued that the US had not given him convincing proof.

In an hour-long interview, Musharraf shared blame for the delay with Washington, saying it was not until October that American officials provided evidence of the activities of Abdul Qadeer Khan. "If they knew it earlier, they should have told us," Musharraf said. "Maybe a lot of things would not have happened."

At the same time, Musharraf said he had seen signs that Khan was sharing nuclear technology, including "illegal contacts, maybe suspicions of contacts", and "suspicious movement" connected to Khan's laboratory. But he said he was concerned that investigating Khan, a national hero for his role in developing its nuclear weapons, could provoke a political backlash.

"It was extremely sensitive," he said. "One couldn't outright

start investigating as if he's any common criminal."

In Washington yesterday, a senior Bush administration official acknowledged that Musharraf was not given highly specific information about Khan's activities until October. But the official noted that the US conveyed more general warnings about Khan's activities starting in 2001.

Tomorrow, President George W. Bush is expected to give what one senior official at the White House described as a "lengthy, detailed speech on what must change in the area of stopping proliferation".

He is expected to include new proposals for dealing with rogue scientists and with countries that have not signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty — a delicate subject, because India and Israel, like Pakistan, have rejected it.

Musharraf said he forced Khan to retire from his post as head of a nuclear weapons lab in March 2001 to prevent him from transferring any more nuclear

secrets. That is the first time the general has cited Khan's nuclear activities as the reason for his departure. "We nipped the proliferation in the bud, we stopped the proliferation," he said of Khan's removal. "That is the important part."

But the nuclear black market supplied by Khan continued to operate for two-and-a-half years, until last October, American officials say.

Before the exposure of Khan's network, Pakistani officials, including Musharraf, had long denied that Pakistan was the source of nuclear technology for any other country. In repeated interviews, he never disclosed that he suspected that the nation's top nuclear scientist was spreading technology.

His comments yesterday will only add to the debate over what is a murky episode. Some political and military analysts say Pakistan's earlier refusal to act against Khan and its effort now to bring the scandal to a hasty conclusion reflect at least tacit

approval from the powerful army for his activities. They suggest that Khan receive a full pardon in exchange for publicly stating that he alone was responsible for the proliferation.

Many argue that what may appear to be evasions or deceptions simply reflect Musharraf's quandary — how to appease both international pressure to crack down on a rogue proliferator and domestic pressure to protect Khan.

Musharraf seems to have few answers about how Khan operated freely in a country where the nuclear arsenal is considered its greatest single asset. He said that the brigadier general in charge of security for Khan's top-secret laboratory never reported anything. "He didn't, and frankly, he hasn't even now," the President said.

The general emphatically denied reports Khan had struck a barter agreement with North Korea in which Pakistani nuclear technology was exchanged for ballistic missile technology. He said Pakistani cargo planes spotted in North Korea in July 2002 were picking up surface-to-air missiles purchased at the height of tensions with India.

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE



Musharraf

SECRET AGENT

The recent disclosure about Pakistan's nuclear behaviour is likely to further damage the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The growing evidence of Islamabad's role in nuclear proliferation will also further erode the country's credibility in the international community. It has now been established, beyond doubt, that the father of Pakistan's nuclear programme, Mr Abdul Qadeer Khan, was directly involved in proliferating nuclear technology to countries like Iran, Libya and North Korea. These are countries that the United States of America and its allies have viewed as "rogues" and, in fact, Iran and North Korea were described by Mr George W. Bush as being part of an axis of evil. The evidence of Mr Khan's complicity has been gathered systematically over the past few months by the US government. *Pakistani 11/2*

Detailed evidence included information regarding Mr Khan's visits to many of these countries, his meetings with nuclear black-marketeers and even details of financial transactions. The evidence was so overwhelming that Mr Pervez Musharraf had no choice but to confront Mr Khan and his associates. Reports indicate that Mr Khan has accepted full responsibility for the nuclear proliferation. Given the almost legendary status that Mr Khan occupies in Pakistan, it is not surprising that Mr Musharraf has pardoned him. There are, however, several disturbing aspects of the episode that require sustained attention. Most important, it is unlikely that Mr Khan could have proliferated nuclear technology without the knowledge of Pakistan's army. As is well known, Pakistan's nuclear assets are under the control of the military, and it seems improbable that the nuclear scientist could have acted alone. If indeed Pakistan's army was involved, and Mr Khan's confession is a way of shifting attention away from the military, it should make the international community even more concerned about Islamabad's nuclear weapons. In any case, there are likely to be many apprehensions about the safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear programme as a consequence of this episode. Moreover, the cavalier attitude displayed by those in charge of Pakistan's nuclear technology is likely to suggest that this is not a state that can be trusted with weapons of mass destruction. And even while the US and its allies may, at present, have geo-strategic reasons to not target Mr Musharraf and the army regime, a long-term international strategy to deal with Pakistan's nuclear assets will need to be carefully worked out.

India cannot and should not remain a silent spectator to these events. As a first step, concrete bilateral measures to prevent the accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons must be quickly worked out. Proposals to set up a nuclear-risk reduction centre in south Asia must be translated into reality. As is obvious, the International Atomic Energy Agency was not able to prevent the transfer of technology to states that had signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Clearly, the time has come to reconstruct the regime, given the realities of contemporary international relations.

PoK leader calls for a wider dialogue

By Praveen Swami

HD-11
9/2

NEW DELHI, FEB. 8. A prominent opposition leader from Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir has called for a broad dialogue on the State's future, involving leaders from all its regions and political groupings on both sides of the Line of Control.

Shazia Ghulam Din, a leader of the All Parties National Alliance, a coalition fighting for greater democracy in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, told *The Hindu* that the current India-Pakistan détente did not address the problems of Jammu and Kashmir. Although a dialogue was under way between India and Pakistan, and between the Union Government and the secessionist All Parties Hurriyat Conference, large sections of opinion in Jammu and Kashmir were unrepresented.

"We go through this dialogue ritual every now and then," Ms. Ghulam Din said, "and each time the Kashmiris get nothing. Talks begin, then India and Pakistan consult some Kashmiri groups, and finally we are forgotten. Sometimes the two countries talk to Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, sometimes the APHC, sometimes Abdul Qayoom Khan, sometimes someone else."

"Our position," she continued, "is that there is no point talking to this group or that group. You must speak to all. Unless you talk to the people of Gilgit and Baltistan, and to our

Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist brothers, how will dialogue be meaningful?" Ms. Ghulam Din said such a dialogue needed to be international in character, and premised on the recognition of the unity of all of Jammu and Kashmir.

APNA is spearheading an under-reported but influential independence movement in Pakistani-held Kashmir. For the past two years, it has led a mass struggle against Pakistani rule and for the reunification of Jammu and Kashmir. APNA has established a considerable presence in areas such as Gilgit and Baltistan, where peoples long denied democracy are starting to revolt.

Unsurprisingly, APNA's nationalist position has brought it into direct confrontation with the Pakistani establishment. In 2002, for example, APNA leaders opposed plans to expand the Mangla dam, which feeds Punjab's canal system. APNA said the dam work would result in the settlement of non-Kashmiris in the Mirpur area of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. APNA leaders argued that the resettlement plans violated pre-1947 State subject regulations, which give only permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir the right to own property in the State.

Like most APNA leaders, she made no secret of her hostility to armed groups operating in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly the ethnic Punjabi-dominated organisations of the Islamist far-right. "I want to say

POK
PK

this is no Jihad, and no one who understand religion will describe it as one" she asserted. "It is a carefully planned fraud perpetrated on the people. While we accept indigenous militant groups from within Indian-occupied Kashmir, "we condemn the foreigners who have come to fight on our soil."

Ms. Ghulam Din is the daughter of Mohammad Maqbool Butt, one of the icons of the armed secessionist movement in Jammu and Kashmir. Mr. Butt was hanged for his role in terrorist activity after the assassination of an Indian diplomat, Ravindra Mhatre. Ms. Ghulam Din herself was a member of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, but later chose to renounce violence. APNA rejects violence, and is committed to democratic mass struggle.

Although she had come to India to attend the recent World Social Forum meeting in Mumbai, official sources said her visit indicated New Delhi's increasing willingness to allow contact between Kashmiris on both sides of LoC. In recent weeks, Kashmiris in the frontier villages along the Neelam river have been gathering along its banks to shout out greetings to relatives and pass mail.

Ms. Ghulam Din's remarks suggest leaders in PoK sense the possibility of an India-Pakistan deal on Jammu and Kashmir, and hope to use the opportunity to secure autonomy for their regions and some degree of open movement across borders.

'Pakistan has been treating the world to a soap opera'

The buck stopped here

...while Abdul Qadeer Khan took the blame for selling Pakistan's nuclear secrets. IMTIAZ GUL in Islamabad and G.S. MUDUR in New Delhi report on the scandal that reeks of a hasty cover-up

For the second time in over three decades, Shamsunnisa found herself in agony, sundered from her son on the day of Id. The first time, 32 years ago, Major Islam ul Haq was a prisoner of war, a captive of the Indian army. Last week, Islam, principal staff officer to now discredited Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan, was again in custody, held by the Pakistani army. And 76-year-old Shamsunnisa was in distress.

"We've been betrayed by our own," said Hussam ul Haq, Islam's brother. "This is how our national heroes are treated." Islam is among seven scientists and four other officials the Pakistani government has detained for leaking to Iran, Libya and North Korea, blueprints for technologies that could have helped those countries build nuclear weapons.

Khan's confession notwithstanding, the families of the officials in custody say they are victims of a carefully-contrived farce designed to stop the buck from travelling to the 'generals'. It was a climactic 40-minute meeting that brought the curtain down on the first act of an action-packed drama that began on November 27, when Mohammad Farooq, the first of 11 scientists still in detention, was picked up by intelligence sleuths.

The meeting between Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and Qadeer Khan, in house arrest since January 28, was followed by an admission of guilt by the man once known as the father of the Islamic bomb. And along with that, rather conveniently, came a mercy petition which the federal cabinet accepted.

On Thursday, the President pardoned Khan. But not everybody is convinced that it's all over. "We have yet to determine under what circumstances he confessed and sought a reprieve," says Pakistan Peoples Party chief Amin Faheem. "The whole affair is suspect."

For many in and outside Pakistan, the episode reeks of a cover-up. For many questions that the arrests led to are still to be answered. Would Khan and his men have leaked nuclear secrets to friendly nations without the knowledge of the government and the army? And was the President in the know?

"Pakistan has been treating the world to a soap opera," says Subash Kapila, an international relations and strategic affairs consultant with the South Asia Analysis Group (SAAG), an Indian non-government think-tank. "Pakistan's non-proliferation activities are the world's worst-kept secret."

Analysts familiar with Pakistan's secret deals say the accusations against Khan and the other nuclear scientists, Khan's confession, as well as the public pardon are all part of an elaborate charade.

"Individuals could not have done this without a wink and a nod," says K. Santhanam, director of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, New Delhi. Analysts say that more than anyone else in the Pakistani military hierarchy, Musharraf himself should be accountable at least for the deals with North Korea. The agreement for cooperation in missile technology was finalised during a visit by Benazir Bhutto to North Korea in the early 1990s.

Musharraf, who was then director general of military operations, was responsible for coordinating the project. "Musharraf and Khan made

many secret visits to North Korea on this project, together and independently," claims Bahukutumbi Raman, former additional secretary with India's Research and Analysis Wing. In a paper published by SAAG, Raman says Pakistan initially paid for North Korea's missiles and related technology with dollars and wheat purchased from the US and Australia.

Through the 1990s, says Raman, the missile deal between Pakistan and North Korea was coordinated by the Joint Intelligence Miscellaneous, or JIM, a division of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI).

"The supplementary agreement to help North Korea in developing a military nuclear capability was reached after Musharraf assumed power in 1999," Raman maintains.

Pakistan began its nuclear quest in 1965 when the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) was set up, ostensibly to promote the peaceful use of atomic energy. Its first nuclear station — the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant — was installed with Canadian help after 17 years. The nuclear one-upmanship in the subcontinent flared up with India's Pokhran blast — which prompted former prime minister Z.A. Bhutto to pledge that Pakistan would "eat grass", if necessary, to develop its own nuclear weapons. He handed over the job to Khan, who had returned to Pakistan from Holland for research.

Work went on for some years at the Kahuta Research Laboratories (KRL), set up near Islamabad to establish a uranium enrichment plant. But the suspicion that Khan's efforts were



LARGER THAN LIFE: Citizens in Lahore walk past a billboard showing Pervez Musharraf and the map of Pakistan. Scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan (below). AFP/Reuters

"There is no chance that Khan and the others could have engaged in transfer of nuclear technology to foreign countries without the knowledge and approval of the government," says Frank J. Gaffney, president of the Centre for Security Policy, Washington DC.

"The Pakistani military was responsible for the programme, it was an authoritarian regime, and the technology transfers were part and parcel of foreign policy, not pure commercial transactions," Gaffney told *The Telegraph*. The scientists at

km south of Tehran, where Iran was erecting a facility to make weapons-grade uranium.

Iran had initially denied any illegitimate nuclear research activity there. But last September, IAEA inspectors visited Natanz and detected samples of enriched uranium — a material that may be processed to make bombs.

In a letter couriered to the IAEA in October 2003, the head of Iran's atomic energy organisation acknowledged that Iran had been trying to develop facilities for weapons-grade uranium for 18 years with foreign aid. The designs of machines called centrifuges were identical to those in Pakistan, which themselves are derived from designs that Khan had allegedly stolen from The Netherlands in the 1970s.

In December, Libya sprung another surprise, coming clean on its own nuclear ambitions. Seif el Islam, the son of Libya ruler Muammar Gaddafi, identified Pakistan as its leading nuclear supplier for which Libya had spent US \$40 million, most of the money going to Pakistan. The disclosures by Iran and Libya forced Musharraf to acknowledge that individual scientists may have been leaking secrets on their own.

After pardoning Khan, Musharraf again claimed that no Pakistani government or army has ever been involved in nuclear proliferation. He asserted there is no evidence of the involvement of former army chiefs Aslam Beg and Jhangir Karamat in the illegal nuclear technology transfer.

Besides Khan and Islam, Pakistani investigators have also picked up 54-year-old mechanical engineer Mohamma Farooq, 66-year-old civil engineer Shijawal Malik, and others.

The families have ridiculed charges that scientists were leaking nuclear technologies for money. "We're middle-class families. We don't have fancy cars, giant bungalows, and we don't holiday abroad," says a family member of one of the arrested scientists. Friends describe how Farooq's extended family of 17 members live together in a four-bedroom house. Although the current controversy erupted after the recent disclosures by Iran and Libya, international strategic analysts have long known about Pakistan's transfer of nuclear weapons technologies to these two countries and to North

The grand mogul

● The Bomb wasn't the only passion in Abdul Qadeer Khan's life. He was also a successful hotelier, a collector of vintage cars, and a magnanimous philanthropist. He lived in a heavily-guarded palatial bungalow in Islamabad with vintage cars from the early 1900s lining his porch. Once when he planned a holiday, he imported a US\$400,000 Teflon tent from Florida and he gifted BMWs and bungalows to his daughters.

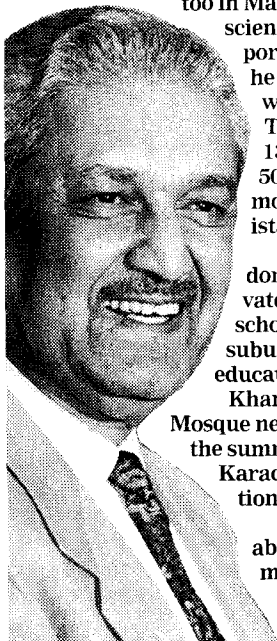
His gift to his Dutch wife, Hendrina, was a hotel in Timbuctoo in Mali, which he named after her. A fellow-scientist and right-hand man of Khan reportedly told Pakistani investigators that he had overseen the transfer of carved wooden furniture from Islamabad to Timbuctoo in a Pakistani Air Force C-130 transport plane. And he spent Rs 50 million on a media campaign to promote himself as the 'father' of the Pakistani nuclear bomb.

Khan also had an altruistic streak. He donated hundreds of computers to private and government schools, supported schools and medical clinics in Islamabad's suburbs, and funded institutes of higher education.

Khan once heard that the hall of the Faisal Mosque near his house was unbearably hot in the summers. A single phone call by Khan and Karachi businessmen installed an air-conditioning plant in the giant mosque.

Another phone call, and the Islamabad municipality agreed to foot the mosque's additional electricity bill.

— By Imtiaz Gul



aimed at an Islamic nuclear bomb — a reference to the country's close ties with other Muslim states — refused to die.

Now as events unfurl in Pakistan, its role in helping other nations in their nuclear ambitions can no longer be denied. Yet, experts stress that this was an operation that would have been planned right at the top. Security experts point out that the military and intelligence security system that was in place at the KRL would have precluded individual scientists from leaking technological secrets on their own.

the KRL are kept under tight surveillance by the army and the intelligence agency both within Pakistan and during their visits abroad.

For Pakistan, ironically, it was the very countries it was secretly feeding knowhow for nuclear weapons, that squealed. Iran is a signatory to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and thus has to open its doors to periodic inspections of its nuclear materials inventory. Satellite pictures may have alerted International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors about a site named Natanz, 100

Korea. However, some non-proliferation experts believe the transfer of nuclear technology from Pakistan may have involved both state-sponsored as well as personal initiatives of scientists. "The technology transfer to North Korea had to be state-approved because the payment was missiles," says Leonard Spector, deputy director of the Centre for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, Washington DC.

"But the technology transfers to Iran and Libya are more ambiguous and may have involved some self-enrichment," Spector told *The Telegraph*.

Analysts say Washington would be aware of the role the government played in the transfers, but has for now decided to back Musharraf. "The administration is quiet probably because it feels Musharraf is in a very difficult situation, and he is a valued ally in the war against terrorism," says Gaffney.

"The US is attempting to arrive at a practical solution to a very difficult problem," adds Spector. "The goal is to ensure that the Pakistani government no longer supports this kind of activity. But it is important to maintain stability in Pakistan."

The truth about the Pakistan establishment's role in the transfers may never emerge, unless some of the arrested scientists decide to speak out. When he was allowed to meet with family members for a short while on Id last week, Shijawal Malik told an intelligence officer: "Nothing I've done will ever put my children to shame."

(With inputs from Varuna Verma)

THE TELEGRAPH • FEB 2004

A.Q. Khan episode an internal matter: Pakistan

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 7. Pakistan has contested the claim of the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, that the probe into the scandal on leak of nuclear secrets was not an internal affair of the country.

"The investigations in Pakistan are an internal matter and cannot be raised in any other forum," the Foreign Ministry spokesman, Masood Khan, said in response to comments made by Mr. Sinha that the issue would be raised in forums such as the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. Khan said: "Pakistan is already cooperating with the IAEA. Therefore, Mr. Sinha's advice in this regard is gratuitous. We do not disagree with Mr. Sinha that all nuclear-capable states, including India, should behave in a responsible manner."

Mr. Khan's comment apparently was not

so much aimed at the External Affairs Minister but at all those, particularly the American media, who have raised serious concerns on the issues arising out of the probe and the decision of the Pakistan Government to pardon the disgraced nuclear scientist, A.Q. Khan.

At a press conference where he announced the decision to pardon Dr. Khan, the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, said the probe was entirely an internal issue of Pakistan and it would not hand over any papers to any outside agency or country.

Gen. Musharraf, however, said that Pakistan was ready to cooperate with the IAEA. "This is a sovereign country, no documents will be submitted to the IAEA, to an independent inquiry and we will not allow the U.N. to supervise our nuclear programme," Gen. Musharraf said.

Pakistan sees the comments of the U.S.

Secretary of State, Colin Powell, that he would ask Gen. Musharraf about the pardon essentially as a public posture to criticism in the media.

"This is a matter between Mr. Khan, who is a Pakistani citizen, and his Government. But it is a matter also that I will be talking to President Musharraf about," Gen. Powell told reporters at the U.N. headquarters in New York.

He said that "goal number one" was making sure that no more sensitive nuclear details were passed on by any Pakistani scientists, including Dr. Khan, dubbed by Gen. Powell as the "biggest" of all nuclear proliferators.

Pakistan is expected to maintain that the leaks had taken place before the nuclear command and control authority was in place and there was no scope for such a scandal in the future.

Nuclear noose round Pakistan's neck

By Pervez Hoodbhoy

Pakistan will have to put its nuclear house in order with strict and complete accountability, regardless of rank or reputation.

THIRTY YEARS ago, fearful of India's newly acquired nuclear weapons, Pakistan set out on its own quest to become a nuclear weapons state. Lacking a strong technological base, it secretly searched the world's industrialised countries for what was needed. Few could have imagined then that the move from buyer to seller of the world's deadliest technology would be so swift.

But spectacular revelations beginning late last year by Iran, and later Libya, have forced Pakistan's President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, to launch an investigation of Pakistani involvement in secret transfers of vital nuclear weapons information and equipment to Iran, North Korea and Libya. Musharraf has conceded the existence of "an underworld of people" in Pakistan who, out of "personal greed," could have sold nuclear secrets.

The figure at the centre of the crisis is Dr. A.Q. Khan, Pakistan's most celebrated bomb maker and a national hero, who was fired last Saturday from his job as science adviser to Pakistan's Prime Minister. In his heyday, Khan was accustomed to adulation and worship. His procurement, by whatever means, of secret centrifuge designs from a Dutch consortium in the mid-1970s was critical to Pakistan's successful nuclearisation. With unlimited government resources at his disposal, and free of auditing restrictions, Khan, a metallurgist who is often wrongly referred to as a nuclear scientist, managed to purchase restricted items, which companies in Europe and the United States were willing to sell for the right price, no questions asked. In the process, Khan became a wealthy man. Today, he and several close associates find that the laws of powerful nations cannot be spurned as easily as those of the state they have claimed to defend. Forced by the international community (read: the United States), Pakistan has put Khan and his cohorts on notice. Inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) revealed centrifuges and traces of highly enriched uranium, and Iran pinpointed Pakistan as the source. A British expert who recently accompanied agency inspectors into Iran identified Iranian centrifuges as being identical to the Dutch design that Khan secretly obtained.

And yet it is unlikely that Khan will be convicted in a Pakistani court, because that would involve a head-on collision with the country's religious parties and with a public that has been led to believe that Khan's development of the bomb guaranteed Pa-

kistan's security. [Gen. Musharraf has since pardoned Dr. Khan.]

While the IAEA and U.S. intelligence may claim credit for having discovered the fountain of nuclear proliferation, Khan widely and openly advertised his wares over the past decade. Every year — including 2003, when the proliferation controversy was already hot — Islamabad was festooned with colourful banners advertising international workshops on "Vibrations In Rapidly Rotating Machinery" and "Advanced Materials," sponsored by the Dr. A.Q. Khan Research Laboratories (also known as the Kahuta Laboratories), Pakistan's key uranium enrichment facility.

Over the years, Khan and his collaborators also published a number of papers on issues regarding the technical means for enabling centrifuge rotors to spin at supersonic speeds without disintegrating, which is essential for making bomb-grade uranium. They could scarcely have been more blatant. But to make absolutely certain, Kahuta issued glossy brochures that were aimed at classified organisations but were easily obtained on the Kahuta website.

But Khan's nuclear bravado was of little concern to any of Pakistan's governments, civil or military. Indeed, since May 1998, when the country conducted several underground nuclear tests, Pakistan has flaunted its nuclear status in a manner wholly different from the world's other nuclear-armed countries. Nuclear nationalism was the order of the day as governments vigorously promoted the bomb as the symbol of Pakistan's high scientific achievement, national determination and self-respect, and as the harbinger of a new Muslim era. Publicly funded nuclear shrines still litter the country. One, a fibreglass model of the nuclear-blasted Chaghai mountain, stands at the entrance to Islamabad, bathed at night in a garish, orange light. Pakistan's political parties, secular and Islamic, rushed to claim ownership after the nuclear tests; elites and the masses all saw in the bomb a sign that Pakistan could succeed at something. With great pomp and ceremony, the bomb makers were turned into national heroes.

With international outrage over its proliferation growing, the bomb threatens to become a noose around Pakistan's neck. For Musharraf's government, Khan's mega-ton ego and his escapades over the past decade and a half are now a nightmare. Even

as the Iranian revelation catapulted Pakistan to the forefront of the world's attention, Khan threw down the gauntlet last month by declaring in a television interview: "Who made the atom bomb? I made it. Who made the missiles? I made them for you." Responding to calls by the Islamic parties to defend the bomb makers, thousands have taken to the streets of Pakistani cities to protest investigations into the activities of Khan and others. Qazi Hussain Ahmad, leader of the Jamaat-e-Islami, called for Khan's exoneration even if he "has made millions of dollars, because he has saved Pakistan."

The investigation is likely to raise more issues than it settles. While Musharraf has said that "There is no such evidence that any government personality or military personality was involved," this attempt to ascribe all wrongdoing to a few greedy individual scientists will find few takers. Nor should it.

Since its inception, Pakistan's nuclear programme has been squarely under army supervision. A multi-tiered security system was headed by a lieutenant general (now, two) with all nuclear installations and personnel kept under the tightest possible surveillance. Diplomatic immunity was insufficient to prevent a physical roughing up of the French ambassador to Pakistan some years ago when he journeyed to a point several miles from the enrichment facility. Kahuta was considered sensitive to the point that Benazir Bhutto, the former Prime Minister, claims that even while in office she could not receive clearance to visit the labs. In such an extreme security environment, it would be amazing to miss the travel abroad of senior scientists, engineers and administrators, their meetings with foreign nationals, and the transport and transfer of classified technical documents and components, if not whole centrifuges.

While individual gain may have been part of the motivation, the substantial cause lies elsewhere. From the inception of the bomb programme, Pakistan's establishment has sought to turn its nuclear ambitions and success into larger gains. For one, it wanted (and gained) the support of hundreds of millions of Muslims the world over by claiming to provide a Muslim success story. (That this involved replicating a 60-year-old technology for mass destruction is a sad commentary on the state of the Muslim world.) For an-

other, it enabled Pakistan to enjoy considerable financial and political benefits from oil-rich Arab countries. Among others, Libya reportedly bankrolled Pakistan and may even have supplied raw uranium. After Pakistan's nuclear tests six years ago, the Saudi government gave an unannounced gift of \$4 billion worth of oil spread over five years to tide Pakistan over during its difficulties caused by international sanctions.

The transfers to North Korea are more prosaic. Having developed the bomb, Pakistan needed missiles to deliver them. North Korea was willing to supply them, for a price. Like the Dutch centrifuges, all Kahuta had to do was put them together and stick a star and crescent on them.

These deals and transfers of technology apparently took place from about 1987 until 1995. Musharraf is reported to have given Secretary of State Colin L. Powell his "four hundred percent assurance" that no such interchange is taking place now. This may be enough for now, given Musharraf's solid support for U.S. moves against Al-Qaeda.

Whether moved by money or faith, Pakistan's bomb makers, like the bomb itself, have seriously compromised the country's international standing and security. Two years ago, it was scientists from the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission who, in a fit of Islamic solidarity, went to Afghanistan and met with Osama bin Laden and the Taliban. It is hard to believe they were the only ones so inclined.

Pakistan will have to put its nuclear house in order. Anything less than strict and complete accountability, regardless of rank or reputation, will leave the door open for those who may wish to try their luck, or in whom the fire of faith burns brighter. My country's loose nukes underscore a global danger that may already be out of control.

Nuclear secrets will keep leaking as long as the bomb has value as a currency of power and prestige. Humanity's best chance of survival lies in creating taboos against nuclear weapons, much as those that already exist for chemical and biological weapons, and to work rapidly toward their global elimination. To do away with the bomb, bomb technology and the menace of their proliferation will require the United States, as the world's only superpower, to take the lead by reducing its own nuclear arsenal, as well as dealing with all proliferators, including its ally Israel, at the same level.

(Dr. Pervez Hoodbhoy is Professor of Nuclear Physics at Quaid-e-Azam University in Islamabad.)

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Khan takes blackmail route to pardon

HT Correspondent & Agencies
Islamabad, February 5

ACTING ON the recommendation of the Cabinet, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf on Thursday granted pardon to Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan on the issue of illegal nuclear proliferation. The presidential clemency comes a day after Khan met Musharraf and publicly admitted leaking nuclear knowhow to Iran, Libya and North Korea, a local TV channel reported.

But reports in the American press were quick to point out that Khan had "ensured" the pardon by sending to his daughter in Iraq incriminating evidence that Islamabad's military was aware of the nuclear proliferation.

The *Washington Post* said that as a kind of insurance policy to obtain pardon for his past actions of leaking nuclear knowhow, the scientist had some weeks ago provided

ed his daughter Dina, who lives in Baghdad, with the documentary evidence. The *Post* quoted a friend of Khan who spoke with him twice during the investigation as saying that the father of the Pak bomb had instructed his daughter to make the evidence public if the government were to prosecute or take other punitive action against him.

It also quoted a senior investigator as saying that three Army chiefs of staff, including Musharraf, were aware of the assistance provided to North Korea in exchange for help with Pakistan's ballistic missile programme.

Many Pakistanis, the paper pointed out, have questioned how Khan could have conducted such an ambitious series of illicit sales without some official support.

Though he enjoyed great autonomy as director of Khan Research Laboratories, security at the facility was the responsibility of the

ment during a meeting with newspaper editors. He also tried to dispel the impression that the proliferation would not have been possible without the knowledge and support of the military. "We have questioned all military personnel but found their involvement ... this was done by Khan and his associates," he told the editors.

KRL was autonomous and had its own security apparatus, he said. Army chiefs had knowledge of the nuclear programme but did not know of proliferation. Khan would remain under strict security and would not be allowed to travel abroad, the President said.

Elaborating on the details of the investigation since 2001, the general said the ball rolled when the ISI raided a North Korea-bound plane chartered by KRL. Though the raid yielded nothing, the suspicions led to Khan's removal as KRL chairman. Musharraf contradicted Kh-



AP
A little member of the Khan fan club.

military and the ISI. The paper recalled that "partly in response to US pressure", Musharraf had forced Khan to retire in 2001.

Earlier, the Cabinet, headed by PM Jamali, had recommended Musharraf to accept the scientist's mercy petition and forgive him.

Musharraf made the announce-

an's claim that the proliferation was in "good faith", saying he did it "for personal greed and money".

Musharraf also insisted there would be no sell-out on the country's vital interests. "I assure that there will be no rollback of our nuclear programme. There is no pressure whatsoever from any country in this regard."

Analysts have maintained that an open trial of Khan, a national hero, could reveal embarrassing evidence implicating the army and make the scientist a martyr.

Tip of the iceberg

In Vienna, UN nuclear watchdog chief Md El-Baradei said Khan's revelations are just the "tip of the iceberg" about such trafficking.

"Khan was not working alone. We need to know who was producing the centrifuges" that can be used to make atomic bombs and "make sure it will not be repeated," El-Baradei said, adds AFP.

আব্দুল কাদিরকে ক্ষমাই করলেন মুশারফ

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ইশলামাবাদ, ৫ ফেব্রুয়ারি—পাক পরমাণু বোমার জনক আব্দুল কাদির খান ইরান, লিবিয়া ও উত্তর কোরিয়ায় পরমাণু প্রযুক্তি পাচারের দায় কাল নিজের কাঁধে নেওয়ার পর আজ প্রত্যক্ষিত ভাবেই তাঁর অপরাধ মার্জনা করলেন প্রেসিডেন্ট পারভেজ মুশারফ। আজই সকালেই পাক মন্ত্রিসভা তাঁকে ক্ষমা করার জন্য মুশারফের কাছে সুপারিশ করে। মুশারফ এক সাংবাদিক বৈঠকে বলেছেন, “আমি ঠেকে ক্ষমা করেছি। কাদির লিখিতভাবে আমার কাছে ক্ষমা প্রার্থনা করেছিলেন। আমিও লিখিতভাবে তাঁকে ক্ষমা করার কথা জানিয়ে দিয়েছি।” পরমাণু প্রযুক্তি পাচারের গোটা দায় নিজের কাঁধে নিয়ে কাদির খান সরকার ও সেনাবাহিনীর শীর্ষব্যক্তিদের আড়াল করছেন বলে পর্যবেক্ষকরা মনে করলেও বৃশ প্রশাসন মুশারফের পাশে দাঁড়িয়েছেন। পেট্রোলিয়ামের প্রধান ডোনাল্ড রামসফেল্ড বলেছেন, মুশারফ গোটা ব্যাপারটা বেশ দক্ষতার সঙ্গেই সামলাচ্ছেন।

কাল মুশারফের সঙ্গে দেখা করার পর পাক সরকারি টিভিতে বিবৃতি দিয়ে কাদির পরমাণু প্রযুক্তি পাচারের সবটুকু দায় নিজের কাঁধে নিয়ে তার সহকর্মী ও সরকারি কর্তব্যবক্তাদের মুক্ত করার চেষ্টা করলেও এর পিছনে গোপন বোম্বাপড়ার আঁচ পাচ্ছেন পর্যবেক্ষক মহল। তাদের মতে, সেনাবাহিনীর প্রত্যক্ষ নিয়ন্ত্রণাধীন খান রিসার্চ ল্যাবরেটরি থেকে কাদির খান

সবার অজান্তামতে প্রযুক্তি পাচার করেছেন, এটা আদৌ বিশ্বাসযোগ্য নয়। সেনাবাহিনী, বিশেষত সেনাপ্রধান প্রেসিডেন্ট পারভেজ মুশারফকে সন্দেহ মুক্ত করতে গোপন বোম্বাপড়ার অঙ্গ হিসাবেই স্বীকারোক্তি করেছেন কাদির।

এ দিকে, চাঞ্চল্যকর স্বীকারোক্তির পরেও ৬৯ বছর বয়সী বিজ্ঞানীকে জাতীয় নায়কের মর্যাদা থেকে বঞ্চিত করতে নারাজ পাকিস্তানের আম জনতা। তাদের মতে, কাদিরকে বলির পাঠা করা হয়েছে। চাপের মুখে তিনি স্বীকারোক্তি দিতে বাধ্য হয়েছেন। দাবি উঠেছে, সরকার নিয়ন্ত্রিত টেলিভিশনে নয়, কাদিরকে জনতার সামনে কথা বলতে দেওয়া হোক, যাতে তিনি সব সত্যটুকু বলতে পারেন।

অন্য দিকে তাঁর সহকর্মী অন্য বিজ্ঞানীদের কোনও পোষ ছিল না বলে গতকাল পাক টিভিতে হাজির হয়ে কাদির খান কবুল করার পরেও পরমাণু প্রকল্পের সঙ্গে যুক্ত পাঁচ বিজ্ঞানী ও অফিসারকে ক্ষেফতার করা হয়েছে। প্রেক্ষতার হওয়া বিজ্ঞানীদের মধ্যে আছেন খান রিসার্চ ল্যাবরেটরির মহম্মদ ফারুখ ও নাজির আহমেদ। দুই কর্মকর্তা, অবসরপ্রাপ্ত ব্রিগেডিয়ার তাজওয়ার খান ও প্রাজন ব্রিগেডিয়ার মালিক সাজাওয়াল ছাড়াও ল্যাবরেটরির ব্রিগিডিয়াল স্টাফ অফিসার অবসরপ্রাপ্ত মেজর ইসলাম উল হককে ক্ষেফতার করা হয়েছে। গত তিন মাস তাদের নজরবন্দি করে রাখা হয়েছিল। এই

খবর সংবাদ সংস্থার। ওয়াশিংটন থেকে সীমা সিরোহি জানাচ্ছেন: পরমাণু কেলেঙ্কারি পাকিস্তানে অস্থিরতা তেঁকে আনতে পারে বলে দুশ্চিন্তায় থাকা বৃশ প্রশাসন কাদির খানের স্বীকারোক্তির পর আজ প্রকাশ্যেই প্রেসিডেন্ট পারভেজ মুশারফের প্রতি তাদের সমর্থন ব্যক্ত করেছে। কিন্তু দেশ জুড়ে আপাতত একটাই প্রশ্ন, পরমাণু প্রযুক্তি কোথায় পাচার হয়েছে এবং তা সন্ত্রাসবাদীদের হাতে গিয়ে পড়ার সম্ভাবনা কতটা। কাদির নিজে ইরান, লিবিয়া ও উত্তর কোরিয়ায় পরমাণু প্রযুক্তি পাচারের কথা বললেও মার্কিন গোয়েন্দাদের আশঙ্কা, তিনি সিরিয়া ও ইরাককেও কিছু গুরুত্বপূর্ণ তথ্য বিক্রি করে থাকতে পারেন।

পরমাণু কেলেঙ্কারি ইস্যুতে মুশারফকে সমর্থন জানানোর বিনিময়ে আমেরিকা পাকিস্তানের পরমাণু প্রকল্পের উপর আন্তর্জাতিক নজরদারি চাইতে পারে বলে মনে করা হচ্ছে। যদি সত্যি সত্যি তা চাওয়া হয় তাহলে পাকিস্তানে আর এক দফা অভ্যন্তরীণ কোপল মাথাচাড়া দেবে।

তবে একটা জিনিস পরিষ্কার যে, ব্যক্তিগত লাভ বা ইসলামি দেশগুলির বৃহত্তর স্বার্থের জন্য কাদির খান যত বড় ভুলই করে থাকুন না কেন তাঁর জেরে মুশারফ কোনও বিপদে পড়ুন এটা আমেরিকা চায় না। মুশারফ ক্ষমতায় থাকুন এটাই বৃশ প্রশাসনের কাম্য। এই

কারণেই সমগ্ৰ নিরসনে পাক কর্তৃপক্ষের সঙ্গে নিরন্তর যোগাযোগ রেখে চলেছে আমেরিকা। কাদির খান যাবতীয় দায়ভার নিজের কাঁধে নিয়ে পাক সেনাবাহিনী ও প্রেসিডেন্ট মুশারফের উপর থেকে সন্দেহের তির সরিয়ে নিতে সাহায্য করবেন, এমনটাই চুক্তি হয়েছে বলে মনে করা হচ্ছে।

এই চুক্তিতে রাজি না হয়ে কাদিরের আর কোনও উপায় ছিল না। কেননা, তাঁর বিরুদ্ধে পাহাড়প্রমাণ তথ্যপ্রমাণ রয়েছে। আমেরিকা ও ব্রিটেনের সঙ্গে দরকষাকষি করে কাদিরের কাজকর্মের প্রাথমিক খবর যুগিয়েছে লিবিয়া ও ইরান। মার্কিন গোয়েন্দা সংস্থাগুলি দীর্ঘ দিন ধরে তাঁর গতিবিধির উপর নজর রাখছিল।

তাদের চাপেই ২০০১ সালে কাদিরকে খান রিসার্চ ল্যাবরেটরি'র প্রধান পদ থেকে সরিয়ে দেন মুশারফ। কাদিরের দুর্নীতি এবং বেআইনি পথে রোজগারের টাকায় গড়ে তোলা প্রাসাদোপম বাড়ি সম্পর্কে খবরাখবরও পাক সরকারের কাছে রয়েছে। পাকিস্তানি সুত্রের খবর, কোনও শাস্তির মুখে পড়বেন না এই চুক্তিতে কাদির স্বীকারোক্তি করতে রাজি হয়েছেন। আমেরিকাও চায় না কাদিরের প্রকাশ্য বিচার হোক। চুক্তি মোতাবেক কাদির দুবাই থেকে দক্ষিণ-পূর্ব এশিয়া হয়ে ইউরোপ পর্যন্ত বিস্তৃত পরমাণু কালোবাজার চক্র সম্পর্কে বিস্তারিত খবর, চক্রের চাইদের নাম ও তাদের টেলিফোন নম্বর জানাবেন বলে আশা করা হচ্ছে।

Khan takes sole blame for N-leaks

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Feb. 4. — Pakistani scientist Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan has admitted transferring nuclear technology to several countries and absolved successive Pakistani governments of any responsibility for proliferation of nuclear technology, saying the illegal transfer of nuclear knowhow had taken place at his behest.

Making an extraordinary public confession over state TV after his meeting with President Pervez Musharraf today, Dr Khan asked the country to "pardon him" for the unauthorised transfer. "There was never ever any kind of authorisation for these activities by the government. I take full responsibility for my actions and seek your pardon. "I have much to answer for. The investigations have esta-



Gen. Pervez Musharraf with Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan in Rawalpindi on Wednesday. — AFP

blished that many of the reported activities did occur and these were inevitably initiated at my behest... I was confronted with the evidence and findings and I have voluntarily admitted that much of it is true and accurate... I have chosen to appear before you to offer my deepest regrets and unqualified

apologies to a traumatised nation," Dr Khan said.

Without naming the countries to whom he supplied nuclear technology, the scientist said it pained him that his entire lifetime achievement of providing foolproof national security to the nation could have been seriously jeopardized

on account of his activities. "These activities relating to unauthorised proliferation were based in good faith but on error of judgement," he said, bailing out successive governments.

In another development, the National Command Authority, Pakistan's official body in-charge of nuclear weapons, referred Dr Khan's plea for clemency to the Cabinet which would meet here tomorrow to take a final decision on the issue.

The NCA meeting headed by President Pervez Musharraf and attended by the top military brass as well as Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali and senior Cabinet colleagues reportedly took a favourable view on Khan's clemency petition but the final decision on it would be announced by the government tomorrow, official media reports here said.

Meanwhile, Pakistani experts

said the nuclear black market that let Iran, Libya and North Korea acquire weapons technology from Pakistan under the noses of international monitors raises suspicions that terror groups also acquired bomb components or plans, adds AP.

"If the black market could transfer technology from Europe to Pakistan in spite of all these sanctions and embargoes, that same black market of smugglers can also pass on materials from this to terrorist groups," said Dr AH Nayyar, a nuclear physicist and head of the Pakistan Peace Coalition. "The possibility exists and needs to be investigated thoroughly." The acquisition of weapons designs, however, would make it far easier for terrorists to make a workable bomb, said Mr David Albright, head of the Institute for Science and International Security in Washington.

A.Q. Khan has sought clemency for illegal transfer of nuclear-technology, says Pakistan

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 4. The Pakistan Government today claimed that the father of country's nuclear programme, Abdul Qadeer Khan, has accepted full responsibility for all illegal transfer of technology and sought clemency from President Pervez Musharraf in the course of a meeting with him during the day.

The development should bring cheer to Gen. Musharraf, who has been under intense international pressure on the subject for over a month. However, it is not going to close the chapter on the scandal as long as the crucial question whether Dr. Khan could have transferred nuclear technology without help from top bosses is not answered.

According to the Government, Dr. Khan had apparently sought an appointment with Gen. Musharraf on Tuesday and the speed at which it has materialised is a reflection of the military establishment to put an early end to the

murky episode. It became all the more imperative after speculative reports in the western media suggested that Dr. Khan had taken the names of top military brass, including Gen. Musharraf, as those who were aware of the transfers.

Dr. Khan told the State-run Pakistan Television that Gen. Musharraf has said that a decision on his representation would be announced later after consultation with the National Command Authority (NSA). Headed by Gen. Musharraf, the Authority is in charge of country's nuclear weapons and programmes.

Dr. Khan "has accepted full responsibility for all the nuclear proliferation activities which were conducted by him during the period in which he was at the helm of affairs of the Khan Research Laboratories. He has also submitted his mercy petition to the President and requested for clemency," a Government statement said.

The PTV showed an interview with Dr.

Khan, in which he claimed to have told the President "what had happened". "I gave him the background what was happening and what had happened," Dr. Khan said. He claimed that the tone of President Musharraf was lenient and easygoing during his meeting with him.

"He (Musharraf) appreciated the frankness with which I gave him the details and 'insha allah' (God willing) he will discuss with the Cabinet, the Prime Minister, other colleagues and then he will take a decision how to proceed and close this matter," an unruffled Dr. Khan said. The statement quoted Gen. Musharraf as saying that the entire nation had been "severely traumatised by the unfortunate events in the last months, a reference to the investigation into nuclear leaks by Pakistani scientists to Iran, Libya and North Korea."

Talking to Geo TV, a private television network, Dr. Khan said, "I have apprised the President with the entire situation linked to the nuclear technology and he

listened to it conscientiously."

The Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) has given a call to observe a protest day tomorrow (on the day of Kashmir Solidarity Day) against Gen. Musharraf for the "humiliation of national heroes."

Cabinet decision today

PTI reports:

The National Command Authority, Pakistan official body in-charge of nuclear weapons, referred Dr. Khan's mercy appeal to the Cabinet which would meet here tomorrow to take a final decision on the issue.

The NCA meeting headed by President Pervez Musharraf and attended by the top military brass as well as Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali and senior cabinet colleagues reportedly took a favourable view on Khan's clemency petition but the final decision on it would be announced by the Cabinet which would meet here tomorrow, official media reports here said.

Khan apologises, seeks Musharraf pardon



President Pervez Musharraf (right) with the founder of Pakistan's nuclear programme Abdul Qadeer Khan in Rawalpindi. (AFP)

IMTIAZ GUL

Islamabad, Feb. 4: Pakistan's top scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan made a dramatic personal apology today for leaking nuclear secrets, the latest twist in a proliferation scandal stretching from Libya to North Korea.

During the rare 40-minute meeting with Musharraf, Khan also submitted a petition of mercy and requested clemency in view of his services to the nation, an official statement said.

"The nuclear scientist took responsibility for pilferages that took place when he was in charge of the Kahuta Research Laboratories (KRL) until his retirement in 2001," the statement, which was issued after the meeting, said.

Later, in a televised statement Khan said: "It is with deepest sense of sorrow, anguish and regret that I have chosen to appear before you in order to atone for some of the anguish and pain that has been suffered by the people of Pakistan on account of the extremely unfortunate events of

the last two months. "The investigation has established that many of the reported activities (by several Pakistanis pointed out by the International Atomic Energy Agency-IAEA) did occur and the deals were inevitably initiated at my behest," he said.

Qadeer Khan said during the course of the investigation, he voluntarily admitted that much of the reported activities were true "for which I offer my deepest regrets and unqualified apologies to a traumatised nation."

"It pains me to realise that my entire life's achievements of providing foolproof security to my nation could have been placed in serious jeopardy on account of my activities which were based in good faith but on errors of judgment related to unauthorised proliferation activities," he said.

"I also wish to clarify that there was never ever any kind of authorisation for these activities by the government. I take full responsibility for my actions," the silver-haired scientist added,

speaking in English. Khan also took full responsibility for his actions and sought pardon for causing so much trauma to the nation since November, last year. An official statement earlier had said that Khan had realised that his activities, which were in clear violation of various Pakistani laws, could have seriously jeopardised Pakistan's nuclear capabilities and put the nation at risk.

Musharraf also convened a meeting of the National Command Authority (NCA), which was in session till the filing of this report, to take a final decision on Khan's mercy petition.

The decision on Saturday last week to remove Khan from his post as the adviser to the Prime Minister on strategic affairs was during an NCA meeting. Only, the nuclear scientist was placed under house

arrest. Khan's meeting with the President and the request for clemency, however, triggered an adverse reaction by Opposition parties.

"We have yet to determine as to whether and under what circumstances Qadeer Khan made confessions and sought reprieve. The whole affair is suspect," Amin Faheem, chief of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), said. "The government must place the whole issue in parliament," he demanded.

Families of four detained KRL officials also rejected Khan's reported requests for clemency and the TV statement.

"These statements have been extracted under duress, we simply do not accept them," said Aisamul Haq, the younger brother of Islamul Haq, one of Khan's aides who is still in custody.

"If the government is right, it must allow Qadeer Khan to appear on an independent and live media forum to explain the situation," Shafiq, wife of another official demanded. The Islamic Opposition pounced on the government's treatment of Khan, saying he had been treated as a scapegoat and had only been hounded by the authorities because of pressure from the US.

"I don't think people like A.Q. Khan should be tried. He is a national hero. He has developed the (nuclear) programme," said Qazi Hussain Ahmed.

Pakistan originally denied its nuclear secrets and technology had been leaked, either officially or by individuals. But it launched a probe in November after the IAEA provided evidence pointing to Pakistan's involvement in Iran's nuclear programme.

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'Khan nails Pervez for N-leaks'

Press Trust of India 5-1 A2/08



US aid Pak 1 w

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3. — Pakistani scientist Dr. AQ Khan has revealed that General Pervez Musharraf himself was involved in nuclear proliferation, the *Washington Post* reported quoting a Pakistani investigator. The revelation is an embarrassment to the Bush administration which views the Pakistani President as its best bet in the region against terrorism and proliferation of WMD.

Dr Khan has also named Mrs Benazir Bhutto and former army chiefs Gen. Mirza Aslam Beg and Gen. Jehangir Karamat as being privy to the covert nuclear deals.

Dr Khan confessed he helped North Korea design and equip facilities for making weapons-grade uranium with the knowledge of senior military commanders, including

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3. — The USA proposes to provide \$300 million aid to Pakistan for debt relief and development activities, India would be getting a mere \$15 million in the \$564 million annual budget proposals for South Asia. — PTI

Details on page 3

Dr Khan's assertions contradict assertions by Gen. Musharraf and other officials that Dr Khan and at least one other scientist, Dr. Md Farooq, acted out of greed and in violation of government policy that bars the export of nuclear weapons technology to any foreign country.

Dr Khan also urged the investigators to question the Pakistani President, Gen. Karamat and Gen. Beg as "no debriefing is complete unless you bring every one of them here and debrief us together".

Gen. Musharraf, the unnamed investigator was quoted as saying.

Gen. Beg, the army chief of staff from 1988 to 1991, was aware of assistance the scientist was providing to Iran's nuclear programme and that Gen. Musharraf and two other army chiefs knew and approved of his efforts on behalf of Pyongyang, Dr Khan told investigators.

Khan confesses: I sold nuclear secrets

PK-1 287

Vijay Dutt & Agencies
London, February 2

THE FATHER of the Pakistani nuclear bomb, Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, has admitted selling nuclear secrets to Iran, Libya and North Korea, but authorities haven't decided whether the national hero will go on trial.

Khan, in a 12-page written confession, has reportedly revealed the names of several top military officers and scientists who were part of the nuclear transfer plot.

"Earlier, Khan was avoiding the allegation of proliferation but later admitted (it) during four intense sessions of two hours each," a Pakistani official said.

Can of worms

► Khan confesses he leaked nuclear knowhow (from 1986 to the late 1990s) to groups working for Iran, Libya and North Korea

► Analysts say prosecuting Khan would expose Pakistan's nuclear programme to scrutiny

► Three retired military



officers were also questioned during the probe. But Musharraf has exonerated the military

have found that he travelled 41 times to various countries in the past two years, including Dubai, Malaysia, Casablanca, South Africa and Turkey, probably to contact the underworld.

Khan and his accomplices are believed to have smuggled the nuclear hardware on chartered planes. He was reportedly cautioned by the ISI chief in 2000 to "show some responsibility" after one chartered flight to North Korea was detained and searched. Apparently, nothing was found. The channel reportedly worked through Dubai, where the wide network of Dawood Ibrahim came in handy for money-laundering.

■ Page 15: Flawed hero or crook?

tion on Pakistan. He also said he thought it would help the Muslim cause. The scientist, however, is suspected of having amassed millions in the deals. Investigators

Khan denied a financial motive, saying he shared the technology because he thought the emergence of more nuclear states would ease Western atten-

Pak oppn angry at govt's sacking of nuclear hero

Islamabad: Opposition parties were on Sunday furious at the government's sacking of Pakistan's top nuclear scientist amid a probe into suspected nuclear technology sales, saying it was an insult and could jeopardise national security. The government sacked Abdul Qadir Khan on Saturday, architect of Pakistan's nuclear programme, as an adviser to "facilitate" the investigation into the suspected sale of nuclear know-how to Iran and Libya.

The decision, which came after a meeting of the country's political and military leaders chaired by President Pervez Musharraf, shocked a nation accustomed to revering Dr. Khan as a hero. "It is the ultimate insult to the people of Pakistan," senator Saadia Abbasi of exiled premier Nawaz Sharif's secular Pakistan Muslim League said.

Pakistan came out of nuclear closet during Sharif's rule in May 1998



A Pakistani youth member of Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) shouts slogans as he carries a placard depicting a caricature of President Pervez Musharraf and a nuclear missile in Karachi on Friday

by conducting nuclear tests. "The entire nation feels humiliated over the treatment being meted out to a national hero by the government," Mr Abbasi said. "There is a grave sense of loss personally and as a nation we feel that our backbone has been broken." Leader of six-party Islamist alliance Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) Mian Muhammad Aslam said: "It is an attempt to make Pakistan practically insecure. MMA will raise this matter in parliament and also launch public protest to compel government to reverse disgraceful actions against our national heroes." Mr Aslam said, "US and the Western countries are too uncomfortable to see an Islamic country having nuclear capability. The present government lacks courage to stand up against external pressures, that is why it is acting against our national heroes and jeopardising the security of the country."

Meanwhile, mystery shrouds the whereabouts of Dr. Khan. Media reports said here on Sunday that confusion prevailed over the whereabouts of the 'father of the nuclear bomb'. A Pakistani newspaper, which managed to speak to him briefly, said Dr. Khan declined to comment on reports of his arrest. "I have left my matter to God," he reportedly told the newspaper. When asked about his condition, he said "I am all right and thankful to all my sympathisers."

The report said it was not known whether Dr. Khan was kept under house arrest. The government said last night that security around him has been tightened. Pakistan's defence spokesman Maj. Gen. Shoukat Sultan told the local media that Dr. Khan was not under arrest but security had been beefed up around his residence. Agencies

Nuke scanner on Pak seven

Islamabad, Feb. 1 (Reuters): Pakistan's investigation into the sale of nuclear weapons technology to Iran and Libya has narrowed down to seven suspects, including top scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan who has been sacked as government adviser, officials said today.

Revered as the father of the country's and the Islamic world's atomic bomb, Khan's removal as adviser to the Prime Minister is a sensitive issue. Pakistan developed nuclear weapons from the 1970s in response to India's programme.

President Pervez Musharraf, who has promised to punish anyone who leaked nuclear weapons secrets abroad, has yet to decide whether Khan and others will be put on trial.

"That decision will be taken only when the investigation is complete," Major-General Shaukat Sultan, Pakistan's military spokesman, said.

"If during the the investigation anyone is found out, that person will be looked into. No one is above the law." He said the investigation would be wound up after the Muslim holiday of Id al-Adha, which ends in Pakistan on Wednesday.

Details of Khan's large personal fortune and extravagant lifestyle have been reported in the local press, but many refuse to blame the 69-year-old, saying

he was acting at the behest of the military which was desperate to develop an atomic bomb.

Whether the net will widen to include senior military and intelligence officials, who western diplomats say must have known about Khan's dealings abroad, remains to be seen.

Sultan said there were two retired brigadiers among the seven suspects.

A report in *The News* daily that suggested Khan's business interests stretched to Africa also questioned the role of retired General Mirza Aslam Beg, head of the army from 1988 to 1991, who is not under investigation.

It said Beg had denied two successive Prime Ministers — Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif — access to the Khan Research Laboratories uranium enrichment plant near Islamabad. Beg has denied any wrongdoing.

Pervez address

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf will address the nation after the Id holidays to explain the need to crack down against Khan and other scientists for allegedly proliferating nuclear technology to Iran and Libya, official media reported today.

The government was under pressure from the Opposition and Islamist parties not to take action against Khan.

Qadeer Khan removed

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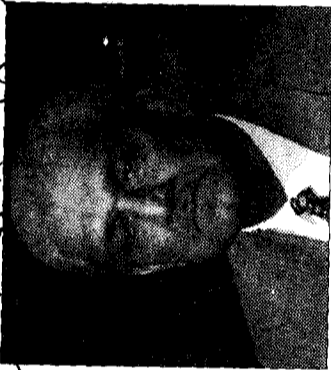
ISLAMABAD, Jan. 31. — The father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, Mr Abdul Qadeer Khan, has been removed from the post of scientific adviser to Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali for his alleged involvement in the proliferation of sensitive technology to Iran and Libya.

The action followed a meeting of the National Nuclear Command Authority, chaired by President Pervez Musharraf who reviewed the investigation process and its fallout.

He was removed to "facilitate" a probe into the suspected transfer of nuclear technology to Iran and Libya, officials said.

Mr Khan was earlier designated adviser to the President and after last year's polls, he was made adviser to the Prime Minister following his forced retirement in 2001 as the head of premier nuclear installation Khan Research Laboratories.

The administrative action



Mr Abdul Qadeer Khan

removing Mr Khan as scientific adviser, a post which bestowed Cabinet rank on him, was seen as a prelude to take drastic action against him, possibly his arrest.

Pakistan government was under pressure from the Opposition and Islamist parties not to take action against him for his contribution to the country. The Islamist alliance, Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, has threatened mass agitation if any action is taken against him.

Mr Khan has emerged as the

INQUIRY FINDINGS

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 31. — Loose controls at Pakistan's top nuclear facility allowed a small number of employees to profit from the nuclear black market, Intelligence and government officials said today.

The officials said investigators have submitted these findings in a report to Gen. Pervez Musharraf. The government has promised that the probe into alleged transfers of nuclear technology to Iran and Libya would soon be complete. — AP

key suspect in the investigation, launched in November following information provided by Iran to the International Atomic Energy Association.

Significantly the administrative action against the scientist followed contradictory statements by Pakistani ministers and officials for the past few days.

Interior minister Mr Faisal Saleh Hayat said recently that no action was contemplated against Mr Khan as he was not a suspect.

But, official APP news agency last night quoted a spokesman of the interior ministry as clarifying that Mr Hayat has been quoted wrongly. "The news quoting the minister as saying that Mr Khan was not a suspect in the transfer of nuclear know-how to any other country was not correct."

According to the spokesman, what Mr Hayat had said was that until the investigation was over, it would be premature to say anything.

Security boost

Security was raised today at the already heavily-guarded home of Mr Khan. "We have enhanced his security arrangements," military spokesman Maj.-Gen. Shaukat Sultan told AFP, adding that the government was "concerned about his security".

Less than Khan-did

PKND Bill ST-6
The politics of the possible in Pakistan

Only the very naive will be taken in by the story of how Islamabad came to be the world's champion proliferator of nuclear weapons — that individual scientists succumbed to the lure of filthy lucre and exchanged knowhow for property and bank balances. To Pakistani investigators it might be an "open and shut" case, but they can reveal only as much as their bosses will allow them to reveal. Pakistan's nuclear programme is run neither by its scientists; nor, post-Zulfikar Bhutto, does the political establishment have much to do with it. Its reins are firmly in the hands of the military, and it is inconceivable that neither the military nor the ubiquitous ISI had an inkling of what was going on under their noses even as Abdul Qadeer Khan, the "father" of Pakistan's nuclear programme, travelled frequently to Iran and North Korea.

The truth, rather, is that the military is untouchable in Pervez Musharraf-country — look at the manner in which military personnel have been kept out of the purview of the National Accountability Bureau whose brief appears to be to go after as many civilian politicians as it can get. Musharraf would only have to touch the real decision-makers on proliferation — presuming he is not one of their number himself — and poof, there would go his power base. As it is, he will become vulnerable when he steps down from his present position of chief of army staff, as he has promised to by the end of this year. On the other hand, Washington is breathing down his neck for nuclear dealings with almost all those it has designated rogue states. The solution: offer up Khan as a convenient scapegoat.

Actually, even this solution may not be easy to implement. Khan has been the key man responsible for Pakistan's nuclear programme ever since he stole centrifuge designs from the Dutch firm Urenco in the 1970s. He remained head of Khan Research Laboratories in Kahuta till only two years ago, a fallout of 9/11 as the Americans were suspicious about his Al Qaeda links. His role as architect of Pakistan's nuclear programme has earned him the status of a national hero. Turning him into a villain overnight leaves a bad taste in the mouth, particularly as any trial of him will have to be a closed one — he would spill too many secrets otherwise.

The axe may therefore not fall on Khan but some of his deputies, while he may be asked to live out his days in retirement. But Washington has launched its own independent investigations, and whether such a denouement will satisfy it remains to be seen. Actually even Washington is responsible as it had winked a grandfatherly eye during the 1980s, while Islamabad went merrily about illegally acquiring nuclear equipment from abroad. Those were, of course, the heady days of the Afghan *jihad* against the Soviets, and the Reagan administration gave Islamabad a break from the Symington amendment, which stipulated cutting off all aid to any country acquiring nuclear technology from abroad. This window of opportunity proved crucial in the setting up of Islamabad's nuclear weapons programme. But superpowers have the luxury of overlooking their own warts while pointing the finger of blame at others. Islamabad, on the contrary, may not get out of this unscathed.

THE STATESMAN

31 JAN 2004

অন্য জেহাদ

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১৫ জানুয়ারী ২০০৮

দুই নৌকায় পাঁচ দিয়া চলিলে
টলমলায়মান থাকিতেই হয়,
এমনকী মাঝে মধ্যে পা ফস্কাইয়া
নাকানি চোবানি খাওয়াও আশ্চর্য নয়।
এই বাস্তব উপলব্ধিটি সম্ভবত অবশেষে
পাক প্রেসিডেন্ট পারভেজ মুশারফের
চিত্তগগনে উদ্ভিত হইয়াছে। ইসলামি
জেহাদির নৌকাখানি ত্যাগ করিতে
মুশারফ তাই এখন এতটাই উন্মুখ যে
খোদ সন্ত্রাসের বিরুদ্ধেই তিনি জেহাদ
ঘোষণা করিয়া বসিয়াছেন। তাঁহার এই
নূতন আহ্বান যেমন আহ্লাদ-
উদ্বেককারী, তেমনই বিস্ময়জনক।
বিস্ময়, কেননা যে সে নহে, খোদ
পারভেজ মুশারফের মুখ হইতে নিঃসৃত
হইয়াছে এই আহ্বান, যে মুশারফ
আপাদমস্তক সৈন্য-সংস্কৃতিতে পরিপুষ্ট,
একনায়কত্বের তাগিদে বরাবর দেশের
কুটূর্ণপন্থী লালনে অভ্যস্ত, হাজারো
আন্তর্জাতিক চাপের সম্মুখেও গা
বাঁচাইয়া দুই কুল রক্ষা করিবার
কুটনীতিতে অতীব সিদ্ধহস্ত। প্রথম বার
পাক পার্লামেন্টে ন্যাশনাল অ্যাসেম্বলি
ও সেনেটের যুগ্ম অধিবেশনে বক্তৃতা
দিতে উপস্থিত হইয়া সেই মুশারফ যে
এমন ভাষায়, এমন দ্বিধাহীন দার্ঢ্যে,
এমন অবিচলিত সাহসের সঙ্গে
সন্ত্রাসবিরোধী জেহাদের ধূয়া তুলিবেন,
সন্ত্রাসের মূল উপড়াইয়া ফেলিবার জন্য
প্রকাশ্য আহ্বান জানাইবেন, এমনটা
সত্যই ভাবা যায় নাই। সামান্য সময়ে
এতখানি অবস্থানের পরিবর্তন তাঁহার
কাছ হইতে প্রত্যাশিত ছিল না বলিয়াই
বোধ হয় ভারতীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী
অটলবিহারী বাজপেয়ী ও
উপপ্রধানমন্ত্রী লালকৃষ্ণ আডবাণী
উভয়েই এ বিষয়ে তাঁহাদের গভীর
সন্তোষ প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন, এই আশাও
র্যক্ত করিয়াছেন যে মুশারফ তাঁহার
মন্ত্রাস্বামনা বাগাড়ম্বরেই সীমাবদ্ধ
রাখিবেন না, তাহা সিদ্ধ করিবার
লক্ষ্যেও দ্রুত অগ্রসর হইবেন। এখনই
এতখানি আশা হয়তো বাড়াবাড়ি
পোড়াইতে পারে, তবে মুশারফ যে
তাঁহার ইতিমধ্যেই প্রকাশিত বক্তব্যের
দ্বারা নিজ দেশাভ্যন্তরে পিছু ফিরিবার
সেতু পোড়াইয়া ফেলিতেছেন, সে
বিষয়েও বড় একটা সংশয় নাই।
পারভেজ মুশারফের অবস্থানের
এই 'নাটকীয়' পরিবর্তনের প্রেক্ষাপটটি
বিস্তৃত। বিভিন্ন ধরনের ঘটনাচক্রের
একত্র সমাবেশে এই মুহূর্তে এমনই এক
নিষ্স্থিতি উদ্ভূত, যাহাতে মুশারফের
পক্ষে সেতু উড়াইয়া দিয়া শান্তির পথে
পা বাড়ানো ছাড়া বিশেষ গত্যন্তর নাই।
কয়েক দিনের মধ্যে পর পর দুই বার
তাঁহার উপর প্রাণনাশের হামলা
হুঁহুকে অবশ্যই এই শান্তিপথে ঠেলিয়া
দিয়াছে। নচেৎ তিনি তো বহু দিন
যাবৎই এক মনে, এক সুরে বলিয়া

আসিয়াছেন যে কাশ্মীর সমস্যাই
ভারত-পাক সম্পর্কের মূল কাঁটা, এবং
সন্ত্রাসমদতে পাক রাষ্ট্রের ভূমিকা
বিষয়ে ভারত যে ইঙ্গিতসমূহ করিয়া
থাকে, সে সকল নেহাতই ভিত্তিহীন।
প্রত্যক্ষ সামরিক মদতের কথা যদি বা
বাদও দেওয়া যায়, মুশারফ-পরিচালিত
পাক রাষ্ট্রের এই সরকারি অবস্থান যে
সন্ত্রাসী ও জেহাদিদের পরোক্ষে
বিলক্ষণ উৎসাহিত করিয়া
আসিতেছিল, সে বিষয়ে সন্দেহ কী!
কুখ্যাত এগারোই সেপ্টেম্বরের পর
আমেরিকা যুক্তরাষ্ট্র হইতে প্রাক্তন মিত্র
পাকিস্তানের উপর সন্ত্রাস-বিরোধিতার
জন্য যে পরিমাণ চাপ আসিতেছিল, দুই
হাতে সন্ত্রাস-বিরোধিতা ও সন্ত্রাস-
মদতের দুই মন্দিরা বাজাইয়া মুশারফ
এত দিন তাহারও ভালই মোকাবিলা
করিয়া আসিয়াছেন। এত সঙ্ঘেও
শেষরক্ষা করিতে তিনি অক্ষম হইলেন,
ক্রমশ সন্ত্রাসবাদী জেহাদিদের
বিরাগভাজন হইলেন, দুই নৌকায়
চলিবার অবধারিত ফল ফলিল। শেষ
পর্যন্ত নিজের রাজনৈতিক অস্তিত্ব ও
স্থিতির দায়েই তাঁহাকে শান্তিপথের
সওয়ার হইতে হইল। সংঘর্ষপথের
সন্ত্রাসী পূজারীরা নিশ্চয়ই তাঁহাকে আর
পূর্বের মতো অসীম বিশ্বাসভাজন
প্রশ্রয়দাতা মনে করে না, সুতরাং,
সেতু পুড়িতেছে।
বস্তুত, পার্লামেন্টে বক্তব্য পেশের
সময়েও প্রবল বিক্ষোভের মুখে পড়েন
মুশারফ, কিন্তু সে বিক্ষোভের বক্তব্য
ছিল ভিন্ন। আওয়ামি ন্যাশনাল পার্টি,
রেস্টোরেশন ডেমোক্রেসি, পাক
মুসলিম লিগ, সকলেরই মতে,
সাংবিধানিক প্রক্রিয়ায় নির্বাচিত হন নাই
যে প্রেসিডেন্ট, তাঁহার পক্ষে
পার্লামেন্টে যুগ্ম বৈঠকে ভাষণ দিতে
আসাই অধিকার-বহির্ভূত। প্রশ্নটি ওঠা
অস্বাভাবিক নয়, বরং অত্যন্ত সঙ্গত,
কিন্তু এই মুহূর্তে এই প্রশ্নের উত্থাপন
আরও একটি ধন্দ তথা প্রত্যাশার জন্ম
দেয়। তবে কী এই বিপক্ষ দলগুলির
কাছে মুশারফের মূল বক্তব্যের প্রতি
নিহিত সমর্থন রহিয়াছে? তাই সন্ত্রাস
বিষয়ে মুশারফের অবস্থানের বদলে
মুশারফের অধিকারই বৃহত্তর বিরুদ্ধ
বক্তব্য হইয়া উঠিতেছে? তাহাই যদি
হয়, সে ক্ষেত্রে মুশারফের পক্ষে
উদ্দেশ্যসাধন অনেক সহজতর হইয়া
যাইবে, সন্দেহ নাই। আশা করা যাক,
মুশারফ ও তাঁহার রাজনৈতিক
প্রতিপক্ষগণ, সকলেরই কাছে এত
দিনে সন্ত্রাসচক্রের অর্থহীনতা ও
বিপজ্জনকতা স্পষ্ট হইয়া গিয়াছে।
এখন একমাত্র এই পাল্টা 'জেহাদের'
পথই মুশারফ, তথা তাঁহার দেশ, তথা
সমগ্র উপমহাদেশকে মঙ্গলবার্তা
আনিয়া দিতে পারে।

BOYCOTT KHAN, SAYS GOVT

N-scientists' foreign funds found

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 25. — Investigators have traced the foreign bank accounts of two senior Pakistani nuclear scientists, who allegedly received money for passing nuclear technology to Iran. In another development, the government has ordered all ministries and departments not to invite Dr AQ Khan, the father of the country's atomic bomb, to any official function.

The foreign bank accounts in which the proceeds from the transfer of some nuclear technology to Iran have been deposited were traced back to at least two senior nuclear scientists, unnamed officials were quoted as saying by the local daily the *News* today. These accounts were being operated through a Dubai-based bank, which has already provided the required information to Pakistani authorities.

"It is an open and shut case. Their foreign bank accounts swelled by millions of dollars as the sensitive information and some hardware reached Iran," one official said.

For investigation and security reasons, the government sources have not revealed the names of the scientists involved in the deal. Yesterday, the same newspaper hinted at Dr Khan and his close associate Dr M Farooq.

The government has also instructed all ministries and departments not to invite Dr Khan to

MMA warns of protest march

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 25. — Hundreds of Islamic hardliners today rallied in support of the Pakistani scientists being detained for alleged nuclear proliferation, even as the major alliance of Pakistan's Islamic groups threatened to organise a people's march to the Capital if they were not freed. Acting chief of MMA, Qazi Hussain Ahmed, demanded in Rawalpindi that the government immediately release all nuclear scientists. — PTI

any official function, the newspaper said.

The decision to allow Dr Khan to continue as an adviser to the Prime Minister on Scientific Affairs would be taken by President Pervez Musharraf who returned from Davos today after attending the World Economic Forum.

The Iranian authorities have already confirmed that the foreign bank accounts were being controlled by Pakistani nuclear scientists, the paper said. It was also discovered that Dubai-based undercover companies used by Khan Research Laboratories to procure equipment was being operated by a close relative of a top nuclear scientist.

Musharraf returns: Gen. Musharraf today returned home after a week-long visit to Turkey and Davos in Switzerland where he attended the World Economic Forum. He also met the US Vice-President.

Musharraf admits scientists sold N-data

Davos (Switzerland): Pakistan's President General Pervez Musharraf acknowledged on Friday that scientists from his country appeared to have sold nuclear designs to other nations probably "for personal financial gain". He denied that the Pakistan government knew of any sales at the time but vowed that suspects would be dealt with "as anti-state elements".

General Musharraf's statement at a global economic forum here came after weeks of delicate efforts to force Pakistan to deal with the scientists, according to diplomats and American officials.

Technical documents recently obtained from Libya on its nuclear programme, as well as documents relating to Iran's nuclear activities, undercut years of Pakistani denials and appeared to force General Musharraf's hand, diplomats and American officials said.

The documents "have created a situation in which the denials no longer hold up," one senior American official said.

General Musharraf met several times in recent weeks with Abdul Qadeer Khan, the father of the Pakistani atomic bomb, who is revered in the country as a national hero, the officials said.

A number of scientists closely tied to Dr Khan have been detained for

Investigators point finger at Khan, Farooq

Washington: Pakistani investigators have concluded that at least two of the country's top nuclear scientists—Abdul Qadeer Khan and Mohammed Farooq, a manager of the premier nuclear weapons laboratory named after Khan—gave unauthorised technical assistance to Iran's nuclear weapons programme in the late 1980s, the *Washington Post* reported on Saturday.

Khan and other Pakistani scientists allegedly provided help to build nuclear weapons under a secret agreement between Pakistan and Iran that was supposed to be limited to the sharing of peaceful nuclear technology, Pakistani officials told the *Washington Post* on condition of anonymity. PTI

questioning. There have already been protests in Islamabad over the detentions, and some European and American officials said that General Musharraf seemed to be preparing for arrests or other legal actions.

Starting in late December, Pakistani government officials began backing away from their vigorous denials that

their scientists had provided critical help to several aspiring nuclear states, including Iran and North Korea. But on Friday, General Musharraf went further. "Well, I would not like to predict," he said in an interview with CNN, "but it appears that some individuals, as I said, were involved for personal financial gain."

General Musharraf continued to insist that the government was not involved in the sales, portraying the actions as the efforts of corrupt scientists. American officials, however, are clearly skeptical of these claims.

A senior European diplomat who has reviewed much of the evidence said that "it stretches credulity that proliferation on this scale can occur without senior officials in the government knowing about it".

American officials say they are uncertain why General Musharraf is now moving against the scientists. They suggested in recent interviews that the evidence has become so overwhelming that he has begun to fear the reimposition of sanctions by Congress. But they also suggest that he may be trying to reassert his power, demonstrating that he will not be intimidated by critics who say he has warmed up too much to the US, both in the hunt for Al Qaida terrorists and in Washington's demands to clamp down on proliferation. NYT News Service

Nukes in safe hands: Pervez

Istanbul, Jan. 22 (Reuters): President Pervez Musharraf said yesterday the fight to root out Islamic militancy in Pakistan would be long and hard, but there was no danger of his country's nuclear weapons falling into extremist hands.

Musharraf, who survived two recent assassination attempts blamed on militants opposed to his support for the US "war on terror", said the violence sprang from years of conflict in flashpoints such as Afghanistan, Kashmir and West Asia.

"All this has a fallout, and it has led to extremism, it has led to

militancy in Pakistani society," he told a small group of reporters during an official trip to Turkey. "It will certainly take time to curb. There is no short-cut solution to it."

But he said he was confident most Pakistanis backed his stance, despite noisy protests on Saturday by Opposition politicians during his first speech to parliament since seizing power in a 1999 coup.

The protests were led partly by Islamists who recently cut a deal to keep him in power until 2007, but who walked out of the session en masse to condemn his support for Washington.

"The vast majority of Pakistanis are moderate. They are not extremists," he said. "And that is my strength... What I am trying to do is give voice to this vast majority."

Musharraf, who called on Saturday for a "jihad against extremism", said there was no cause for concern that militants would get access to Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. "Pakistan's nuclear assets... are under very strong custodial controls," he said. "There is no danger of our nuclear assets falling into extremist hands."

Worries about nuclear security in Pakistan have been

fanned by a police probe into suspicions that several of the country's top scientists may have sold nuclear know-how to Iran.

Two Dutch ministers said this week the same technology may also have found its way to Libya and North Korea.

Musharraf, who has vowed to strengthen his country's nuclear and missile defence programme, said the government had never been involved in spreading nuclear technology, and any individuals found guilty of this would face "tough action".

He was speaking a day after signing an anti-terrorism accord

with Turkey, another country battered by militant attacks and courting closer relations with the west.

Four suicide bombings claimed by al Qaida killed at least 61 people in Istanbul in November and Turkish press reports said some of those involved had been trained in Pakistan.

Turkey hopes to start full membership talks with the European Union. Washington sees both countries as strategic allies and views Turkey in particular as a model "Muslim democracy" that should be emulated elsewhere.

Pak releases three nuke scientists

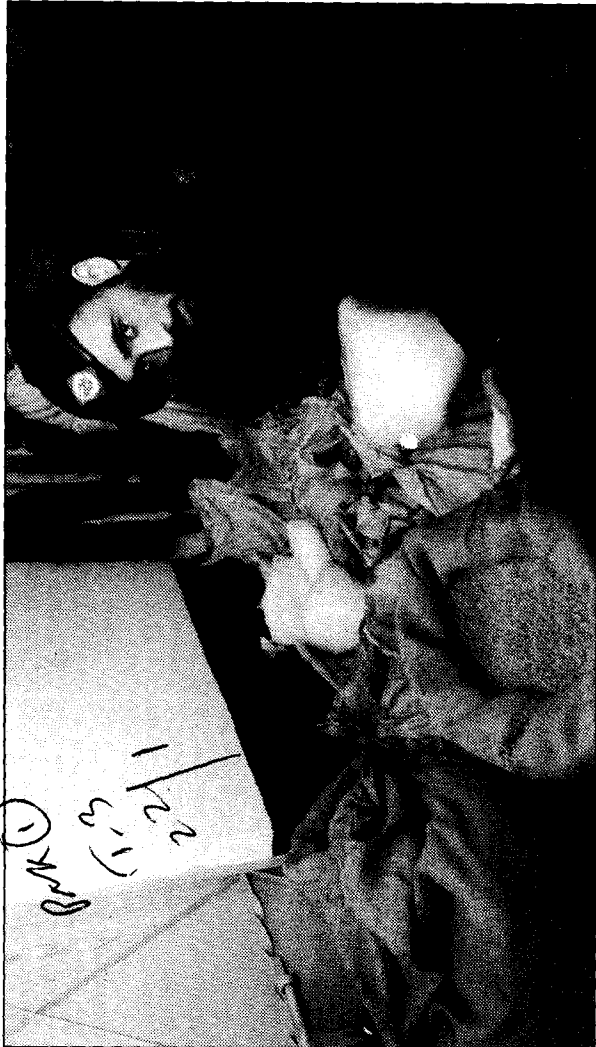
IMTIAZ GUL

Islamabad, Jan. 21: Pakistan today released three nuclear scientists who were questioned over the alleged transfer of nuclear technology to Iran.

"There were four officials investigated in the first phase and we have released all except Dr Farooq Ahmed. Now their movement is no longer restricted," Pakistan's information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said at a press briefing.

Dr Ahmed was among the three scientists who had been detained for "debriefing" in November, last year. Rashid said nine people, including two retired brigadiers and a retired major, are still being questioned. He added that the debriefings will conclude within a week's time. No official or scientist who have been released will be required for future debriefings nor will there movements be restricted.

Families and friends of officials being debriefed claim at least 25 scientists and administrative officials of the Khan Research Laboratories (KRL) are being detained over allegations that some may have supplied nu-



A policeman shows bomb-making material recovered from a house in Karachi after a raid. (Reuters)

clear information and materials to Iran and North Korea. Debriefings of scientists at KRL, Pakistan's premier uranium enrichment facility, had begun in December, last year, based on information from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran. The KRL founder and the pioneer of Pakistan's nuclear programme, Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, was also grilled.

However, Rashid clarified that all detained officials were either retired scientists or army officers who had been associated with the country's 30-year-old

nuclear programme.

To a question, he denied Pakistan's involvement in nuclear proliferation, saying: "The debriefings reflect Pakistan's responsible attitude to the issue."

He also denied press reports that a former chief of army staff General Mirza Aslam Beg had

also been questioned during the debriefings. "The reports were part of a malicious propaganda campaign unleashed to malign Pakistan as an irresponsible state," Rashid said, adding that "our record in the nuclear arena is impeccable."

The families of detained officials today demonstrated in front of the Pakistan parliament to protest against the "illegal" arrests.

"Yes, we have filed petition in the court of law against the detentions but it (protest) is a reflection of our anger," Saima Aadi, daughter of Dr Nazir Ahmed, said. Dr Ahmad was picked up from his residence over the weekend for questioning.

"We will not trust official statements until our father and other officials are released," Saima said.

The Rawalpindi bench of the Lahore High Court has summoned the ISI chief, home secretary and Pakistan army spokesperson on January 23 in habeas corpus petitions filed by the families of two detained KRL officials to explain why the detainees have not been produced before the judicial magistrate.

Ex-army boss faces Pak nuke needle

Pak ①
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London, Jan. 20 (PTI): General Aslam Beg, former chief of army staff of Pakistan who allegedly tried to sell nuclear technology to Iran for \$12 billion, is being questioned in Islamabad, the London-based *Times* newspaper reported today.

The maverick general was held after Abdul Qadeer Khan, architect of the Pakistani nuclear programme, told investigators during a debriefing that nuclear cooperation with Iran had been authorised by the army officer, the *Times* claimed.

General Beg, one of a number of senior officers with Islamist sympathies, was the chief of army staff from 1988-91 — the period during which the country's nuclear secrets were allegedly passed on to Iran.

General Beg, who also served as head of the Inter Services In-



Aslam Beg

telligence agency, is said to have tried to persuade the civilian governments in power during that period to transfer nuclear technology in return for the money that Iran was allegedly prepared to pay and which would have underwritten the Pakistani military budget for a

considerable time. The offer was rejected.

Eight other officials linked with Pakistan's premier nuclear weapons laboratory have also been detained. Among them were two retired brigadiers who until recently had served as directors at the Khan Research Laboratories (KRL), and a retired major. Major Islam-ul-Haq, a close aide and principal staff officer to Khan, was detained by two intelligence officials while dining at Khan's house. His wife said that she had heard nothing from him since then. Two more senior scientists are also being questioned in the latest sweep.

Quoting Pakistan foreign ministry official Masood Khan, the paper said: "There is no presumption of guilt. It is probable that some of these people would be cleared."

Police probe Omar hand in Musharraf attacks

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 19. — The investigations into the recent attempts on President Pervez Musharraf's life took a new turn with police suspecting the involvement of Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, the militant who was released by India to end the Kandahar hijacking of an Indian Airlines plane in 1999.

Omar, the British born Pakistani militant and a close associate of Masood Azhar, chief of banned militant outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed, is currently awaiting the outcome of his appeal against death sentence in the kidnapping and murder of US journalist Daniel Pearl.

He was brought to Karachi under tight security yesterday

from prison in Hyderabad for interrogation.

Pakistan officials were quoted in the local media today as saying that Omar was being intensely interrogated in connection with ongoing investigations into the two attempts made on the life of Gen. Musharraf last month.

The suspicion of Omar's involvement in the attempts added a new dimension to the case which Pakistani officials believe was the handiwork of "Brigade 313", an alliance of jihadi groups including Jaish and Lashkar-e-Taiyaba. One of the two suicide bombers has been identified as an active member of Jaish and the other as Harkatul Alami. Omar is believed to have association with both.

8 N-scientists, aides quizzed

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 19. — Stepping up investigations into the allegations of proliferation of nuclear technology, security agencies in Pakistan have questioned eight scientists and their aides and raided the house of the father of its nuclear bomb, Mr Abdul Qadir Khan.

All the eight, including an aide of Mr Khan, have been linked to Pakistan's key uranium enrichment facilities Kahuta Research Laboratories and were being "debriefed" in the wake of reports from International Atomic Energy Agency.

They are being questioned on the the allegations of nuclear proliferation to Iran and Libya.

"This does not mean that these persons have been arrested or there is any charge against them. This is an ongoing debriefing session," information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said yesterday.

Those being debriefed include two former Brigadiers, retired Major Islam ul-Haq, who is Mr Khan's principal staff officer, besides three scientists and an official from the administration.

Director-general, Inter-Services Public Relations, Maj-Gen Shaukat Sultan, too added that nobody had been arrested rather some persons were called for a debriefing. He added Pakistan was committed to follow international agreements on non-proliferation.

Those who have been picked up included Mr Nazir, former director-general of KRL's science and technology cooperation directorate, Director administration Brig (retired) Tajwar, and in-charge of the KRL sports Mr Mansoor Ahmed.

Karachi blasts suspect held

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 19. — Pakistan police has arrested a member of a local sectarian outfit for his suspected involvement in the recent car bomb attacks at a church in Karachi and recovered a large amount of explosives. "We arrested Shamim Ahmed alias Shami, an activist of the banned Lashkar-i-Jhangvi group in Gulistan-i-Jauhar on Saturday. He led us to an abandoned house in Junejo Town in Mehmoodabad where we found a large amount of explosives," daily Dawn quoted a police officer as saying.

The police official said Shami is suspected to have been involved in the explosions near the Christian Bible Society and a church on 15 January in which 14 people were injured.

Meanwhile, Pakistani agents are struggling to determine whether an Al-Qaida leader is among seven suspected members of the terror group arrested in a weekend raid, and they've called in the FBI to help interrogate them, intelligence officials said today. — Agencies

THE STATIONER

70 JAN 2004

Qadeer Khan detained

Press Trust of India
Islamabad, January 19

THE FATHER of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, is among the eight scientists and officials who are being questioned in connection with allegations of proliferation and transfer of nuclear technology to Iran and Libya.

"Questions have been asked. The investigations are continuing," Foreign Office spokesman Masood Khan said on Monday. His comments followed disclosure by Pakistan Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad that eight scientists and officials connected with Khan Research Laboratories were being "debriefed" on the issue.

Those being questioned include retired Maj. Islamul Haq, personal secretary to Dr Khan, two former Brigadiers and three scientists and a top



A file photo of Pakistan's top nuclear scientist Dr AQ Khan.

administration official. "This is an ongoing debriefing session," Ahmad said, adding that the eight had not been arrested or charged.

Defending the investigations, Masood Khan said "we are conducting an in-house internal enquiry in accordance with the rules and regulations of the organisation"

and denied involvement of foreign country or foreigners in the investigations.

The wife of Major Haq said that the major was detained on Saturday while he was having dinner with Khan.

Pervez attack probe

British-born Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, better known as Sheikh Omar, who was sentenced to death for masterminding the murder of US reporter Daniel Pearl, is being questioned about two attempts to kill Pervez Musharraf, police said on Monday.

Omar was moved to Islamabad from Hyderabad at the weekend for questioning over the bomb attacks on Musharraf last month. A police source said sleuths suspected there might be a link between Omar and the militants who attacked Musharraf.

Pak N-scientist aide detained

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19/1/04

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 18. — Continuing investigation into allegations of nuclear proliferation, Pakistani security agencies have detained a senior aide to top nuclear scientist Mr Abdul Qadir Khan for interrogation.

Major Isamul Haq, the personal security officer of Mr Khan, was detained yesterday, Pakistani TV channel Geo reported today.

Mr Khan, considered the father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, telephoned Maj. Haq's family yesterday and told them that he has been taken in for questioning by security agencies.

Following this, the family members appealed to the officials of the top nuclear installation, Khan Research Laboratories, to permit them to meet Maj. Haq,

who has not returned home since yesterday.

Pakistan government admitted last month that several of its top nuclear scientists, including Mr Khan, were being questioned in connection with the allegations by International Atomic Energy Agency of proliferation of nuclear technology by Pakistan to Iran and Libya.

President Pervez Musharraf also briefly mentioned the need for stringent checks to prevent proliferation of technology in his address to parliament yesterday.

Maj. Gen. Shaukat Sultan, spokesman for Pakistan's military, said he could not confirm Maj. Haq had been picked up but reiterated standing statements some scientists are being "debriefed".

"This is a normal process," Maj. Gen. Sultan said. "We are committed to non-proliferation."

THE STATESMAN

19 JAN 2004

Protests greet Musharraf's first address

15/11 PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 17. — Bitter protests by opposition lawmakers demanding that the President quit office greeted General Pervez Musharraf's first ever address to parliament today.

Opposition deputies wearing black bands and holding banners pasted with photographs of former Prime Ministers Mr Nawaz Sharif and Mrs Benazir Bhutto shouted "go Musharraf" and "no Musharraf no" as the President came to address the joint session of the 342-seat National Assembly and the 100-seat Senate.

Lawmakers from the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy led by the People's Party Parliamentarians and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and its smaller allies staged what was a repeat of what two previous presidents faced.

Lawmakers belonging to the main Islamist alliance Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal, which recently entered into a pact with Gen. Musharraf to endorse his presidency and constitutional amendments, also boycotted the address at the last minute. The opposition was also angry that some of its legislators, on board a plane, were flown back to Peshawar from Islamabad international airport for what the government stated as "security" rea-

Flights diverted after bomb threat

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 17. — Two domestic flights were diverted today from Islamabad's airport because of a bomb scare, an airline spokesman said, amid conflicting accounts over what caused the delays.

A high-profile opposition lawmaker alleged that a Pakistan International Airlines flight she took from Lahore was diverted to prevent her from attending a key parliamentary address in Islamabad by Pakistan's President. "What kind of General is he who is scared of a woman?" she said over phone after disembarking in Peshawar. — AFP

sons. However, President Musharraf wearing a white colour sherwani did not give attention to the protest and continued his address.

The parliament has been witnessing a crippling row for over a year over Gen. Musharraf's sweeping constitutional powers, grabbed through constitutional amendments.

According to parliamentary rules, the President must address the joint sitting of the Parliament every year.

Gen. Musharraf did not address last year in view of the strong protest by the combined opposition.

THE STATESMAN

1.8 JAN 2004

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18/1/04

Pervez calls for *jihad* against terror

Pakistani

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Jan. 17. — Gen. Pervez Musharraf today went a step further on his assurance not to let terrorists operate from Pakistan-controlled territory. In his first-ever address to the joint session of parliament, the Pakistani President called for a *jihad* against extremism and sectarian violence, pledged to permanently root out terrorism from Pakistani soil and emphasised that the composite dialogue beginning next month should be pursued with sincerity to find a peaceful solution to the Kashmir issue.

Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, who addressed the country's top police officers today, expressed the hope that Islamabad would sincerely implement recent commitments on action against terrorists. "We hope the commitments undertaken will be implemented sincerely and that we can move forward to focus on development and growth, rather than be caught in suspicion and hostility," he said at the concluding session of a two-day meeting of chief secretaries and DGPs.

Later, foreign minister Mr Yashwant Sinha called his Pakistani counterpart Mr Khurshid Mehmood

Kasuri to congratulate him for the success of the seven-nation summit and talks between the two countries. The two leaders agreed to begin the composite dialogue next month as decided earlier.

Gen. Musharraf, interrupted by Opposition members who were shouting slogans asking him to quit, delivered his toughest speech against terror to send a clear signal to India and the world that he was making a serious effort to root out terror. Two flights carrying senior Opposition leaders and parliamentarians of the ruling party were diverted from the capital ahead of the general's address, ostensibly because of bomb threats.

The general, who has survived two assassination bids, sweated profusely in his *sherwani* but went on to vow to stamp out terrorism and prevent nuclear proliferation. He referred to the Indian charge of cross-border terrorism, saying it was important for Islamabad to find a peaceful and just solution to the Kashmir issue to put an end to charges that Pakistan was backing terror. "Agreement reached should be pursued with good intentions and sincerity keeping in mind the aspirations of the people of Kashmir

to take this process forward."

A few people in the country, he said, interpreted Islam with wrong considerations to influence the majority and weaken the country from within. "It's a fact that majority of Pakistanis are moderate. They reject extremism. I appeal to the MPs and people of Pakistan to wage *jihad* against extremism to make Pakistan a moderate and welfare Islamic state... We all have to ensure that individuals or groups involved in terrorism are completely eradicated from Pakistan."

Pakistan, he said, faced four serious allegations in the international arena — spread of terrorism in Afghanistan from Pakistani tribal areas, terrorism on the LoC, proliferation of nuclear weapons and Pakistan being part of an "intolerant society". Emphasising that "important and far-reaching" decisions are to be taken to get out of the "situation", the President warned that "otherwise the coming generations will pay a very heavy price for this indifference and Allah Almighty will never forgive us..."

On Pakistan becoming a nuclear power, he said its capability in nuclear and missile technology was in "national interest".

THE STATESMAN

18 JAN 2004

Pak intelligence officer held in Pervez probe

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BAKID
Gr 3 12/11/09
Islamabad, Jan. 11 (PTT): Pakistan police have detained a local intelligence official for allegedly tipping off the two suicide bombers who tried to crash their explosive-laden vehicles into President Pervez Musharraf's convoy at Rawalpindi on Christmas day.

Muhammad Naeem, an official of the Islamabad special branch, reportedly tipped off the timing of the departure of the presidential convoy to the suicide bombers over his cellphone. Naeem was detailed for the security of Musharraf at the convention centre where he addressed a meeting on science and technology on December 25 here.

Inspector general of police Islamabad Fiaz Ahmad Khan Toru said the intelligence operative was in touch with the suicide attackers over his phone, which made him a suspect. "He must be interrogated about the controversial call", Toru was quoted as saying by the daily *The News*.

Naeem was traced by investi-



Pervez Musharraf

gators as they recovered the chip of the mobile phone used by one of the suicide bombers killed while attempting to ram his explosives-laden vehicle into Musharraf's convoy.

Naeem, who was detained on December 28, was in touch with the suicide attacker Jamil, the report said adding he had bought a new motorbike few days before the assassination attempt.

Investigators believe his detention may lead to clues about

those who masterminded and executed the suicide attack on President Musharraf, the newspaper said. "There is evidence which prove links between the first attempt on the President's life on December 14 at the Chaklala bridge near Ammar chowk and the second attempt at Jhanda Chichi chowk on December 25," an official said.

As many as 109 calls dialled to or from the suicide bombers, were detected during the investigation and all of them were being scrutinised. Significantly, the duration of all the calls was of three seconds except one of 12 seconds. "We have made a headway to the network through these calls", the official said.

Based on the mobile calls, another suspect, Syed Ghulam Yasin Bokhari was reported to have been arrested from Bahawalpur. Investigators say he used to provide manpower and training to terrorists and is reported to be a member of a banned group.

THE TELEGRAPH

12 JAN 2001

মুশারফকে আক্রমণ: গোয়েন্দা অফিসার ধৃত

ইসলামাবাদ, ১১ জানুয়ারি— সর্বের মধ্যেই ভূত। পাকিস্তানের প্রেসিডেন্ট পারভেজ মুশারফকে হত্যার চেষ্টার চক্রান্তে জড়িত সন্দেহে সে দেশের গোয়েন্দা বিভাগের এক অফিসারকে গ্রেফতার করেছে পাকিস্তান পুলিশ। মহম্মদ নঈম নামে ইসলামাবাদ স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চের ওই অফিসারই মুশারফের কনভয়ের গতিবিধি সম্পর্কে মোবাইল ফোনে আত্মঘাতী জঙ্গিদের যাবতীয় খবরাখবর দিয়েছিলেন বলে পুলিশের ধারণা। হামলার পর নিহত এক জঙ্গির মোবাইল ফোনের চিপ খুঁজে পান গোয়েন্দারা। চিপ থেকে পাওয়া ফোন নম্বরগুলি সম্পর্কে খোঁজখবর চালাতে গিয়েই মহম্মদ নঈম নামে অফিসার সরাসরি তাঁদের সন্দেহের তালিকায় চলে আসেন। মুশারফের হত্যার চেষ্টার ছকে নঈমের যুক্ত থাকার বিষয়ে পাক গোয়েন্দারা প্রায় নিশ্চিত হওয়ায় এই চক্রান্তে পাক-গোয়েন্দাবাহিনী ও সেনাবাহিনীর জড়িত থাকার সম্ভাবনাও ক্রমশ প্রবল হয়ে উঠেছে। নঈম-এর সূত্র ধরেই এখন এই চক্রান্তের মূল চাইদের হদিশ শুরু করেছেন গোয়েন্দারা।

গত ২৮ ডিসেম্বর পাক পুলিশের হাতে গ্রেফতার হন নঈম। ইসলামাবাদের আই জি পি ফেয়জ আহমেদ খান তরু জানিয়েছেন, গত ২৫ ডিসেম্বর, মুশারফের উপর হামলার দিন কনভেনশন সেন্টারে নিরাপত্তার দায়িত্বে ছিলেন নঈম। সেখানে বক্তৃতা শেষ করে মুশারফ বার হওয়া মাত্র নঈম তাঁর মোবাইল ফোন থেকে জামিল

নামে এক জঙ্গিকে ফোন করে প্রেসিডেন্টের কনভয় কোন রাস্তা দিয়ে যাবে সেই খবর দেন। হামলাকারী আত্মঘাতী জঙ্গিদের মধ্যে জামিল ছিলেন অন্যতম। তার মোবাইল ফোনের চিপ থেকেই মোট ১০৯ টি কলের হদিশ পান গোয়েন্দারা। ১২ মিনিটের একটি কল ছাড়া প্রত্যেকটি কলই ছিল ৩ মিনিটের। প্রতিটি কল সম্পর্কে বিস্তারিত খবর নিয়েছেন গোয়েন্দারা। নঈম ছাড়াও ওই কলের ভিত্তিতে ভাওয়ালপুর থেকে সঈদ গুলাম ইউসুফ বুখারি নামে একজনকে ধরা হয়েছে। গোয়েন্দাদের সন্দেহ, বুখারি সন্ত্রাসবাদী সংগঠনের সদস্য। সন্ত্রাসবাদীদের জন্য সে লোক জোগান দেওয়া ও তাঁদের প্রশিক্ষণ দেওয়ার ব্যবস্থা করত। এখনও পর্যন্ত পাওয়া তথ্যের ভিত্তিতে গোয়েন্দারা মনে করছেন গত ডিসেম্বরে মুশারফের উপর হওয়া দুটি হামলার মধ্যে যোগ রয়েছে। হতে পারে কোনও একটি দল বা গোষ্ঠী এই চক্রান্তের পিছনে রয়েছে। নঈমকে জেরা করে এ সম্পর্কে আরও অনেক রহস্য উদঘাটিত হতে পারে বলে মনে করা হচ্ছে।

এ দিকে মুশারফের নিরাপত্তা অনেকটা মার্কিন প্রেসিডেন্টের নিরাপত্তা ব্যবস্থার ধাঁচে গোটা ব্যবস্থা চেলে সাজানো হচ্ছে। এ বার থেকে তাঁর কনভয়ে ৬ টি একইরকম দেখতে লিমুজিন গাড়ি থাকবে। মুশারফ কখন, কোন গাড়িতে উঠলেন তা যাতে দেখা না যায় তার জন্য প্রেসিডেন্টের বাড়ির বাইরে পর্দা লাগানো থাকবে।

Pakistan's Homecoming

South Asia, not West Asia

By K Subrahmanyam

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In 1972, after the Bangladesh war, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto publicly vowed to turn his back on India and seek Pakistan's fortune among the Islamic countries to the West. He convened a spectacular Islamic summit at Lahore. He embarked on a quest for nuclear weapons, not merely to deter Indian conventional superiority but also to assert Pakistan's leadership role in the Islamic world. He christened it the 'Islamic bomb' and collected enormous funds from the Islamic world. He concluded secret defence deals with the Shah of Iran and the Gulf states to ensure their military support in any future conflict with India.

General Zia-ul Haq continued the wooing of the Islamic world. He sent a whole division of Pakistani troops to Saudi Arabia. Pakistani pilots flew fighter aircraft for the Gulf states. Pakistan's identification with the Islamic world became total when, under the CIA's leadership it assembled a vast international jihadi force of 80,000-100,000 Muslims from countries ranging from Morocco to Indonesia to fight the Soviet forces in Afghanistan. That, in turn gave birth to jihadism with Pakistani ideologues like Maududi (originally from India) exercising a lot of influence. With Arab money, West European equipment obtained in black market, Chinese weapon design and technical assistance and the US looking away, Pakistan became a nuclear weapon power in the late '80s.

Yet Pakistan was not accepted as a partner by the Islamic countries of West Asia, let alone as a leader. Ayatollah Khomeini used to call Zia-ul Haq the lesser Satan, the bigger Satan being the US. There have always been tensions between Shia Iran and Sunni-dominated Pakistan. During the first Gulf War, Pakistani army chief General Aslam Beg initially sided with Saddam Hussein's strategic defiance. That, in turn, led to most of the Gulf states scaling down their military involvement with Pakistan under US pressure. Subsequently, Pakistan took over Afghanistan by helping the Taliban to fight the Rabbani government. The Pakistani ISI backed the jihadi campaigns in Bosnia, Kosovo, Kashmir and Chechnya and instigated trouble in the Central Asian Republics. Allowing Osama bin Laden refuge, supporting the Taliban and converting Pakistan into the epicentre of jihadi terrorism were all part of the Pakistani leadership's ambitious plans to play a pre-eminent role in the Islamic world.

The Pakistani leadership has a tradition of overestimating its own capability and underestimating the countervailing factors. That resulted in their being frustrated in 1947 (Kashmir), 1965 (Operation Gibraltar), 1971 (Bangladesh), 1984 (Siachen) and 1999 (Kargil). They spoke of bleeding India

through a thousand cuts but could not succeed. Similarly, their use of terrorism as an instrument of foreign policy finally recoiled on them when 9/11 happened. The US became fully engaged in West Asia with president Bush making clear the American determination to restructure the political architecture of the region. Pakistan has been told it has no role to play to its West.

Thanks to its wrong priorities, Pakistan has lost out in terms of economic growth as well as social and political advancement. The Pakistani education system is completely out of sync with today's knowledge economy. An estimate has it that the ratio of college students between Pakistan and India is 1 to 97.

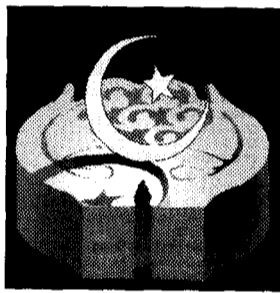
General Musharraf appears finally to have realised that as a country that is part of the subcontinent and whose destiny is linked with the Indus-Gangetic area, Pakistan would never be accepted as part of West Asian Islamic states. Long ago, a noted US analyst said that Pakistan's geostrategic importance arose out of its proximity to the three largest nations of the world — China, India and USSR — and its commanding the

oil sea lanes from the Gulf. But in a unipolar world with no active tension among these three major powers and the US, that geostrategic location has lost much of its significance. Pakistan's source of financial support, Saudi Arabia, is coming increasingly under US scrutiny.

In many ways the upcoming SAARC summit is a sort of homecoming for Pakistan: It

has more in common with the rest of the subcontinent than West Asia and its future economic growth and political and social advancement depend increasingly on peaceful interaction with other SAARC nations. Pakistan is the only country in South Asia that has been discussed internationally as a possible failed state. General Musharraf now knows that terrorism unleashed by the ISI has boomeranged on him.

The general, when faced with the US ultimatum in September 2001, made a U-turn in his Afghan policy and totally abandoned the Taliban. Now, faced with the inexorable realities of the war on terrorism and developing international alignments, it would be logical for him to give up the policy of the last 30 years of confronting India and embark on subcontinental economic co-operation so vitally needed to prevent Pakistan from becoming a failed state. In the history of SAARC this is the most crucial summit. While India, in the light of its past experience, has to be extremely cautious, it must also take into account the enormous compulsions on Pakistan to break with the past. If Pakistan gives credible evidence of its desire to integrate with the subcontinent it should be welcomed and treated like the prodigal son of the biblical tale.



Jamali won't be sacked, assures Musharraf

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Press Trust of India

US confidence in General

WASHINGTON, Jan 2. — Expressing fears that terrorists are after the life of President Musharraf, who survived two assassination attempts last month, President Bush has said he is confident that Pakistani security forces will crack down on the terror network. Mr Bush, who spoke to Mr Musharraf over phone recently, said that "obviously terrorists are after him, and he sounded very confident that his security forces would be able to deal with the threat." "...therefore I feel confident about his security situation," he said yesterday. — PTI

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 2. — President Pervez Musharraf today indicated he would not use his constitutional power to dissolve the legislature and sack the Prime Minister and vowed to sustain democracy and economic reforms.

"Despite the Article 58-2(B) of the Constitution, the present Parliament would become first in the history of the country to complete its full five-year term," Mr Musharraf said in a televised New Year address to the nation. "It would be my responsibility to ensure the continuation of sustained democracy," he said.

Mr Musharraf's remarks came close on the heels of the amendment to Pakistan's 1973 constitution to give the general extraordinary powers, including the right to dissolve Parliament and sack the Prime Minister by decree. They assumed significance in the backdrop of Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali's expressing the hope that the military strongman would not use his powers to sack him and dissolve the National Assembly.

Mr Musharraf, who yesterday won the vote of confidence from the legislature amidst a boycott of the exercise by the

mainstream political opposition, asked the opposition to "listen and understand the voice of the two-thirds majority and play a constructive role in Parliament." He described as "historic" the adoption of the 17th constitution amendment which gave him the power to dissolve Parliament and remove the Prime Minister, and the vote of confidence and said "I am happy this decision by the members was above personal considerations and in the interest of the nation." Mr Jamali had told the media that the President, who has always kept his promises in the past, has said it publicly that he will not use his powers to dismiss the government.

"Therefore, there is no question of use of this article to dissolve the National Assembly by the President," he said.

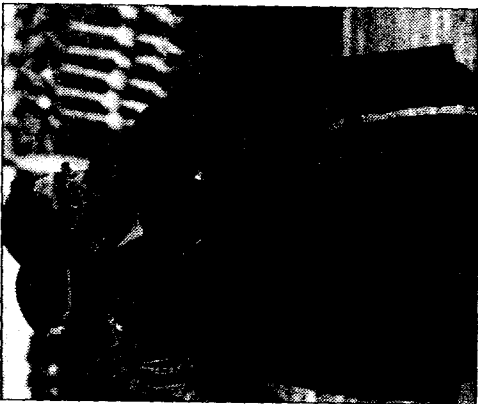
Apparently responding to this, Mr Musharraf, while thanking the Jamali government, allied parties and the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) for the 17th Amendment Bill, assured them that he would come upto their expectations.

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General wins vote to become a 'democrat'



Musharraf. Seeking legitimacy

Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 1. — President Musharraf won a vote of confidence today that supporters hailed as the final step on the General's journey from dictator to democrat. Opponents derided the proceedings which will keep the Pakistani leader in power as President till 2007.

The balloting in both houses of Parliament, and the nation's four provincial assemblies followed a surprise deal last month with a coalition of hardline Islamic parties that agreed to support Gen Musharraf's claim to the presidency in return for a promise that he step down as army

chief by the end of 2004. Information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said the vote, which Gen Musharraf won easily because of a total walkout by several key Opposition groups, was an important boost ahead of the Saarc summit that will bring Pakistani and Indian leaders together since relations between the two neighbours began to thaw in April. The seven-nation summit begins in the Capital on Sunday.

"Now Musharraf can greet the summit delegates as the elected president of Pakistan," Mr Ahmed said. When asked if today's confidence vote meant the end of a dictatorship that began after Gen Musharraf seized power in a 1999 coup,

Mr Ahmed said: "Yes, you could say that." But today's drama did little to put to rest the debate swirling around the General, who has become one of the USA's staunchest allies in the war on terrorism, even as he 'sidelined his country's main political heavyweights.

Two former Prime Ministers, Ms Benazir Bhutto and Mr Nawaz Sharif, live in exile.

During voting in the lower house, Opposition lawmakers from Ms Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party and Mr Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League thumped their desks, shouting "No, No, No! Go Musharraf Go!"

Lawmakers from both parties walked out of proceedings at assem-

blies throughout the country. Mr Ahsan Iqbal, chief coordinator of Pakistan Muslim League (N), called the vote a "mockery of democracy." "Musharraf has staged another drama to get his illegal presidency validated," he said. "It's a total fraud. We don't accept these results. We do not accept him as president."

Even lawmakers from the Islamic coalition, Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal or MMA, remained on the sidelines, neither supporting nor opposing the General in the confidence vote.

The holdouts made for some strange numbers. The 100-strong Senate voted 56-1 in favour of Gen Musharraf, while the 342-member lower house voted 191-0 for the

General. Provincial voting followed the same lines, with large number of abstentions, most notable in the North-West Frontier Province, an area bordering Afghanistan where the MMA holds sway.

Gen Musharraf won the NWFP vote unanimously, but only 30 of the assembly's 124 lawmakers took part. Had Gen Musharraf lost the confidence vote he would have been forced to resign, although that was never considered a possibility after his supporters reached a deal with the MMA, a marriage of convenience for the strongly pro-US leader and the virulently anti-US religious bloc. Before the deal, the Opposition had paralysed Parliament for months.

Musharraf strengthens grip

ISLAMABAD, Dec. 31. — Gen. Pervez Musharraf today approved a law under which he will remain Pakistan's President until 2007 and prepared to seek an endorsement of his Presidency by Parliament tomorrow, three days ahead of the SAARC summit.

He also appointed Supreme Court judge, Mr Justice Nazim Hussain Siddiqui, as the new Chief Justice of Pakistan, paving the way for the immediate retirement of incumbent Mr Justice Sheikh Riaz Ahmad, who had sworn-in Gen. Musharraf as President following his election in a controversial referendum rejected by the Opposition.

Mr Justice Siddiqui would tomorrow take charge from Mr Justice Ahmad, whose services had been extended after he retired. Un-



Musharraf: Strength to strength?

der the 17th Constitutional Amendment Bill ratified by Senate and National Assembly, Gen. Musharraf will quit as the Chief of Army by December 2004 and seek a

vote of confidence from two houses of Parliament and four provincial Assemblies.

After signing the Bill, Gen. Musharraf described it as a "historic" event and said the resultant checks and balances would impart permanence to the democratic system and Parliament would complete its tenure of five years.

"Nobody is permanent, only Pakistan is permanent, this system is for Pakistan and for stability of democracy. I am sure there will be political stability and the Parliament will complete its tenure of five years," he told members of the National Assembly belonging to PML and its allied parties. — PTL