

Emergency in Pakistan



Comments 3



Rituparna Goswami Pande 5 November 2007 20997 views

Life came to a standstill in Pakistan with the declaration of Emergency by self styled Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf. His actions reeked more of him being an army chief rather than a president of Pakistan. He cited the growing instances of Islamic militant violence and “constant” judicial interference as the reasons behind his clamping emergency and sacking of Ifthikar Choudhary, the Supreme Court chief justice which incidentally came in the wake of the crucial apex court ruling on the legality of his election.

The declaration of emergency has resulted in the suspension of all constitutional rights, all independent news media were gagged, telephone services were cut off and probably the internet services will soon be blocked. Paramilitary deployed in all strategic locations such as the street housing the presidency building etc. Moreover, the detention of politicians, lawyers and journalists may be on the cards.

Before anyone could cry foul play which was attempted by the seven member apex court bench headed by the Chief justice himself, he was shown the door and promptly replaced by Justice Abdul Hameed Dogar.

Former leader of Pakistan Nawaz Shariff condemned Musharaff’s role while Benazir Bhutto cut short her stay in Dubai to return to Pakistan. But on her arrival at Karachi she was not allowed to get of the plane and runs the risk of being either arrested or deported depending on the whim of the president.

Pakistan as a nation has always been politically volatile. History is witness to the fact that Presidents in Pakistan are doomed either to be assassinated or banished from their country after they relinquish power. The political history of Pakistan is a chequered one. The Muslim League which had formed the first government of Pakistan under the leadership of Muhammed Ali Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan, found its leadership in

Pakistani politics on the decline with the rise of other political parties. The first Constitution of Pakistan was adopted in 1956, but was suspended in 1958 by Ayub Khan. The Constitution of 1973, suspended in 1977 by Zia-ul-haq, was re-instated in 1991 and is the country's most important document, laying the foundations of government. Pakistan is a federal democratic republic with Islam as the state religion.

Once again the martial law brought about by Musharaff has made the world react in unison.

The world at large too poured out its reaction with the US Secretary of state Condoleeza Rice criticizing the measures as “highly regrettable”. Musharaff defied the warnings of US officials and imposed Martial law in the country.

“The US has made very clear that it does not support extra constitutional measures as they would take Pakistan away from the path of democracy and civilian rule” said Rice.

The Indian government too expressed its concern at the developments in Pakistan while BJP and the Left denounced the emergency.

With Pakistan’s future hanging in balance only time will tell what other coup Musharaf has up his sleeve for his country of crisis.

Photo by Atif Gulzar, Lahore, Pakistan

Rituparna Goswami Pande

Journalist, writer

BY RITUPARNA GOSWAMI PANDE

Women of Substance

My Waxen Wings

I, Kaziranga

A day for Women!

Assam - a killing field for the wild

ON THIS DAY

Assam Don Bosco University Celebrates 12th Convocation, Honors Outstanding Graduates

Marathon race organised in Durga Puja celebration

Humanitarian Response to the Flood Ravaged Communities of Assam by NEADS

Young greater adjutant storks rescued

October Dimasa Heritage Rally may boost touring bikers
