

Sharif's policy of capitulating before India has flopped: PPP

KARACHI, Sept 20: The main opposition Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Friday claimed the lack of progress in India-Pakistan talks in New Delhi proved that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's policy of capitulating before India has flopped, reports AFP.

Pakistani Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmed's statement on Thursday that India "resisted" from previous agreement "vindicates" the PPP position, the party's Central Executive Committee chaired by ex-prime minister Benazir Bhutto said.

New Delhi had "dangled the carrot of talks to demoralise the people of Jammu and Kashmir and to gain time," the PPP statement said.

In a resolution adopted here it said "Sharif's myopic policy of capitulating before India failed to deliver the goods."

Sharif's overtures saw the emergence of a more belligerent and aggressive India," it said adding New Delhi stored short-range Prithvi missiles

near the border bringing key Pakistani cities "under threat of a nuclear warhead within five minutes warning time."

It alleged that prior to the talks India increased tension at the line of control dividing the Himalayan state into Pakistani and Indian held zones of Kashmir which "led to many casualties."

The two countries have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir.

The process of dialogue started in March on Sharif's initiative to implement his election pledge to improve ties marred by the 50-year-old Kashmir dispute.

The third round Thursday adjourned without any major breakthrough, the two sides could not set up working groups on outstanding issues including Kashmir despite an agreement reached in their second session in Islamabad on a "mechanism" on tackling an eight-point agenda.

A joint statement said fur-

ther consideration was required and the talks will be reconvened at a mutually convenient date.

Officials said Sharif and Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral will meet in New York next week in an effort to give impetus to the process.

Earlier another report says, five security personnel were killed in a head-on collision between a police jeep and a truck carrying paramilitary rangers near a police training centre in Karachi on Friday, police said.

The rangers' truck changed lanes to overtake a vehicle and ploughed into the police jeep coming the other way on the main national highway linking Karachi with upcountry, they said.

The crash left three police men and two paramilitary soldiers dead.

Police said three others, including two policemen, had been admitted to the city's Jinnah Hospital with serious injuries.

A joint statement said fur-

Hardship of Afghan women mounts as they barred from working

KABUL, Sept 20: Every morning, lines of women widowed by war snake out of the Afghan capital's destroyed hospitals and wrecked schools waiting for handouts of oil and beans that mean survival, reports AP.

The food provided by aid agencies at distribution centres goes to 11,000 widows, many of whom have families of six children or more. They wait under green canvas tents, clutching their identity card in one hand and their veil in the other.

In a sign of the mounting distress, the centers in Kabul this year had to stay open in the summer as well as winter.

The economy is in such a

shattered state, the women can't even afford to buy a piece of bread a day," said Esther Robinson, who coordinates the food project for CARE International.

When the Taliban religious army took Kabul last year, they banned women from working.

emptying the bureaucracy, schools and hospitals of many who had single-handedly supported their families.

Women were forced to cloak themselves head to toe in a shroud called the burqa. Wearing high heels or cosmetics was forbidden. And more than 70 schools that served girls were shut down.

Talking to a foreign man could draw a beating from young zealots who patrol the streets enforcing the Taliban's strict interpretation of Islamic law. Several Afghan women refused to be interviewed for this story.

Many are simply preoccupied with surviving.

Droves of women in burqas now crowd the streets, begging for a pittance. Aid agencies that tried to start projects inside homes found their warehouses overflowing with sweaters and quilts that no one, not even at bargain prices, could afford to buy.

Arafat, Arab FMs slam Tel Aviv's actions in Jerusalem

'Israel causes ME peace process to malfunction'

CAIRO, Sept 20: Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Arab foreign ministers meeting in Cairo on Friday slammed Israeli actions in Jerusalem and said the Jewish state had caused the Middle East peace process to malfunction, reports Reuter.

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