

COMPILATION of MEDIA COVERAGE:
UN REPORT ON BENAZIR BHUTTO'S ASSASINATION



SANA ALI

'Pak unlikely to act on BB report'

NEW YORK (Bloomberg) – Pakistan is unlikely to take steps to address the security and judicial failures detailed in a report on the assassination of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, the nation's Ambassador to the United Nations said.

"I have witnessed history in my country for the last 60 years and nothing is ever taken to conclusion," Ambassador Abdullah Hussain Haroon said in an interview on Friday. "We have had great trauma in Pakistan that did not lead to reform."

Bhutto's 2007 assassination might have been prevented had the government and security forces taken adequate steps after death threats were made against her, the UN-backed report said. The subsequent investigation "lacked direction, was ineffective and suffered from a lack of commitment to identify and bring all of the perpetrators to justice," the report said.

Haroon, 59, said the 65-page report, commissioned by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and released on Thursday, was a "very clean factual picture" that was "well-conceived, well-written and well-intentioned" and contained no major errors. The report called for "police reform measures" to "operate in a structure of accountability for protecting the rights of the individual." It said Pakistan needs "strong and effective intelligence services" and that the "democratic rule of law in Pakistan could be greatly strengthened."

PAST VIOLENCE

Past violence in Pakistan, including the "loss of East Pakistan," the 1979 execution of Benazir Bhutto's father, prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and military ruler General Muhammad Ziaul Haq's death in a plane crash in 1988 all failed to produce better leadership, Haroon said.

“We started off in undivided India a far more brilliant small group of people who disengaged from India and went our way knowing we could do better,” Haroon said.

“We did in the first 25 years. Then we decided to go in mad directions and policies and since then it has been all the way down.”

Pakistan now needs “strong leadership and incorruptible leadership,” said Haroon, whose family owns a major Pakistani media group. The government doesn’t need US help building democracy as suggested on Friday in Washington by State Department spokesman PJ Crowley, Haroon said. “We will continue to work with Pakistan, to make sure that we build the institutions of democracy going forward and help them defend them as well,” Crowley told reporters.

“I don’t think you can help anything,” Haroon said, meaning the US “When the US was not a democracy, in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, we were a democracy,” he said, referring to the disenfranchisement of African-Americans. “The time it took you to get adult franchise we were already under adult franchise. We may have retarded today but we were a full-fledged democracy.”

The US, Haroon said, should “observe the Bible which they believe in” rather than “paying off people to be corrupt.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/18-Apr-2010/Pak-unlikely-to-act-on-BB-report>

Reservations on UN report premature: Babar

CHAKWAL – Federal Minister for Law Babar Awan said on Saturday that the UN Commission report on Benazir Bhutto murder is very comprehensive and some new startling discoveries have been revealed it. However, the government would adopt its strategy after examining the report minutely and certain reservations on it from different circles are premature.

Talking to media after attending a reception hosted by District Bar Association Chakwal in his honor here, Babar said that the killer of Benazir would not be spared and the UN report would assist the government in finding the real facts. About the 18th amendment, the Minister was of the view that all the 'dictatorial' clauses of the military rulers have been eliminated from the Constitution. He further said that PPP believes in freedom of the press and no law meant to curb the media would be made during the PPP govt.

Responding to another question, Babar said that two years have passed by working with PML-N and other allies and nothing serious would happen in the remaining three years of the govt tenure. He said that the Prime Minister himself has taken a serious notice of electricity loadshedding and a committee in this regard have been constituted. Earlier, Babar was warmly by District Bar Chakwal President Haroon Irshad Janjua, Secretary General Zaigham Abbas and other members of the Bar.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online//Politics/18-Apr-2010/Reservations-on-UN-report-premature-Babar>

Nawaz sees nothing new in UN report

LAHORE (Online) – PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif has said that there was nothing new in the report released by United Nations Commission about murder of late former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and all the answers about her killing have not been answered.

He was talking to newsmen on Saturday after condoling with party leader Nadir Chaudhry over the demise of his mother. Loadshedding is the biggest problem of Pakistan and the government failed to do anything significant in this regard, he said. He said there was no cut in the electricity bills despite long unscheduled power outages. He said the people's tolerance, while suffering from load shedding, is really appreciable.

He said, "There is no problem if my politics gets wobbly but the country should not be at any risk." He said the government should take notice of the incidents that took place in Hazara.

Nawaz said, "We are giving sacrifices for the sake of democracy and good governance." He said he has tried to control the situation in Hazara but some opportunists aggravated the matter. He said PML-N will support the government in its all positive deeds but will oppose all action, which it will consider against the good governance. Replying to another query regarding resignation of PML-N member parliament from Hazara, Mehtab Abbasi, he said MNAs and MPAs of PML-N had sacrificed for cause of good-governance in the country, adding that he will talk over to Mehtab Abbasi when he will receive his resignation. The PML-N Chief further pointed out that constitution of Pakistan has defined specific limits for every institution and every institution in the country should work in its limits.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online//Politics/18-Apr-2010/Nawaz-sees-nothing-new-in-UN-report>

'Musharraf responsible for BB's murder'

ISLAMABAD: Basing their conclusions on a report unveiled by a UN inquiry commission, central leaders of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) have held former president Pervez Musharraf responsible for the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, as he "failed" to provide the former prime minister the required security cover.

A meeting of the core group of the PPP – which was presided over by Co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari and attended by Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani – was held at the Presidency to discuss the UN report.

Presidential spokesman Farhatullah Babar said that in light of the UN commission report, "there is no doubt" that Musharraf was responsible for Benazir's murder and would have to face legal proceedings.

Babar said the UN commission's report had, in fact, endorsed the party's position that Musharraf wanted to "eliminate her".

"The PPP has reiterated its resolve to ... bring to justice all those, including Musharraf ... involved in the criminal act," he said.

Legal action: Babar said the core committee of the party had asked the prime minister to take appropriate legal action in light of the report – which calls on the authorities to determine criminal responsibility for planning and carrying out the assassination.

Party sources told Daily Times that it had been decided to launch stern administrative and legal action against all government officials who failed to provide security to Benazir. The party also decided to launch departmental action against officials responsible for providing security to Benazir in and around Liaquat Bagh on December 27, 2007.

However, no consensus could be reached on the role of other political personalities mentioned in the UN report, which include Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and Rehman

Malik. A final decision may likely be made at the next meeting of the committee.

The sources confirmed that action would be sought against then Punjab home secretary Khusro Pervaiz, then Rawalpindi DCO Irfan Elahi, then Rawalpindi CPO Saud Aziz, then IB director general Brig (r) Ejaz Shah, then federal interior secretary Kamal Shah, Major Imtiaz and others.

Interior Minister Rehman Malik has been asked to put the names of these officials on the ECL, while the establishment secretary has been asked to transfer to the OSD pool all officials nominated in the report.

All named in UN report to face 'action'

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan People's Party decided on Saturday to take "appropriate legal actions" against all those, including former president Gen (retd) Pervez Musharraf, who were named in the UN report as responsible for the assassination of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto.

After chairing a meeting of the party's 'core group' at the Presidency on Saturday night, President Asif Zardari asked Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani to take action in the light of the UN report.

The document "called upon the competent authorities in Pakistan to make a determination of the criminal responsibility for planning and carrying out the assassination".

According to Farhatullah Babar, the president's spokesman, the party recommended to the prime minister, who attended the meeting, to also take "appropriate legal action" against government officials mentioned in the report. He, however, did not elaborate on the term "legal action".

Mr Babar said the PPP 'accepted' the UN report on the assassination of Ms Bhutto at the Liaquat Bagh in Rawalpindi on Dec 27, 2007. The meeting, he said, had reiterated the report and endorsed the party's position that "Gen Musharraf was responsible for the assassination of Ms Bhutto". He said that Ms Bhutto also believed that "Gen Musharraf wants to eliminate me".

She had mentioned it in a letter and in numerous press and public statements, he said, adding that the PPP "reiterated its resolve to expose and bring to justice all those, including Gen Musharraf, who planned, abetted and indulged in the criminal act, screened off the offenders and destroyed evidence".

PPP's information secretary Fauzia Wahab told Dawn that the party had decided to constitute a committee to find out people within the party who were responsible for providing security to Ms Bhutto. She said the UN report had categorically held the Musharraf government, former Punjab government and the Rawalpindi administration responsible for Ms Bhutto's murder.

She said that cases had already been registered, but these could be altered in the light of legal experts' opinion after examining the UN report.

PPP sources told Dawn that the government was also considering an option of putting the names of all those people mentioned in the report on the exit control list.

The meeting was also attended by Interior Minister Rehman Malik, Food and Agriculture Minister Nazar Muhammad Gondal, Information Minister Qamar Zaman Kaira, Labour Minister Syed Khursheed Shah, Water and Power Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources Naveed Qamar, Law Minister Babar Awan, adviser to the prime minister Raza Rabbani, Leader of House in Senate Nayyar Bokhari, PPP Secretary General Jahangir Badar, Senator Faisal Raza Abidi, Rukhsana Bangash, Fouzia Wahab, MNA Fouzia Habib and Farhatullah Babar.

Participants of the meeting praised the UN inquiry commission for its efforts.

The PPP's Central Executive Committee in its meeting held in Naudero soon after the

assassination of Benazir had called for an inquiry by a UN commission. The parliament also adopted a unanimous resolution calling upon the government to approach the UN for setting up of an inquiry commission.

Mr Babar said the commission's findings that "the failures of the police and other officials to react effectively to Ms Bhutto's assassination were, in most cases, deliberate' pointed to a conspiracy that the PPP believed had been hatched to physically eliminate its chairperson.

In a statement on Friday night, Mr Babar said the report took note of not immediately cordoning off the crime scene, washing the crime scene within one hour and forty minutes of the blast and the collection of only 23 pieces of evidence, in a case where one would normally have expected thousands, endorsing the suspicion voiced by the party at the time.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/19-all-named-in-un-report-to-face-action-840-hh-02>

UN report has vindicated PPP: Zardari

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari said on Friday the UN inquiry commission's report had confirmed the apprehensions of the Pakistan People's Party about the assassination of Benazir Bhutto. He ordered that the ongoing criminal investigation be expedited.

In an official statement, issued almost 20 hours after the release of the UN report, the president said the PPP had been claiming that the Musharraf government was responsible — first, for the criminal neglect in providing security to Ms Bhutto and, second, by hushing up available evidence to cover up the crime.

Except for blaming the previous regime, the president did not mention any thing on the report's findings that also mentioned failure of the PPP in providing a foolproof

security cover to Benazir and conducting a result-oriented investigation to unveil faces despite a lapse of over two years.

The government also did not specify how the criminal investigation would be conducted and under whose supervision it would be carried out. It also did not give a timeframe about completion of the investigation.

Presidential spokesman Farhatullah Babar said the second joint investigation team was carrying out the criminal investigation and in the light of the UN report the pace would be expedited.

However, senior PPP leader Senator Safdar Abbasi stressed the need for setting up a special department, or an impartial body, to investigate the crime.

“I fear that if no criminal investigation is carried out today, there will be a strong reaction from the public, especially from PPP’s diehard workers who are desperately waiting for justice and punishment to those involved in the killing of their beloved leader,” he said.

Presiding over a meeting at the presidency before issuing the official statement, the president said: “The federal government under Gen Musharraf, although fully aware of and tracking the serious threats to Ms Bhutto, did little more than pass on those threats to her and was not proactive in neutralising them or ensuring that security provided was commensurate to the threats. The UN investigators’ concerns will be addressed in the fresh investigation already launched by the government last year.”

Mr Babar said the UN report would be examined by legal experts of the PPP. They would recommend to the party co-chairman necessary steps to be taken in the light of the report.

“Persons named in the report for negligence or complicity in the conspiracy will be investigated and cases will also be brought against them in the light of legal opinion,” he added.

Members of the media thought the government would issue an official reaction to the UN report or at least Interior Minister Rehman Malik would hold a press conference in the morning to answer dozens of questions about the UN report.

Many attempts were made to contact the interior minister, who was in charge of Ms Bhutto at the time of her assassination, but he did not attend telephone calls.

Officials told Dawn that all government quarters and authorities concerned had kept mum on the issue and sat together with Farhatullah Babar, who had been tasked with preparation of an official statement on the report.

Senator Abbasi, who was with Ms Bhutto in her vehicle at the time of the assassination, said that although the UN report did not impose any criminal liability on anyone, it provided leads to the government to initiate criminal investigation to unveil planners, perpetrators, abettors, financiers and attackers involved in the assassination.

Sources close to former Rawalpindi CPO Saud Aziz told Dawn that autopsy of Ms Bhutto could not be conducted on the directives of Mr Zardari.

But the UN report said the CPO on three occasions refused the request of doctors for carrying out post-mortem examination.

The sources said the CPO had insisted on her autopsy and written a letter to the higher authorities even from the Chaklala airbase, where Ms Bhutto's body was sent for transportation to Ghari Khuda Bakhsh.

According to the sources, Mr Aziz had informed the authorities that the body was being taken without post-mortem. The UN report said: "CPO Saud Aziz's role in this decision is controversial as many senior police officials emphasised that hosing down a crime scene was fundamentally inconsistent with Pakistani police practice.

"CPO Saud Aziz did not act independently in deciding to hose down the crime scene. He had received a call from Army headquarters instructing him to order the hosing down of the crime scene. The CPO was ordered to hose down the scene by Major General Nadeem Ijaz Ahmad, the then Director General of Military Intelligence."

The sources said the CPO had rejected a perception that the site of her assassination had been washed on the directives of a hidden power. He was of the view that the crime scene was washed after collection of 23 different articles having direct links with the attack, including shells and bullets fired by a terrorist which were later matched by the investigators, the added.

The sources said the CPO had some objections to the UN report and claimed that the UN commission had not incorporated those details in its investigation report.

The UN report recalled that following Benazir's assassination, the government had held a televised press conference, conducted by Brigadier Cheema, a spokesperson of the ministry of interior.

“The decision to hold the press conference was made by General Musharraf during a meeting on the morning of December 28 at a facility in General Headquarters known as Camp House. That meeting, at which General Musharraf was briefed on the intercept and on medical evidence, was attended by the directors-general of the ISI, MI and the IB.

“Brigadier Cheema was summoned to a subsequent meeting at ISI Headquarters and directed by the director general of the ISI to hold the press conference. In attendance at this second meeting, in addition to Brigadier Cheema, were Interior Secretary Kamal Shah, Director General of the ISI, Director General of the IB, Deputy Director General of the ISI and another ISI brigadier,” the report said.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/un-report-has-vindicated-ppp-zardari-740>

Do the right thing

The Benazir Bhutto commission report makes clear that the primary blame for the inadequate security around Ms Bhutto must lie with Gen Musharraf’s government.

But the commission also did not flinch from stating another fact: “Despite considerable and valiant efforts by individual PPP members to protect Ms Bhutto, the PPP as an organisation was inadequate to handle the challenges. There was no person in overall charge of the PPP’s provision of security. As a result, the PPP’s security for Ms Bhutto was characterised by a lack of direction and professionalism.” True, the PPP was a party whose leader had been in self-imposed exile for a decade and the Pakistan she was returning to in October 2007 was going through one of the most violent periods in the country’s history. To expect perfection in her security arrangements by the PPP would have been to ask for too much.

But there were glaring lapses, and the commission names names and cites specific examples: “...the Commission finds it incredible that they [Farhatullah Babar, Babar Awan, Rehman Malik and Gen Tauqir Zia (retd) in the back-up bullet-proof Mercedes] drove all the way to Zardari House, a drive of about 20 minutes, before they became

aware that Ms Bhutto had been injured in the blast. They should have stopped at a safe distance when they felt the blast so as to check on Ms Bhutto's condition, the condition of her vehicle and whether the back-up vehicle was required. Indeed, as the back-up vehicle, the Mercedes-Benz car would have been an essential element of Ms Bhutto's convoy on the return trip even if the occupants of that car had confirmed that Ms Bhutto had been unscathed in the attack."

Paradoxically, Rehman Malik — who was in charge of Ms Bhutto's security as his letters to the Musharraf government indicated — told the commission that he was just the PPP leader's "national security adviser". But the Commission found that he performed a significant role in the security management. The occupants of the car, not least Mr Malik, should realise that they have been found wanting. It is now up to them to decide whether or not falling on their swords is the right thing to do.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/editorial/19-do-the-right-thing-840-hh-09>

'Musharraf is Benazir's killer'

ISLAMABAD: It took two years and four months for the Pakistan People's Party to hold General (retd) Pervez Musharraf responsible for the assassination of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and recommended Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani to take legal action against the former dictator as well all those government officials mentioned adversely in the UN report.

The decision was taken in a meeting of the core group of PPP held on Saturday night at the Presidency to discuss the report of the UN Inquiry Commission on the assassination of Benazir Bhutto and was presided over by co-chairman PPP and President Asif Ali Zardari. Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani was also present.

Presidential spokesman Farhatullah Babar said the meeting considered the UN Inquiry Commission report and accepted its findings and observations. Babar said that the

meeting reiterated that the report endorsed the party position that General (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf was responsible for the assassination of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. "The party reiterated its resolve to expose and bring to justice all those including Gen (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf who planned, abetted and indulged in the criminal act, screened off the offenders and destroyed the evidence," he said.

The meeting recalled that Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto also believed that former dictator General (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf wanted to eliminate her. Benazir Bhutto had mentioned it in her letter and in numerous press and public statements.

Farhatullah Babar said that party recommended to the prime minister to take appropriate legal actions in the light of the report of the UN Inquiry Commission, which, inter alia, called upon the competent authorities in Pakistan to make a determination of the criminal responsibility for planning and carrying out the assassination.

He said the core group of the PPP further recommended to Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani to take appropriate legal action against those government officials mentioned in the UN report.

According to sources, the PPP core group also recommended to the federal government to put the names of all those officials who were accused of security negligence on Exit Control List (ECL) and brought all accused back into the country who were outside Pakistan.

Sources said it was recommended to the federal government to make all those officials mentioned in the report immediately as Officer on Special Duty (OSD) and to monitor their activities.

The meeting recalled that the Central Executive Committee (CEC) of the party meeting held in Naudero soon after the assassination of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto had called for setting up of a UN Inquiry Commission in the assassination of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto.

Subsequently, parliament also adopted a unanimous resolution calling upon the government to approach the United Nations to set up an inquiry commission, it recalled.

The meeting also thanked the UN Inquiry Commission for its efforts, he said.

The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, Rehman A Malik, Nazar Muhammad Gondal, Qamar Zaman Kaira, Syed Khursheed Shah, Raja Parvaiz Ashraf, Naveed Qamar, Dr Babar Awan, Raza Rabbani, Senator Nayyar Hussain Bokhari, Jahangir Badar, Senator Faisal Raza Abidi, Ms Rukhsana Bangash, Ms Fouzia Wahab, Ms Fouzia Habib and spokesman for the president Farhatullah Babar.

Online adds: Meanwhile, speaking on the occasion, President Asif Ali Zardari said that the UN inquiry report had vindicated the PPP's apprehensions and that the assassins of BB would not be spared. The death of Benazir Bhutto not only deprived the nation but also the entire world of an international leader. He reiterated that murderers of BB would be unmasked at all costs.

The president vowed to take the reconciliation process forward with all the political parties for sustainable democracy and stability in the country. He said the PPP believed in democracy, reminding it had rendered unprecedented sacrifices for the cause.

According to sources, senior PPP leaders during the core committee meeting were of the view that the UN commission's report on BB's murder be implemented forthwith. They said the report pointed fingers at certain persons and action must be ensured against them, even if they belonged to the government.

During the meeting, PPP leaders said though the UN report contained nothing new, delay in the implementation of the report would create further doubts in the minds of the people and this situation would be detrimental to the political future of the party. They further stated that not only the former regime but also personal security of Benazir Bhutto were responsible for her security, as both did not fulfill their responsibility.

The party leaders said that Pakistani agencies should immediately complete investigation into the murder of Benazir Bhutto and the findings be made public.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=28365

Many questions about Benazir's murder still unanswered: Nawaz

LAHORE: PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif has said a raft of questions regarding the assassination of Benazir Bhutto is still unanswered, though the UN commission has unveiled its report.

He said the government should bring forth true facts before the public, after a thorough investigation.

He was talking to journalists during his visit to the residence of PML-N Joint Secretary Nadir Chaudhry to offer his condolences over the death of his mother.

Nawaz said the question why the Benazir's murder site was hosed down immediately after the crime is still unanswered. He claimed that there was nothing new in the UN commission report and the authorities should dig out as to why and on whose orders the crime scene was washed.

Commenting on the resignation of Sardar Mehtab Abbasi, he said he tendered his resignation under pressure, adding this is no solution to problems. He said the PML-N MNAs and MPAs offered sacrifices for the cause of good governance in the country, adding that he would discuss the resignation issue with the party members.

Nawaz said vested interests added fuel to the fire in Hazara and served their purposes at the cost of Pakistan. He said that his party conceded to the Awami National Party (ANP) demand in the larger national interest. He claimed that if his politics was put at stake, he won't mind, but the country should remain intact.

About attending the signing ceremony of the 18th Amendment by the president, he said he had not received any invitation.

The PML-N Quaid said that loadshedding was the biggest problem of Pakistan currently and the government had failed to resolve the crisis. He said there was no cut in the electricity bills, despite long hours of unscheduled power outages. He appreciated the people for showing tolerance in such difficult times.

Nawaz said his party would support the government in its good deeds, but would oppose all such actions that are not in national interest.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=28374

Criminal probe next step after UN report: FM

MULTAN: Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said on Saturday a criminal investigation would be the next step after the announcement of the UN commission report on the assassination of Benazir Bhutto.

Addressing a press conference at the airport here, he said the UN report was being examined by legal experts, but would not take any decision in haste. He said President Zardari would announce the next strategy after consultations and taking the party and its CEC into confidence. He said the government had opted for the UN inquiry to ensure impartiality and the criminal investigations thus conducted would have more weight.

He said the world had expressed confidence in Pakistan's nuclear programme at the Nuclear Safety Summit. He said Pakistan told the summit that our three-layered security system met international standards.

"We hope the next IMF tranche would be released after the IMF board meeting on May 3-4," he added. Qureshi said PM Gilani would take up the case of Pakistan's inclusion

in the GSP Plus countries at the second Pak-EU summit in Brussels on April 21.

He said Pakistan raised the water issue with the US and handed it over a dossier. He said he also raised the Aafia issue with the US.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=28376

PPP to seek 'stern' action against Musharraf following UN Benazir assassination report

Backing the UN enquiry commission's report over former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's assassination, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has held former President General Pervez Musharraf responsible for the tragic incident.

A meeting of PPP's core committee, which was chaired by President Asif Ali Zardari and was attended by Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and several top party leaders, blamed Musharraf for not providing adequate security cover to Bhutto despite having information about the impending threat to her life.

"There is no doubt that Musharraf was responsible for Benazir's murder and would have to face legal proceedings," Presidential spokesperson Farhatullah Babar said.

Babar said the UN commission's report has endorsed the PPP's position that Musharraf wanted to "eliminate" Bhutto.

"The PPP has reiterated its resolve to ... bring to justice all those, including Musharraf ... involved in the criminal act," The Daily Times quoted Babar, as saying.

He said the PPP core committee has asked Gilani to take appropriate legal action following UN commission's report.

According to PPP insiders, the party has decided to take strong legal action against all

government officials who failed to protect Bhutto.

The party has also decided to launch departmental action against officials responsible for making security arrangements in and around Liaquat Bagh on December 27, 2007, the day Bhutto was killed in a gun and bomb attack while she was returning after addressing a election rally.

However, the party is undecided on Interior Minister Rehman Malik, who was Bhutto's security advisor, and other political leaders, whose name appear in the commission's report.

<http://story.malaysiasun.com/index.php/ct/9/cid/303b19022816233b/id/624366/cs/1/>

UN report: 'Unfazed' Musharraf says he has got one 'final' bullet in pistol for defence

Unfazed by the UN commission's inquiry report over former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's assassination, which directly indicts him and his regime for the crime, former Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf has said he has one final bullet in his pistol which he will use for his defence in the case.

Musharraf rejected the UN report, saying it contained no new information.

According to sources, Musharraf held a meeting with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (Insaf group) chief Farooq Malik here, and told him that even he had been targeted by suicide bombers on number of occasions.

Musharraf also rubbished reports that Bhutto was not provided foolproof security during her election campaign in Rawalpindi on December 27, 2007, the day she was killed in a gun and bomb attack.

"Despite being provided best security, Benazir Bhutto could not be saved," The Nation

quoted Musharraf, as saying.

It may be noted that the UN enquiry commission's report has blamed the then Musharraf government of 'deliberately' failing to probe the December 2007 suicide attack, saying the tragedy could have been averted if adequate security arrangements would have been made.

"The Musharraf government failed to provide foolproof security to Ms. Bhutto which ultimately allowed a lethal assault on her. The security breach left wide-open room for an attack to happen," the report said in its opening remarks.

Musharraf also called cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan a 'political goof', and said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) chief would barely win a seat in the elections.

Referring to people like Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) chief Nawaz Sharif, who has been stressing on the former general's trial, he said 'such elements were actually scared of him', and that like a true soldier he would prefer 'martyrdom' rather than surrendering.

<http://story.malaysiasun.com/index.php/ct/9/cid/303b19022816233b/id/624354/cs/1/>

UN Report Blasts Pakistan Over Bhutto's Slaying

A damning United Nations report into the assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said her death could have been prevented and that a failure to investigate her killing was "deliberate."

The report issued Thursday called for a "serious, credible criminal investigation" into her slaying in a gun and suicide bomb attack at a rally in Rawalpindi in December 2007.

It said the government of then-President Pervez Musharraf had failed to provide

adequate security and that intelligence agencies conducted their own investigations but only selectively shared information with the police.

Former Pakistani leader Benazir Bhutto waves to supporters at a rally on Dec. 27, 2007, the day she was assassinated. Pakistan's government failed to provide adequate security for her, according to a U.N. report.

The Pakistani police said today that it would step up its inquiry, which has been ongoing. "We are not oblivious of our responsibilities to carry out investigations," presidential spokesman Farhatullah Babar told Reuters.

But there was general skepticism about the willingness or ability of the authorities to fully investigate who organized and ordered the killing.

"There is no will to really delve into all kinds of linkages which implicate people who are still in the know, who are still in the country," the acting director of the Eurasian Studies Institute of Strategic Studies, Simbal Khan, told Reuters.

And a BBC correspondent in Islamabad, Shoaib Hasan, said, "it is unlikely that any such exercise will take place in the near future," adding, "In the end, the controversy surrounding Ms. Bhutto's assassination is likely to continue."

Bhutto, 54, who had twice served as Pakistan's prime minister, was killed weeks after she had returned from exile to seek another term in a power-sharing arrangement with Musharraf. Hours after arriving in Karachi, she had survived a bomb attack at a rally in which more than 100 people were killed.

The U.N. report, which sharply condemned the hosing down of the crime scene within hours of the killing, was welcomed by Pakistan's ruling party, which is headed by Bhutto's widower, President Asif Ali Zardari.

But it was criticized by a Musharraf aide, Rashid Qureshi, who told the BBC it made "absurd statements" and was quoted by The Associated Press as saying, "This chief U.N. investigator was not the relative of Sherlock Holmes. It is a pack of lies."

The three-member panel's nine-month inquiry, which was requested by Pakistan, was headed by Chile's U.N. envoy, Heraldo Munoz.

"The commission believes that the failure of the police to investigate effectively Ms. Bhutto's assassination was deliberate," the report concluded.

A hearing is scheduled next week for five people arrested after the assassination, but they are not thought to be the ones who planned the attack.

<http://www.aolnews.com/world/article/un-report-blasts-pakistan-over-benazir-bhuttos-assassination/19442859>

Pakistan Unlikely to Act on Bhutto Report, UN Envoy Haroon Says

April 17 (Bloomberg) -- Pakistan is unlikely to take steps to address the security and judicial failures detailed in a report on the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, the nation's envoy to the United Nations said.

"I have witnessed history in my country for the last 60 years and nothing is ever taken to conclusion," Ambassador Abdullah Hussain Haroon said in an interview today. "We have had great trauma in Pakistan that did not lead to reform."

Bhutto's 2007 assassination might have been prevented had the government and security forces taken adequate steps after death threats were made against her, the UN-backed report said. The subsequent investigation "lacked direction, was ineffective and suffered from a lack of commitment to identify and bring all of the perpetrators to justice," the report said.

Haroon, 59, said the 65-page report, commissioned by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and released yesterday, was a "very clean factual picture" that was "well-conceived, well-written and well-intentioned" and contained no major errors.

The report called for "police reform measures" to "operate in a structure of accountability for protecting the rights of the individual." It said Pakistan needs "strong

and effective intelligence services” and that the “democratic rule of law in Pakistan could be greatly strengthened.”

Past Violence

Past violence in Pakistan, including the “loss of East Pakistan,” the 1979 execution of Bhutto’s father, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and military ruler General Mohammad Zia ul-Haq’s death in a plane crash in 1988 all failed to produce better leadership, Haroon said.

“We started off in undivided India a far more brilliant small group of people who disengaged from India and went our way knowing we could do better,” Haroon said. “We did in the first 25 years. Then we decided to go in mad directions and policies and since then it has been all the way down.”

Pakistan now needs “strong leadership and incorruptible leadership,” said Haroon, whose family owns the Pakistani media group Dawn.

The government doesn’t need U.S. help building democracy as suggested today in Washington by State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley, Haroon said.

“We will continue to work with Pakistan, to make sure that we build the institutions of democracy going forward and help them defend them as well,” Crowley told reporters.

“I don’t think you can help anything,” Haroon said, meaning the U.S. “When the U.S. was not a democracy, in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, we were a democracy,” he said, referring to the disenfranchisement of African-Americans. “The time it took you to get adult franchise we were already under adult franchise. We may have retarded today but we were a full- fledged democracy.”

The U.S., Haroon said, should “observe the Bible which they believe in” rather than “paying off people to be corrupt.”

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2010-04-16/pakistan-unlikely-to-act-on-bhutto-report-un-envoy-haroon-says.html>

Pakistan failed to protect Bhutto, probe death: U.N.

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) – Pakistan failed to properly protect former prime minister Benazir Bhutto or investigate her assassination and "severely hampered" a United Nations inquiry, U.N. investigators said on Thursday.

Bhutto was killed in a gun and suicide bomb attack after an election rally in the city of Rawalpindi on December 27, 2007, weeks after she returned to Pakistan from eight years in self-imposed exile.

"While she died when a 15-and-a-half-year-old suicide bomber detonated his explosives near her vehicle, no one believes that this boy acted alone," the 65-page report by a U.N. commission of inquiry said.

"The commission was mystified by the efforts of certain high-ranking Pakistani government authorities to obstruct access to military and intelligence sources."

U.N. investigators believe the failure to effectively examine Bhutto's death was "deliberate," the report said, adding their inquiry was "severely hampered."

"Ms Bhutto's assassination could have been prevented if adequate security measures had been taken," it concluded.

Bhutto was mistrusted by parts of Pakistan's military and security establishment and speculation has lingered she was the victim of a plot by allies of General Pervez Musharraf, the president at the time, who did not want her to come to power.

The report, which did not name any suspected culprits but urged Pakistan to conduct a proper investigation, followed a nine-month inquiry by the three-person panel headed by Chile's U.N. Ambassador Heraldo Munoz.

It was presented on Thursday to U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. The release of the report was delayed for just over two weeks because of a request by President Asif Ali Zardari, Bhutto's widower, to allow the commission to hear evidence from three unidentified heads of state.

NO AUTOPSY, NO FORENSIC EVIDENCE

Bhutto had returned to Pakistan, a key ally to the United States in its war against al Qaeda and the Taliban, to contest an election under a power-sharing deal with Musharraf that Washington had helped to broker.

A staunch opponent of Islamist militants, Bhutto survived a bomb attack on a rally hours after arriving home in the city of Karachi in October 2007. About 140 people were killed.

After that bombing, Bhutto had spoken of a warning from a "friendly country" she did not identify. The U.N. report said Pakistan's ISI intelligence service told investigators it had received information from Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates about threats against Bhutto.

The toughly worded U.N. report said Musharraf was aware of and tracking the many threats against Bhutto.

But his government "did little more than pass on those threats to her and to provincial authorities and were not proactive in neutralizing them or ensuring that the security provided was commensurate to the threats," it said.

The report described many failures in investigating the assassination.

The Rawalpindi district police hosed down the scene and did not collect or preserve evidence, preventing a proper forensic examination. The failure to conduct an autopsy has also made it impossible to determine a precise cause of death.

The actions by police were deliberate, the report said.

"These officials, in part fearing involvement by the intelligence agencies, were unsure of how vigorously they ought to pursue actions that they knew, as professionals, they should have taken," it said.

The former government that was led by allies of Musharraf blamed the late Pakistani Taliban leader and al Qaeda ally Baitullah Mehsud for Bhutto's murder.

Mehsud was killed in a U.S. drone strike last August. Despite the accusations against Mehsud, conspiracy theories abound in Pakistan over who was behind the assassination.

The U.N. chief set up the panel in July 2009 at the request of Pakistan's coalition government, led by Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party. Its original six-month mandate was extended due to the enormity of the task.

Any criminal investigation will be up to Pakistani authorities but Munoz has said the commission's findings could complement government efforts.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20100415/ts_nm/us_pakistan_bhutto_un

U.N.'s Bhutto Report Says What Pakistanis Already Know About Spy Agency and Army

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — The long-awaited United Nations report on the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto did not answer the central question of who killed her, but did put its finger directly on what remains the most troubling part of Pakistan's reality, the dominance of its military and intelligence services over civilian leaders.

A presidential spokesman said Friday that the report — 65 pages that made repeated references to the unchecked power of the military and its intelligence wing, known by the initials ISI — would reinvigorate the government's own investigation that began last year. But in many ways it served to underscore the government's inability to push it forward nearly three years after Ms. Bhutto's death, even though her widower, Asif Ali Zardari, is now president.

The report stated in black and white what Pakistanis sometimes have to whisper: that a nexus of elites, known as the establishment, whose core is formed by top military and intelligence officers but also includes politicians and bureaucrats, has busied itself with everything from rigging elections to making deals with militants. Ms. Bhutto's father, a flawed but charismatic leader, is broadly believed to have been executed because he was too threatening to its interests.

Some in Pakistan expressed delight at the findings, saying the exposure would force an uncomfortable conversation in Pakistan, where a rambunctious, young media broadcasts around the clock.

“This is going to upset the establishment,” said Kamran Shafi, a columnist for Dawn, a daily newspaper. “I hope very much it reacts in not a very good way. It needs to be exposed.”

Others disagreed, saying it would have little effect. The coverage on Friday was more notable for what it left out than for what it said, said Khaled Ahmed, an author and columnist for the Friday Times, a weekly newspaper. There were few references to the most scathing part of the report about the military’s role.

“The report is quite damning, but the way it’s presented on TV is inconclusive,” Mr. Ahmed said. “We don’t know who did it. That’s the kind of impression that will be created here.” He added: “Very clearly there’s a reluctance to point to the army. This is what everybody has ignored.”

The reason, he said, is part psychology and part national identity. Pakistan’s army has long represented the central and most crucial part of this country’s idea of itself, a symbol of protection against Pakistan’s mortal foe, India. That narrative is taught in textbooks and reinforced in society, and going against it is like attacking yourself. “The army has a geopolitical mind that is unchanging, and that’s what people love,” Mr. Ahmed said.

Pakistan is not the only country like this. In Turkey, the military exerted extensive control over civilian affairs for decades, deposing elected governments, working behind the scenes to foment unrest, and even executing a civilian prime minister.

But in Pakistan the influence is more overt, and the report points it out in painstaking detail in the example of the police investigation of Ms. Bhutto’s killing. The intelligence agency was portrayed as having been the invisible hand guiding the police.

The small bit of police work the report commended — a team of investigators’ searching through sewers after the assassination site had been prematurely hosed down — stopped abruptly when a senior officer, Gen. Abdul Majeed, took over and began to base the inquiry on information he had received from the intelligence agency.

The agency has no jurisdiction in the criminal justice system, and civilian police officers often complain that intelligence officials destroy their efforts to build a case simply by plucking suspects out of their custody into a black zone. The report said that members of the investigation team it spoke with “all but admitted that virtually all of their most important information” came from the intelligence agency.

The attack's aftermath was a series of stunning failures. Ms. Bhutto's chase vehicle, a bulletproof Mercedes, drove off, leaving her alone without backup or any police protection. Her car, whose tires were flat from the blast, stalled en route to the hospital, leaving her stranded by the side of the road, a development the report found "extraordinary." A private vehicle that belonged to an acquaintance later arrived.

It cataloged inconsistencies. The government of Pervez Musharraf, the president at the time, announced at a national news conference that she had died from hitting her head on the lever of her car's escape hatch. But one police team that the report's investigators trusted found no blood or tissue on the handle. Police team members reported seeing people cleaning the vehicle, even though investigations were still going on.

Then there was outright prevarication. Scotland Yard investigators, who also conducted an investigation at the time, based much of their findings on information from the police, the report said. But the report said that the United Nations commission found "the accounts the Rawalpindi police provided to Scotland Yard to be largely untrue."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/17/world/asia/17bhutto.html>

Pakistan to probe Bhutto killing after UN report

Pakistan said Friday it would step up its probe into the assassination of Benazir Bhutto after a U.N. report blamed security forces for failing to protect her — accusations dismissed as a "pack of lies" by an aide to ex-President Pervez Musharraf.

Bhutto, a former prime minister, was killed in a Dec. 27, 2007, gun and suicide-bomb attack as she was leaving a rally in Rawalpindi city, where she was campaigning to return her Pakistan People's Party to power in elections after returning from nearly nine years in self-imposed exile.

The slaying was the latest in a long line of high-profile political assassinations in Pakistan and convulsed the country, which was then ruled by unpopular military-backed ruler Musharraf and battered — as now — by al-Qaida and Taliban violence. Supporters of Bhutto immediately hinted that Musharraf or his allies in the powerful and largely unaccountable security forces may have played a role.

The three-member U.N. panel, which was not tasked with unmasking the killers, said Bhutto's death could have been avoided if Musharraf's government and security

agencies had taken adequate measures. It also found that the probe into her death was deliberately hampered by intelligence agencies.

The report, issued Thursday, was highly critical of a decision made within hours of the killing to hose down the crime scene and not to conduct an autopsy.

The report was hailed by the PPP, which now governs Pakistan and is led by President Asif Ali Zardari, Bhutto's widower. Zardari aide Farahnaz Ispahani said "the report will pave the way for a proper police investigation and possible penal proceedings."

Presidential spokesman Farhatullah Babar said the report backed up the PPP's belief that Musharraf or his allies were responsible for Bhutto's death. He said the probe "was a shot in the arm into ongoing investigations," into her death.

But Musharraf aide Rashid Qureshi insisted the U.N. report was based on rumors and that Musharraf — currently living abroad — was not responsible.

"This chief U.N. investigator was not the relative of Sherlock Homes," Qureshi told The Associated Press. "It is a pack of lies."

He added that Bhutto exposed herself to the risk even after the head of the country's most powerful spy agency, Inter-Services Intelligence, warned her not to attend the rally because of threats of an attack.

Musharraf's government blamed Baitullah Mehsud, a Pakistani militant commander with links to al-Qaida. Officials at the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency also reportedly said Mehsud, who was killed in a missile strike last August, was the chief suspect.

Bhutto was a secular politician with strong links to Western governments and a vocal critic of Islamist militants.

The U.N. commission said Musharraf's government, though tracking threats against Bhutto, did little more than pass them on to her and provincial authorities and did not act to neutralize them or ensure "that the security provided was commensurate with the threats."

Bhutto's party provided extra security, but the arrangements "lacked leadership and were inadequate and poorly executed," it said.

"Ms. Bhutto faced threats from a number of sources," the commission said. "These included al-Qaida, the Taliban, local jihadi groups and potentially from elements in the

Pakistani Establishment" — the customary way people here refer to the country's powerful military and intelligence apparatus.

The U.N. said the police probe lacked direction and commitment, and that it went after "lower level operatives," not higher-ups.

The commission said Inter-Services Intelligence conducted parallel investigations, gathering evidence which was only selectively shared with the police.

"The commission believes that the failure of the police to investigate effectively Ms. Bhutto's assassination was deliberate," the report said. "These officials, in part fearing intelligence agencies' involvement, were unsure of how vigorously they ought to pursue actions, which they knew, as professionals, they should have taken."

Five people have been accused by authorities of involvement in the assassination — although they are not believed to be the masterminds and the investigation is ongoing. Officials have said a final charge-sheet against them would only be submitted in court after the U.N. report was examined. A hearing was scheduled for April 21 for the five, jail official Mohammed Zafar said.

The commission urged Pakistani authorities to carry out a "serious, credible" criminal investigation that "determines who conceived, ordered and executed this heinous crime of historic proportions, and brings those responsible to justice."

The U.N. secretary-general agreed to appoint a commission to assist Pakistan by determining the facts and circumstances of Bhutto's death and it began work on July 1, 2009, conducting more than 250 interviews and reviewing hundreds of documents, videos, photographs and documentary material.

Under terms agreed to by the U.N. and the Pakistani government, Pakistani authorities would determine any criminal responsibility.

<http://wire.antiwar.com/2010/04/16/pakistan-to-probe-bhutto-killing-after-un-report-2/>
