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The Daily Star

COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know

Today's issue 24 pages

www.thedailystar.net

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XVII NO. 340

DHAKA MONDAY DECEMBER 31, 2007

POUSH 17, 1414 BS

ZILHAJI 20, 1428 HJRI

24 PAGES PRICE: Tk 10.00



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Teenage son Bilawal succeeds Benazir

PPP decides to take part in election, Pak ruling party sees polls delay, Sharif too backs out from election boycott decision

AGENCIES, Naudero

Slain Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto's son Bilawal yesterday was named chairman of her party, with her husband named co-chairman, two top party officials told AFP.

Slain Benazir's party will take part in national elections set for January 8, her husband Asif Ali Zardari said yesterday.

The party of former Pakistan premier Nawaz Sharif will also take part in elections, after earlier saying it would boycott, two spokesmen of the party said.

Zardari earlier called on Sharif

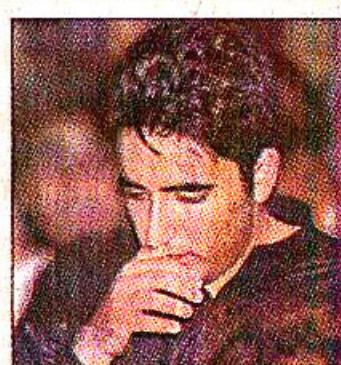
A blood-stained family legacy

AFP, undated

At just 19 years old, a blood-stained family legacy could hang heavy on the shoulders of assassinated Pakistan opposition leader Benazir Bhutto's only son Bilawal.

He becomes the third Bhutto to

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Bilawal



Asif Ali Zardari

reverse his decision to boycott the polls, which Sharif had announced as a gesture of solidarity in the wake of Benazir's assassination on Thursday.

"We will go to elections," Zardari told a news conference at which his son Bilawal was presented as the new chairman of the Pakistan People's Party.

"We are grateful to Nawaz Sharif for announcing a boycott of the election. But we appeal to him to end the boycott and take part."

Meanwhile, a personal spokes-

Dhaka asked to adopt counter militant ideology

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh may end up facing Pakistan's militancy situation in just five years if the government does not counter militant ideology by creating strategies within itself and the civil society, said renowned political analyst Rohan Gunaratna yesterday.

A global expert on al-Qaeda, Gunaratna said Bangladesh has the operational capability to prevent militancy but the government does not have mechanisms in place to sweeping arrests last year, Gunaratna said.

Referring to the countrywide bomb blasts carried out by the JMB on August 17, 2005, he said, "The JMB was known to the Bangladeshi authorities before that incident, [but] there wasn't the initiative on part of the Bangladeshi authorities to act against this group until they could plan and conduct the operation."

"That in many ways speaks of a nation," he said, adding that the JMB was able to work under religious cover through which they made linkages within the country and was able to survive and grow enough to conduct the August 17 operation.

"The threat of terrorism is sometimes hidden," Gunaratna said, "Though JMB leaders have been executed, the ideology of this

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

man for Sharif said the decision was taken after Benazir's husband Asif Ali Zardari had asked Sharif's party to participate.

"We will contest the election," a party spokesman said.

"No major party should boycott because it would damage democracy," the spokesman, Zaeem Qadri, quoted Zardari as telling Sharif.

The decision came just three days after Bhutto was assassinated, leaving a void at the head of the PPP.

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