

International

Pak military ruler inducts new provincial governors

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 22 : Pakistan's military ruler Pervez Musharraf has appointed three military figures and a former judge as governors of the country's four provinces, reports AFP.

They were to be sworn in later today, officials said.

Former lieutenant general Muhammad Saifur leads the administration in the political heartland of Punjab, retired Air Marshal Muhammad Azim Daudpota in southern Sindh and former lieutenant general Muhammad Shafiq in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP).

Amirul Mulk Mengal, former provincial high court judge, is the only civilian who becomes governor in southwestern Balochistan province.

The nominations were made late Thursday by the army chief who assumed power after ousting prime minister Nawaz Sharif on October 12.

Previous governors under

Sharif had ceased to function after Musharraf clamped a state of emergency across the country, suspended the constitution, federal parliament and legislature in all the four provinces.

The general also named former chief of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency, retired lieutenant general Naseem Rana, as defence secretary, officials said.

Rana, the head of the defence ministry replaces Sharif's confidante, retired general Ifthikhar Ali Khan.

The general has yet to announce the make-up of the central administration.

An announcement is expected in the next few days but officials say it is likely to be a three-tier system with a seven-member National Security Council (NSC) led by Musharraf at its apex.

The NSC will include chiefs of navy and air force and four specialists in legal, finance, foreign and national affairs. A

think-tank to work as an advisory panel under the NSC will be part of the system.

A cabinet of ministers will also work under the NSC.

Military spokesman

Brigadier Rashid Qureshi said the announcement on how

Pakistan will be run had been

held up because Musharraf was

still looking for the most suit-

able people.

Musharraf wants to choose

"such people who should shoulder the responsibility with all their wisdom," Qureshi said.

Sources said the provincial

governors would carry out the

policies laid down by the central authorities.

Musharraf, who wants strict

austerity measures to slash ex-

penditures, has said the govern-

ors would work with smaller

cabins than previously.

Safdar who has been ap-

pointed Punjab governor is a

former commander of the

National Defence College. He

has also served as vice-chancel-

lor of the prestigious Punjab University.

Daudpota, he takes over as

governor of the troubled Sindh

province, has served as manag-

ing director of the national car-

rier, Pakistan International Air-

lines (PIA).

NWFP governor Shafiq is a

former corps commander of the

army.

Justice Mengal is a jurist

from the less developed

Balochistan province.

Musharraf, chairing a high-

level meeting at the army's gen-

eral headquarters in the nearby

city of Rawalpindi, Thursday,

reiterated his "resolve" to put

the country's battered economy

back on track.

"Strict measures will be

taken against loan defaulters,

tax evaders, and all others re-

sponsible for the prevailing

economic crisis," he told the

meeting, which was attended by

economists, financial experts

and senior civil and military

officers.

DILI, Oct. 22 : Independence leader Xanana Gusmao tri- umphantly returned to East Timor today, making his first appearance as a free man in his homeland since being arrested by Indonesian authorities seven years ago, reports AFP.

Dressed in Falintil battle fatigues, Gusmao told a cheering, weeping crowd from a balcony on the old governor's residence that East Timor no longer needed Indonesia.

"We don't need Indonesia East Timorese are very brave people," he said to volleys of "Viva East Timor, Viva Falintil" from the elderly, the sick and the young who survived a month of terror by Jakarta militia after the territory voted overwhelmingly for independence in an August 30 ballot.

In an emotional speech, Gusmao said East Timor would recover and rebuild.

"We hold the right to inde- pendence," said the man tipped to be the first president of an independent East Timor. "They won't destroy us. There will be sorrow but today we are more confident because tomorrow is

ours.

"We East Timorese people have fought for 25 years. Today we finally got our liberation."

The 53-year-old Gusmao, ex- pected to return this weekend, was slipped into East Timor Thursday night by the UN-mandated forces (Interfet).

Crowds flocked from all corners of Dili to the white-washed governor's residence, standing like a beacon in a sea of charred shells of buildings, to hear him.

"Our homeland is ours. We will develop our new country. We know what we want and we will recover from the damage," Gusmao told them.

"We meet again in very sor- rowful circumstance but from today nothing can stop us. Mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, be happy."

Interfet commander Major General Peer Cosgrove said

Gusmao, who had been in Dar- win, chairing a series of meetings with resistance leaders, was flown from Darwin to East Timor's second city of Baucau Thursday night and then flown by helicopter to Dili.

Gusmao returns in triumph



An Australian soldier (R) stands guard as an emotional Commander of Falintil, Xanana Gusmao (L) speaks to more than three thousand East Timorese upon his return to Dili yesterday. Xanana Gusmao who was held in a Jakarta jail for 8 years returned to the capital under high security and was given an emotionally warm homecoming welcome by the crowd.

— AFP photo

Fugitive Papon arrested in Switzerland

GENEVA, Oct. 22 : Fugitive French war-time criminal Maurice Papon has been arrested in the region of Berne, Swiss police said today, reports AFP.

On Thursday, French au- thorities issued an international arrest warrant against Papon who was sentenced to 10 years in prison last year for his role in the deportation of French Jews.

Papon, 89, went into hiding a day before an appeal hearing Thursday against his conviction. In his absence, the appeal was quashed.

He was spotted in a Swiss hotel last week, but had not been seen since he checked out last Friday.

French MPs applaud news of arrest

A round of applause went up in the French National Assembly, or lower house, on Friday on news that fugitive French war-time criminal Maurice Papon had been arrested in Switzerland.

Applause erupted across party lines as Junior Budget Minister Christian Sautter said: "I would like to announce some good news. Mr Papon has been arrested in Switzerland."

Violence claims 5 in Kashmir

JAMMU, India, Oct. 22 : Five people including four militants have been killed in separate incidents in the restive north Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, police said today, re- ports Reuters.

They said border guards killed two militants as they tried to cross the Line of Control with Pakistan into the state's Sunderbani area in Rajouri district, 176 km (110 miles) north of Jammu, the winter capital of the province.

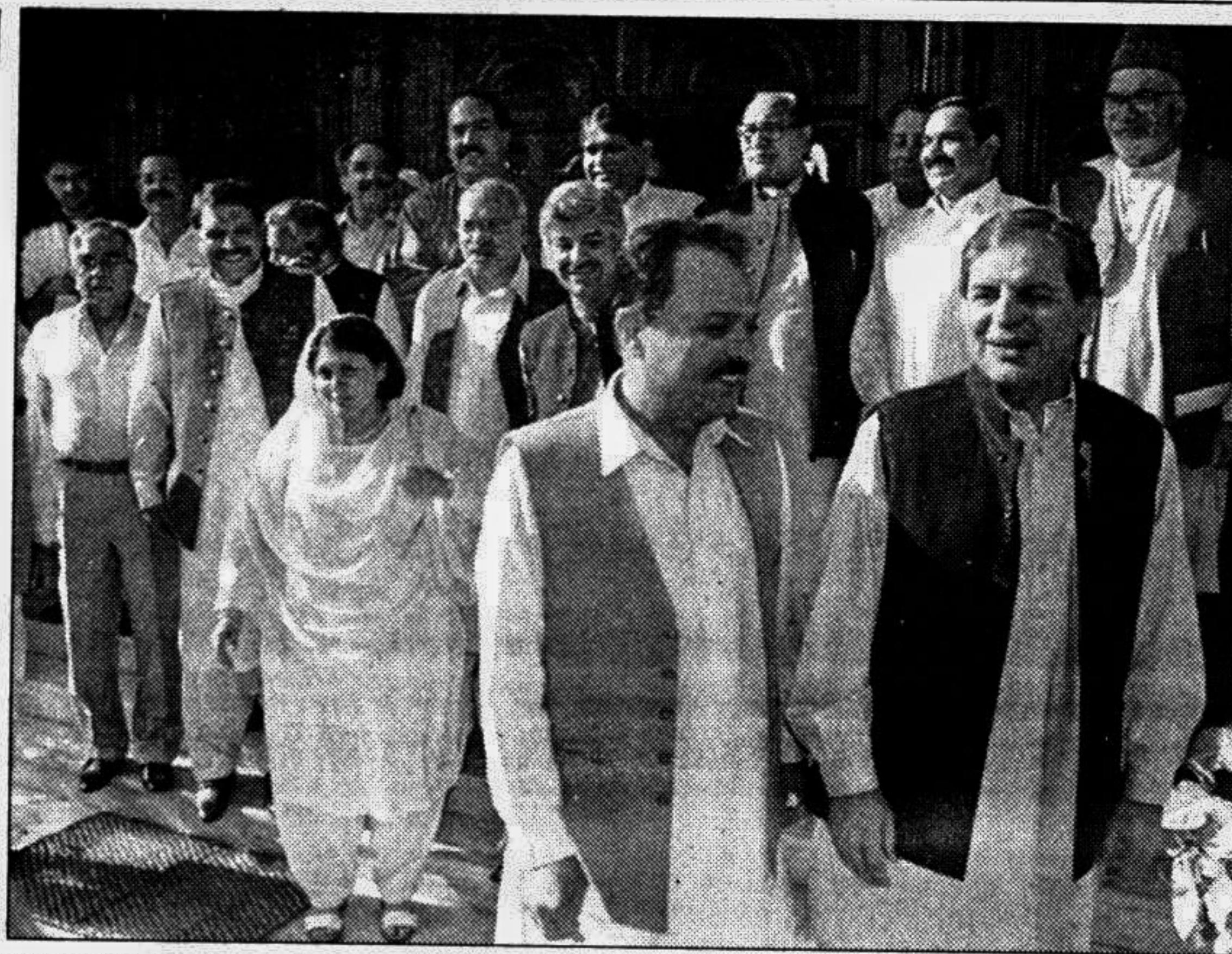
Police said one soldier was killed and three injured in another incident when separatists attacked a security post near Surankote area of Poonch district, 256 km (110 miles) north of Jammu.

Indian troops killed two militants in a clash at Bachianwali in Poonch on Thursday.

Separatist violence involving Kashmiri guerrillas has been on the rise since Indian forces ousted infiltrators from northern Kashmir in July after a nearly two-month military operation.

About a dozen militant groups are fighting for Kashmiri's independence or merger with neighbouring Pakistan.

Police and hospital say more than 25,000 people have been killed in almost a decade of rebellion in the Himalayan region.



The party members of deposed Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif come out from the residence of the former interior minister Shujahat Hussain after a meeting in Islamabad Thursday. The party holds its first meeting since the October 12 military takeover, demanded the immediate release of their leader Sharif and "restoration of democracy." They termed last week's military coup "unjustified" but said it would not seek any confrontation with the new government.

— AFP photo

Indonesia's new president meets economic experts

JAKARTA, Oct. 22 : Indonesia's new president Abdurrahman Wahid today called prominent economists and financial experts to the state palace in his first moves to form a Cabinet and pick advisors, reports AFP.

Palace sources said that among those meeting with Wahid were National Mandate Party (PAN) secretary general Faisal Basri, who is also a University of Indonesia economist, Bank Indonesia deputy governor Dono Iskandar and University of Indonesia economist Sri Mulyani.

The meetings underlined the seriousness of the financial situation in Indonesia, whose economy has been suspended over a bank scandal.

A foreign ministry official, who asked not to be named, told AFP that the names of two senior officials from the ministry, Nana Sutresna and Nugroho Wisnurmurti, had been circulating as possible successors to veteran Foreign Minister Ali Alatas.

Armed forces spokesman, Major General Sudrajat (Eds: One name), told AFP that it was "too early to speculate" whether

He wants to know the current economic condition and

what steps to be taken since the economic issues are very urgent we gave him a lot of inputs.

"There are a lot of options ... one of them is to form a national economic council and hopefully (the forming of the council) will be completed by tomorrow (Saturday)," he told journalists.

The economic meetings were followed immediately by meetings with the ambassadors of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Wahid was scheduled to meet Japan's ambassador later in the day.

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Phalke award for B R Chopra

NEW DELHI, Oct. 22 : Noted film-maker and producer of popular tele-serial Mohabbat, B R Chopra, was on Thursday chosen for the prestigious Dada Saheb Phalke Award for 1998, reports PTI.

Balayogi re-elected Speaker

New Delhi, Oct. 22 : G.M.C. Balayogi was unanimously re-elected as speaker of the lower house of the Indian parliament today following recent general elections, reports AFP.

Balayogi, 48, was escorted to the Speaker's chair by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and opposition leader Sonia Gandhi amid thumping of desks in the 545-member parliament.

Balayogi has gained the reputation of controlling noisy scenes in parliament with a mix of humour and firmness.

"I will call upon the treasury benches and opposition to help me to run the house in an environment of mutual cooperation and consensus among the members, particularly as there are as many as 38 political parties which have their presence in the house, apart from independents," he said.

Balayogi, a member of the regional Telugu Desam Party (TDP), had stunned everyone in 1998 by beating popular and tested Congress-backed Speaker P.A. Sangma to the Speaker's post.

Japan to send envoy to India, Pakistan

TOKYO, Oct. 22 : Japan said today it would send a senior diplomat to India and Pakistan next week to deepen dialogue with New Delhi's new Cabinet and urge Islamabad to restore a civilian government, reports AFP.

State Foreign Secretary Ichiro Yamamoto will also urge the two countries to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) on nuclear weapons, the foreign ministry said in a statement.

Yamamoto is to make a three day visit to India from Sunday before flying to Islamabad on Tuesday for a two day visit.

In Pakistan, he plans to meet General Pervez Musharraf and call on him to sign the CTBT and revive a civilian government as soon as possible, the ministry said.

In India, he will promote dialogue and exchanges with the new Indian government and discuss a planned visit by Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh to Japan," it said.