

STATE OF EMERGENCY IN PAKISTAN

Introduction

Focus

This *News in Review* story focuses on the ongoing political turbulence in Pakistan, where a state of emergency has been imposed. The potential for instability in that country and its neighbours, such as Afghanistan and India, is explored.

Further Research

To stay informed about politics and life in Pakistan visit the official government Web site at www.pak.gov.pk.

On November 28, 2007, Pakistan's embattled president, Pervez Musharraf, said a tearful farewell to the armed forces he had led for almost a decade. Bowing to intense domestic and international pressure, he agreed to remove his army uniform in order to serve a second term as the civilian president of his troubled nation. But Musharraf's move was viewed as "too little, too late" by his many political enemies inside the country, who remained skeptical of his motives and ultimate intentions. For on November 3 he had imposed a state of emergency, effectively suspending the constitution and empowering the police and armed forces to detain anyone suspected of opposing his rule. Musharraf justified this draconian move in a nationwide address to his people. He argued that it was the only way to deal with the rising threat of extremist Islamic groups operating within the country. He claimed that these factions, closely tied to international terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda and the Taliban forces fighting NATO troops in neighbouring Afghanistan, posed a mortal threat to Pakistan's security.

However, to his opponents, Musharraf's action seemed more likely inspired by his desire to curb legal challenges to his controversial re-election as president in October. He had dismissed the chief justice of the Supreme Court, Iftikhar Chaudhry, who had questioned the legality of Musharraf's re-election, and replaced him and other judicial officials with hand-picked replacements who were sure to uphold his right to claim a second term in office. In the ensuing outcry over this high-handed act, many lawyers and journalists staged noisy demonstrations outside the court offices, which were broken up by the police.

Meanwhile, as demonstrations erupted throughout the country, and Musharraf's opponents of various political stripes took to the streets in protest, two of the general's most prominent rivals returned to the country from exile. Benazir Bhutto, the daughter of a former prime minister and twice prime minister herself, arrived to a tumultuous welcome by supporters of her Pakistan People's Party. However, her return was marred by a serious assassination attempt when her motorcade was the target of a deadly bomb attack as it proceeded slowly through the packed streets of Karachi. Bhutto escaped injury, but over 140 of her supporters were killed in the blast. Later in November, another former leader, Nawaz Sharif, also returned from exile, in Saudi Arabia, and prepared to rally his political forces for a comeback attempt. Both Bhutto and Sharif ruled out any chance of negotiations with Musharraf to share power or act as a transition team to restore democracy in the country. They demanded that Musharraf lift the state of emergency and ensure that immediate free elections be called.

For his part, Musharraf was under intense pressure from his main ally, the United States, to set a date for new elections and remove his military uniform if he was to continue to serve as president. Since seizing power in a military coup in 1999, Musharraf had ruled the country as a virtual dictator, banning opposition political groups and keeping a tight rein on the country's media. But after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, he had become a key strategic ally for U.S. President George W. Bush in the war on international terrorism. For this reason,

Did you know . . .

Both India and Pakistan won their independence from Britain in 1947. Pakistan has been ruled by the military for 32 of its 60 years as a nation. In that same time, its neighbour India has become the most populous democracy in the world.

Western criticism of his undemocratic methods was muted, and large sums of military aid continued to flow into Pakistan.

Since its declaration of independence in 1947, Pakistan’s history has been marked by brief periods of unstable democracy punctuated by longer stretches of harsh military rule. The country occupies an important strategic position in Asia; as a nuclear power it is viewed as a major player in the region. A long-running territorial dispute with India over the border zone of Kashmir,

serious internal divisions among its various ethnic and linguistic groups, and the rising danger of fundamentalist Islamic organizations operating inside its borders all combine to make Pakistan “the most dangerous nation in the world” to some international observers. As the world anxiously watches the unfolding political drama in the country, there are growing concerns that Pakistan’s domestic problems could trigger even more serious confrontations with its neighbours in one of the most troubled regions of the globe.

To Consider

1. Why did President Pervez Musharraf step down as leader of the army at the end of November 2007?

2. Why did he impose a state of emergency on November 3, 2007?

3. What did his political opponents say were the real reasons for his imposition of the state of emergency?

4. Who are Musharraf’s main political opponents? What are they demanding?

5. Why are Pakistan’s internal political problems a matter for considerable international concern?

STATE OF EMERGENCY IN PAKISTAN

Video Review

Did you know . . .

The United States has spent over \$100-million to protect Pakistan's nuclear weapons. Control of those weapons is a major source of anxiety for the world.

Watch the video and answer the following questions.

1. Who is the president of Pakistan? Why did he proclaim a state of emergency in November 2007?

2. Why did he remove the chief justice of Pakistan's Supreme Court?

3. What country borders Pakistan to the west? Why is this country important to Canada at the moment?

4. How many nuclear warheads does Pakistan possess? _____
5. What extremist Islamic groups are currently operating within Pakistan's borders?

6. To what other Asian country is Pakistan compared in this video? Why?

7. What organization of which Canada is a member suspended Pakistan because of the state of emergency?

8. When did the current ruler of Pakistan seize power? _____
What country is his most important ally? _____
9. When are new elections supposed to be held in Pakistan? _____
10. What important move did the president of Pakistan make at the end of November 2007?

STATE OF EMERGENCY IN PAKISTAN

Modern Pakistan: A Timeline of Important Events

Here is a timeline of the main events in Pakistan's troubled history since it gained independence from Great Britain. Circle the three events that you think are the most important and be prepared to explain your selections.

1947 Pakistan becomes independent after splitting from India. The new country contains two regions, on opposite sides of the Indian subcontinent, West and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

1948 Pakistan and India go to war for the first time over the disputed region of Kashmir.

1949 Following the death of independence hero Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Liaqat Ali Khan becomes prime minister but is shot dead at a rally in 1951.

1954 Pakistan signs a mutual defence treaty with the United States.

1956 Pakistan officially becomes an Islamic Republic governed by Muslim Sharia law.

1958 General Ayub Khan seizes power and bans political parties.

1965 Pakistan and India fight a second war over Kashmir, which ends with a UN-brokered cease-fire and a peace agreement mediated by Indian ally the Soviet Union.

1969 General Yahya Khan imposes martial law and dissolves parliament.

1971 India and Pakistan go to war again after an independence movement seeks

freedom for East Pakistan (Bangladesh). Pakistan loses the war, and Bangladesh becomes a separate country.

1971 Yahya Khan hands power over to a civilian leader, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who begins peace talks with India.

1977 General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq seizes power, toppling Bhutto's government and declaring martial law. Bhutto is convicted of treason and hanged in 1979 despite widespread international protests.

1988 Zia and many of his senior military officials die in a mysterious plane crash. Civilian rule is restored, and Bhutto's daughter, Benazir, leads her People's Progressive Party to victory in general elections.

1990 Following the collapse of Bhutto's government on corruption charges, Nawaz Sharif becomes prime minister. His government in turn falls three years later, enabling Bhutto to return to power.

1997 Sharif's Muslim League Party defeats Bhutto at the polls, and he becomes prime minister for a second time.

1998 Pakistan conducts five nuclear tests in response to India's detonation of atomic bombs. Tensions escalate between the two countries.

1999 After Sharif attempts to fire army leader General Pervez Musharraf, Musharraf stages a military coup overthrowing Sharif's government and imposing military rule.

2001 Musharraf names himself president and gains much-needed U.S. backing after the September 11 terrorist attacks and the invasion of Afghanistan.

2005 A massive earthquake strikes the Pakistani part of Kashmir, killing tens of thousands of people. Canada rushes much-needed aid to the region.

2007 Musharraf removes the head of Pakistan's Supreme Court after he challenges the president's right to serve a second term in office. Protests break out all over Pakistan. Musharraf suspends the constitution and imposes a nation-

wide state of emergency. Hundreds of opponents of his regime are arrested. Political rivals Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif return from exile and call for an end to Musharraf's rule and for free elections. Pakistan is suspended from the Commonwealth for the second time. Musharraf promises to step down as army leader and hold new elections by early January, but insists that he intends to continue to serve as president.

Source: CBC News In Depth, Pakistan, "Timeline," www.cbc.ca/news/background/pakistan/

Analysis

1. What patterns do you notice in Pakistan's turbulent political history since it won its independence from Britain 60 years ago?

2. What issues have caused conflict between Pakistan and its neighbour India since both countries became independent?

3. Why might Canada be officially concerned about events in Pakistan?

STATE OF EMERGENCY IN PAKISTAN

In the Line of Fire: A Profile of Pervez Musharraf

Quote

"I found myself between a rock and a hard surface."

— General Pervez Musharraf, on his restoring parliamentary elections in early January, but keeping his emergency decree (*The New York Times*, November 12, 2007)

Pakistan's embattled President, Pervez Musharraf, believes that only his firm military hand on the government can save his country from descending into political chaos and the danger of a fundamentalist Islamic takeover. For this reason, he seized power in a military coup in 1999, ousting the ineffective and corrupt government of then prime minister Nawaz Sharif. Since then, Musharraf has not deviated from his goal of restoring what he calls "true democracy" in Pakistan, a system of government that he firmly believes must have as its foundation strong internal security and stability. He was acting on this belief when he imposed a nation-wide state of emergency in early November 2007, suspending the constitution, dismissing judges who challenged the legitimacy of his recent re-election as president, and jailing a number of political opponents and other critics of his regime. Despite widespread international condemnation of his action, especially from his main ally and military supplier, the United States, Musharraf justified his move by claiming that the state of emergency was all that stood between Pakistan and anarchy.

Pakistan's history since winning independence from Britain 60 years ago appears to give some support to Musharraf's claim that the military has acted as a stabilizing, albeit undemocratic, force in the country's political evolution.

Musharraf himself was born in Delhi, now the capital of India, in 1943, into a Muslim, Urdu-speaking family. In the chaos and violence that followed the partition of the former British colony into the predominantly Hindu India and Muslim West and East Pakistan, Musharraf and his family fled to

Karachi, where he grew up and received a military education. He joined the army at the age of 21 and rapidly moved up in the ranks, attracting attention to himself because he did not come from the traditional Punjabi upper class that dominated the army's officer corps. He received high honours for his actions during the two wars that Pakistan fought with India in 1965 and 1971 as a platoon and commando leader. During this time, he continued his military studies at the elite Royal College of Defence Studies in Britain, where he perfected his English and made some valuable contacts.

In 1999 he was appointed to the position of army chief of staff and soon found himself confronting the danger of a possible war with India over the long-disputed territory of Kashmir that forms part of the northern border between the two countries. Believing that the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was incapable of dealing with the crisis, Musharraf staged a military coup after Sharif's attempts to prevent his airplane from re-entering the country failed. The coup was initially popular at home, since both Sharif and his main political opponent, Benazir Bhutto, who had alternated in power throughout most of the 1990s, had become discredited over widespread corruption and political double-dealing. But internationally, the reaction to the coup was uniformly negative; Pakistan was expelled from the Commonwealth.

All this was to change dramatically as a result of the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States and President George W. Bush's subsequent declaration of war on international terrorism. Al Qaeda, the Islamic fundamentalist faction believed to be responsible for the attacks, was based

in neighbouring Afghanistan, and Pakistan's co-operation in the plans to oust the Taliban regime from that country was essential. Even though Pakistan had enjoyed good relations with the extremist Taliban for many years, believing it to be a force for stability in the region, Musharraf readily agreed to U.S. demands that he allow his country to be used as a staging area for military attacks on Al Qaeda bases in Afghanistan and the violent, semi-autonomous Northwest Frontier Province, where support for Islamic extremist groups was strong.

Musharraf took a calculated risk in allying himself with the United States at the time, knowing that opinion in his own country and much of the Muslim world was opposed to Bush's actions. But he realized that he had no option, given the U.S. president's declaration that "anyone who is not with us is against us." In his controversial 2007 autobiography, *In the Line of Fire*, Musharraf writes that a top American diplomat warned him that the United States would "bomb Pakistan back to the stone age" if it did not support the war on terrorism. Since then, Musharraf has enjoyed considerable U.S. diplomatic and military support, but has antagonized Islamic political groups inside Pakistan who are strongly anti-American in their beliefs. He has survived a number of assassination attempts, but has pursued his pro-U.S. policies while at the same time seeking a rapprochement with Pakistan's traditional enemy, India, over Kashmir and other issues dividing the two countries. And at home, he has not hesitated to use military force to crush extremist Islamic organizations, the most recent example being his decision to storm the Red Mosque and an adjacent madrassa (Islamic school) in Karachi in July 2007, resulting in hundreds of deaths.

Musharraf is a westernized Muslim who apparently enjoys an occasional glass of whiskey, and whose wife does not wear the traditional *hijab*, or head scarf. During his time as president, he has faced numerous crises and challenges to his rule, but has never hesitated to take strong actions to deal with them and perpetuate his hold on power. His decision to impose a state of emergency is completely in keeping with his belief that only he and the army he has led can guarantee peace, security, and stability for Pakistan. He has an almost visceral disdain for civilian political leaders such as his two main rivals, Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto, both of whom he believes always put short-term political goals ahead of the national interest. At the same time, he is strongly opposed to Islamic fundamentalism and the acts of international terrorism it has spawned, despite his earlier support for groups such as the Taliban.

Now that Musharraf has decided to remove his army uniform and seek a second term as a civilian president, it remains to be seen if he can gather enough political support within his divided and troubled country to hold on to power. Should he lose control of parliament, especially after new elections are held as promised in January 2008, he could face the possibility of impeachment, or even treason charges, for his imposition of the state of emergency in late 2007. Can Pervez Musharraf's dramatic political career have a peaceful ending, or will he leave his country's stage in disgrace?

Source: CBC News In Depth, "Pakistan's Pervez Musharraf is 'In the Line of Fire,'" www.cbc.ca/news/background/pakistan/musharraf.html, and BBC News Online Profile: "President Pervez Musharraf," <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk>

Inquiry

1. How has Musharraf's background in the army prepared him for a career in politics and influenced his beliefs about the kind of government his country needs if it is to remain peaceful and secure?
2. Why did Musharraf decide to support the U.S. war on terrorism after the September 11, 2001, attacks? What implications did this decision have for his domestic position as leader of Pakistan?
3. What challenges does Musharraf face now that he has removed his army uniform and is seeking to govern his country as a civilian leader?
4. How do you think Canadians should view Musharraf? Why?

STATE OF EMERGENCY IN PAKISTAN

Daughter of Destiny: A Profile of Benazir Bhutto

Quote

“In the view of my party, military dictatorship, first in the 80s and now again, under General Musharraf, has fuelled the forces of extremism, and military dictatorship puts into place a government that is unaccountable, that is unrepresentative, undemocratic, and disconnected from the ordinary people in the country, disconnected from the aspirations of the people who make up Pakistan.” — Benazir Bhutto, in a speech to Council on Foreign Relations, August 15, 2007 (www.cfr.org/publication/14041/conversation_with_benazir_bhutto.html)

Like the Gandhi family in neighbouring India, the Bhuttos are a powerful political dynasty that has played a major role in Pakistan’s post-independence history. Benazir Bhutto, the daughter of former prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and twice prime minister herself, returned to Pakistan in October 2007 to assume her role as leader of the popular Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) and challenge the regime of President Pervez Musharraf. Bhutto knew that her decision was a potentially dangerous one to make, for even though she has numerous supporters in Pakistan she also has attracted many enemies among the hard-line fundamentalist Muslim groups operating inside the country. They hate her as a westernized Muslim who has condemned religious extremism and expressed support for the U.S.-led war on terrorism and the invasion of Afghanistan. Shortly after she arrived in Karachi—the country’s main city and stronghold of her PPP—her convoy was the target of a massive suicide car bomb that narrowly missed her while taking the lives of well over 100 of her followers and security guards. Showing characteristic aplomb and determination, Bhutto had dismissed the danger of assassination, stating that “no true Muslim will attack me because Islam forbids attacks on women, and Muslims know that if they attack a woman they will burn in hell.”

Such courage in the face of potentially deadly opposition has been a hallmark of Bhutto’s career ever since she entered politics following the execution of her father in 1979. She was born in the province of Sindh in 1953 and grew up surrounded by politics, as her father was to be the first democratically

elected prime minister in the country’s history. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was a cultivated, westernized leader with a strong socialist, populist bent, whose government promised Pakistan’s impoverished people “*roti, chapra, and makan,*” or food, clothing, and shelter. Bhutto was sent abroad to complete her education in the United States and Britain, studying at prestigious universities such as Harvard and Oxford. After returning to Pakistan, she witnessed the military coup led by General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq, who toppled her father’s democratic government and eventually imprisoned and executed him on specious treason charges. It was as a result of this that she decided to pursue a career in politics and further her father’s interrupted legacy as a democratic leader.

She spent five years in prison, much of it in solitary confinement, before being released on medical grounds and allowed to leave the country. Abroad, she cultivated the image of a sophisticated, glamorous, and intelligent young woman who was grooming herself for an eventual return to public life as the leader of her country. In 1986 she returned to Pakistan, and following the death of Zia and some of his top generals in a mysterious plane crash in 1988, Benazir Bhutto finally led her PPP to an election victory. She was sworn in as Pakistan’s first female prime minister.

However, initial expectations that she would bring about a democratic transformation in Pakistan’s political life were quickly disappointed, as her government was dismissed by the country’s president on corruption charges within two years of her swearing-in. Despite the fact that her husband, Asif

Zardari, is alleged to have stolen millions of dollars from the country's treasury and transferred them to overseas accounts in Europe and the Middle East, Bhutto has always denied any wrongdoing, claiming that the accusations against her and her husband are politically motivated and without foundation. She was able to return to power in 1993, but was again dismissed, in 1996, after which she went into voluntary exile in the opulent Gulf emirate of Dubai

Bhutto's family life has been marred by violent, unexplained murders, including the deaths of her two brothers: Shahnawaz—found dead in his French Riviera apartment in 1985—and Murtaza—who was shot dead in Afghanistan in 1996. In exile, Bhutto remained a staunch critic of President Pervez Musharraf's seizure of power in 1999 and strongly backed the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan to remove the fundamentalist Islamic Taliban regime from power there and destroy Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda terrorist cells. Seizing the opportunity opened up by Musharraf's crumbling political support in Pakistan in the fall of 2007, Bhutto returned to a tumultuous welcome from her PPP supporters, pledging to force Musharraf to call new elections, which she believed her party was in a good position to win. At the time of her return from exile, some observers questioned her intentions, believing that her return was a signal to Musharraf that she was interested in pursuing a power-sharing agreement with him that would help stabilize his shaky hold on power. But Musharraf's subsequent declaration of a state of emergency in early November 2007 hardened her opposition to him, for which she was briefly placed

under house arrest. Commenting that Musharraf was obviously "out of his depth," and incapable of governing, Bhutto demanded an immediate end to the state of emergency and new, free elections by early 2008.

Benazir Bhutto is indeed a "daughter of destiny," as her autobiography asserts, but it is far from certain that she is destined to rise to the top leadership position in her troubled country for a third time. She enjoys widespread support among secular, westernized Pakistanis, but at the same time is reviled by the country's hard-line Islamic extremists. Abroad, she is viewed as someone who could possibly restore Pakistan's tarnished image as a modern democracy. Yet, at the same time, there are serious doubts about her political abilities given the corruption charges that surfaced during her previous two troubled administrations. As a woman, she could do much as a symbol of progress and enlightenment in a part of the world where her sex has traditionally faced serious obstacles to full equality. Whether or not she can put together a political alliance among Pakistan's habitually warring factions and clans that will be strong enough to challenge Musharraf, her other main rival for power Nawaz Sharif, and the rising Islamic fundamentalist factions remains to be seen. Benazir's ultimate political destiny has yet to unfold.

Source: CBC News In Depth, Pakistan, "Benazir Bhutto: The prodigal daughter returns to Pakistan," www.cbc.ca/news/background/pakistan/bhutto.html, and BBC News OnLine, "Benazir Bhutto's extraordinary career," <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk>

Analysis

1. What factors in Benazir Bhutto's background prepared her for a political career in Pakistan?
2. What problems did she face during her two terms as prime minister of Pakistan?
3. Why does she attract both strong support and considerable opposition inside Pakistan?
4. What challenges does she face in order to succeed in returning to office as her country's leader for a third time? Do you think she can be successful as a leader of Pakistan? Explain.

STATE OF EMERGENCY IN PAKISTAN

Musharraf's Supporters and Opponents

Quote

"Musharraf's standing on a bar of soap, he can easily slip." — Pakistani lawyer (*Toronto Star*, November 27, 2007)

Here is a summary of the main political groups in Pakistan and their positions on President Pervez Musharraf and his imposition of a state of emergency on the country in the fall of 2007.

Radical Islamic Groups

There are a number of extremist Islamic groups operating inside Pakistan that have close ties with Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda organization and the Taliban insurgents who are battling NATO forces in neighbouring Afghanistan. The main base of support and operations for these groups in Pakistan is the country's remote and lawless Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) that borders Afghanistan, where the Pakistani army faces serious problems imposing its control. These groups are working to topple President Musharraf's government and replace it with a hard-line Islamic regime that will oppose the U.S.-led "war on terror" and ally itself with similar governments such as Iran's. They have staged a number of dramatic suicide bombing attacks inside Pakistan and have, on many occasions, tried to assassinate Musharraf and one of his main rivals, Benazir Bhutto. Many international observers worry about the growing support these groups are attracting in the country and fear that, should they ever come to power, the possibility of a major crisis involving the use of nuclear weapons could not be ruled out.

Judges and Lawyers

The initial protests over Musharraf's imposition of a state of emergency in Pakistan emanated from the country's judiciary and legal officials. They were angry over the suspension of the

constitution and the forced removal of the chief justice of the Supreme Court, Iftikhar Chaudhry, a vocal critic of Musharraf's regime. Many of them were dismissed from their positions after refusing to sign an oath of loyalty to the provisional constitution that was instituted after the state of emergency was declared. Some were jailed or placed under house arrest. The judges and lawyers attracted considerable domestic and outside support for their defence of Pakistan's constitution and legal guarantees against what many viewed as Musharraf's heavy-handed actions.

Opposition Political Parties

Most of Pakistan's fractured and competing opposition political parties were affected by the imposition of the state of emergency, and their leaders were detained. These include former prime minister Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP), former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-N, and the Movement for Justice Party, led by former cricket star Imran Khan. All of these parties are pro-Western, secular groups who strongly oppose Islamic extremism. In addition, the country's main pro-Islamic group, the Jamaat-e-Islami, led by Qazi Hussain Ahmed, was also subject to the crackdown. Interestingly, though, Pakistan's other main Islamist party, the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, of Fazlur Rehman, was not banned, since it indicated that it might be willing to enter into power-sharing talks with Musharraf's own political group, the Pakistan Muslim League-Q, a breakaway from Sharif's party that has little popular support.

Further Research

To learn more about the Muslim League-Q in Pakistan go to the official site at <http://pakistanmuslimleague.info>. To find out more about the Muslim League-N go to www.pmln.org.pk. To find out more about Benazir Bhutto's People's Progressive Party, visit www.ppp.org.pk. Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam's official Web site is www.jamaat.org. Interestingly, all these political party sites have English portals. The progress of the January 2008 elections in Pakistan may be followed at www.elections.com.pk.

Note: It is possible that these Web sites may be blocked during times of political crisis.

Ordinary Pakistanis

Despite the fact that many people opposed Musharraf's state of emergency, there is also a great deal of disillusionment with most of the opposition political parties in the minds of many ordinary Pakistani citizens. They remember the corruption and infighting that plagued the administrations of both Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif and grudgingly grant to Musharraf the claim that he has at least been able to restore some degree of security and stability to the country. However, a growing number of Pakistanis are becoming more supportive of radical Islamic groups, and this was one of the reasons why Musharraf acted to suspend the constitution.

The Military and Intelligence Services

Pakistan's armed forces have traditionally played a major role in the country's political life, frequently intervening to dismiss civilian government and impose military rule in times of real or perceived crisis. For the moment, the military appears to be solidly behind Musharraf, but there are concerns that some junior officers may be unhappy with his pro-Western policy positions. In addition, the country's powerful secret service, the Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI), is believed

to harbour elements opposed to some of Musharraf's policies, including his unconditional support for the U.S.-led war on terrorism and his withdrawal of military aid to Kashmiri separatists battling against Indian forces.

The Media

The rise of the Internet and small television outlets have added a new dimension and voice to Pakistan's political opposition. The state of emergency specifically targeted small independent cable television networks and Internet blogs that provided the anti-Musharraf groups with a platform. Many opposition newspapers continued to publish, defying a ban on any articles critical of the government. But because of the high illiteracy rate in Pakistan, many ordinary citizens do not have access to them.

Human Rights Groups

In the aftermath of the state of emergency, the offices of Pakistan's main human rights organization, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (www.hrcp-web.org), were raided, and its leader, Asma Jehangir, was confined to her home, along with its founder, I.A. Rehman.

Source: BBC News Online, "General Musharraf: For and against," <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk>

Inquiry

1. Which of Pakistan's opposition groups do you think poses the most serious threat to President Musharraf? Why?
2. To what groups inside Pakistan could Musharraf potentially look for support if he seeks to preserve his hold on power as the country's president? Why?

