

Pak bans export of N-material

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Dec. 27. — Pakistan today announced banning export of technologies, material and equipment related to nuclear and biological weapons and their delivery systems.

The control lists have been notified pursuant to the "Export Control Act on Goods, Technologies, Materials, Equipment related to Nuclear and Biological Weapons and their Delivery Systems", which was adopted by the country's parliament in September 2004, a foreign office statement said.

The control lists adopted by Pakistan encompass the lists and scope of export controls maintained by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), the Australia Group (AG) which relates to biological agents and toxins, and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), it said. The classification system is based on the European Union's integrated list and latest international standards in this regard, the statement said.

Lists controlling the exports of chemical wea-

Iran nukes

JERUSALEM, Dec. 27. — Israel has warned that Iran will certainly have nuclear capability within one or two years if its programme goes ahead unchecked. The chairman of Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee, Mr Yuval Steinitz, stated this following the presentation of an assessment on Iran's nuclear capability by Israeli intelligence agency Mossad's chief Mr Meir Dagan in front of a panel, *Ha'aretz Online* reported. Mr Steinitz said that if Iran possesses atomic weaponry, the region will become a "black Middle East." — PTI

pons related agents and their delivery system are already being maintained by Pakistan pursuant to the Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Ordinance 2000. The statement said that the notification of the control lists further highlights Pakistan's policy to implement its national and international non-proliferation commitments as a responsible nuclear weapons state. The lists are being notified to all concerned, including manufacturers of such goods.

The war in Balochistan: a backgrounder

What the conflict is about, and why it is important to the region

Praveen Swami

NEW DELHI: Indian television viewers and newspaper readers could be forgiven for not knowing it exists. South Asia's most violent low-intensity conflict has garnered just a few column-inches of print and barely a few minutes of airtime.

Using combat jets, helicopter gunships and artillery, Pakistan's military has been pounding tribal insurgents in the gas-rich and strategically crucial province of Balochistan since the middle of December. Hundreds are believed to have died in the fighting, mainly civilians. The veteran Baloch leader Sardar Sherbaz Khan Mazari, a moderate, told the *Daily Times* that the situation was similar to that which preceded the 1971 Bangladesh war of liberation.

For a conflict that threatens to become a crisis for South Asia, the fighting in Balochistan had relatively innocuous origins. In January 2003, four Pakistan soldiers were alleged to have raped a doctor employed by Pakistan Petroleum at the Sui gasfield. When the authorities failed to file a case, Bugti tribesmen attacked the gasfield. Other tribes joined in, hitting the port at Gwadar as well as railway lines and military facilities. Pakistani forces responded in strength.

Enormous stakes

For both sides, the stakes were enormous. Tribal leaders saw the conflict as a last opportunity to get what they considered a fair share of Balochistan's enormous gas resources: Sui has

• Tribal leaders see the conflict as an opportunity to get a fair share of the gas resources

• The Government sees the fighting as an intolerable challenge to its authority

challenge to its authority and as a spark that could set off similar fires in other provinces.

In an article in August 2005, the eminent journalist Najam Sethi blamed the crisis on "the social and electoral engineering engineered by the military regime." By sidelining mainstream parties in favour of Islamists, he said, President Pervez Musharraf alienated both "the old non-religious tribal leadership as well as the new secular urban middle classes of Balochistan, who see no economic or political space for themselves in the new military-mullah dispensation."

By contrast, Gen. Musharraf has sought to present himself as a modernist whose developmental successes have provoked reaction from the powerful tribal 'sardars' — the hereditary rulers of the dominant Bugti, Marri and Mengal clans.

Whatever the truth, Gen. Musharraf's polemic hasn't helped his own case. In one interview, he said that if the Baloch insurgents continued fighting, "I will hit them so hard they won't know what hit them," language that outraged many.

Attack on rally

The current military assault was provoked by a rocket attack on a rally held by Gen. Musharraf in the town of Kohlu in De-

the Frontier Corps, Balochistan, Major General Shujaat Zamir Dar, and his deputy. Soon after these attacks, Frontier Corps paramilitary and regular Army units, backed by helicopter gunships, launched full-scale attacks on the insurgents.

To those with a sense of history, it isn't hard to see what could lie ahead. In February 1973, Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence discovered a consignment of arms allegedly shipped by Iraq's Embassy to members of the Marri tribe. President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto promptly dismissed the provincial government; Baloch nationalists responded by launching a full-blown insurgency. For the next five years, a 55,000-strong Baloch irregular force fought six Army divisions, backed by air strikes.

Huge casualties

By the time fighting ended, an estimated 5,000 insurgents and 3,000 soldiers had died, along with tens of thousands of civilians. On that occasion, India chose not to use its considerable post-1971 leverage in Pakistan to end the carnage. Unlike in Bangladesh, its covert services did not respond to the insurgents' appeals for help. While New Delhi has now taken the unusual measure of expressing concern on the situation in Balochistan,

More restrictions on madrasas

HO-14
3/12

Ordinance prohibits seminaries from promoting militancy, religious hatred

B. Muralidhar Reddy

PKR

and groups, the effort was given up.

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf on Thursday promulgated an ordinance making it mandatory for every madrasa (religious seminary) in the Federal capital to carry out audit of its accounts and prepare an annual educational activity report.

The ordinance making it compulsory for religious schools to register and account for their funds amends the Societies Registration Act 1860 and would come into force with immediate effect in the Islamabad Capital Territory.

It also prohibits seminaries from promoting militancy, sectarianism and religious hatred. Similar ordinances are in the process of being promulgated in other provinces of the country.

The ordinance would be applicable to religious institutions meant primarily for religious education, Jamia, Darul Uloom, school, college or university or called by any other name, set up for the purpose of imparting religious education with board and lodging facilities.

Religious schools in Pakistan, with an estimated enrolment of 10 lakh students, have once again become the focus of attention of the international community after the London blasts in July in the wake of reports that at least two of those involved were products of Pakistan's religious schools.

The ordinance directs all madrasas to submit an annual report of its educational activities to the registrar of societies. Similarly, it has become mandatory for every religious institution to carry out audit of its accounts and submit a copy of its audit report to the registrar of societies.

Pressure from the West

Since 9/11, the United States and the West have been pressing Pakistan to reform the religious schools with particular emphasis on syllabus and the source of their funding as some of the schools are suspected to be *jeihad* factories.

The directive said no madrasa would teach or publish any literature which promotes militancy and spread sectarianism and religious hatred. Under the ordinance, madrasas existing before its commencement should get themselves registered before December 31, 2005. Similarly, madrasas established after the ordinance should get themselves registered within one year of their establishment.

In 2002, Gen. Musharraf attempted to introduce laws for regulation of religious schools. However, in the face of stiff resistance from religious parties

APR 2005

TELETYPE

TERROR STRIKES



Security personnel remove a body from one of the blast sites in Karachi on Tuesday morning.

AP

Pak blasts target KFC

Car bombs kill six near England team hotel

AGENCIES

Karachi, November 15

TWO CAR bombs exploded outside an outlet of Kentucky Fried Chicken in Karachi on Tuesday, killing at least six people and wounding 14 others.

"This is an act of terrorism and apparently KFC was the target," said Manzoor Mughal, who is heading the police investigation. The blasts nearly destroyed the KFC outlet and damaged several buildings including two luxury hotels, Pearl Continental and the Sheraton.

The Sheraton is expected to host the England cricket team when they arrive in Karachi to play an ODI against Pakistan on

December 15. The government suspects that the attackers may have aimed to disrupt the match. Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Shahryar Khan said the match would be held on schedule and the English players would get tight security. There was no immediate reaction from the England team management.

Another possible motive behind the attack on the high-profile American outlet, information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed felt, was to tarnish Pakistan's image ahead of an international donors' conference on November 19. UN secretary general Kofi Annan is expected to participate in the conference, which hopes to raise \$5.2 billion for reconstruc-

tion of quake-hit areas.

A little-known group, called Baluchistan National Army, has claimed responsibility for the blasts. Shakir Alam, claiming to be a spokesman for the group, phoned media organisations in Karachi with the claim, which the police are investigating.

It was not the first attack on a KFC outlet in Karachi. In September, a KFC and a MacDonald's restaurant were bombed; in May, six people were killed when protesters set fire to a KFC outlet.

Five kilos of explosives were used in the twin blasts. Casualties were restricted as the explosion occurred when people were heading to offices and shops and were not inside KFC.

Pervez ups the ante

Pervez Musharraf
15/11
Of quake relief and F-16s

President Pervez Musharraf's sudden announcement to postpone the purchase of F-16 fighter jets from the USA in order to direct the funds for quake relief is essentially intended to mollify the domestic constituency. The enormity of the tragedy was apparent to Pakistan and the world on the day of the disaster, and yet the General had maintained for the past four weeks that there would be no dilution of defence needs. The backtracking after a visit to the army hospitals in PoK was effected in the presence of military surgeons and comes in response to the Opposition bluster on mounting defence expenditure despite the calamity. In purely economic terms, it has been estimated that the money saved will be just 10 per cent of what quake reconstruction will cost. The calculating soldier must also have reckoned with the diplomatic mileage; he has couched his decision on the F-16 with the charge that the international community (aka the West) has adopted double standards on the relief effort, having provided less than 25 per cent of the money required to help the three million homeless. The General's facts and figures are beyond dispute, but it doesn't behove a Head of State to wax indignant on the basis of bizarre comparisons. His attempt to equate the earthquake with last December's tsunami and the more recent Hurricane Katrina was absurdly far-fetched, and meant distinctly for the consumption of his critics at home. An estimated 230,000 perished in the tsunami that swept through countries (mercifully, save Pakistan). The tragedy of New Orleans in August was in large measure a human failure, the horrendous outcome of George Bush's social engineering that turned a natural calamity into a national disgrace. If at all a comparison can be drawn, it can perhaps be related to poverty levels. As with Katrina, the victims of the quake are among the poorest. The social denominator might have determined the US President's relief effort; this has in no way influenced the international response towards Pakistan.

The developments have rather crudely exposed the current wisdom of the White House, notably that geo-political factors and the overriding need to combat terror must get a higher priority than providing succour to victims of a horrible tragedy. "The rationale of the sale of F-16s to Pakistan still applies despite the quake disaster and talks will resume at an appropriate time," was America's official reaction to the postponement. A more inhumane response to a tragedy would be difficult to imagine. Iron has entered their souls.

Pakistan's games

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But ill-equipped for peacetime tragedy

On 1 September, the Pakistan Air Force Deputy Chief of Operations, Shahzad Chaudhry announced a "month of war games" starting that weekend involving "the entire fleet, including US-made F-16s, French Mirage fighter aircraft and Chinese-built jets" and "using all assets", an exercise he said was the "closest to war you can get in peacetime". The Pakistan Air Force aircraft would fly 8,200 operational sorties, "the highest ever"; Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz would witness the games at the initial stage and President Pervez Musharraf in the concluding phase. Aziz duly did so, and spoke glowingly of how the tremendous power of Pakistan's Air Force extended from the mountains of the Hindu Kush to the Arabian Sea. Any such set of war-games needs a presumed enemy, and there are no prizes for guessing that India was the "target" of those "8,200 operational sorties". Indeed the war games were announced just as India's Foreign Secretary started his talks in Islamabad, a fact that may once have led to the official flying back. But the Government of India said nothing. The "month-long" exercise would have ended about October 3-4. The Pakistan Air Force has not announced any glorious results yet. However, Pakistan (and the part of Jammu & Kashmir it has held on to since its 22 October 1947 invasion and the British-led coup d'état in Gilgit/Baltistan nine days later) were hit by an earthquake immediately afterwards. General Musharraf went visiting the quake-hit areas in battle gear, down to his paratrooper's wings. Pakistan's official TV initially showed a group of three awe-struck bureaucrats/generals who kept saying that God is great. Now, in the aftermath of the quake, Pakistanis are asking just how inept their country has been in its response. Its public statements have been consistent with the sole national goal it has developed to perfection over decades, namely, manipulation of world attention (now using the Hurriyat too) to sell its rather simplistic point of view on the complex mortal conflict that is Jammu & Kashmir.

A fundamental question arises for Pakistan's citizens: what were the concrete gains achieved by their Air Force's grand exercise? What was the exact opportunity cost in terms of fungible economic resources of those 8,200 operational sorties? How many helicopters could the air force press into quake relief operations? It has been estimated by a top Pakistani economist that but for the Kashmir conflict, Pakistan's annual per capita income today may have been near \$2200 whereas it in fact is less than one third of that. Gohar Ayub Khan, as Pakistan's Foreign Minister, had warned India in 1998-99 that the next war would be one that Pakistan would win hands down because India would surrender within a few hours. This was presumably a threat to unleash missiles against Indian cities, so that if India found even non-nuclear missiles suddenly hitting Jamshedpur or Benaras or Bangalore, she would be intimidated enough to sue for peace at once. Recent events have shown that a modern war between Pakistan and India, even a non-nuclear one, would involve the equivalent of a hundred earthquakes. There is no one insane enough on this side of the border to contemplate such an exchange of destruction. Are there still people on the other side who not merely contemplate it but may be actively wishing it? How will the omniscient omnipresent Almighty be treating them?

Killer quake claims over 17,000 in PoK

Pak Seeks World Help To Meet Its 'Biggest Tragedy'

Islamabad: Struggling to deal with the devastating earthquake, Pakistan on Sunday said more than 19,000 people have perished—over 17,000 in occupied Kashmir alone—and 42,000 injured and sought international help in terms of medicines, blankets, tents and helicopters to cope with the "biggest tragedy" of its history.

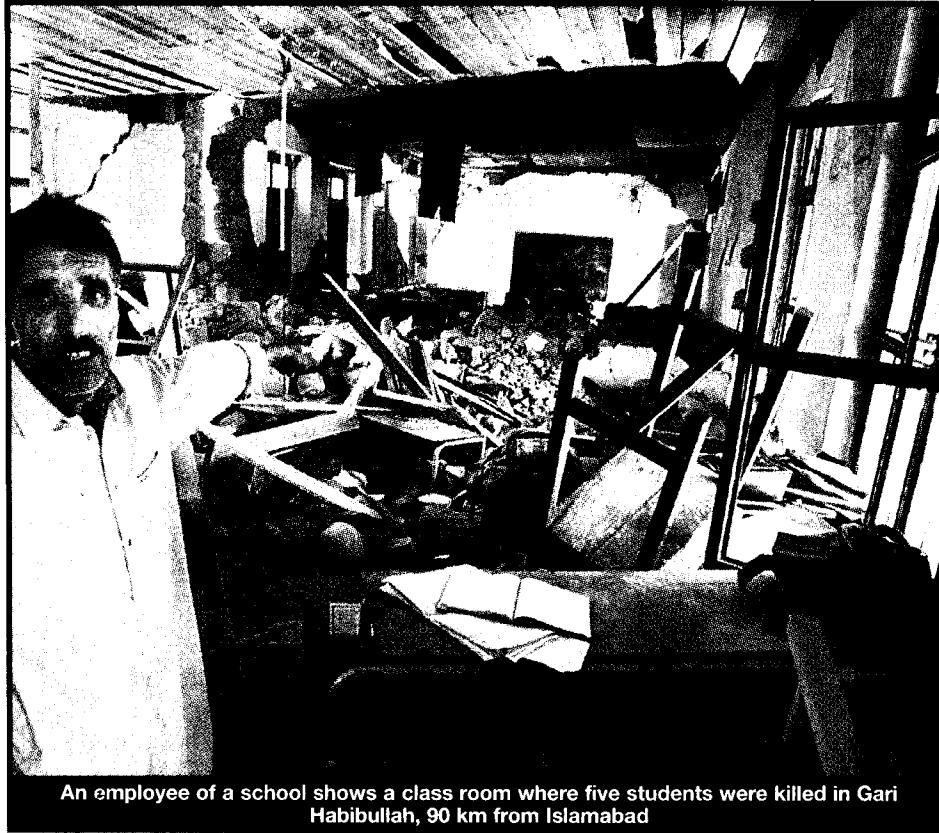
Private television 'Aaj' reported without attributing to any source that more than 25,000 people have died in PoK and North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Describing the situation as "horrendous that one cannot imagine," interior minister Aftab Sherpao told reporters that "so far 19,136 people have lost their lives, 42,397 were injured. Casualties are increasing by the hour."

We do seek international assistance, we have enough manpower but we need financial support. There is a need for large supplies of medicines, tents and cargo helicopters to reach out to the people in far-flung and cut-off areas, the bigger these copters the better—Gen Musharraf

He said the worst affected area was Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, where 17,388 were confirmed dead and 40,421 injured. Around 11,000 of the dead were in PoK capital Muzaffarabad, the epicentre of Saturday's 7.4 magnitude quake, he said.

In NWFP, 1,760 people were killed and 1,797 injured, he said adding in the central province of Punjab 11 were dead and 83 injured. As he was addressing the press conference, many aftershocks were felt in the capital. The Army also suffered heavy casualties with 286 of its men claimed by the killer quake and 215 injured. While 114 personnel were killed in Muzaffarabad, 86 each died in Rawalakot and Bog, Sherpao said.

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, who undertook an aerial visit of NWFP, sought international assistance to deal with the situation. "We do seek international assistance, we have enough manpower but we need financial support so that we may utilise in a required way to cope with the biggest tragedy of our history," Musharraf said. "There is a need for large supplies of medicines, tents, cargo helicopters to reach out to the people in far-flung and cut off areas, the bigger these copters the better," he was quoted as saying by official APP news agency. Sherpao said 70 per cent of the houses were damaged or flattened in Muzaffarabad while 60 per cent houses were hit in Rawalakot. Agencies



An employee of a school shows a class room where five students were killed in Gari Habibullah, 90 km from Islamabad

'I saw people rolling down hills like debris'

By M Saleem Pandit/TNN

Uri: "Right before my eyes, an entire hill collapsed. There were people on it, rolling down with the debris of their homes..." the words trail off, but the fear frozen in the eyes of Sadardin Mir of Sultan-dakhi village near Uri says much more. Mir and his wife were lucky to be out of harm's way when the earthquake shook the very foundations of their village on Saturday. But concern for their two-year-old son saw them rushing back to their home, and jolted them to the reality of the destruction. "I saw eight bodies lying on the roads while shifting my son, Tuafiq Ahmad, to the Army hospital." Though caught under the debris, his son was lucky to have escaped with injuries.

In fact, Mir's village was among the first to be accessed by Army rescue teams. However, Dawaran village, situated near Mohra power station, eight km off Uri, was not that lucky. Rescue teams were yet to come to their aid till



er who was away to Srinagar on the fateful morning. He rushed back only to be greeted by rubble of what was once his home. "My house and cattle are gone, thankfully my family is safe," he said.

His seven-year-old daughter Safina also narrates how they spent a harrowing day and a sleepless night with no electricity, food or water. It was only on Sunday afternoon that some policemen distributed bread among the suffering villagers.

Sunday morning. Ninety of the village's 180 houses were flattened while the remaining too were severely damaged, forcing people to spend a night shelterless and without food and water. Wails of women told the story of destruction that ravaged this village.

"There were bodies and debris everywhere. We formed our own teams to pull out people. A number of people are still missing and there is no medical team in the village," said Fazaldad Mughal, a labourer

Toll in J&K rises to 450; army, airforce step up rescue work

Srinagar: As rescue operations picked up in remote areas with the help of the army, 280 bodies were recovered on Sunday from the worst-affected Tangdhar near the Line of Control, taking the toll in the devastating quake to 450. As many as 280 bodies, including 258 of civilians, 19 army soldiers and three Border Security Force personnel were retrieved from 11 villages in Tangdhar area in Kupwara district.

"The toll is expected to rise as there is no news from four villages in Teetwal area," a state government official said, adding that 3,000 houses had been razed in Tangdhar region alone. Earlier chief secretary Vijay Bakaya had put the toll at 320. Bakaya had said that 157 deaths have been registered in Kupwara district while Baramulla has recorded 139 and Srinagar 6.

Eighteen deaths were also reported from Jammu region from areas falling near the LoC. As many as 41 security personnel were reported killed in Saturday's temblor, which had triggered landslides that wiped out several bunkers along the LoC.

Army and air force on Sunday intensified rescue and relief efforts in quake-hit Jammu and Kashmir pressing choppers and airplanes to airlift people to safety, set up a disaster management action cell to coordinate round-the-clock operations and deployed troops, medical and engineering teams to deal with aftermath of earthquake.

"We have pressed choppers into rescue operations and disaster management cell has been formed at 16 Corps Headquarters amid launch of night-long operations, including deployment of several columns of troops, medical and engineering teams in affected areas in the state," Brigadier General Staff A K Bakshi said.

Army has pressed its engineering wings to rebuild infrastructure in rural areas and choppers have been ferrying the injured and the affected to safety from Uri, Tangdhar and Poonch, he said.

Over 300 tents have been set up at five different places in Poonch by the army for housing the houseless people, who have been provided with food and ration, Bakshi said.

The state government has despatched over 2,000 police personnel and home guards and provided satellite phones to maintain connectivity between the worst-affected Uri and Tangdhar towns with Srinagar.

As fresh tremors were felt in the region, panic-stricken survivors, including women and children, spent the cold night in the open with shattered dwellings in the backdrop providing a grim reminder of the quake that jolted the sub-continent. Agencies



Hundreds feared dead as quake rocks Pakistan

40 aftershocks cause panic; villages reduced to rubble in the Punjab, Frontier provinces

B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD: Hundreds of people were feared killed and several thousand injured as a powerful earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale hit large parts of Pakistan and Pak-occupied Kashmir (PoK) on Saturday morning.

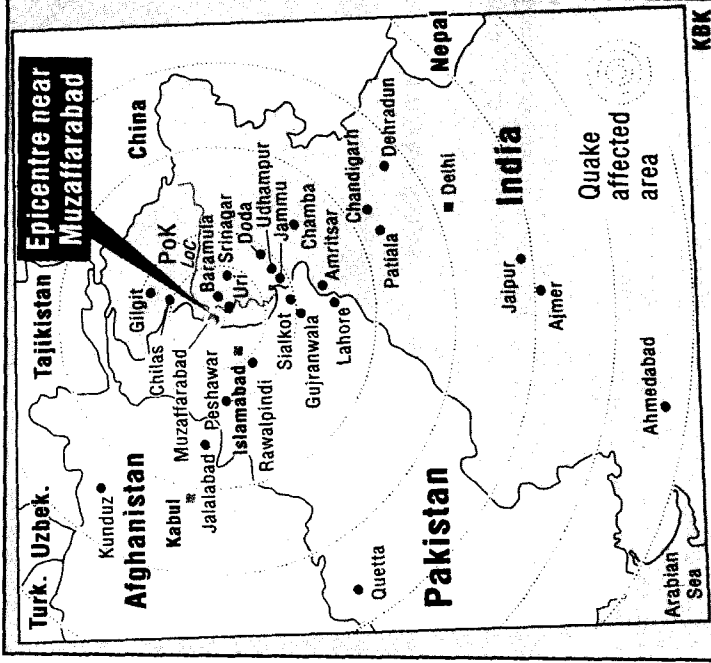
The epicentre of the quake, which lasted over a minute, was near Muzaffarabad, capital of PoK. Reports said the town was the worst hit. A total of 250 persons were confirmed dead in the PoK capital alone.

According to Shaukat Sultan, Director-General of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), 50 per cent of the buildings either collapsed or were damaged in Muzaffarabad.

As the communications systems collapsed, details of the destruction were not yet known.

There was panic in the national capital as the earth began shaking at 8.52 a.m. (9.22 a.m. IST). With prayers on their lips, people ran out of their houses. The scene was no different in government offices and commercial buildings. (On account of Ramzan, offices in Pakistan begin functioning at 8 a.m.) Minutes after the quake, most buildings were empty.

People gathered in open



spaces and frantically tried to establish contact with their kith and kin.

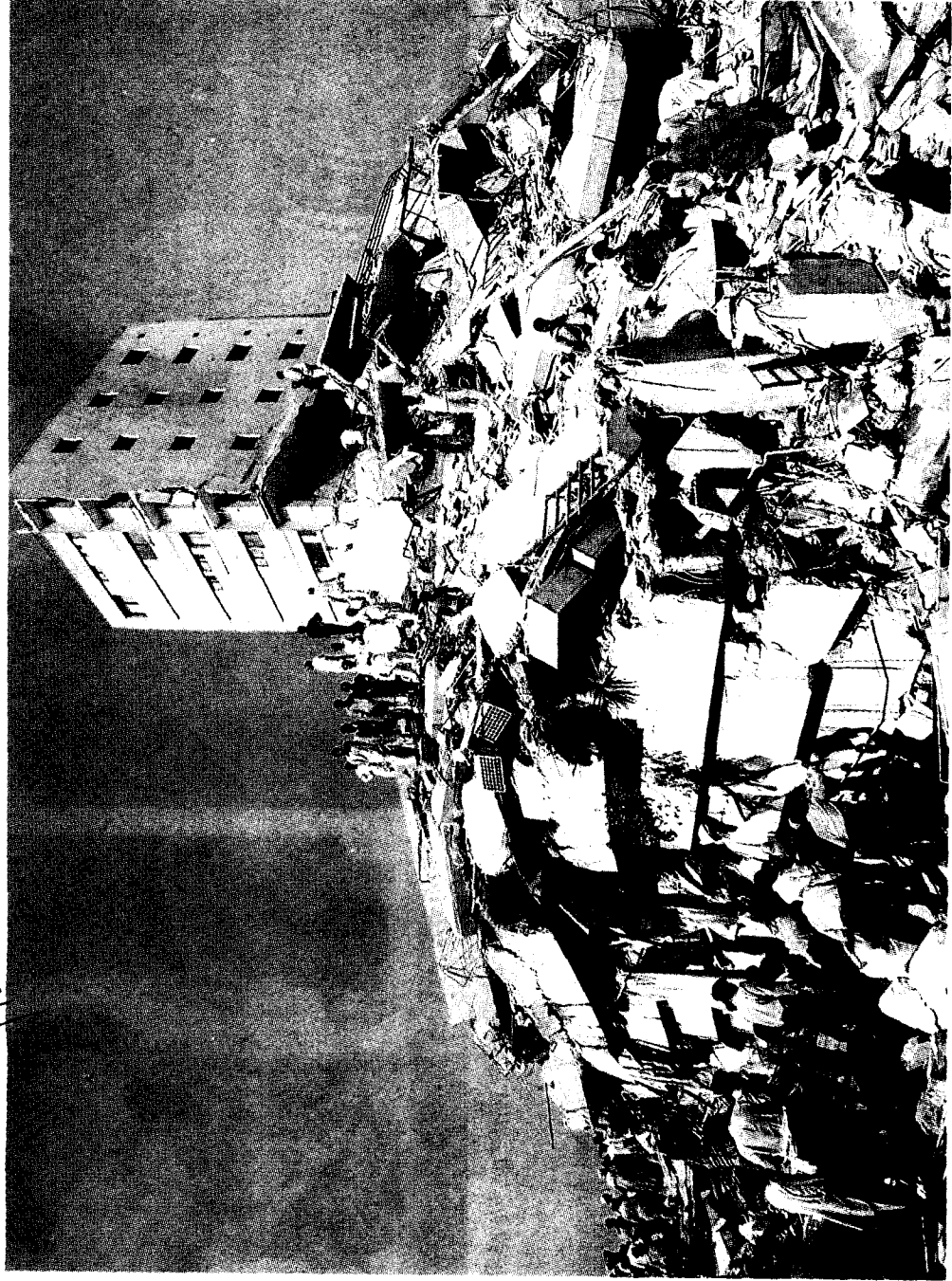
The fears triggered by the quake intensified as the first aftershock occurred within 18 minutes.

A sense of uneasiness prevailed throughout the day as the aftershocks continued. An after-

shock recorded at 3.40 p.m. (4.10 p.m. IST) was of the magnitude of 6.5.

By evening, 40 tremors were recorded but the Pakistan Meteorological Office categorised them as "usual aftershocks."

Experts said the earthquake was the worst in Pakistan's history.



IN RUINS: Rescue teams and volunteers look for survivors in the rubble of a building flattened by the powerful earthquake in Islamabad on Saturday. — PHOTO: AFP

Over 200 killed in Jammu and Kashmir; Uri town flattened

Luv Puri

JAMMU: Over 200 people were killed and more than 700 injured in Jammu and Kashmir due to the quake. More than 2,000 houses were damaged, and thousands became shelter-less in minutes.

All parts of the State were jolted but the border districts of

Kupwara, Baramulla and Poonch bore the brunt of the damage due to their proximity to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, which was the epicentre of the quake. Uri town, which adjoins Muzaffarabad district of PoK, was flattened. Officials of the 15 Corps told *The Hindu* that more than 120 people were killed and more than 300 in-

jured in Uri sector of Baramulla district. In the same sector, 20 Army personnel were killed and 37 injured.

Baramulla town also suffered damage. Two persons were killed and 80 others were injured. In the Tangdhar sector of Kupwara district, another forward area to the north of Bara-

mulla district, 20 persons were killed and more than 100 others injured.

In Poonch district, 10 persons were killed. The famous Moti Mahal building in the middle of the town, which housed soldiers of the Poonch brigade, was completely destroyed. The soldiers were evacuated

and taken to the military hospital.

Official sources said 236 bodies were recovered, including 197 civilians and 36 Army personnel.

The number of injured stood at 650, including 82 Army personnel.

The full impact of the quake could not be known as roads to

many of the affected villages remained inaccessible due to landslips. No contact could be established with many villages and people protested against the poor response of the administration.

The Government cancelled the leave of all medical and para-medical staff. Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed vis-

ited the affected areas.

The State Government said those who lost their houses would be accommodated in school buildings. Tents were flown to the affected areas.

More reports, photographs on Page 10

Ruling party sweeps Pak local elections

By Amir Wasim & Nasir Iqbal

Islamabad: Candidates backed by the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (PML) and its coalition partners won most of the district, tehsil and town nazim seats in the third phase of the local government elections held all over the country on Thursday, according to unofficial results declared by the Election Commission of Pakistan here on



HAVE YOUR SAY

Thursday.

In Punjab, the PML won nazim seats in 26 out of 34 districts, as it suffered defeat in Faisalabad, Kasur, Pakpattan, Muzaffargarh, Mianwali, Khushab, Sahiwal and Vehari. The Haq Parast Group, backed by the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), bagged almost all the top slots in Karachi and Hyderabad while the government-backed Khushhal Pakistan Panel (KPP) swept the polls throughout interior Sindh except in Jamshoro district. The PPP-backed Awam Dost Panel faced its worst-ever defeat in its strongholds of Larkana, Nawabshah, Sanghar and Umberkot.

Similarly, the PML-backed Khushal Pakistan Group won

10 of the 24 districts in the NWFP, followed by the JUI-F which bagged four districts. The Jamaat-i-Islami, which suffered a defeat in Nowshera, where Qazi Hussain Ahmads son Asif Luqman Qazi lost to the PPP candidate, was able to win in three districts.

The ANP, PML-N and the PPP (Sherpao) managed to win two districts each.

In Balochistan, the PML has come out victorious, winning all important seats in 14 out of 27 districts, including Quetta and Gwadar. The JUI-F won in five districts of Pashtoon areas while the BNP-Awami won the seats in Kech and Panjgur districts. The nationalists won the district nazim seats in Khuzdar, Mastung and Awaran while Pashoonkhwa Milli Awami Party could win only in Musakhel district.

Polling was peaceful all over the country, except some minor clashes

between rival groups in Hyderabad and Jamshoro in Sindh. The polling was suspended for about two hours at a polling station in Jamshoro.

Of the 108 districts, the results of 50 districts had been received by the Election Commission till 11pm and the final results would be announced on Saturday. The EC would hold inquiry into allegations regarding use of state machinery, horse-trading and visits by federal ministers to polling stations.

According to unofficial results, several interesting contests were witnessed in the elections. In Mianwali, the group backed by federal minister Sher Afgan defeated Rokris supported by the Punjab chief minister. Dawn

Are the coloured revolutions fading out? Ramesh

Vladimir Radyuhin

PRO-WESTERN "coloured revolutions" in former Soviet States have run aground. Hailed in the West as a breakthrough towards democracy and economic progress, they have brought neither democracy nor growth.

The "orange revolution" in Ukraine has plunged the country into its worst political crisis since the break-up of the Soviet Union. Georgia is quietly sinking into a political and economic morass 21 months after the U.S.-orchestrated "rose revolution" toppled veteran Soviet-era leader Eduard Shevardnadze. In Kyrgyzstan, the "tulip revolution" earlier this year has not, as Washington hoped, generated a shift away from Russia and towards the West.

The meltdown of Ukraine's "orange revolution" had dealt a major blow to the U.S.-led "liberty crusade" in the former Soviet Union. Soon after Western-oriented Opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko was catapulted to power in January by massive protests against alleged presidential vote rigging, Ukraine's new leaders split into two hostile groups, one supporting the President, the other siding with former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. The two groups clashed over redistribution of assets grabbed by relatives of former President Leonid Kuchma. When infighting for power and wealth broke into the open earlier this month, President Yushchenko was forced to fire the entire government and his own top aides. The two camps traded charges of corruption and abuse of power. Ms. Tymoshenko's loyalists accused Mr. Yushchenko's team of plotting to assassinate the axed Prime Minister, of faking Mr. Yushchenko's "poisoning" by "Russian agents" to fan the "orange revolution," and of taking money from exiled Russian oligarch Boris Berezovsky to finance his presidential campaign. Their opponents hit back accusing Ms. Tymoshenko of awarding confiscated industrial assets to friendly business groups and of ruining the country's economy.

It has indeed been the worst year for the Ukrainian economy in many years. Ukraine's gross domestic product in August 2005 declined compared with August 2004; the first annual fall

U.S.-sponsored regime change in the former Soviet States has run into problems. Many of the new regimes have proved unpopular. Besides, Russia has moved to regain its influence.

since 1999. A robust trade surplus has been wiped out, prices have soared, wage and pension increases have eroded, and foreign investment has dwindled.

The situation in Georgia is even more pitiful. Less than two years after the "rose revolution" that brought pro-Western President Mikhail Saakashvili to power, the economic crisis has deepened. Massive smuggling and corruption continue to plague the country, factories are running idle, and the budget is filled by revenues from casinos, restaurants, and selling of scrap metal. Georgia's foreign debt has reached \$1.7 billion, a staggering figure for a country of four million. Unemployment is believed to have soared to 30 per cent, and a majority of Georgians survive on what their men working in Russia send back home.

Mr. Saakashvili has been building an authoritarian regime, pressuring the media to avoid criticism of the government and stating publicly that parties that disagree with him on issues such as the presence of foreign troops in Georgia or membership in the European Union, which he supports, should be outlawed. He has pushed through Parliament legislation to staff central and district election commissions with presidential appointees, without any representation for Opposition parties. Mr. Saakashvili's rule has been heavily tainted by the mysterious death earlier this year of Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania, who acted as a moderate counterweight to the radical President. The official version that Zhvania died of heating gas poisoning was challenged by his relatives and experts who said he had been killed. Mr. Saakashvili's popularity has tumbled from an incredible 94 per cent at the time of the "rose revolution" in November 1993 to 23 per cent today.

Public opinion surveys show that both in Uk-

raine and Georgia a majority of the population does not think life has improved since the "velvet revolutions." Many say it has actually worsened.

The March "tulip revolution" in Kyrgyzstan has, if anything, strengthened Russia's position in that country as its new leaders turn to Moscow for economic and military aid to stabilise the post-revolution situation. At the same time, the "tulip revolution" has set off crippling wars for re-carving of wealth and property, similar to those that have triggered the power crisis in Ukraine. On September 21 unidentified assailants gunned down top Kyrgyz lawmaker Bayaman Erkinbayev, one of the country's richest businessmen who financed protests that toppled former President Askar Akayev in March. Erkinbayev is the second big businessman to have been killed since the March revolution.

The crisis of the "coloured revolutions" has been precipitated by a hardening of Russia's policy towards pro-Western regimes in the former Soviet Union. Two months ago, a senior Kremlin source told Russian media that Moscow was overhauling its policy towards the former Soviet States.

"Russia is not planning to restore the Soviet empire, but it cannot put up with a situation when it effectively subsidises the economies of some of those countries by supplying them with energy resources at loss-making prices," the Kremlin official said.

By curious coincidence the government crisis in Ukraine broke out a week after Russia announced that it was tripling the price of natural gas it supplies to Ukraine from \$65 per 1,000 cubic metres to \$180 to bring it in line with European prices. For Georgia the price of Russian gas may go up by a third next year.

The Kremlin acknowledges that its policy re-

view has been prompted by "velvet revolutions" in Georgia and Ukraine. "It is such a situation (lingering poverty in ex-Soviet States despite discounted oil and gas supplies) that creates fertile ground for orange revolutions, after which little changes for the people, while the new rulers, at least some of them, receive salaries from the Americans either directly or covertly," the senior Kremlin official said, hinting at Georgia, whose new government has received Western donations to cover officials' salaries.

Russia has also moved to weaken its dependence on Ukraine and Poland for the transit of its natural gas to Europe. Last month President Vladimir Putin clinched a mega-deal with Germany to build a seabed gas pipeline from Russia to Germany across the Baltic Sea. The new pipeline with a projected capacity of 55 billion cubic metres a year will strengthen Russia's bargaining positions vis-à-vis Ukraine, which currently accounts for 75 per cent of Russian gas supplies to Europe (140 billion cubic meters a year) and thwart Ukraine's and Georgia's plan to form an energy alliance with Azerbaijan to transport Caspian oil and gas to Europe bypassing Russia as an alternative to the Russian-European alliance.

Sobering effect

Russia's new policy towards its neighbours has had a sobering effect on Ukraine. President Yushchenko replaced fiery "orange revolution" leader Yulia Tymoshenko as Prime Minister with middle-of-the-line technocrat Yury Yekhanurov, whose first visit abroad next week will be to Russia to patch the post-revolution rift between the two countries. During his visit to Moscow last week, Ukraine's Acting Foreign Minister Boris Tarasyuk indicated a shift in Kiev's singularly Western-oriented policy describing relations with the West and Russia as equally important foreign policy priorities.

Having suffered a setback in Ukraine, the United States rushed to rescue the "rose revolution" in Georgia. A week after the fall of the "orange" government in Ukraine, Washington granted Georgia \$295 million in aid to reward it for "success in building democracy and free market economy." This is the biggest aid package any ex-Soviet State has received from the U.S., and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice promised American aid to Georgia will be further increased.

Despite the unravelling of the "coloured revolutions" in Ukraine and Georgia, the U.S. appears determined to continue promoting regime change in the former Soviet States. The U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee has approved \$565 million in aid programmes to ex-Soviet States in 2006, claiming that "authoritarian Russia poses a growing threat" to those countries.

For its part, Moscow has called on Washington to abandon zero-sum rivalries in the former Soviet Union. Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin laid down three basic principles for what he called "civilised competition" in the region in a keynote article carried in the government newspaper *Rossiiskaya Gazeta* last month.

First, the U.S. must renounce spinning "coloured revolutions" in the former Soviet States. Russia "cannot agree with the methods of forced 'democratisation' of the entire post-Soviet space, either through 'coloured revolutions' or by means of exerting information-political pressure on the existing governments," Mr. Karasin said.

Secondly, Moscow accepts the fact that the U.S. and other extra-regional states may have legitimate interests in the former Soviet States. "In principle this is a normal thing," the Russian Minister said. "There is nothing exotic about the involvement of the U.S., the European Union and other players in various processes in the Commonwealth [of Independent States]."

Thirdly, Russia and the U.S. must work out a balance of competition and cooperation to promote "a mutually respectful and predictable partnership" in the CIS countries.

Given the George W. Bush administration's obsession with countering Russian influence in the former Soviet Union, Moscow plans to put its proposals for discussion in the Group of Eight when the chairmanship goes to Russia next year. Mr. Putin intends to include in the agenda of the G8 summit in Russia next year the question of providing international assistance to former Soviet States. The plan would cast Russia in the role of coordinator of such aid programmes and thereby enhance its influence in the region.

CARTOONSCAPE



Shia-raid slur on militant

Pak Sunni radical held

Islamabad, Sept. 28
(Reuters): Pakistani security forces have arrested a notorious Sunni militant accused of involvement in a series of attacks on minority Shias, intelligence officials said today.

The man, Asif Choto, was arrested several days ago with another suspected militant in the garrison city of Rawalpindi, adjoining Islamabad, the officials said. "He is a major wanted militant," said one intelligence official who declined to be identified.

Interior minister Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao declined to comment.

Another intelligence official said Choto masterminded a suicide attack on a Shia mosque in the eastern city of Sialkot in October in which at least 25 people were killed. Security forces acting on information provided by Choto had arrested up to seven other militants in different parts of the central Punjab province, the second official said.

A police investigator said

Choto was wanted in connection with dozens of criminal cases in Karachi and the government of the southern province of Sindh had announced a reward of 2.5 million rupees (\$42,000) for his capture.

Choto is a member of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, an outlawed Sunni militant group blamed for most of the attacks on Shias, which is also believed to have links with al Qaida. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi has also been implicated in attacks on western targets in Pakistan including the murder of US reporter Daniel Pearl in 2002, and in two attempts to kill President Pervez Musharraf.

It was not clear if Choto was involved in those incidents, the security officials said. While most members of Pakistan's Sunni majority live in peace with Shias, militants from both sects have been responsible for attacks in which hundreds of people have been killed in recent years.

Pervez rape remarks posted on web

Press Trust of India



WASHINGTON, Sept. 24. — Challenging President Pervez Musharraf's credibility after he denied his remarks that women in Pakistan claim to have been raped to go abroad, *The Washington Post* today posted on its website the audio of the comments he made to three of its reporters.

"The (audio) link includes the full nine-minute discussion with Gen Musharraf on the problem of rape in his country," the newspaper said. In the 12 September interview, the President told the Post's reporters that claiming rape has become "a money-making concern" in Pakistan. "A lot of people say if you want to go abroad and get a visa for Canada or a citizenship and be a millionaire, get yourself raped."

Faced with protests over his remarks, Gen Musharraf subsequently told a women's group in New York that he had been misquoted. "These are not my words...I am not so silly and stupid to make comments of this sort." He later told *CNN* that the remarks were made by someone else in his presence. "Not so," says *The Post*, which posted the audio of the interview on www.washingtonpost.com. Canada's Prime Minister protested over the remarks but the USA took a neutral stance while condemning violence against women.

Rape remark out on tape

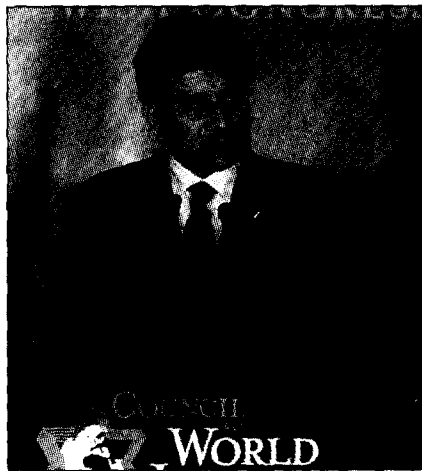
S. Rajagopalan
Washington, September 19

PAKISTAN PRESIDENT Pervez Musharraf is in a spot — not for what he failed to achieve in talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, but for his remarks that rape has become a “moneymaking concern” for some Pakistani women wanting to settle abroad.

After the comments sparked off a firestorm, Musharraf took the stand that he never made those remarks and that the *Washington Post*, which had interviewed him in New York, had “totally misquoted” him. That this familiar escape route for politicians of the subcontinent was not going to work this time became clear with the *Post* confronting him on Monday with a tape recording of the interview. After reviewing the recording, the paper announced that Musharraf had been “accurately quoted”.

The reported remark that landed Musharraf in a soup was: “You must understand the environment in Pakistan. This (rape) has become a moneymaking concern. A lot of people say if you want to go abroad and get a visa for Canada or citizenship, get yourself raped.”

Musharraf had made the comments while discussing the rape of Mukhtar Mai and Shazia Khalid, two cases that have provoked widespread protests. In the case of Khalid, a doctor, Musharraf said he had arranged a Canadian visa and \$50,000 for her after the rape by an alleged army officer. Musharraf’s remarks and disclosure about the Canadian visa also provoked a sharp protest by Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin during a meeting



Musharraf at a New York function.

with the Pakistani leader on the sidelines of the UN session. When a women’s group protested his remarks during an unseemly encounter in New York on Saturday, Musharraf said: “Let me say with total sincerity that I never said that, and it has been misquoted. These are not my words, and I would go to the extent of saying I am not so silly and stupid to make comments of this sort.” He repeated the assertion in an interview to CNN.

The Post said the 50-minute interview with Musharraf, conducted by three of its reporters, was tape recorded.

“A review of the recording yesterday confirmed that Musharraf — who was surrounded by aide who took notes and also recorded the interview — was accurately quoted,” it said.

20 SEP 2005

THE NEW YORK TIMES

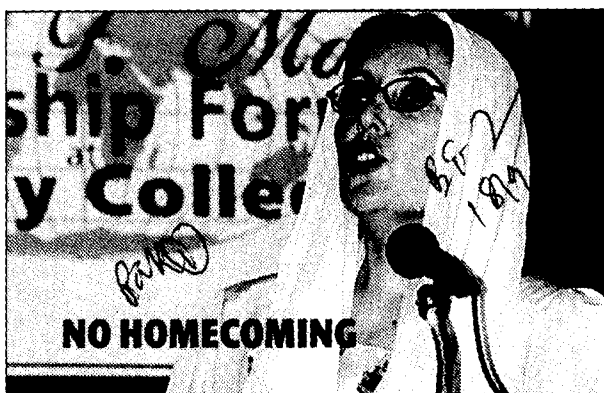
No entry for Benazir, Sharif in Pak: Musharraf

New York
17 SEPTEMBER

PRESIDENT Pervez Musharraf has categorically said former Prime Ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif will not be allowed to return to Pakistan, reports Online news agency.

Addressing a ceremony at Columbia University and later replying to queries of American students, he said democracy had deep roots in Pakistan and there was no chance of it being derailed. They destroyed Pakistan, how could they be allowed to return and plunder the national exchequer, he asked. They plundered \$2 billion from the national exchequer and turned Pakistan into a failed state, he said.

"The incumbent Parliament is working smoothly and there is no chance of its abolition, the elections will be held in 2007," he added. He said democratic institutions were left paralysed by the so-called champions of democracy. "But my six years' tenure to rule the country has made an example of the best reign in the country and all sectors are marching on the road to progress," he said.



On the Pakistan-India peace process, he said the leadership of both sides was determined to take the composite dialogue process to another level.

"The talks between Islamabad and New Delhi will continue," he said. "We are satisfied with the progress of the composite dialogue on bilateral trade promotion, better people-to-people contact, and confidence building measures and are hopeful the process will move ahead," he maintained.

On Jammu and Kashmir, he said the issue was a sensitive one and needed some time. He also said as far as progress in contacts with Israel was concerned, it

would continue phase wise. However, it will be good for West Asia peace that a sovereign Palestinian state emerges and both Israel and Palestine live peacefully side by side, he said.

He said the greatest threat to national progress and development was extremism and terrorism. He said post-9/11 "we supported the Allied Forces and it is proof of our sincerity that we have arrested around 700 activists of the terrorist organisation and have totally dismantled the network from the country".

"We have dismantled the network from the country and they are losing and we are winning this war," he said. — IANS

Pakistan's religious parties losing ground?

PK (1)
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The differences between the Government and the religious parties appear to be growing.

B. Muralidhar Reddy

FOR THE first time in decades, Pakistan's religious parties and organisations appear to be seriously threatened by government measures to curtail their influence. This is evident from their increasingly belligerent tone towards President Pervez Musharraf in recent weeks.

Quazi Hussain Ahmed, chief of the Jamaat-e-Islami (the largest religious political party in the country), surprised political and diplomatic observers with his statement on August 29 that the six-party alliance of religious parties, Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), would not participate in the October 2007 general election if Gen. Musharraf continued at the helm of affairs.

Though Mr. Hussain has never enjoyed a good equation with Gen. Musharraf, such a sweeping assertion from him has brought to fore the growing unease among the religious parties over the Government's efforts to marginalise them. They see it as a grand design under pressure from the international community (read the United States).

Since occupying centre stage in the polity in 1958, the Pakistan military has always considered the religious forces its natural ally. It was the military's patronage that gave the religious parties the clout they could never get through electoral politics. Gen. Musharraf was no exception. The MMA was actually dubbed the "Military Mullah Alliance" by the Opposition.

The October 2002 general election was a dream one for the religious parties. They not only captured two provinces (the North West Frontier Province on their own and Balochistan in coalition with the pro-Musharraf Pakistan Muslim League) but also emerged as a major force at the national level.

However, with growing international pressure on Gen. Musharraf to contain fundamentalist forces, the equations seem to be changing. The first hint came when Gen. Musharraf refused to sign a Bill seeking to enforce a Taliban type of code of conduct for citizens in the NWFP, and referred the matter to the Supreme Court. The apex court declared some of the provisions *ultra vires*.

Then the Leader of the Opposition and chief of his own faction of the Jamaat-e-Ulema-Islami, Fazlur Rehman was deported from the United Arab Emirates on August 1. A furious Mr. Rehman held the Government responsible for the act and threatened to spill the beans on the "export of militants" to

Afghanistan. There was no reaction from Islamabad.

Mr. Rehman later announced that the religious schools run by his organisation would not submit to the new procedure for registration and audit of their accounts. He accused Gen. Musharraf of defaming the religious schools and parties to earn brownie points from U.S. President George W. Bush.

The growing gulf between the religious parties and Gen. Musharraf at the grassroots level was evident after the local bodies election. After the first phase on August 18, Gen. Musharraf claimed the religious parties had lost considerable ground. According to him, they managed to get less than 25 per cent of the popular vote compared with 75 per cent in 2002. At the end of the second phase on August 25, Gen. Musharraf declared at a rally in Karachi that "extremists" all over Pakistan had been rejected. It was the outcome of his campaign against them, he said.

The travails of the religious parties continued with the Pakistan Supreme Court declaring that the certificates issued by religious schools could not be considered to be on a par with the tenth grade state board qualification to be eligible to contest the local bodies election. The MMA has been the worst hit by the verdict, which also has serious implications for the alliance in the context of the 2007 general election.

Just before the October 2002 election, Gen. Musharraf had prescribed graduation as the minimum qualification to contest for the national and provincial assemblies. However, the MMA-backed candidates benefited most from the provision as the government agreed to allow graduates of religious schools to contest the election.

Now, following the Supreme Court verdict, the MMA has reasons to be concerned about the future. The apex court has been critical of the functioning of the religious schools and said they were being managed and run by the private sector without a statutory sanction and without affiliation to a recognised university or educational board.

The detailed judgment, released to the press on August 29, said that the madrassas were not teaching their students even a single subject of general education, which could enable them to join the mainstream of society and compete for employment or any other purpose.

Are all these developments signs that winds of change are blowing? Only time will tell.

Pro-Pervez parties claim poll victory

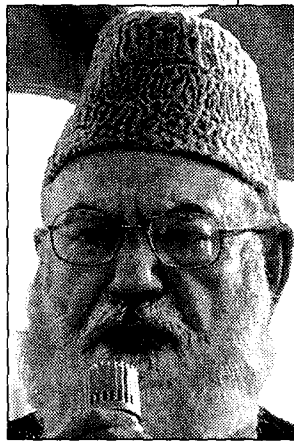
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part 1

Islamabad, Aug. 27 (Reuters): Government parties in Pakistan claimed victory today in the second round of local elections, but the Opposition Islamist alliance denounced the poll saying a fair vote was impossible under President Pervez Musharraf.

The elections were officially held on a non-party basis but were keenly contested by political factions to consolidate their power bases ahead of general elections in 2007 which are expected to result in Musharraf staying in power.

The Election Commission said it was still counting ballots from Thursday's second round and an official announcement on winning candidates was expected tomorrow.

The pro-Musharraf Pakistan Muslim League said candidates backed by the ruling coalition fared well in all four provinces including the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) ruled by an Opposi-



**MMA president
Qazi Hussain Ahmed in
Peshawar. (AFP)**

tion Islamist alliance.

"Like the first phase, we have also swept the second phase," Tariq Azim Khan, a spokesman for the ruling Pakistan Muslim League, said.

"We have maintained our majority in Punjab, which has been our stronghold, as well as

in Sindh and Baluchistan," he said.

"We have done well even in NWFP, contrary to what has been said before the elections. Results in NWFP show people have rejected extremism."

But Islamists denounced the elections as rigged and said they took part in the polls "only to expose the regime before the world".

"The results are totally managed, planned and rigged," Liaquat Baluch, deputy secretary-general of the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal alliance said. "It shows that free and fair elections are not possible in the presence of General Musharraf."

Musharraf yesterday hailed the outcome of the poll as "defeat for extremists".

MMA won control of NWFP and shared power in Baluchistan, thanks in part to anti-American sentiment fuelled by the US-led war on terrorism launched in Afghanistan in late 2001.

28 AUG 2005

Clerics target Musharraf

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Aug. 23. — Voicing strong opposition over the government's ordinance on registration of all Pakistani madrassas, headline Islamic clerics have rejected it saying it would curb the freedom, the religious schools currently enjoy.

President Mr Pervez Musharraf's ordinance has seemingly sparked off stiff protest among headline clerics headed by Maulana Fazlur Rehman, chief of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) who has refused to register the seminaries with the government.

"We reject the Madaris Registration Ordinance which President General Pervez Musharraf has promulgated by amending the Society Act," Mr Rehman, also the leader of the Opposition in the Pakistan National Assembly and general secretary of the Islamist Alliance Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) told media here yesterday after a meeting to discuss the ordinance.

"If we approve such amendments and the Parliament also approves them we will be forced to introduce the government-dictated syllabus and employ government-recommended teachers in the madrassas. This is not possible for us," he added.

Mr Rehman said JUI-F, a party headed by clerics representing their interests, would not register its 8,500 seminaries across Pakistan.

He said the party has decided not to register religious schools under the amended Society Registration Act 1860 and also refused to repatriate foreign students studying in its seminaries. The meeting rejected the 31 December deadline for registration of seminaries while also dismissing the 30 September deadline for expulsion of foreign students, chief administrator of Wafaqul Madaris Arabia Mr Qari Mohammad Hanif Jalandhri, was quoted in the media here as saying.

Despite all government functionaries having clearly stated that no seminary or any religious student was involved in terrorism, the meeting was told that there was no reason for putting so many curbs on the establishments.

The aim of such steps was also to render seminary degrees (sanad) useless and interfere in their syllabus, monetary matters and administrative issues, it was said at the meeting and a decision was taken to constitute a committee to chalk out a future programme to continue the opposition.

In the aftermath of the 7/7 London bombings, Mr Musharraf while asking the madrassas to

Pervez to speak on moderate Islam

UN HQ, Aug. 23. — Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf has accepted an invitation from a leading Jewish organisation to speak about his campaign to promote moderate Islam among Muslims around the world, the Council for World Jewry said.

Mr Musharraf urged Muslims in a June 2003 speech to move forward in politically-trying times with a strategy of "enlightened moderation" and has been advocating the policy ever since as the best way for Muslims and non-Muslims to counter extremism and terrorism.

Council chairman Mr Jack Rosen said Mr Musharraf's speech next month would be unique because it would mark the first time a Muslim leader with international stature stands up and publicly calls for moderation in the Muslim world not only at an event for Americans but at an event sponsored by the Jewish community.

"He's going to be speaking to a constituency that's been demonised by many extremists in the Muslim world," Mr Rosen said in an interview yesterday. Mr Rosen told he and two colleagues from the council which is part of the American Jewish Congress were invited to meet Mr Musharraf in Islamabad in May. During their talk, they discussed Muslim extremism, terrorism and the need for reconciliation.

Out of that meeting came an invitation for Mr Musharraf to speak to the American and Jewish communities on his call for "enlightened moderation" and the changes needed in the Muslim world and the West to achieve it, Mr Rosen said. The event will take place in New York soon after a UN summit. — AP

register with the government also government was yet to issue the said that about 1400 foreign students studying in local madrassas, orders for expulsion of the foreign students which was opposed by the MMA. However, the would be expelled.

Local polls in Pakistan begin

Charges of pre-election rigging

B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD: The first phase of election to local bodies in Pakistan ended on Thursday on a relatively peaceful note amid charges of pre-poll rigging by Opposition parties.

Information Minister Shaikh Rashid Ahmed told journalists that the polling went off peacefully amid enthusiasm. He said the Government was holding transparent elections and dismissed the charges of rigging.

Though the election was on a

non-party basis, all the mainstream parties have fielded their candidates and actively coordinated the campaign as the exercise is seen as a curtain raiser to the 2007 general election. In the first phase, 53 districts in the four provinces were covered.

Counting of votes was taken up and the results are expected in most of the constituencies later in the night. The second phase scheduled on August 25 and the last phase in September.

Merkel unveils leadership team

Stoiber's remark causes a flutter

Luke Harding

BERLIN: Germany's conservative leader, Angela Merkel, on Wednesday presented her campaign team for next month's general election, shrugging off remarks by a colleague who had described East German voters as "stupid cows".

Ms Merkel, the leader of Germany's Christian Democrats, introduced nine members of her team who are likely to play leading roles in any Merkel-led cabinet.

Describing them as a "strong troupe", she said German voters faced a clear choice — between the failed policies of Social Democrat Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and her own agenda for change.

"Our country needs change. Our voters face a decision on the nation's direction," she declared at Konrad-Adenauer-Haus, her party's Berlin headquarters.

Standing next to Ms Merkel was Edmund Stoiber, the troublesome grey-haired leader of the CDU's Bavarian sister party, the CSU, whose latest gaffe might just ruin Ms Merkel's chances. Mr Stoiber last week dubbed East German voters as "stupid cows" after polls re-



German Chancellor hopeful Angela Merkel.

— PHOTO: AFP

vealed that 30 per cent of East Germans were preparing to vote for a new Left-wing party.

On Wednesday, Mr Stoiber refused to elaborate. He merely said: "German voters now have to decide whether they want further decline, or for the country to re-emerge." — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2005

Pak tests cruise missile

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, Aug. 11. — Pakistan today “successfully” test-fired its first-ever “indigenously developed” cruise missile capable of carrying nuclear warheads that could reach targets upto 500 km, with Gen. Pervez Musharraf claiming it to be “qualitatively better” than India’s Brahmos.

Describing the successful launch of Hatf VII a “major milestone” in the country’s nuclear programme, the Pakistan President said it would improve the military balance “further” acting as a counter to US-made Patriot defence missile systems planned to be acquired by New Delhi.

“If I were to compare with any other missile it’s with the Brahmos of India. I am proud of the fact that this missile is totally indigenous. I am proud of our scientists.

“In quality it is better. The range of Brahmos is 290 or 300 km. the range of Babur missile is 500 km,” Gen. Musharraf told reporters hours after the defence min-



This photograph handed out by the Pakistani military shows the launch of the Babur missile. — AFP

**‘If I were to compare with any other missile, it’s with the Brahmos of India’
— Gen. Musharraf**

istry announced that Hatf VII Babur has been successfully test-fired.

Gen. Musharraf claimed qualitative edge of Babur over Brahmos without mentioning that the Indo-Russian missile is a supersonic cruise missile and probably the

fastest in its class.

The Pakistan leader, who described the ground-launched cruise missile test as a “major milestone”, said it would enhance Pakistan’s “defensive potential”. He added: “Our scientists and neighbours have once again done the nation proud by mustering a rare technology,” he said.

The new missile has the ability to hit targets with pinpoint accuracy as it cruises close to earth, Gen. Musharraf said adding the “biggest value of the system” is that it is not detectable and can not be intercepted. The new missile would help to maintain balance in the conventional and unconventional field as it would carry both nuclear and conventional missiles, the leader added.

“There was a talk of India getting Patriot missile, (PAC-3) and there was feeling that there is an imbalance of purchase of very advanced technology, weapons and Patriot missiles by India. Let me say this improves the balance further. That is the significance of Babur cruise missile we fired,” the Pakistan President said.

AUG 2005

THE

Pakistan test-fires cruise missile, joins select group

Peace process with India will move ahead, says Minister

B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Thursday conducted a successful test flight of its first-ever Ground Launched Cruise Missile (GLCM) — Hatf VII Babur — that can carry nuclear and conventional warheads to a range of 500 km.

A statement by the military said that it is a terrain-hugging missile, with the most advanced and modern navigation and guidance system and a high degree of manoeuvrability.

The technology enables the missile to avoid radar detection and penetrate undetected any hostile defensive system, it said.

“By the Grace of Allah, all design parameters for the flight were validated. By conducting the successful test, Pakistan has joined a select group of countries, which have the capability to design and develop cruise missiles. Cruise missiles can also be launched from surface ships, submarines and aircraft”, the military said.

“A milestone”

It quoted President General Pervez Musharraf as saying that the successful test was a major milestone in Pakistan’s quest for strengthening and consolidating strategic capability.

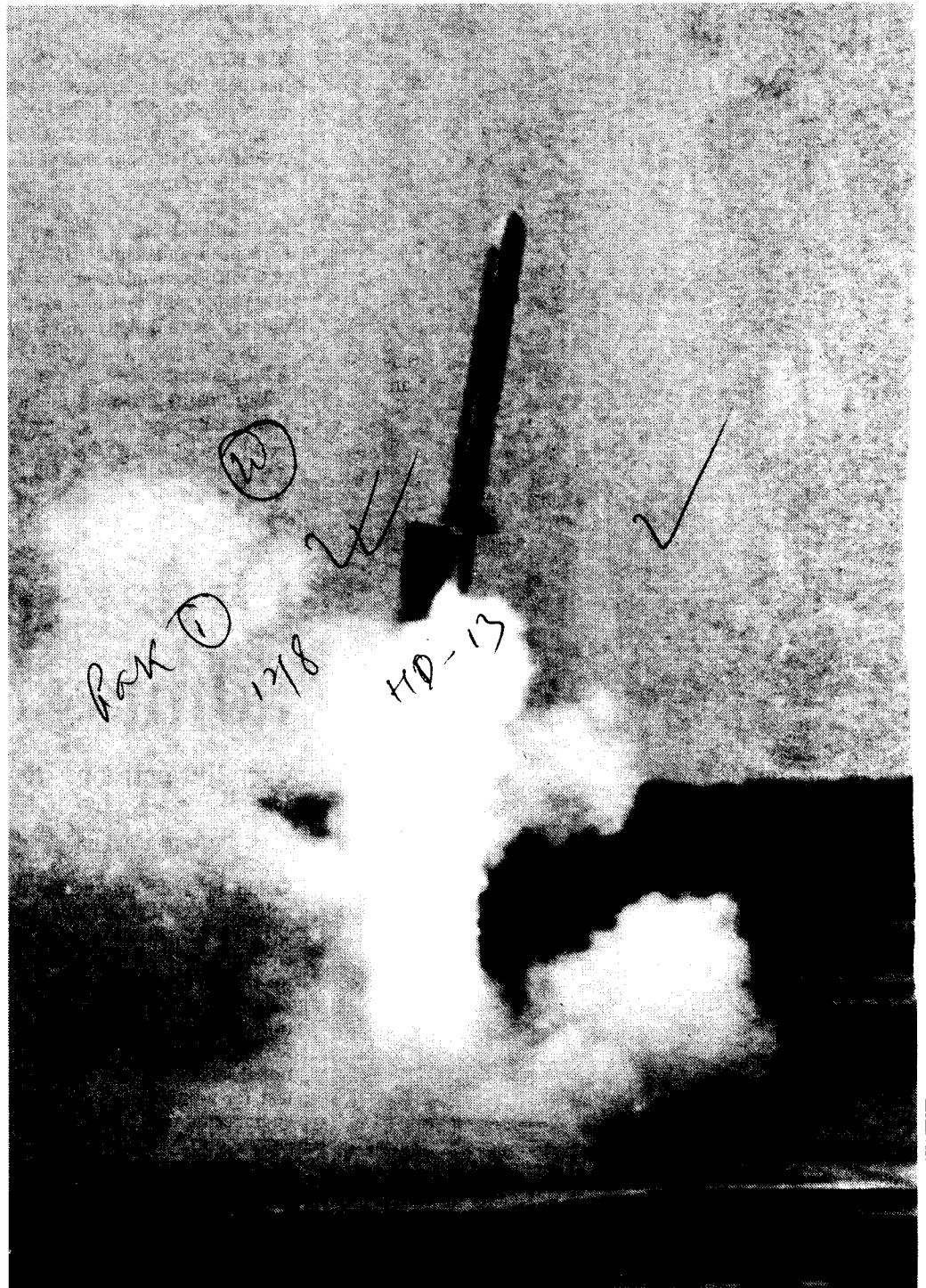
The usual advance notice to neighbouring countries was not given. According to Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman Naeem Khan the practice of advance intimation was followed only in case of ballistic missile tests.

Earlier this week India and Pakistan formalised an arrangement under which they notify each other in about about ballistic missile tests.

The agreement envisages advance notification of all ballistic missile tests conducted within a 40 km radius of each other’s borders.

Though it is for the first time Pakistan has conducted a ground-launched missile test, it has held several ballistic missile tests since the scandal involving A.Q. Khan in nuclear proliferation broke early last year.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said test-firing of the



In this photo released by the Inter Services Public Relations Department, Pakistan’s first cruise missile is test-fired on Thursday from an undisclosed location. The missile, named Babur, has a range of 500 km. — PHOTO: AP

cruise missile should not be a matter of concern for India, as the peace process between the two countries would move ahead.

Talking to newsmen here, the

Minister said Pakistan wanted to resolve all issues with India peacefully but it could not remain oblivious to its defence needs.

Islamabad would improve its

missile technology, he said.

He said test-firing of the cruise missile was a gift to the nation on Independence Day (August 14) and birthday of President Musharraf who turned 62 on Thursday.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 5, 2005

Pakistan's madrassas in perspective

President Pervez Musharraf's announcement that Pakistan's madrassas are once again under the scanner underscores the fine balance he has had to maintain since September 2001 between deflecting criticism from the West about the country's 'jihad factories' and sparking a dangerous reaction from the religious Right at home. Soon after 9/11, the United States placed a list of demands before General Musharraf; one of these was the 'reform' of the madrassa system of education. Washington believed these institutions imparting 'Islamic education' were producing radicalised graduates ready to be hired by Al Qaeda. President Musharraf obediently decreed the registration of all madrassas in Pakistan; the introduction of a mixed curriculum to teach subjects such as modern mathematics, science, and information technology along with Islamic subjects; and an audit of madrassa accounts. However, he quickly retreated from enforcement, evidently because these 'reforms' generated a tremendous backlash from the seminaries and religious political parties. After a period of negotiations with the institutions that ended in mid-2002, the Government decided to do nothing much about them. The General's most recent 'reform' update includes the decision to expel about 1400 foreign students enrolled in Islamic religious schools; it followed western media reports that two (and possibly three) of the July 7 London bombers spent time in Pakistani madrassas.

The reform of the madrassa system is certainly overdue. President Musharraf's method, however, seems to be to signal or reiterate his reformist intentions every time Muslim terrorists with an alleged Pakistani link strike on western soil. This merely contradicts his own reasonable claim that not all seminaries are breeding grounds for terrorists. Focussing obsessively on madrassas is to overlook other reasons for the growth and expansion of Al Qaeda — and the deadly autonomous cells the Al Qaeda kind of world-view has spawned in far-flung parts of the world. The British Government's reluctance to accept the link between its Iraq policy and the London bombings is typical of western obscurantism that has much in common with religious fundamentalism. There is absolutely no need for official Indian policy to join in this obfuscation of the larger truth. A handful of Pakistan's seminaries are certainly associated with militant Islam — these appear more in need of a firm hand than reform. But in a social context where the state education system is dysfunctional, there is a need to identify practical alternatives to the madrassas, which offer a measure of literacy and learning, however outmoded or inadequate. If the impression about the role they play is the opposite, President Musharraf must accept some of the blame for distorting the picture in his anxiety to appease and, in a sense, pull the wool over the eyes of, his western patrons.

07 AUG 2005

THE HINDU

Another Musharraf charm offensive

Pakistan's President tries to explain away his past failures in tackling fundamentalists.

B. Muralidhar Reddy

ON FRIDAY last, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf held forth for over two hours with 80-odd foreign correspondents, some based in the country and some visiting it. It was a charm offensive by the General. Highlighting the latest crackdown against fundamentalist elements within his country, he sounded determined to eliminate the menace.

Conscious of the scepticism on the latest crackdown, Gen. Musharraf offered a host of reasons why he could not take the campaign against the fundamentalists to its logical conclusion post-9/11.

"It is a totally different environment today. Please do not look at 2005 from eyes of 2002," he stressed in an obvious reference to the unfulfilled pledges of his speech of January 12, 2002. However, the reasons given by Gen. Musharraf for his inability to take on the fundamentalists raise more questions than they answer.

He listed four distinct factors that came in the way of his campaign in 2002: a pro-Taliban wave across Pakistan; the poor economic situation; his shaky standing in the eyes of the world because of his military background; and the eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation with India then. On the face of it, the list seems credible but an objective analysis would show that barring the military standoff with India, none of the other factors could have restrained the General.

It is incredible that Gen. Musharraf should claim that a million Taliban would have poured into the streets of Pakistan had he gone ahead with measures to curb militancy. The American-led alliance commenced operations in Afghanistan in the first week of October 2001 and the Taliban was ousted within the next six weeks. Barring a demonstration here and there, Pakistan remained by and large peaceful. The reports in the Western media about a backlash in Pakistan to the developments in Afghanistan proved to be just hype.

The Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), a conglomerate of pro-Taliban parties which came into existence weeks before the October 2002 general election, not only took part in the election but for the first time in Pakistan's history emerged as a credible political force. It took the North West Frontier Province with a two-thirds majority and in Balochistan formed the government in alliance with the military-backed Muslim League.

Part of the MMA's success was attributed to the prevailing anti-American sentiment post-9/11. But no less important was the generous help it reportedly got from several intelligence agencies. Also, the new election rules framed by Gen. Musharraf virtually knocked out from the poll fray the regional parties in the NWFP and Balochistan.

Going by Gen. Musharraf's argument on the pro-Taliban sentiment prevalent in 2002, one wonders where the one million Taliban have disappeared in 2005? Have they left Pakistan? Or has the mindset of a majority of the million



Pervez Musharraf ... image conscious. - PHOTO: AP

Taliban, who were ready to march on to the streets, changed on account of the government policies in the last four years? Or is the government now in a position to challenge the might of the million Taliban?

Next, Gen. Musharraf's claim that the "instable" economic situation did not give him much leeway in dealing with the radicals belies his repeated assertions that his regime's major achievement after the October 1999 military coup was effecting an economic turnaround. Weeks after the coup, Gen. Musharraf requisitioned the services of Shaukat Aziz, then a top manager with Citibank in New York, and gave him a single task: halt the downslide and turn around the economy. Before 9/11, Mr. Aziz had succeeded in persuading at least the World Bank for a fresh loan on the basis of his "performance."

After the twin towers of New York came tumbling down and Islamabad joined the "international war against terrorism," Pakistan's economy experienced a major boost thanks to grants, new loans and re-scheduling of old loans by the U.S. and its allies. From less than \$1 billion before 9/11, the foreign exchange reserves today stand at over \$15 billion.

Gen. Musharraf maintains that his military man image in the eyes of the international community, read the U.S., was a stumbling block in the path of confrontation with the extremists. Far from it. The U.S. and its allies for the very reason embraced him. It was Zia-ul-Haq in the reverse.

In 1979, the then dictator emerged as the chief ally of the West in its proxy war against the erstwhile Soviet Union in Afghanistan and his military background was forgotten.

In similar fashion, Gen. Musharraf's uniform ceased to be an issue for the U.S. and the West virtually hours after 9/11. In less than a week after September 11, the then U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, telephoned Gen. Musharraf conveying the famous line of President Bush "either you are with us or them" albeit in a polite manner.

The call actually signalled the end of any American objections to the General's military background.

মুশারফের বিরুদ্ধে কট্টরপন্থীদের বিক্ষোভ

ইসলামাবাদ, ২২ জুলাই: লন্ডনে ৭ জুলাই-এর বিস্ফোরণের পরে পাকিস্তান-জুড়ে সন্ত্রাসবাদীদের খোঁজে ধরপাকড়ের জেরে দেশে কট্টরপন্থীদের রোষে পড়েছেন পাক প্রেসিডেন্ট। জুম্মাবারের বিশেষ নমাজের দিন ইসলামাবাদ-সহ দেশের প্রায় সব বড় শহরে মুশারফের বিরুদ্ধে মিছিল বার করেছেন কট্টরবাদীরা। প্রেসিডেন্টকে 'আমেরিকার পোষা কুকুর' বলে সমালোচনা করতেও ছাড়েননি তাঁরা। বৃশ প্রশাসন আজ মুশারফের পাশে দাঁড়িয়েছে। তারা বলেছে, 'সন্ত্রাস দমনে আমেরিকার অন্যতম সঙ্গী পাকিস্তান।' কিন্তু একই দিনে উল্টো কথা বলেছে একটি প্রথম সারির মার্কিন দৈনিক। পাকিস্তানকে 'সন্ত্রাসবাদের অন্যতম ঘাঁটি' বলে উল্লেখ করে তারা মুশারফের অস্বস্তি বাড়িয়েছে।

৭/৭-এর পরেই সন্ত্রাসের মোকাবিলায় টনি ব্ল্যারকে সব রকম সাহায্যের প্রতিশ্রুতি দিয়েছিলেন মুশারফ। জঙ্গিপনা রুখতে তাঁর তৎপরতায় কট্টরপন্থীরা মুশারফের উপরে খড়্গহস্ত। পাক সরকার তাই বলে অবশ্য ধরপাকড় থেকে পিছু হঠছে না। কাল লন্ডনে ফের বিস্ফোরণের পরে রাতভর অভিযান চালিয়ে পাক নিরাপত্তা বাহিনী আরও ৯০ জন সন্দেহভাজন জঙ্গিকে গ্রেফতার করেছে। এই নিয়ে ৭/৭-এর পরে মোট ৩০০ জনকে ধরা হল। লন্ডনের আত্মঘাতী জঙ্গিরা পাকিস্তানের মাদ্রাসায় আসা-যাওয়া করতেন বলে খবর প্রচারিত হওয়ার পরে গত মঙ্গল বার থেকে পাকিস্তানে কট্টর ভাবধারার স্কুল-মাদ্রাসা-মসজিদগুলিতে অভিযান চালানো হয়। কালই পাক প্রেসিডেন্ট বলেছিলেন, ডিসেম্বরের মধ্যে সব ইসলামি স্কুল ও মাদ্রাসাগুলিকে নথিভুক্ত হতে হবে।

এই সিদ্ধান্তে অযাচিত ভাবে চিরকালের শত্রু বেনজির ভুট্টোকে পাশে পেলেও কট্টরপন্থীদের ক্ষোভের মুখে পড়েছেন মুশারফ। আজ রাজধানী ইসলামাবাদে প্রায় হাজারখানেক লোক প্রেসিডেন্টের বিরুদ্ধে বিক্ষোভ প্রদর্শন করেন। মুখে ছিল স্লোগান—'আমেরিকার বন্ধু মুশারফ এক জন বিশ্বাসঘাতক।' শিশুরাও মিছিলে সামিল হয়। তাদের হাতে পোস্টারে লেখা ছিল—'মুশারফ সুনুন, আমরা সন্ত্রাসবাদী নই।' বিক্ষোভকারীরা পুলিশ টোকির দিকে পাথর ছোড়ে। ল্যাম্প পোস্ট ও পুলিশের মোটর সাইকেল ভাঙচুর করা হয়। করাচি-লাহোর-কোয়েটা-পোশোয়ারে জায়গায় জায়গায় এ রকম মিছিল বার হয়। তবে অনেকে বলছেন, ৯/১১-এর পরে পাকিস্তানে ধরপাকড়ের বিরুদ্ধে যে তুমুল বিক্ষোভ হয়েছিল এ বার তার সিকি ভাগও দেখা যায়নি।

— রয়টার্স, পি টি আই

3 JUL 2005 ANABAZAR PATRIKA

22 JUL 2005

Musharraf pledges to wipe out jihad



AP
Musharraf addresses the nation on Pakistan Television.

Islamabad, July 21

NOTHING THAT he wanted resolution of all disputes with India, including that on Kashmir, peacefully and judiciously, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf said on Thursday that jihadi elements did not want these efforts to succeed and vowed to crush terrorists and extremists.

Observing that the "Kalashnikov culture" had crept into Pakistani society over the past 26 years, he said the al-Qaida had come to the country's "cities and mountains" and "mujahideen" were openly indulging in recruit-

ment, training, collecting donations and publishing and circulating "jihadi literature".

"We want to resolve all political disputes with India, including that on Kashmir. But these people (jihadis) are against it. They say they want to pursue the path of jihad (holy war)", he said in a televised address to the nation on Thursday.

"They want to wage jihad in the world, everywhere", Musharraf said, denouncing such elements. Observing that they were "behind the times" and their decisions had always been "wrong", the Pakistan President said such elements were taking Pakistan backwards in time.

Vowing to crush terrorists and extremists, he said, "These elements are causing harm to Pakistan" and "defaming" Islam.

'Madrasas must register'

Taking note of allegations that madrasas were being used as training grounds for militants and extremists, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf on Thursday directed those which had not been registered to do so by December. Musharraf said he had been asking these bodies for the past three years to get themselves registered, but they had not been doing so.

Pakistan detains 200 militants

Campaign against fundamentalism will continue, says Minister

B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has detained more than 200 suspected militants as part of the crackdown on extremism after the London bombings.

"Today the security forces have carried out operations and arrested about 200 persons from all over the country. The campaign against fundamentalism would continue," said Interior Minister Aftab Sherpao.

Reports from various parts of the country said authorities were raiding some of the religious schools known to be inciting students to wage "jihad" (holy war) to protect the rights of Muslims. A police raid on a religious school housing girl students here on Tuesday night generated furore.

It is not clear under what law the suspected hardliners are being picked up. Pakistan has been down this lane before when it undertook a crackdown in January 2002 in the aftermath of 9/11 and also the Indian Parliament attack. Most were freed as the authorities failed to prepare any chargesheet against them.

The Interior Minister insisted that the arrests were "an internal matter" and not connected to the London attacks. Last Friday, President Pervez Musharraf presided over an extraordinary meeting of police officers following the London carnage and ordered a crackdown on extremist outfits and elements.

The raids on the religious schools have come even as investigators are probing whether one of the London bombers, Shahzad Tanweer (22), attended a madrasa in Pakistan. Tanweer and Mohammad Sidique Khan (30) arrived at the Karachi airport on November 19 and left almost three months later. A third, 18-year-old Hasib Husain, arrived last July via Saudi



DENOUNCING RAIDS: Women students staging a demonstration in front of the "Jamia Hafsa and Jamia Faridia" madrasa against police raids in Islamabad on Tuesday night. - PHOTO: REUTERS

Arabia but it remains unclear when and where he left the country.

In one raid in Karachi, police confiscated 150 audiotapes of the teachings of a militant cleric and arrested the shop owner

selling them. Some 30 persons were also detained within the last 24 hours for selling newspapers and magazines containing "hate material."

At a meeting of the Home Secretaries and police chiefs of the

provinces, Pakistan occupied Kashmir and Islamabad, the Minister directed the authorities concerned to make the crackdown against proscribed religious organisations more effective and result oriented.

Respect borders, Pakistan tells U.S.

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf has assured the U.S. of unwavering support in the war on terrorism, but said he would not tolerate violation of the borders by U.S. forces, newspapers said.

Gen. Musharraf met U.S. Central Command chief General John Abizaid on Tuesday after strikes by Afghanistan-based U.S. forces killed 24 suspected militants in a Pakistani tribal region

bordering Afghanistan last week. The strikes prompted anti-U.S. protests by pro-militant tribesmen in North Waziristan, during funerals for some of the dead on Saturday. - Reuters

29 JUL

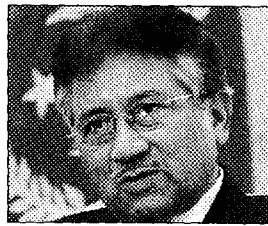
Crackdown on terror in Pak

MUBASHIR Zaidi
Islamabad, July 15

PAKISTANI PRESIDENT General Pervez Musharraf on Friday directed law enforcement agencies to launch a countrywide campaign against collection of donations, display of arms, holding of gatherings by banned outfits and to remove all hate material from markets by this December at the latest. The directive came hours after the President spoke to British PM Tony Blair and assured his fullest support in the London bombings probe. With reports suggesting a Pakistani connection to the blasts, the directive seems aimed at softening the criticism of Pakistani madrasas and terrorist organisations.

"You must enforce an end to publication and distribution of hate material including pamphlets, booklets, CDs etc. Writers, publishers and distributors

PERVEZSPEAK



of all such literature must be held accountable in accordance with the law. You must ensure that such material is not available in markets latest by December, this year," Musharraf told senior police officers.

Musharraf said the Pakistani government would not allow any militant organisations to collect donations in any form and to address gatherings. Anyone found indulging in these activities

would be strictly dealt with.

"Nor will anybody be allowed to brandish weapons," he said, assuring full support to police in its actions against extremists. The President said he would review progress in the drive and judge the results on the basis of feedback from the people.

The President made it clear that the actions of the government are not anti-religion but intended to curb the extremist minority, harming Pakistan's interests and tarnishing the image of Islam. "No government can be anti-religion - Pakistan undoubtedly is an ideological state and is an Islamic Republic. We have to take it forward as a modern, dynamic, progressive, forward looking Islamic state," he asserted.

Pakistan, he said, stands at the cross-roads in its history and there is an urgent need to address the extremist forces existing on the fringes of its society.

1 JULY 2005

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Pakistan raises outlay for defence

Expenditure up to Rs. 223.5 billion from last year's Rs. 216 billion

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday announced Rs. 1,098 billion (\$18.4 billion) annual budget for the fiscal year 2005-06, with defence allocation covering almost 25 per cent of the total outlay.

The government increased defence spending to Rs. 223.5 billion (\$3.74 billion) from last year's Rs. 216 billion (\$3.62 billion).

Minister for Finance Omar Ayub, while presenting the budget in the National Assembly, cited Pakistan's continued commitment to safeguard territorial integrity as the reason for the increase. "Our Government remains committed to a strong defence and preservation of country's security and territorial integrity," said Mr. Ayub, grandson of a former

Pakistani President, Field Marshal Gohar Ayub Khan.

Though the situation on Pakistan's eastern borders with India has eased following commencement of the peace process and continued ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC), the country is still deeply engaged in the ongoing war against terror in the tribal regions bordering Afghanistan.

Pakistan has deployed over 75,000 troops in these areas to prevent cross border movements by al-Qaeda and Taliban fugitives, operating there.

The Government allocated last year Rs. 193.9 billion (\$3.25 billion), which were later revised upwards by Rs. 216.3 billion (\$3.62 billion). Mr. Ayub said the

defence spending would be kept at 3.1 per cent of the GDP. A leading economist opposed increase in the defence budget, saying major chunk of this amount should have gone to infrastructure development. "The government could slash non-combat expenditure and divert that amount to infrastructure development," Mr Qaisar Bengali said.

As Pakistani armed forces plan to procure a series of latest military equipment, including F-16 aircraft from the United States this year, the Government may have to revise the defence spending later this year. For two important areas in social sector – health and education – a meagre Rs. 20 billion has been allocated. – UNI

08 JUN 2005

THE HINDU

MOB TARGETS KFC RESTAURANT ■ 6 DEAD

KARACHI BURNS



AFTERMATH: A car set on fire by Shi'ite rioters in Karachi on Tuesday. — AFP

Associated Press

KARACHI, May 31. — Widespread rioting and arson were reported in the city after Shi'ite mobs went on the rampage to vent anger at the suicide blast in a mosque here last evening.

In the worst incident, a mob torched a KFC restaurant last night killing six employees and bringing the overall death toll to 12. Four of the victims at the restaurant were burned to death, while the two others died after taking refuge in a refrigeration unit, a senior police officer said. The six bodies were recovered today.

Sunni extremists were suspected in the mosque attack, and it was unclear why KFC was targeted in retaliatory rioting, along with arson attacks on vehicles, shops, three bank branches and three gas stations. However, the restaurant is heavily associated with the USA and rioters in Pakistan typically attack symbols of Washington while on a rampage.

One of the three men involved in the mosque attack was admitted to a hospital with injuries. Police said his name was Md Jamil and that he was from the outlawed Jaish-e-Mohammed militant group, which is accused of orchestrating several attacks against minorities.

Meanwhile, the home minister of Sindh province, Mr Rauf Siddiqi, said security in Karachi has shifted into "high alert". He condemned yesterday's attack on the Shi'ite mosque as "criminal and merciless". He added: "These incidents are happening one after the other. We are trying to find a link between them."

Pak to deport Libbi: Musharraf

Senior Al-Qaida militant Abu Farrajal-Libbi will be handed over to the USA for prosecution, Gen. Pervez Musharraf said today, AP adds from Islamabad. "We are obviously going to deport him," the Pakistani President told CNN. "We don't want him in Pakistan."

01 JUN 2007

Pervez lecture sparks protests

IMTIAZ GUL

Islamabad, May 18: A lecture on "unity and settlement of differences" to members of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam) by President Pervez Musharraf has sparked a new controversy with leading Opposition parties questioning his "direct interference" in politics.

A breakaway faction of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League, the PML (Q) is in disarray after some party members developed serious differences with their leadership on a host of issues.

The differences began to surface after PML (Q) chief Chaudhry Shujaat Hussein terminated the membership of former Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali. The situation in the party worsened to such an extent that Musharraf had to convene a meeting on Monday and lecture the party members to "behave" themselves.

While asking the party members to sort out their differences, Musharraf also allayed their fears, telling them that the PML (Q) was his party.

Recently, Musharraf had himself triggered speculations by conceding that he is in constant touch with the PPP, which is considered as a moderate political force, capable of carrying forward his agenda of "enlightened moderation".

Interestingly, Jamali, who has been quite disturbed over Hussein's statement that he



Pervez Musharraf

(Jamali) is no longer a member of the PML after resigning as secretary general on his appointment as the Prime Minister in October 2002, kept quiet during Monday's meeting of the party members and Musharraf.

However, he met Musharraf and told him about his differences with Hussein, who was instrumental in splitting Sharif's PML five years ago.

The leading Opposition parties are also unhappy with the performance of the PML (Q) and Musharraf's interference in political affairs.

"General Musharraf's increasing interactions with the politicians constitute as an interference in political affairs," PML secretary general Siddique-ul-Farooque said.

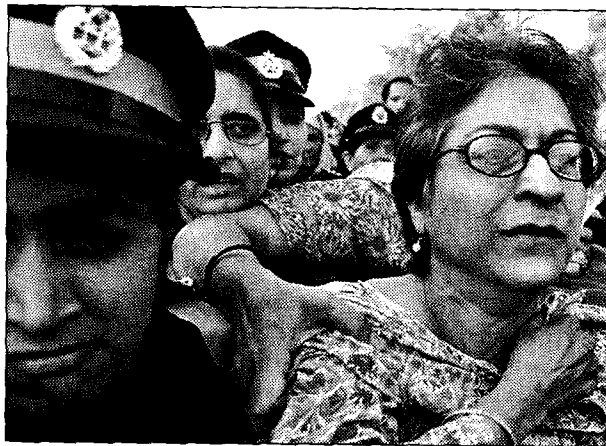
Rage over race in Lahore

Lahore, May 14 (Agencies): Pakistani police detained about 30 people today, including a prominent human rights activist, for defying a ban on women running in a road race through Lahore, witnesses and police said.

Authorities banned women from competing in such races after Islamic hard-liners — who regard women's participation as against Islam — attacked runners at a similar event elsewhere in Punjab province last month.

Asma Jehangir, the former chief of Pakistan's Human Rights Commission, and about 30 other male and female participants were detained at today's race, police official Waqar Abbasi said. The race was cancelled because of the arrests.

He said police and other government officials had asked race organisers to obey



Human rights activist Asma Jehangir (right) being arrested in Lahore. (AFP)

the ban, but they refused.

However, one of the organisers, Nabeel Ahmed, said the arrests were "unjustified" and that participants had not committed any crime.

Police said 13 supporters of

an Islamic religious group were also arrested.

A Reuters photographer said police also beat and arrested protesters from Islamist parties who had planned to attack participants

in the race.

"When people started running the police baton charged them, beat them and arrested them, pulling people by the hair, pulling women by the hair," Ali Dayan-Hasan, a Pakistani researcher for Human Rights Watch, said from a police cell where he was being held with more than 20 others.

Dayan-Hasan, who was observing the race, said up to 50 people, mostly women, had gone just a few metres before the police charged. He presumed the others detained were taken to another police station.

The incident is the latest in Pakistan to pit conservative Islamists against more liberal elements in the country. President Pervez Musharraf said this year people who objected to women taking part in sports in public should switch off their television sets.

15 MAY 2005 THE TELEGRAPH

Foes turn friends in changing Pak

IMTIAZ GUL

Islamabad, May 11: Against the backdrop of emerging political realignments in Pakistan, yesterday's foes may be tomorrow's friends, with Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) sharing power with President General Pervez Musharraf.

Speculation on the PPP's role in the future political set-up rose following President Musharraf's statement in Lahore yesterday that he is still in touch with the party.

"It is not a one-way traffic because both the sides are wil-

ling to continue dialogue," he told newsmen amid reports of a deal, which if struck, will lead to dissolution of assemblies and holding of fresh elections by end of this year.

"Contact is a permanent thing and is still alive between us regardless of the outcome," Musharraf said, adding that not only the government, but the PPP has also shown interest in continuing dialogue.

Musharraf, a strong advocate of allowing moderate forces to rule Pakistan to improve the country's image abroad, particularly in the West, says these forces should

be encouraged to combat extremism.

A key US ally in the ongoing war on terror, Pakistan has taken several measures to propagate a soft and liberal image abroad by launching a manhunt for al Qaida and Taliban fugitives and militants involved in fanning sectarianism in the country.

While the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (PML-Q), a breakaway faction of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's PML, rules out the possibility of fresh parliamentary elections before 2007, Benazir's husband Asif Ali Zardari

insists that 2005 is poll time.

Observers believe that Zardari's bail in one of the many corruption cases last year after spending nine years in jail, was also part of reconciliatory moves towards the PPP and other moderate forces in the country.

While media reports today suggested the PPP has forwarded the names of its stalwarts for key portfolios in a future national set-up prior to fresh elections, senior party leader and PPP spokesperson Senator Farhatullah Babar said the reports were an attempt to "discredit" the party.

"Both parties are close to an agreement for national reconciliation. In this regard, President Musharraf's emissaries sought names of PPP leaders for inclusion in the national set-up and the PPP forwarded their names," the reports said.

Benazir was reported to have suggested the name of Aftab Shaban Mirani as the caretaker Prime Minister, but the government opposed it and requested her to forward Makhdoom Amin Fahim's name for the slot. The reports, quoting sources, added that she accepted the demand.



Pervez Musharraf (left) and Benazir Bhutto

AL-LIBBI NO. 3 MAN IN TERROR OUTFIT

Al-Qaida leader arrested in Pak

Jan McGirk in Islamabad

May 4. — Abu Farraj al-Libbi, a top Al-Qaida leader wanted for two assassination attempts against President Pervez Musharraf, has been captured after 17 months on the run.

According to intelligence sources, he is considered to be Al-Qaida's operational chief in Pakistan and co-ordinate Islamist cells in Britain and the USA. The arrest was hailed by President George W Bush as a "critical victory in the war on terror".

The Libyan-born militant, was arrested along with five other Islamist fighters, according to Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, Pakistan's information minister.

"He's a big catch," Mr Ahmed said. "We will keep him in our custody; he is an important terrorist and he can provide clues for our investigations."

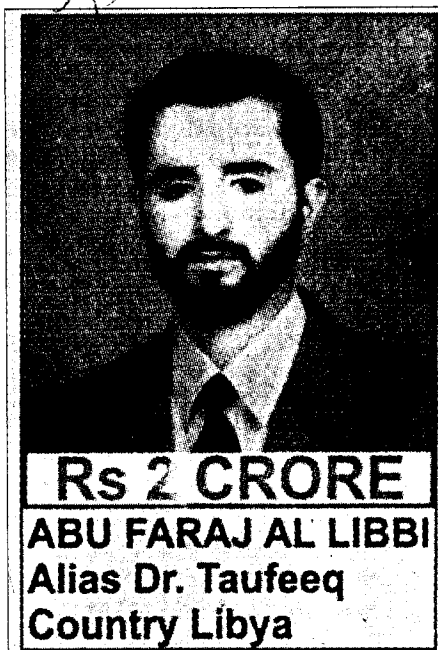
A senior Pakistani intelligence source said that details of a money trail that Al-Libbi disclosed under interrogation led to Europe. Now considered the number three man in Al Qaida, Al-Libbi has been thrust into prominence since the arrest of the 9/11 mastermind, Khaled Shaikh Mohammed, more than two years ago in Rawalpindi.

Mohammed was quickly handed over to US custody for interrogation, as were some 700 other Al Qaida suspects since Pakistan became an ally in Washington's war on terror.

The Pakistani intelligence source said Al-Libbi has been detained for the past five weeks and was questioned by both Pakistani and American agents. He has revealed enough information for Islamabad to plan an imminent "assault against the emirs of Al-Qaida".

This refers to the Egyptian doctor, Ayman Al Zawahiri, who is Osama bin Laden's top deputy and Uzbek allies who have been eluding Pakistani forces for nearly a year in the remote tribal belt between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Al-Libbi will be pressed to reveal the whereabouts of Osama Bin Laden, believed to be hiding in the tribal zone close to Waziristan, where Pakistani troops have clashed sporadically with local clansmen and foreign militants since 2004.



Al-Libbi is accused of masterminding two bombings against President Musharraf in December 2003. — AFP

Order for Osama's head in dry ice

US spy chiefs ordered agents to deliver Osama bin Laden's severed head in a box of dry ice and hoist heads of other Al-Qaida leaders on pikes, a retired field officer has disclosed, AFP adds from Washington. As America reeled in shock days after the 9/11 attacks, former CIA agent Mr Gary Schroen was sent to Afghanistan to help the opposition Northern Alliance to topple the Taliban.

He told National Public Radio in an interview broadcast yesterday that he stopped by the office of then director of the CIA counter-terrorism centre Mr Cofer Black for final instructions. He was told: "Your basic marching orders are to link up with the Northern Alliance and get their cooperation military and they will take on the Taliban. When we break the Taliban, your job is to capture Osama, kill him and bring his head back in a box full of dry ice."

It was the first time in 30 years with the CIA that he had been ordered to set out to kill a target rather than try to bring them in alive, he said. — **The Independent**

05 MAY 2005

THE STATESMAN

Islamabad looks to calm domestic tension

Pakistan's Government has unveiled a series of measures aimed at winning over the people of Balochistan, its largest province.

B. Muralidhar Reddy

CONFIDENCE BUILDING measures (CBMs) are the new buzzword for the Pakistani establishment. Having "determined" that the peace process with India is irreversible, it is now focussed on calming tensions at home.

Balochistan, the centre of insurgency for nearly two years now, is an obvious priority. One of the two parliamentary committees formed to suggest ways to redress the grievances of the province's people has finalised a list of steps aimed at capturing their hearts and minds.

Provincial autonomy

The second committee dealing with changes required in the Constitution for greater provincial autonomy is expected to finalise its report soon.

Pakistan's largest province with 43 per cent of the country's territory, Balochistan is home to six per cent of the population. Though rich in natural resources, it is the country's most backward and neglected region.

Several factors have contributed to the

new urgency on the part of the Pakistan military to tackle the unrest in Balochistan politically instead of as a law and order issue.

Having lost the so-called strategic depth in Afghanistan after the U.S. military intervention post-9/11, Pakistan's army could ill afford an unstable Balochistan. However, the initial decision to establish three cantonments in the province with little concern for the people's socio-economic welfare accentuated the simmering discontent.

On top of it, the marketing of the province

NEWS ANALYSIS

as a prime region for global investment and as a corridor for trade to Central and West Asia without adequate stakes for the locals added fuel to the fire. Self-proclaimed Baloch nationalists are suspicious of the Army's agenda. They fear they would be reduced to a minority in their homeland.

The parliamentary committee on Balochistan seeks to address some of these apprehensions. At the deep-sea Gwadar port, being developed with Chinese help, it has

suggested that the town's people be given preference; the second preference, as far as possible, should be given to the people of Makran and those of Balochistan.

The committee discussed grievances of various tribes and asked the Government to instruct the Frontier Constabulary and the Coast Guard to perform only the duties assigned to them — controlling drugs and arms. It also recommended the strengthening of levies and supply of life-saving drugs worth Rs. 1 billion to Balochistan hospitals.

It recommended setting aside seven per cent of the total revenue of the Gwadar port for the province's development and welfare.

Chieftains' lobby

How the new package will go down with the powerful lobby of 78 chieftains in the province is to be watched. One of their perennial grievances is that the province's wealth is being transferred to the already better off Punjab and that the country's armed might is being used for this.

In the words of Nawab Bugti: "They think that natural resources are national assets, and we think that they are Baloch assets, and

whoever wants to use them must do so through us, not by direct possession." A few weeks ago Islamabad signed a peace accord with the influential Bugti.

Analysts in Islamabad wonder whether the lot of the Balochis can be improved as long as the Sardars continue to hold sway in the province.

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf is on record for saying that only three of the 78 Sardars were "trouble makers." The current phase of unrest in the province is the result of a total marginalisation of the traditional Baloch political parties.

In October 2002, thanks to generous help from the establishment, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), a conglomerate of six religious parties, emerged as a major player in the Baloch politics.

Today, the province is ruled by the military propped-up Muslim League in alliance with the MMA, with no representation to the Baloch parties.

In the entire debate on the unrest in the province in the establishment, there is hardly any reference to the sidelining of the Baloch parties and its impact on the political situation.

Differences in Pakistan ^{Pakistan} Opposition come to the fore

B. Muralidhar Reddy ^{2/19 RD-15}

ISLAMABAD: Serious differences have surfaced within the mainstream Opposition on the approach to the "conciliatory" gestures by the President, Pervez Musharraf.

In a major setback to the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD), grouping of mainstream Opposition parties, the Muslim League led by Nawaz Sharif has announced that it would stay away from its activities owing to the "attitude of People's Party Parliamentarians (PPP)."

The Alliance was formed in 2000 to mobilise people against Gen. Musharraf and military governance. It lost much of its steam after Mr. Sharif chose to enter into a deal with the Government and went into exile to Saudi Arabia along with his entire clan.

The Muslim League is enraged over the recent statements made by Asif Ali Zardari, husband of Benazir Bhutto, on the importance of army as an institution and readiness of his party to keep open the doors for talks.

Mr. Zardari returned from Dubai last week after spending a few weeks in Dubai with his wife and family. Mrs. Bhutto has been living there in self-imposed exile since 1998. For days before his return, the PPP built a hype on the event and made out as if it would be the beginning of a new movement against Gen. Musharraf.

At the last minute, the party leadership decided to go slow against the Government and look for negotiations. A section of the

PPP was also upset with the sudden change of heart at the highest level.

Speaking at a news conference here, the PML-N's acting parliamentary leader in the National Assembly, Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, cited a long list of grievances against the PPP, ranging from changing of venues of ARD meetings to not taking the PML-N into confidence about its plans for welcoming Mr. Zardari in Lahore on April 16.

Stung by the criticism, the PPP said it would try to resolve the matter by holding talks with leaders of the second largest party in the main Opposition alliance.

The party also denied any differences within its rank and file on the approach of the party towards the Government.

The PML leader said Mr. Zardari had announced that he would lead a procession in Lahore on his arrival, but instead went straight to his Bilawal House residence. Mr. Chaudhry Nisar criticised the PPP leaders, saying their behaviour had changed dramatically after Mr. Zardari's arrival from Dubai.

Aziz for moderation

The Prime Minister, Shaukat Aziz, has said "moderation" is at the root of Islam and "extremism" neither led to peace, nor it can guarantee security for the human beings.

He told participants of the National Seerat Conference, organised on the occasion of Eid Milad-un-Nabi, here that Pakistan had to lay foundations of a society that is based on "moderation, enlightenment, tolerance and social justice".

24 APR 2005 THE HINDU

Pleas against Musharraf's dual posts dismissed

B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed petitions challenging the dual posts held by the President, Pervez Musharraf, and the 17th constitutional amendment incorporating most of the changes made by Gen. Musharraf during the military rule from October 12, 1999 to October 2002.

After eight days of hearing, a

five-member bench presided over by the Chief Justice, Nazim Hussain Siddiqui, in a brief judgment dismissed the petitions saying the reasons would be recorded in the detailed judgment.

Authority

During the hearings, the Chief Justice observed that neither the Supreme Court nor any authority in the world could ask lawmakers to behave in a proper

way. "We can understand the limitation of the Prime Minister, but why parliamentarians acted as yes-men and failed to express their opinion at the time the 17th amendment was being passed?" he asked. Without the assistance of legislators, he observed, nothing could have been done.

The observations were made by the petitioner A.K. Dogar of the Pakistan Lawyers Forum.

14 APR 2005 THE HINDU

29 die in Pak shrine blast

Quetta, Pakistan, March 20 (Reuters): A time bomb exploded in a Muslim shrine in southwestern Pakistan as devotees were served food, killing at least 29 people and wounding 40, and police said on Sunday they believed local rivalry was the motive.

Officials earlier said at least 32 people had been killed in the late Saturday blast at the shrine of a saint near Gandhawa town in the province of Baluchistan, and the motive was initially believed to be either sectarian or separatist.

But interior minister Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao said 29 people had been killed

and police were investigating the possibility that rivalry between caretakers of the shrine might have been behind the attack.

"One possibility that police are investigating is rivalry among the descendants of the saint...there were some disputes among relatives," Sherpao told Reuters.

Another possibility was that some conservative Muslims were opposed to the celebration of the saint's day, which includes dancing and singing by women devotees, he said.

The shrine, 420 km north of Pakistan's largest city, Karachi, is a Shiite Muslim place

of worship but members of the majority Sunni community also traditionally pay their respects there.

Baluchistan, Pakistan's largest but poorest province, has a history of sectarian violence between Sunni and Shiite militants and has also been troubled recently by attacks by ethnic minority militants fighting for autonomy.

But Sherpao ruled out the possibility that Sunni-Shiite rivalry or the tribal militants were behind the latest blast.

The bomb went off as food was being distributed after a ceremony. It weighed about 2 kg, Sherpao said. Many of the

injured were hurt in a stampede after the blast, he said.

Provincial police chief Chaudhry Yaqoob said a timing mechanism had been found. "It was a time bomb because we found a time device," Yaqoob said.

Security has been tight in Baluchistan since an attack by the nationalist tribal militants on the country's largest gas field on January 11, in which at least 15 people were killed.

On Thursday, eight soldiers were killed and 23 wounded in a battle with the militants on the outskirts of Dera Bugti town, 170 km (100 miles) east of Gandhawa.

THE TELEGRAPH 21 MAR 2005

Pak Opp protests nuke admission

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ISLAMABAD, MARCH 11

LAWMAKERS from hardline Islamic groups and moderate Opposition parties on Friday walked out of the lower house of Parliament to protest a startling admission from a Cabinet Minister that Khan sold centrifuges to Iran.

It was the first time a politician from either Iran or Pakistan publicly admitted the transfer of centrifuges, which could be used in making an atomic bomb.

Opposition lawmakers said Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed' remarks were highly irresponsible and could create problems for the nation. They called for a debate on the matter, but national Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Ameer Hussain rejected the request.

Dozens of angry lawmakers continued shouting their remarks over the Speaker's objection, then walked out.



Parties walk out of Parliament over Sheikh Rashid Ahmed's disclosure on A.Q. Khan

Qazi Hussain Ahmad, the leader of the MMA, said Ahmed's remarks were "highly irresponsible". "This is a very serious and sensitive matter and the House should hold a debate on it," he said.

Chaudhry Aitzaz Ahsan, a lawmaker from Pakistan People's Party, a moderate Opposition group, also criticised the minister and praised Khan for helping Pakistan attain an atomic bomb. —PTI

Benazir, Nawaz Sharif meet in Jeddah

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, FEB. 10. The two former Prime Ministers of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, met in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia today and reviewed the political situation back home.

Their meeting comes against the backdrop of efforts by emissaries of the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, for a "national reconciliation" and a reaching out to the mainstream political parties.

The Information and Broadcasting Minister, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, said at a news conference that the Government was in "contact" with Ms. Bhutto through emissaries and an understanding with her party could be reached.

Common understanding

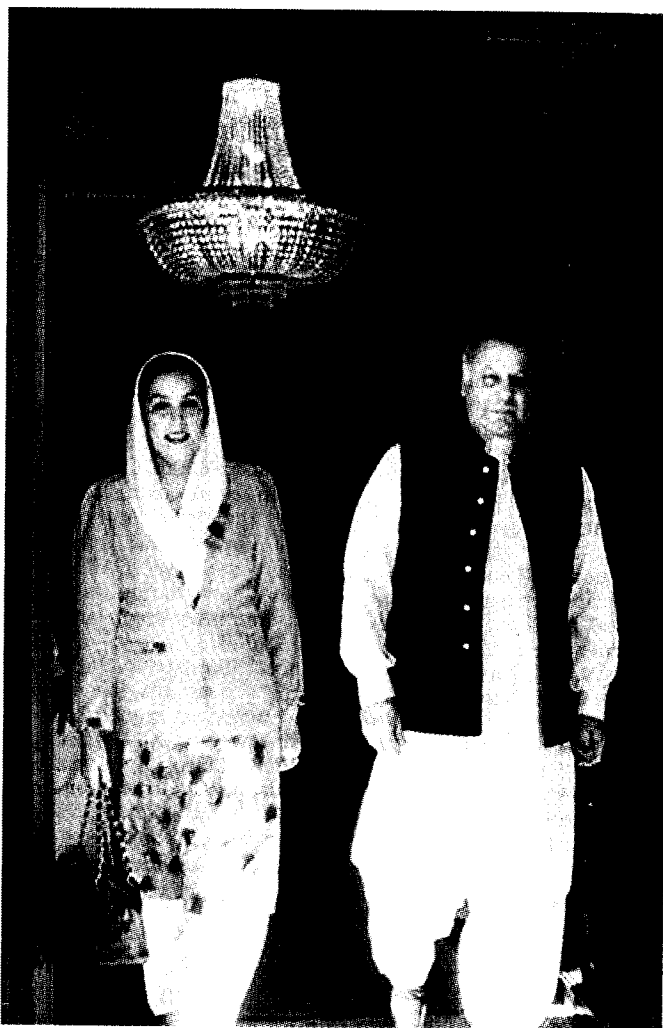
However, representatives of the two former Prime Ministers here said the meeting of the leaders was an effort to bring together all the mainstream parties for a common understanding on problems confronting the country.

Both the leaders are currently in exile. While Ms. Bhutto has been living in self-imposed exile in Dubai since 1998, Mr. Sharif went into exile in 2000, along with his entire family, as part of an understanding with Gen. Musharraf after he was exonerated of all charges.

After the military coup of October 1999, the parties led by Ms. Bhutto and Mr. Sharif were part of a larger alliance of opposition to Gen. Musharraf.

However, this is the first time that they have met to discuss a joint strategy to regain their political base.

The leader of Pakistan's Is-



TO FIGHT TOGETHER: Former Prime Ministers of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto, at the residence of Mr. Sharif in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on Thursday. The photograph was released by the Pakistan Muslim League. — Reuters

lamic Alliance, Muthahida Majlis Amal (MMA), Qazi Hussain Ahmed, also had talks with Mr. Sharif last month.

Amidst reports of a secret

pact between Ms. Benazir Bhutto and Gen. Musharraf, the two leaders had agreed to launch a joint struggle to oust Gen. Musharraf.

THE HINDU

10 FEB 2005

A DOUBLE ROLE

Musharraf In A Cleft Stick

By SANKAR SEN

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President Musharraf, citing the need for unity of command, has decided to break the pledge to give up the job of head of armed forces by the end of December 2004 and turn into a civilian leader. This was the promise he had made to opposition parties, and particularly to *Muttahidda-Majlis-I-Amal* (MMA), a coalition of Islamic parties for their support in Pakistan's Parliament. And now, not unsurprisingly, he has refused to honour the promise. This is a big disappointment. It has become clear that Pakistan's fourth military saviour is totally dependent on his position in the army.

Opposition parties have begun protests and the MMA has threatened to hold more demonstrations and derail Parliament. Quazi Hussain Ahmad, champion of *Jamat-i-Islam* and, to quote journalist Ayaz Amir, "Pakistan's foremost exponent of fake agitations" and another leader of religious parties, Fazlur Rahman have thundered that the MMA will not accept General Musharraf as President, unless he takes off the uniform. However, MMA, despite brave posturings, will not push the matter beyond a point of no return.

Historic linkage

There is an historic linkage between the Pakistani army and these radical Islamic groups who have always received the support of the ISI and the army. Normally military spymasters have a fair measure of the verbal thunder of these fundamentalist groups. In the October 2002 election in Pakistan, the MMA alliance polled nearly 11 per cent of the votes, which yielded 62 seats. At the provincial level, it did its best in Pashtun-dominated North-Western Frontier Province, where it won 47 per cent of the seats and formed the government.

In Baluchistan the MMA is a member of the coalition government. One of the important factors behind the unexpected electoral victory of the MMA has been the support of the Pakistan government, and the difficulties it placed in the way of the mainstream parties. By assisting the MMA in the electoral campaign, Musharraf wanted to ensure that no opposition party won a clear majority in the election of 2002. But the clerics and religious parties are upset with Musharraf for his operations following American pressure against the Al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

Musharraf expects that the prolongation of army rule will not encounter serious opposi-

on from the free world and there will be no pressure, particularly from America, on him to change his course. American backers of Musharraf feel that he is America's best bet and his importance lies not so much in his personal qualities but in the belief that whoever comes after him may be a disaster. This devil-you-know argument is, however, flawed. The short-term policy based on



support to a man without building up institutional capacities is based on quicksand. There always remains the danger that Musharraf like Ayub Khan and Zia-ul-Haq may slip into personalised rule and not know how and when to give up power. There is also a growing concern in Washington that a new spell of martial law will be counter-productive. If secular and provincial channels of expression are blocked, and if mainstream political parties are thwarted, this will only help the radical Islamists.

Three goals

At the June 2003 Camp David summit, President Bush outlined three major goals of American policy towards Pakistan — keeping it as a partner in the war against terrorism, containing the spread of nuclear weapons and democratisation. It will not be easy to persuade the present Pakistan government that democratisation is in Pakistan's own interest. Hostility of the army towards politicians cannot be erased overnight, but there should be pressure on Musharraf for the army's staged withdrawal from politics. In Pakistan's national interest, restoration of a civil-military balance is necessary. America now wants Musharraf to change his political

partners and build bridges with the mainstream Pakistan People's Party of Benazir Bhutto. Benazir's husband Zardari, who had been languishing in prison for more than eight years, has been released. But Zardari was rearrested and his supporters beaten up when he had gone to Punjab; the stronghold of Pakistan Muslim League, which is pro-Musharraf. Zardari then

intelligence officials. Mullah Omar and other Taliban leaders are hiding in different areas of Pakistan.

Recently, Omar issued a message renewing his call to fight the Americans. Allowing Taliban to remain free gives Pakistan a card to play if and when US decides to leave Afghanistan. One of Pakistan's great bargaining chips is the threat that it might become a rogue state if its friends do not help it.

This suicide gambit, however, highlights the vulnerability of Pakistan's moderate leadership and dangers from Islamic radicals. For USA, as Stephen Cohen puts it in his "Idea of Pakistan", "Pakistan is a part-problem and part-solution. An ally in war against terrorism, it is also a potential source of radicalism and nuclear proliferation". The melancholy fact is, whatever be the ties of sentiments linking US to India, it is Pakistan which remains a vital ally in the war against terrorism, because the threat to United States and US position in Afghanistan stem from Pakistani society, which only a Pakistan state alone can control. Thus Washington has no option but to work with Pakistan in the short run, but it has to take note of Pakistan's deeper malaise, and adopt a policy of "cooperation that encompasses a strong dose of prevention".

Widespread criticism

Initially, Musharraf's rule was welcomed by many Pakistanis as a relief from corrupt politicians, but now it is seen in a different light. There is widespread and well-informed criticism of army rule. General Zia during his martial law regime was widely despised but army was held in high esteem. But after nearly five years of Musharraf's rule his popularity and also that of the army has diminished and his position is criticised even within the army. His sticking to the army chief's position implies that no one else can be trusted.

Pakistan's army is still secular, but its officer cadre is becoming anti-American and more Islamic than it was three decades ago. Many officers are openly supportive of Islamic forces and groups. There are strong links between army and various Islamic groups, especially among retired ISI officers who have joined their former clients. Nineteen retired generals attended the 1991 convention of the *Jamaat-i-Islam* in Islamabad.

Musharraf has been able like Zia to sidetrack potential rivals and promote officers who are close to him. But there is no guarantee that none of them will step forward to demand Musharraf's removal if he becomes a liability.

The author is a former Director, National Police Academy.

Pak army glare on Baluch revolt

IMTIAZ GUL

Islamabad, Jan. 16: The Pakistani army appears all set to tackle the latest wave of insurgency sweeping Baluchistan after the province formally sought the federal government's assistance to secure its gas installations.

While interior minister Aftab Sherpao did not rule out a military operation in the area to restore the government's writ, provincial authorities, including home minister Mir Shoaib Nausherwani, opposed such an action. "We have simply asked the federal government to take charge of the security," Nausherwani said.

He said the decision to seek the federal government's help was prompted by five days of clashes in Sui between security forces and armed men, which claimed at least 10 lives. The clashes disrupted the supply of gas to several parts of the country after a purification plant was hit by rockets, and forced the shutdown of the largest natural gasfield at Sui a couple of days ago.

Rich in natural and mineral resources, Baluchistan is the largest of Pakistan's four provinces, but has a high illiteracy and unemployment rate.

A low-level insurgency si-



A Pakistani paramilitary soldier guards the Sui gasfields. (AFP)

mmerring for years gained momentum in recent months after the Baluchistan Liberation Army — which cropped up in the 1980s as a pro-Moscow militant organisation to fight for an independent state comprising all Baluch areas in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan — stepped up attacks on government installations and personnel.

Leading the insurgency are provincial tribal chiefs — Nawab Akbar Bugti (in whose area of dominance the Sui gas fields are located), Nawab Khair Bakhsh Mari and Sardar Attaullah Mengal. Mengal played an important role in instigating an armed rebellion with Bugti and Mari in the mid-1970s, but the revolt was

crushed. At stake is a greater share of natural resources in the province. Besides, the chiefs oppose additional military garrisons that the army plans to set up in the near future.

Joining this chorus is former Prime Minister Zafarullah Jamali, who represents Baluchistan's Rojhan Jamali constituency in the National Assembly. "Such a campaign could not be called a liberation movement. But justice should be done to the people of Baluchistan and their genuine demands should be met after talks," he said.

The insurgency has led President Pervez Musharraf to issue a stern warning to Baluch nationalists in an interview earlier this week: "Don't push us. It's not the seventies, when you can hit and run and hide in the mountains".

However, political analyst Rashed Rahman pointed out that the army did not succeed in quelling the rebellion in four previous campaigns — in 1948, 1958-62, 1963-69 and 1973-77. "Baluchistan needs fast economic development and special human resource development programmes. It needs more educationists, doctors, engineers, technocrats and enough skilled and semi-skilled people to help build this province."

“Pakistan’s war on terror led to human rights violations”

167 By B. Muralidhar Reddy 10-9

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 15. The New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) in its latest report on Pakistan has said that ever since President Pervez Musharraf seized office in a bloodless coup five years ago, Pakistan’s military has acted with increasing impunity to enforce its writ over the State and to protect its grip on Pakistan’s ‘economic resources,’ especially land.

According to the HRW, the other pressing human rights concerns in the country include a rise in sectarian violence; legal discrimination against and mistreatment of women and religious minorities; arbitrary detention of political opponents; harassment and intimidation of the media; and lack of due process in the conduct of the “war on terror” in collaboration with the United States.

A major military offensive against alleged Taliban and Al-Qaeda forces in the South Waziristan area bordering Afghanistan resulted in massive displacement of civilians and scores of deaths, it said.

Substantiating the charge about military consolidating its grip on economic resources, the HRW said in Okara district of the military’s traditional stronghold of Punjab, paramilitary forces acting in conjunction with the army killed and tortured farmers who refused to cede their land rights to the army.

Honour killings

It said violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, rape, “honour killings,” acid attacks, and trafficking, are rampant in Pakistan. The existing legal code discriminates against women and girls and creates major obstacles to seeking redress in cases of violence. Survivors of violence encounter unresponsiveness and hostility at each level of the criminal justice system, from police who fail to register or investigate cases of

gender-based violence to judges with little training or commitment to women’s equal rights.

The report said under Pakistan’s existing Hudood Ordinance, proof of rape generally requires the confession of the accused or the testimony of four adult Muslim men who witnessed the assault. If a woman cannot prove her rape allegation she runs a very high risk of being charged with fornication or adultery, the criminal penalty for which is either a long prison sentence and public whipping, or, though rare, death by stoning. The testimony of women carries half the weight of a man’s testimony under this ordinance.

The Government is yet to repeal or reform the Hudood Ordinance, despite repeated calls for its repeal by the Government-run National Commission on the Status of Women, as well as women’s rights and human rights groups. Informed estimates suggest that over 200,000 cases under the Hudood laws are under process at various levels in Pakistan’s legal system, it claimed.

The HRW quoted Interior Ministry saying that there have been more than 4,000 honour killings in the last six years. Non-governmental groups recorded more than 1,300 honour killings in 2003.

Sectarian violence up

On religious freedom it said sectarian violence increased significantly in Pakistan in 2004. While estimates suggest that at least 4,000 people, largely from the minority Shia Muslim sect, have died as a result of sectarian violence since 1980, the last five years have witnessed a steep rise in incidents of sectarian violence.

The HRW said conduct of the “war on terror” in Pakistan led to serious violations of human rights. Suspects arrested and held on terrorism charges frequently were detained without charge and subject to trials without proper judicial process.

THE HINDU

THE HINDU

16 JAN 2005

^{PM} Zardari ¹¹ reunites with family, plans to go back [✓]

Dubai: Asif Ali Zardari, husband of former Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who arrived here to an emotional family reunion after eight years in prison, has said nothing would stop him from returning to his home country, and vowed to fight the regime of President Pervez Musharraf.

Zardari, 51, said, "I'm a fighter, I will stay and fight. This is a struggle against military dictatorship. By serving the jail term, I've proved that a civilian like me has the strength to stand up to the military," he was quoted as saying by the Gulf News daily on Sunday.

He also denied rumours of any deal with the regime. "I didn't break. Neither did my wife, who was in jail during the Zia years for five years. Nor did my father-in-law who



paid for it with his life. She didn't do a deal for herself, neither did (Zulfikar Ali) Bhutto. How can I even think of it?" He said the next challenge was to see that Pakistan returns to true democracy, not the sham that President Musharraf is foisting on the people. Asked if he was prepared for a return to jail if cases are re-opened against him, Zardari said, "In third world countries like ours, it's a risk you must be willing to take. As for me, jail does not frighten me."

The former senator and cabinet minister was freed on bail after eight years in custody, and later given a passport to travel after being removed from the government's exit control list.

Strongly denying any "deal" between the government and Bhutto's opposition Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Zardari said, "If I wanted to make a deal, I could have done it eight years ago."

About PPP's chances in the forthcoming municipal polls this year and general elections in 2007 he said, "We are sticking to our plan, we demand elections be held in 2005." Asked about his party's performance in the general elections he said, "the PPP let me correct you, did not lose the general elections." PTI ✓

Pak Opposition up in arms

and Karachi. Small rallies were also held in Islamabad and elsewhere.

The rallies did not attract the thousands of protesters that organisers had hoped for, however, and none of the country's top opposition leaders attended.

Liaquat Baluch, a leader of a six-party opposition coalition called Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal or United Action Forum, said the rallies were successful nonetheless in marking a "black day."

The rallies come two days after Gen. Musharraf in a televised address said he will remain army chief until 2007, saying it would be "extremely dangerous" for Pakistan to change track as it fights terrorism. The opposition rejected his claim, saying the army general had not honoured his promise to become a civilian president after 31 December, 2004. In December 2003, President Musharraf struck a deal with the coalition, agreeing to re-

linquish his army post by the end of 2004 in return for its support for constitutional changes allowing him to dismiss Parliament and the prime minister.

He was expected to rule as a civilian until 2007, according to a referendum in 2002. But Gen. Musharraf has indicated that he would keep his uniform. In November, Parliament approved a bill allowing him to remain president and army chief until 2007.



Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal activists at a rally. — AFP

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 1. — Hundreds of supporters of secular and religious groups protested across Pakistan today to condemn President Pervez Musharraf's decision to retain the powerful post of army chief.

Holding black flags, about 500 protesters gathered in Peshawar. About 350 people took part in a rally in Multan. Hundreds of people gathered for the rallies in Lahore

ASSOCIATED PRESS