

Benazir launches election manifesto

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto on Friday launched her party's manifesto for elections in January 8, but reiterated that she was taking part in the polls under protest.

Benazir held up a copy of the document for television cameras as she said that her party would not boycott the elections following President Pervez Musharraf's announcement that he would lift emergency rule on December 16.

"We are taking part in elections under protest, we are not giving them any legitimacy. But if we do not participate we leave the field for others," Benazir told reporters in Islamabad.

"Our policy is based on five 'E's' -- employment, education, energy, environment and equality," the former premier added.

Benazir said that she could "review our decision" on participating in the election if she could agree a common agenda with fellow former premier Nawaz Sharif and other parties.

"But it has to be a joint opposition, it must be a joint opposition," she said.

Sharif said late Thursday that an opposition alliance featuring his Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Party would boycott the elections, the first for nearly six years, saying that they would not be free or fair.

Benazir, who has previously voiced fears that the vote will be rigged, said that the electoral process "is not just" and said that Musharraf's regime had not taken any action on her complaints.

But she added: "We have filed our nomination papers, we are preparing for the election and appealing to the people to help the PPP (Pakistan People's Party) and vote for them."

Benazir, who returned from exile in October amid negotiations for a power-sharing deal with Musharraf, denied rumours that she had met him on Thursday to revive the arrangement.

Relations between Musharraf and Benazir collapsed after she was twice placed under house arrest to stop her leading protest marches during the state of emergency, but Western diplomats have been trying to patch things up.

"I did not meet General Musharraf yesterday. We have already denied it," she said.



Former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto smiles as she shows a copy of her party manifesto during a press conference in Islamabad yesterday. Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto launched her party's manifesto for elections on January 8, but reiterated that she was taking part in the polls under protest.

Musharraf defends record on fighting terror

Pak president needs to do more: US

AFP, Washington

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf said yesterday Pakistan would not be responsible for any failure in the US "war on terror," insisting his country has been struggling against radicalism and terrorism for 30 years.

"We are fighting terrorism everywhere," Musharraf told ABC television.

"We have gone through 30 years of turmoil."

"We cooperate very well. So if there's a failure, it's not Pakistan's failure. Please don't accuse us," he said to an interviewer's question about the failure to capture al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden, believed possibly hiding out in Pakistan's northwest.

"We handled this situation up to 9/11 for 12 years all alone. Nobody else. And when Osama bin Laden factor came in and the world

wanted him to be shuttered out of the place, who was doing anything?"

Musharraf, who on Thursday announced he would lift emergency rule on December 16, insisted his political moves had been in reaction to opposition tactics.

"The opposition, they have all along these five years tried to destabilize me and the government."

"You have to understand, we don't want agitation here... Agitation means breaking down everything, burning things. That cannot be allowed."

"So, therefore, if anyone is trying to do that, we will stop it. That is the way it is in Pakistan."

Asked if he would enter a power-sharing arrangement with opposition leader Benazir Bhutto, he replied: "I'm not into any deal with anyone."

"We are in a stage where we have to have free, fair, transparent elections. We have to see, after the

election, how things develop."

"If the situation develops in a manner which is absolutely unacceptable to me, I have a choice of leaving."

Earlier on Thursday the United States called President Pervez Musharraf's plan to lift emergency rule on December 16 an "essential step" to steering Pakistan back toward democracy but said he must still take more.

US officials also denied Washington had forced the announcement from Musharraf, who had taken a defiant tone earlier Thursday before suddenly announcing he would lift the state of emergency imposed November 3.

The White House and the State Department greeted the news from a frontline ally in the war on terror, but insisted Musharraf follow through on it and ensure that general elections promised for January 8 are fair.

"We welcome this step," White House spokeswoman Dana Perino said, noting that US President George W. Bush had called such a move "an essential step in order to get Pakistan back on the path to democracy."

State Department spokesman Sean McCormack called it a "significant" step among several others he has taken, such as his resignation as army chief Wednesday in order to be sworn in as a civilian president a day later.

He added that "today's announcements are a positive and significant step forward, but there are still steps left in order to get Pakistan back firmly on that road to constitutional democratic rule."

Amid warnings that some of Musharraf's political foes might shun the January elections, Perino called for "the candidates and the people to fully participate in these free and fair elections."

43 held after bombs found at Iraqi Sunni leader's office

AFP, Baghdad

Authorities arrested more people on Friday after car bombs were found near the offices of Iraqi politician Adnan al-Dulaimi but did not say whether they thought he was the target or intended to use them himself.

Dulaimi, who told AFP he may have been targeted, said US and Iraqi troops held 43 people in raids on his Baghdad office and home after discovering two primed car bombs nearby.

"Early in the morning US and Iraqi troops came to my home and arrested 30 people, including my son Mekki," Dulaimi said.

He said troops had detained 13 people in a Thursday evening raid.

At the time, the Iraqi military Thursday announced the discovery of two vehicles packed with explosives at the premises in Baghdad's Hail Adel neighbourhood.

"Two car bombs, primed to explode, were found inside the office compound," Iraqi army spokesman Brigadier General Qasim Atasaid on Thursday.

EU, Iran start final N-talks

IAEA inspects Russian fuel for Tehran

AFP, London/Moscow

The EU foreign policy chief and Iran's top nuclear negotiator held last-ditch talks on Tehran's nuclear plans yesterday, but hopes of a breakthrough appeared slim amid a growing threat of new sanctions.

The Iranian delegation sought to put a positive spin on the talks between Javier Solana and Tehran envoy Saeed Jalili, which came hours before a deadline for Solana to report back to major world powers.

Western nations suspect Iran is using its nuclear programme to covertly develop a nuclear bomb. Despite Iran denials, the United States and its allies are pressing for stronger UN sanctions against Tehran.

"We are optimistic... We are going to present new ideas to Solana," an Iranian official told AFP.

Solana's spokeswoman said the EU's top diplomat -- meeting the new Iranian negotiator for the first time since he was named in October -- had no new proposals himself, but had an open mind on what Tehran had to say.

"He's here to listen to Mr Jalili

and what Iranians put on the table," said Cristina Gallach, adding that the two sides were expected to issue a statement after the talks.

Solana was then expected to brief the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain and Britain whose representatives are scheduled to meet in Paris on Saturday.

"The communication of Mr. Solana will be presented in a few hours or tomorrow through the participation of his senior adviser in the talks in Paris," she said.

US critics say Iran is continuing a long-standing strategy of diplomatic brinkmanship, offering last-minute compromises to delay further sanctions while pressing ahead with its nuclear plans.

Solana, normally extremely optimistic, has appeared increasingly frustrated as time has slipped away for him to make his evaluation to the UN Security Council by the November 30 deadline.

Tehran is under two sets of UN sanctions, as well as unilateral US sanctions, for refusing to suspend uranium enrichment, which can fuel a nuclear reactor or, at highly refined levels, be used to build an

atomic weapon.

The United States in particular is threatening new UN sanctions, although if these cannot be agreed Washington is believed to be ready to impose unilateral sanctions, as could Britain and France.

Solana has been trying to create the conditions for broader negotiations in which Tehran would halt nuclear enrichment in exchange for a package of political, economic and trade incentives.

"The objective of this kind of meeting is to try and create the appropriate framework for a formal negotiation with the Iranians," said Gallach.

Meanwhile, UN nuclear officials on Friday completed five days of inspections of the first consignment of Russian fuel for Iran's nuclear power plant at Bushehr, a statement from the fuel factory said.

Russian officials sealed the containers of nuclear fuel in the presence of a team from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog, said a statement from the TVEL defence factory in Novosibirsk.

12 Tamil rebels killed in Lanka

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan troops have stepped up attacks against Tamil Tiger rebels killing at least 12 in overnight clashes across the northern district, the defence ministry said yesterday.

The military said the rebels died in several clashes and placed government losses at one soldier injured in the 24 hours ending Friday morning.

There was no immediate comment from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who have been fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils since 1972.

Independent verification of casualty tolls is rarely possible and journalists are kept out of rebel-held areas in the north.

Sri Lanka has vowed to pursue attacks against rebel positions until "terrorism" is completely defeated, prime minister Ratnasiri Wickramanayake told parliament Thursday, a day after twin bomb attacks rocked the capital Colombo.

At least 21 people were killed, including two who died in hospital on Thursday and a suicide bomber, while more than 40 were injured in Wednesday's blasts.



Turkish soldiers stand at the site where an airplane crashed in the southwestern province of Isparta yesterday. A Turkish plane carrying 56 people crashed, as it was preparing to land in the southwestern province of Isparta.

Putin inks suspension of CFE arms treaty

AFP, Moscow

President Vladimir Putin has signed into law a decision to suspend Russia's adherence to a Cold War treaty limiting military forces in Europe, the Kremlin said Friday.

The announcement came on the final day of campaigning ahead of parliamentary elections on Sunday in which Putin has accused the West of trying to weaken Russia. A spokeswoman told AFP that

Putin's action had suspended Russia's "adherence to the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty."

The treaty's demise highlights deteriorating relations between Moscow and Nato countries as Putin's administration pushes to reassert Russia on the international stage.

The United States and the European Union on Thursday had urged Russia to not to freeze compliance to CFE.

"The EU regards the treaty as the cornerstone of European security and is deeply concerned by the emerging uncertainties about the future viability of the treaty should Russia cease to implement treaty operations," Portuguese Foreign Minister Luis Amado, whose country holds the EU presidency, said in Madrid.

Putin had ordered the moratorium in July amid a row over US plans to install an anti-missile shield in eastern Europe.

50 arrested in failed Philippine plot

AP, Manila

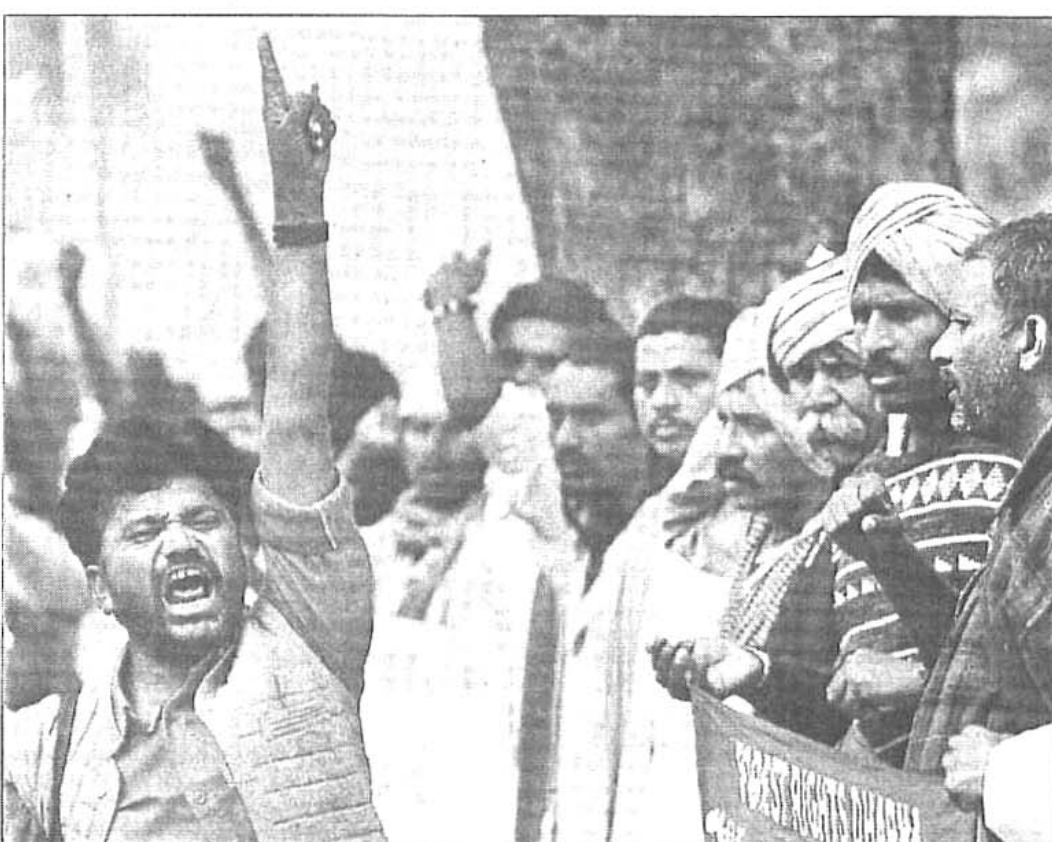
Fifty military officers and their supporters including a former vice president were under arrest and others were being sought Friday following a failed attempt to trigger a "people power" revolt against the Philippines' president.

About 3,000 left-wing activists called for President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's ouster over alleged corruption and human rights violations during two previously planned protests to honor a prominent Filipino revolutionary

hero, police said.

The gatherings were tiny in comparison to the uprisings that ousted presidents in 2001 and 1986, and it appeared that Arroyo had survived yet another crisis.

The latest bid to oust her came Thursday, when 27 soldiers walked out of their trial on earlier insurrection charges and commandeered the five-star Peninsula Hotel. They were joined by Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim suspected of involvement in another failed coup plot last year along with dozens of sympathizers within the military and leaders of leftist and opposition groups.



Tribals and forest dwellers shout slogans as they form a human chain during a protest against the government in New Delhi yesterday. The protesters demanded immediate enforcement of the 'forest rights act' and a halt to the evictions of forest communities.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Dhaka PWD Division-III
Dhaka-1000

Corrigendum Notice
Tender No-DD-3/14 of 2007-2008

Name of work: A-1: Site Improvement/Site Development for Central Jail for undertrial prisoners at Keraniganj under Dhaka District (Block-A1). During the year 2007-2008.
A-2: Site Improvement/Site Development for Central Jail for undertrial prisoners at Keraniganj under Dhaka District (Block-A2). During the year 2007-2008.

The following corrigendum has been made due to unavoidable circumstances for the Tender Notice invited vide tender No-DD-3/14 of 2007-2008 and circulated vide this office Memo No-T/18(30), date: 08/11/2007 for the abovementioned work.

Clause No	Amendment Particulars
NIT S.L.No-10 Last date and time for selling tender document	To read: 09/12/2007 during office hours. Instead of 02/12/2007 during office hours.
NIT S.L.No-11 Last date and time for submission of tender	To read: 10/12/2007 at 12.00 noon. Instead of 03/12/2007 at 12.00 noon.
NIT S.L.No-15 Date and time of opening tenders	To read: 10/12/2007 at 3.00pm. Instead of 03/12/2007 at 3.00pm.

Remaining all other terms and conditions will remain unchanged. This corrigendum notice is a part and parcel of the tender documents.

Executive Engineer
Dhaka PWD Division-III, Dhaka

C-2882

Directorate General Defence Purchase
Ministry of Defence
New Airport Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215

Tender/Re-Tender Notice

1. Sealed tender is invited in local currency from bonafide manufacturers/suppliers/indentors (enlisted firm) for supply of the following items for Bangladesh "Army".

Ser No.	Nomenclature	Date of selling		Date of opening	Currency	Tender No.
		From	To			
a.	Spare parts for Alcatel Digital PABX quantity- 03 line (5 th time)	06-12-2007	24-12-2007	26-12-2007	Foreign/ local	214/2070/P-2

2. Tender schedule with detailed specifications/conditions will be available on payment as per I/T selling rate (non-refundable) during office hour between 0800 hours to 1300 hours. The tender can be dropped latest by 1000 hrs and opened at 1005 hours on the specified date of opening in presence of all tenderers (if present).

ISPR/Misc/07/1792
GD-4297

Major
For Director General

BRAC University

undergraduate admission
Spring 2008

BRAC UNIVERSITY

Bachelor of Architecture (B. Arch)
Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)
BSc in Computer Science and Engineering
BSc in Computer Science
BSc in Electronics and Communication Engineering
BSS in Economics
BA in English
LLB (Hons)
BSc in Physics

Eligibility Requirements
Minimum GPA of 2.5 in SSC and HSC separately and a total GPA 6.0 or O-Level in five subjects and A-Level in two subjects with a GPA of 2.5 at each level (A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2 & E=1). Only one E is acceptable.

All eligible candidates are required to take the admission test.

Full tuition waiver for candidates having
- GPA of 5.0, without the fourth subject, in both SSC and HSC
- 7 A's in 'O' level in one sitting and 3 A's in 'A' level

Scholarships
Tuition waivers and scholarships are available in different categories

- A full residential semester for all students at its highly acclaimed Savar campus
- Unique English language program (EL-Pro) for all students
- Access to BRAC facilities and programs all over Bangladesh
- Wide choice of co-curricular activities
- Hostel with transport facilities for female students
- Own ISP with 24 hour connectivity
- Rich library with access to online journals
- Career services guidance and placements.

Admission Test:
December 28, 2007

Deadline for applications:
December 26, 2007

The admission application forms and other information are available at www.bracuniversity.ac.bd or at the admissions office on the ground floor of the University Building at 66 Mohakhali, Dhaka.

Tel: 8824051; 8853948-9. Fax: 8810383. e-mail: admission@bracuniversity.ac.bd