

## Refugee Review Tribunal

### AUSTRALIA

#### RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

**Research Response Number:** PAK30203  
**Country:** Pakistan  
**Date:** 8 June 2006

Keywords: Pakistan – Punjab – PPP – Shakar Garh

This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

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#### Questions

- 1. Please provide up to date information on the political situation relevant to the PPP in the Punjab.**
- 2. Please provide any information on the operations of the PPP in Shakar Garh.**
- 3. Please provide information on the Pakistan authorities' treatment of members of PPP.**

#### RESPONSE

- 1. Please provide up to date information on the political situation relevant to the PPP in the Punjab.**

The International Crisis Group (ICG) provides the following background on the Pakistan People's Party (PPP); noting that it is presently "the largest single opposition party" in the Punjab and that it is currently operating in alliance with the Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N) as the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (ARD); the ARD opposes the regime of President General Pervez Musharraf and the ruling party, the Pakistan Muslim League – Quaid-i-Azam (PML-Q). The ICG also notes the PPP's situation as the historical enemy of the Pakistan military and the ongoing mistreatment of PPP leaders and activists by the authorities across Pakistan.

The centre-left PPP emerged in 1967 in opposition to Ayub Khan's military government. Its initial, rapid ascent to national prominence was anchored in the socialist program of its founder and leader, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, which called for social justice, economic equality and land redistribution. While the party has moved closer to the centre, it remains wedded to social democracy. According to its 2002 Manifesto, its four basic principles are democracy, religious tolerance, equal economic opportunity, and "people power".

Since Pakistan's first general election in 1970, the PPP has formed four of six governments elected on a party basis. Rural voters are attracted by its left-leaning, social welfare philosophy, including pledges of land reform. In the 1970s, the party appealed to urban

working class voters with an ambitious nationalisation drive. This alienated powerful business and industrial groups that backed, as they still do, the Muslim League. Adapting to economic needs in the 1990s, the party adopted a more business-friendly agenda under Benazir Bhutto that closely resembled the PML's. Nevertheless, the PPP continues to advocate government regulation intended to favour farmers, labour groups, minorities and women.

The PPP is the largest single opposition party in Sindh, Punjab, and the centre, and operates in partnership with its erstwhile political foe, the PML-N, in the pro-democracy ARD coalition. Splinter groups, all claiming to be Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's successors, have kept the party name, with personalised suffixes, including PPP-Sherpao, PPP-Hoti, PPP (Shaheed Bhutto), and the PPP-Patriots (pp.11-12).

...Of the opposition political parties, the generals distrusted the PPP the most because of its long-standing resistance to military rule. It also posed the most credible threat because of its extensive support base. Concerned that the PPP would obtain an absolute majority in the 1988 elections, the military and its intelligence arm, the Inter- Services Intelligence (ISI), helped forge an opposition alliance, the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI), headed by the Muslim League of Nawaz Sharif, Zia's former finance minister and Punjab chief minister, in partnership with the military's religious allies, including the JI.

With military support, the IJI won a strong presence in the National Assembly and formed the provincial government in Punjab (p.5).

...Pakistan's moderate opposition parties are under siege. Many PPP and PMLN leaders, principal components of the anti-military coalition, the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy, are in exile, in prison, or disqualified from elections.

The PML-Q was forged through defections mainly from PML-N but also from PPP, with the military government playing a hands-on role in overseeing its rapid expansion during the local elections of 2000-2001 and in the run up to the national elections of October 2002. Opposition politicians and party workers were coerced and cajoled into joining by state agencies... (p.6).

...In the run-up to and during the [2005 local elections], the government targeted opposition political party leaders and workers. For example, Nadeem Qaira, a PPP tehsil *nazim* (mayor) and brother of a PPP MNA from Gujarat, Qamar Qaira, was arrested under the Anti-Terrorism Act. On 4 April, Ghulam Qadir Chandio, a PPP MPA in Sindh, was arrested on kidnapping charges and denied bail until the alleged victim stated publicly that he had not been kidnapped. Chandio was later rearrested for robbery. There were numerous reports of kidnappings of PPP and PML-N leaders and workers as well as false charges to prevent their candidates from contesting the polls. Opposition candidates and supporters were systematically targeted, with many, particularly from PML-N, coerced or persuaded to defect to PML-Q (p.9) (International Crisis Group 2005, International Crisis Group 2005, *Authoritarianism and Political Party Reform in Pakistan*, Asia Report no.102, 28 September, [http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south\\_asia/102\\_authoritarianism\\_and\\_political\\_party\\_reform\\_in\\_pakistan.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/102_authoritarianism_and_political_party_reform_in_pakistan.pdf) – Accessed 9 December 2005 – Attachment 1).

The ICG also provides the following background on the complex history of the Pakistan Muslim League and the competing forces which lay claim to the PML mantle.

The "Muslim League" label continues to be evocative, associated with the All-India Muslim League that is generally credited with having won Pakistan's independence. A variety of right-of-centre parties have used variations of the name, each claiming to be the rightful political heir, including Ayub Khan's Convention Muslim League and Fatima Jinnah's

Council Muslim League in the 1965 elections. In the 2002 elections six parties entered parliament on Muslim League platforms.

Today, the two largest parties taking up the Muslim League mantle are the PML-N, a faction formed under Nawaz Sharif's leadership in 1993, and its Musharraf-era offshoot, the PML-Q. Both advocate moderate economic policies centred on privatisation and deregulation. In the past the PML-N benefited from the military, corporate and bureaucratic patronage the PML-Q now enjoys. Party activists from both factions stress ideological attachments to the All-India Muslim League and its leader, Mohammed Ali Jinnah.

According to the PML-N's manifesto:

PML-N represents the continuing flow of Muslims' historic struggle and role in South Asia that is spread over several centuries....After winning independence, All-India Muslim League became "Pakistan Muslim League". The PML leadership steered the country successfully through the initial period of great difficulties...[U]nder the dynamic leadership of Mr Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, it reemerged as the largest political party of the country in October 1993...

By its opposition to the military during its last term (1997-1999), the PML-N became the target of its former ally, and by joining forces with the PPP and other like-minded parties in the anti-military Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy, the party hopes to use democratic credentials to regain ground lost to the PML-Q.

The military-created PML-Q also claims the All-India Muslim League's legacy. Its leadership is composed largely of former members of PML-N who joined the splinter group after the army ousted Sharif's government in 1999. The new faction also usurped PML-N offices in Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore. The PML-Q is currently in power in the centre, the ruling party in Punjab, and a coalition partner in the Sindh and Balochistan provincial administrations. Dependent as it is on the military, however, it has had to dilute its party ideology, a topic discussed in greater detail below (International Crisis Group 2005, International Crisis Group 2005, *Authoritarianism and Political Party Reform in Pakistan*, Asia Report no.102, 28 September, pp.11

[http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south\\_asia/102\\_authoritarianism\\_and\\_political\\_party\\_reform\\_in\\_pakistan.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/102_authoritarianism_and_political_party_reform_in_pakistan.pdf) – Accessed 9 December 2005 – Attachment 1).

## **2. Please provide any information on the operations of the PPP in Shakar Garh.**

A number of news reports were located which detailed PPP activities and identities in the locality of Shakar Garh (or Shakargarh) and the larger district Narowal in the Punjab. One of these news bulletins reports on claims that an unidentified gunmen attempted to assassinate a local PPP leader in December 2002. The December 2002 report appears first and is followed by reports, listed in reverse chronological order, which detail a number of local PPP events and the names of various local PPP office holders (including "Sh. Farooq Abdullah, the prominent leader of PPP Shakargarh").

### **District (Sialkot) – PPP leader escaped from life attempt.**

10 December 2002

Sialkot Dec 10-PPI: The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Narowal district vice president has escaped narrowly in a murderous attempt here on Tuesday. Reportedly, Chaudhry Nasrullah Gujjar was going back to his home in village "Sumiyaal" from Shakargarh on his car LOK-840 along with his brother Sadaqat Ullah, late on Monday night. When, they reached in

village “Phulwari” three unidentified masked armed persons opened fire thus badly damaging the car. The PPP leader and his brother saved their lives as lying down in the car. The attackers fled away by firing in the air. Shakargarh police have registered a case, with no arrest (‘District (Sialkot) – PPP leader escaped from life attempt’ 2002, *Asia Pulse*, 10 December – Attachment 2).

#### **District (Shakargarh): Chehellum**

25 November 2005

SHAKARGARH, November 25 (PPI): The Chehellum of the father of **Anwar ul Haq Chaudhry, President of PPP District Narowal**, Dr. Akram-ul-Haq, Inam-ul-Haq Ch, former city Nazim Shakargarh will be held on December 04 at his residence, Railway Road Shakargarh. Quran Khwani and Fateha will be offered for the departed soul of the deceased Muhammad Hussain Chaudhry on this occasion, relatives, fri, and elite of the area has been requested to attend the Chehellum ceremony (‘District (Shakargarh): Chehellum’ 2005, *Pakistan Press International*, 25 November – Attachment 3).

#### **PPP activists stage rally to mark release of Zardari**

27 November 2004

SHAKARGARH Nov 27-(PPI): Pakistan People’s Party Shakargarh staged a rally to mark the release of Asif Ali Zardari, in which the rally led by Major (Retd) Muhammad Khalid Ch. ticket holder of PPP National Assembly, and Muhammad **Tariq Sulehri, Tehsil President of PPP Shakargarh**. The rally was stated from Railway Road and ended at the tomb of Baba Qatib Shah Wali, where the PPP leader and workers prayed for the health of Asif Ali Zardari, and prosperity of the country. The rally was addressed by Sh. Farooq Abdullah, Gulzar Tehseen, Tariq Mehmood Sulehri, Haji Sabir Hussain, Ch. Ramazan Shahid, and they paid rich tributes to both Benazir Bhutto, and Asif Ali Zardari, for their historic struggle for the restoration of democracy. Sweets were also distributed among the people (‘PPP activists stage rally to mark release of Zardari’ 2004, *Pakistan Press International*, 27 November – Attachment 4).

#### **District (Sh.garh): Govt’s wrong policies responsible for unrest among people: PPP**

19 November 2004

SHAKARGARH Nov 19-(PPI): Wrong policies of present government were responsible for general unrest among the people and sectarian violence in the country. This was stated in a press release issued here today, by **Anwar-ul-Haq Ch., president PPP District Narowal**. He said that due to increase in electricity, oil and gas prices, the poor had been affected badly, and if the government could not control the wrong situation of crime the people will be forced to come on the roads (‘District (Sh.garh): Govt’s wrong policies responsible for unrest among people: PPP’ 2004, *Pakistan Press International*, 19 November – Attachment 5).

#### **District (S’garh): Death anniversary of Z.A. Bhutto**

10 March 2004

SHAKARGARH, March 10 (PPI): The 27th death anniversary of founder of the PPP and former Prime Minister of Pakistan Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto will be observed on April 5, 2004 **at the house of Sh. Farooq Abdullah, the prominent leader of PPP Shakargarh**. Major (Retd) Khalid Chaudhry, former Chairman of Pakistan Baitul Maal Committee District Narowal told newsmen here last evening that arrangements in this respect are being made (‘District (S’garh): Death anniversary of Z.A. Bhutto’ 2004, *Pakistan Press International*, 10 March – Attachment 6).

#### **District (Shakargarh) – Butto death anniversary on April 4.**

21 March 2003

SHAKARGARH, March 21-(PPI): The 24th death anniversary of founder of the PPP and former Prime Minister of Pakistan Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto will be celebrated on April 4 **at the residence of Inayat Ullah Comrade** at Mohallah Riazpur Shakargarh. This was disclosed by

**Anwar ul Haq Ch, District President of PPP Narowal** while talking to newsmen on Friday ('District (Shakargarh) – Butto death anniversary on April 4' 2003, *Pakistan Press International*, 21 March – Attachment 7).

### **3. Please provide information on the Pakistan authorities' treatment of members of PPP.**

Information on the mistreatment of PPP leaders and activists by the authorities is presented below in the form of a timeline. The timeline details significant dates in Pakistan's political history (elections, coups, etc) along with some notable incidents which illustrate the manner in which PPP leaders and activists have been subject to arrest and attack by the authorities, and also by political rivals, over the last decade. The incidents catalogued below are merely a sample of the ongoing troubles in which PPP leaders and activists have been involved and appear as an illustration of the general state of affairs. The timeline should not be read as an exhaustive list of all known incidents of mistreatment (time constraints preclude the undertaking of such a lengthy task).

#### **November 1988 – GENERAL ELECTION**

"Benazir Bhutto's PPP wins general election" following "General Zia's death in 1988 end[ing] 11-year military rule" ('Timeline: Pakistan' (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8). PML leader, "Nawaz Sharif, who had been Gen. Zia's finance minister, [leads] a PML-Islamist coalition to a strong second-place showing and [becomes] Punjab chief minister" (Kronstadt, K. Alan 2005, 'CRS Report for Congress: Pakistan's Domestic Political Developments', US Department of State website, 14 February, p.3-4 <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/42440.pdf> – Accessed 21 February 2005 – Attachment 9).

#### **October 1990 – GENERAL ELECTION**

"Benazir Bhutto [PPP] dismissed as prime minister on charges of incompetence and corruption" ('Timeline: Pakistan' (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8). PML leader Nawaz "Sharif [is] elected prime minister" (Kronstadt, K. Alan 2005, 'CRS Report for Congress: Pakistan's Domestic Political Developments', US Department of State website, 14 February, p.3-4 <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/42440.pdf> – Accessed 21 February 2005 – Attachment 9).

#### **October 1993 – GENERAL ELECTION**

"President Khan and Prime Minister Sharif both resign under pressure from military. General election brings Benazir Bhutto back to power" ('Timeline: Pakistan' (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

#### **6 May 1995**

"At least 25 people, including five policemen, were wounded during anti-government demonstrations in Pakistani-controlled Azad (free) Kashmir on Saturday, police and officials said. ...Police fired teargas and made baton charges to disperse stone-throwing protesters in the state capital of Muzaffarabad, which was virtually paralysed by a one-day strike. ...Witnesses said demonstrators blocked main roads across Kashmir with burning tyres, broken glass and barricades. At least eight vehicles, including two police vans, were damaged. ...The strike was called by the Azad Kashmir branch of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP). ...Police detained several PPP leaders in early morning raids, but released them later. Police and demonstrators clashed in several towns and

some shooting in the air was reported (Wani, I. 1995, 'Police clash with strikers in Pakistani Kashmir', *Reuters News*, 6 May – Attachment 10).

### **9 January 1996**

“Gunmen kidnapped and killed two local politicians of Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto’s Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) in Karachi on Tuesday, police said. ...Gunmen in Karachi also abducted and wounded a third PPP politician” (Khan, I. 1996, 'Actor, politicians among six killed in Pakistan', *Reuters News*, 9 January – Attachment 11).

### **November 1996**

“President Leghari dismisses Bhutto [PPP] government amid corruption allegations” ('Timeline: Pakistan' (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

### **6 November 1996**

“At least 20 people were detained and several injured as the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) held a demonstration Wednesday to protest against the ousting a day earlier of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. ...Baton-wielding police pounced on the group and threw a few teargas shells at them as they torched an effigy of Leghari, a former prominent PPP leader until his accession to the presidency in November 1993. ...The demonstrators retaliated by throwing rocks at police as they ran back into the PPP office. Witnesses said some were beaten by police and about a dozen were taken away. ...Windows in the PPP office, located in a one-way street, were broken by flying objects hurled by demonstrators and police. ...Some six people with minor injuries were treated in hospital with one – reporter Zafar Hashmi of local Urdu daily Pakistan – receiving three stitches for a head injury caused by glass shards, doctors said ('UPDATES with injured and clash with police' 1996, *Agence France-Presse*, 6 November – Attachment 12).

### **February 1997 – GENERAL ELECTION**

“Nawaz Sharif returns as prime minister after his Pakistan Muslim League party wins elections” ('Timeline: Pakistan' (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

### **9 June 1997**

“A politician in opposition leader Benazir Bhutto’s Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) was shot dead in the Punjab provincial capital of Lahore” ('Election candidate shot dead in Pakistani city' 1997, *Reuters News*, 9 June – Attachment 13).

### **7 May 1998**

“Pakistani authorities have jailed around a dozen activists of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto’s party and issued arrest warrants for four opposition senators, police and party sources said Thursday. ...The party leaders are accused of staging an anti-government demonstration outside the parliament building here on April 20 in “violation” of an official ban, police sources said. ...Scores of people joined the demonstration organised by the main opposition Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) to protest against government policies and the alleged victimisation of its leader and ex-premier Bhutto. ...Police used batons and lobbed tear gas cannisters to disperse the marchers and several people, including PPP senators Rana Rabbani and Aitzaz Ahsan, were injured. ...PPP Sources said police conducted night raids and whisked away about a dozen people including the party’s central information secretary and ex-minister Nawaz Khokhar ('Pakistani police detain a dozen Bhutto supporters' 1998, *Agence France-Presse*, 7 May – Attachment 14).

### **April 1999**

“Benazir Bhutto and her husband convicted of corruption and given jail sentences. Benazir

stays out of the country” (‘Timeline: Pakistan’ (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

### **1 May 1999**

“Agence France Presse (AFP) reported that, in Lahore, police had detained 120 PPP members as a “precautionary” measure because they posed a “threat” to public peace. The PPP had been planning a demonstration to protest the conviction of former Prime Minister Bhutto” (‘Chronology: Pakistan’ 1999, *Middle East Journal*, 1 October – Attachment 15).

### **11 May 1999**

“KARACHI, May 11 (AFP) – Pakistani police have arrested 275 activists of former premier Benazir Bhutto’s Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) for blocking a highway and railway track in southern Sindh province, police officials said Tuesday. ...The PPP claimed 1,000 of its members had been taken into custody, and witnesses said the police had baton-charged the activists as they staged a sit-in Monday in Khairpur town, 500 kilometers (312 miles) west of here (‘Pakistani police arrest 275 members of Bhutto’s party’ 1999, *Agence France-Presse*, 11 May – Attachment 16).

### **13 September 1999**

“Pakistani authorities Monday freed around 400 opposition workers and leaders who were detained in a weekend police crackdown during anti-government rallies in Karachi and nearby Hyderabad, officials said. ...About 250 detainees from ex-premier Benazir Bhutto’s Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) and the opposition Muttahida Qaumi Movement were released from the six police stations in Karachi, he said. ...Some 150 others including 119 PPP activists and a central PPP leader Khursheed Shah, were released from Hyderabad, the second largest city in southern Sindh province, party sources said. ...Police said the leaders freed here included PPP provincial president Nisar Khuhro, senators Raza Rabbani, and Qaim Ali Shah as well as MQM lawmakers, Farooq Sattar, Aftab Shaikh and Nasreen Jalil. ...Khuhro, claiming hundreds more were still in custody, said the opposition campaign for resignation of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and formation of a neutral interim government for new elections would continue (‘Government frees around 400 opponents amid strike in southern Pakistan’ 1999, *Agence France-Presse*, 13 September – Attachment 17).

### **30 September 1999**

“Hundreds of workers from the MQM and PPP, which is headed by former premier Benazir Bhutto, were detained by the police to thwart [a] rally. ...Some 350 women activists were later released and an equal number of male workers were given bail. ...The two parties are key components of a 19-party Grand Democratic Alliance currently waging a campaign to unseat Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif” (‘Pakistani opposition leaders released on bail’ 1999, *Agence France-Presse*, 30 September – Attachment 18).

### **October 1999 – MUSHARRAF LED COUP**

“Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif [PML] overthrown in military coup led by General Pervez Musharraf. Coup is widely condemned, Pakistan is suspended from Commonwealth” (‘Timeline: Pakistan’ (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

### **April 2000**

“Nawaz Sharif sentenced to life imprisonment on hijacking and terrorism charges” (‘Timeline: Pakistan’ (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

### **17 November 2000**

“Police...arrested seven activists of former premier Benazir Bhutto’s Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) after a raid on their office in the country’s southwestern city of Quetta in Baluchistan

province” (‘PPP office raided, seven activists arrested’ 2000, *Press Trust of India*, 17 November – Attachment 19).

### **27 November 2000**

“KARACHI, Nov. 27 (PPI): Police made arrests of more than a dozen workers and office bearers of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) here at Shafee Stadium in Malir on Monday where they were to hold district workers convention of the party. Later, police released former minister for labour Khwaja Awan and former parliamentarian Sher Muhammad Baluch along with eight other party workers. ... According to details, a large number police personnel took position at the entry and exit points of Convention venue prior to 10:00 a.m. As the workers began to pour in the stadium from various parts of the city, environment gradually began to tense and heated workers started raising slogans against the government, the press release said. Following anti government slogans by PPP workers, police arrested a number of workers and released them after a few hours” (‘Political – PPP stopped from holding worker’s convention’ 2000, *Pakistan Press International*, 27 November – Attachment 20).

### **December 2000**

“Nawaz Sharif goes into exile in Saudi Arabia after being pardoned by military authorities” (‘Timeline: Pakistan’ (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

### **December 2000 to August 2001 – LOCAL ELECTIONS**

“The first local government elections under Musharraf’s devolution scheme [are] held in five phases from December 2000 to August 2001” (International Crisis Group 2005, *Pakistan’s Local Polls: Shoring Up Military Rule*, Asia Briefing N°43, 22 November – Attachment 21).

### **2000-2001**

“The PML-Q [is] forged through defections mainly from PML-N but also from PPP, with the military government playing a hands-on role in overseeing its rapid expansion during the local elections of 2000-2001 and in the run up to the national elections of October 2002. Opposition politicians and party workers were coerced and cajoled into joining by state agencies, including the ISI and the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), a nominal anticorruption watchdog, and by key officials such as Musharraf’s Principal Secretary, Tariq Aziz, Punjab Governor General Khalid Maqbool, Punjab Home Secretary Ejaz Shah and Inspector General Police Punjab Asif Hayat. Tactics included promises of lucrative positions in government, threats of prosecution on false charges, and physical intimidation. ‘Some defected to the PML-Q’, said a PML-N leader, ‘when faced with the choice of jail or a ministership. But most joined out of fear, they had no choice’” (International Crisis Group 2005, *Pakistan’s Local Polls: Shoring Up Military Rule*, Asia Briefing N°43, 22 November, p.6 – Attachment 21).

### **21-22 March 2001**

“Several PPP leaders were arrested by the police who were targeting ARD members to prevent them from holding a public meeting” (*Dawn* 22 Mar. 2001; *ibid.* 23 Mar. 2001) (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties* (January 2001 – April 2004), 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **3 February 2001**

At this time the Research Directorate of Canada’s Immigration and Refugee Board receives the following advice from the Joint Director of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP): “PPP members detained in corruption cases, on charges that at times have proved very hard to verify judicially, have faced harsh treatment in custody-especially during the early months of the military regime. However such cases are again very isolated, and pertain



only to those actually detained on charges. Others could face a threat of arrest for corruption, but it would be highly unlikely that this [would] apply to rank and file PPP members. It is mainly their leaders who are wanted. Treatment across the country may vary slightly, but not significantly” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **30 April 2001**

“40 PPP activists were arrested in Dadu, Bhan Saeedabad, Jamshoro and Thrari Mohabbat, 20 from Larkana, six from Naushahro, nine from Mirpurkhas and one from Khairpur” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **1 May 2001**

“Numerous PPP members, workers and activists were arrested in an attempt to prevent them from participating in a May Day rally planned by the ARD (ibid. 7 May 2001). Between 1 and 6 May 2001, many of those arrested were released on bail, however, on 6 May 2001, three PPP members were imprisoned by the government for 30 days” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **20 June 2001**

“Musharraf names himself president while remaining head of the army” (“Timeline: Pakistan” (undated), *BBC News (World Edition)* website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

### **21 August 2001**

“The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) arrested Jehangir Badar, secretary general of the PPP” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **January 2002**

“Musharraf announces that elections will be held in October 2002” (“Timeline: Pakistan” (undated), *BBC News (World Edition)* website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

**27 January 2002:** 30 PPP workers were arrested while participating in a rally in Jacobabad (*Dawn* 28 Jan. 2002) (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **15 March 2002**

“37 PPP activists, including the information secretary of the PPP, Nasrullah Baloch, were arrested and jailed (ibid. 16 Mar. 2002). According to Benazir Bhutto, those arrested were also physically assaulted (ibid. 17 Mar. 2002)” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **20 March 2002**

“Non-bailable arrest warrants were issued against 70 PPP local leaders and activists in Islamabad for staging a demonstration against the policies of the 1997 government

and for disrupting the public peace (ibid. 21 Mar. 2002)” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **23 March 2002**

“Several PPP leaders and workers were arrested in Lahore after police raided their houses (ibid. 24 Mar. 2002). Several of those arrested were released on bail the following day (*Dawn* 25 Mar. 2002)” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **April 2002**

“Musharraf wins another five years in office in a referendum criticised as unconstitutional and fraught with irregularities” (“Timeline: Pakistan’ (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

### **29 April 2002**

“At least 12 PPP workers were arrested after the police allegedly received information that the workers were planning to “create a law and order situation on [2 April]” (ibid. 30 Apr. 2002)” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **August 2002**

“Musharraf grants himself sweeping new powers, including the right to dismiss an elected parliament. Opposition forces accuse Musharraf of perpetuating dictatorship” (“Timeline: Pakistan’ (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

### **31 August 2002**

“According to the PPP, 600 of its workers and members were arrested in Sindh province “for staging protest demonstrations at various places against the rejection of nomination papers of ... Benazir Bhutto” (ibid. 1 Sept. 2002). Police officials claimed that all of the female activists that were arrested had been released, and that the others would be released on the same day (ibid.)” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **5 September 2002**

“Five female PPP activists were detained when they began to set up for a hunger strike over the disqualification of Bhutto” (ibid. 5 Sept. 2002) (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **September to October 2002**

“In the weeks preceding the elections, human rights activists, Pakistani journalists, and members of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) alleged extensive poll-rigging by the military government. Allegations included the relocation of polling booths at the behest of the PML-QA, the appointment of polling officers handpicked by the PML-QA, the tearing down of campaign posters and banners, police raids on PPP and PML-N offices, and police harassment of PPP and PML-N workers and

candidates at the behest of the government. On October 6, Punjab's Jhelum district police forcibly closed two election offices of the PPP and one of the PML-N and beat up their workers. In response to various complaints, the Chief Election Commissioner of Pakistan issued a statement on September 21 warning the police not to harass any contesting candidate" (Human Rights watch 2003, *World Report – 2003*, January, p.262 – Attachment 23).

"In correspondence forwarded to the Research Directorate [of Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board] in April 2004, the Joint Director of the [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCPP)] indicated that in her opinion": "Activists of the PPP faced problems in the run-up to the October 2002 general election, and were frequently arrested, harassed and detained while attempting to organize rallies and so on. This action was taken by police, with orders from the military authority... . As far as I am aware, since the October 2002 polls, this harassment has decreased, though PPP leaders have faced pressure to switch political loyalties. At the level of activists, workers and party members there have been fewer reports of harassment, although some isolated incidents continue to take place" (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

#### **October 2002 – GENERAL ELECTION**

"First general election since the 1999 military coup results in a hung parliament. Parties haggle over the make-up of a coalition. Religious parties fare better than expected" ('Timeline: Pakistan' (undated), *BBC News (World Edition)* website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

#### **November 2002**

"Mir Zafarullah Jamali selected as prime minister by the National Assembly. He is the first civilian premier since the 1999 military coup and a member of a party close to General Musharraf" ('Timeline: Pakistan' (undated), *BBC News (World Edition)* website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

#### **16 January 2003**

"Over 12 PPP activists were arrested by the police in Khairpur" (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

#### **February 2003**

"In February 2003, Bhutto reportedly accused the government of harassing PPP workers and supporters in Sindh province generally, and in Larkana specifically (*Dawn* 17 Feb. 2003a). The PPP leader of the Sindh Assembly, Nisar Khoro, also held the government responsible for the rise in revengeful activities against PPP supporters in the province of Sindh (PPI 4 Feb. 2003). He alleged that PPP supporters were targeted strictly because they supported the PPP, adding that water to over 100 shops owned by PPP supporters was disconnected and over a dozen shops were closed down by authorities (ibid.). Khoro also stated that PPP supporters were told to re-direct their loyalties away from the PPP or they would face having to leave Thatta" (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

#### **February 2003 – SENATE ELECTION**

"Senate elections: Ruling party [PML-Q] wins most seats in voting to the upper house. Elections said to be final stage of what President Musharraf calls transition to democracy"

(‘Timeline: Pakistan’ (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

### **May 2003**

“LAHORE: Police arrested 30 MPAs, including eight female legislators, belonging to the Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) under 16 Maintenance of Public Order (MPO). ... They were released from police custody in the afternoon. The police also detained Sajida Mir and Ayesha Javed, presidents in Lahore of the PPPP and PML-N respectively. They also rounded off dozens of activists belonging to these parties for creating disturbance and chanting anti-government slogans, urging the legislators to boycott the session” (Jabbar, Qamar 2003, ‘Thirty MPAs detained under MPO, released’, *Daily Times*, 29 May

[http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story\\_29-5-2003\\_pg1\\_1](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story_29-5-2003_pg1_1) – Accessed 10 April 2006 – Attachment 24). “According to a statement by Benazir Bhutto, representatives were “beaten up and had their clothes torn off” (*The News* 31 May 2003). The police had also detained opposition workers, who were not released with the members of parliament” (*Dawn* 30 May 2003) (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **22 July 2003**

“Seven PPP workers were arrested when the police entered one of the workers’ homes, without a search warrant, and interrupted a meeting (ibid. 24 July 2003). The arrested workers were released on bail the following day (ibid.)” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **6 January 2004**

“PPP leader, Chaudhry Mohammad Yasin, was arrested” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1998, *PAK42532.E – Pakistan: The treatment of members, activists and workers of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) by the government and other parties (January 2001 – April 2004)*, 5 May – Attachment 22).

### **August 2004**

“Shaukat Aziz is sworn in as prime minister” (‘Timeline: Pakistan’ (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

### **December 2004**

“President Musharraf says he will stay on as head of the army having previously promised to relinquish the role” (‘Timeline: Pakistan’ (undated), *BBC News* (World Edition) website, (last updated: 12 April 2006) – Attachment 8).

### **April 2005**

“[Thousands of opposition Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) supporters, including several PPP parliamentarians, [are] arbitrarily arrested in a countrywide crackdown. Though many of those arrested were subsequently released without charge, cases against hundreds were filed under the Anti-Terrorism Act and under Pakistan’s criminal procedure code. Scores continue to face charges and the fear of re-arrest” (Human Rights Watch 2006, *World Report – 2006*, January, p.299 – Attachment 23).

“In the run-up to and during the [2005 local elections], the government targeted opposition political party leaders and workers. For example, Nadeem Qaira, a PPP tehsil *nazim* (mayor) and brother of a PPP MNA from Gujarat, Qamar Qaira, was arrested under the Anti-Terrorism Act. On 4 April, Ghulam Qadir Chandio, a PPP MPA in Sindh, was arrested on

kidnapping charges and denied bail until the alleged victim stated publicly that he had not been kidnapped. Chandio was later rearrested for robbery. There were numerous reports of kidnappings of PPP and PML-N leaders and workers as well as false charges to prevent their candidates from contesting the polls. Opposition candidates and supporters were systematically targeted, with many, particularly from PML-N, coerced or persuaded to defect to PML-Q” (International Crisis Group 2005, International Crisis Group 2005, *Authoritarianism and Political Party Reform in Pakistan*, Asia Report no.102, 28 September, [http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south\\_asia/102\\_authoritarianism\\_and\\_political\\_party\\_reform\\_in\\_pakistan.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/102_authoritarianism_and_political_party_reform_in_pakistan.pdf) – Accessed 9 December 2005 – Attachment 1).

### **August 2005**

“Two PPP workers were gunned down in Khairpur at the hands of armed goons of coalition partner Functional Muslim League with the connivance of police. Sher Mohammad Sial was killed in UC Sapar Rind while Mohammad Omar Qureshi was killed in UC Sagyoon. ...Police...detained PPP MPA Naeem Kharal but refuse to register an FIR against the murderers. ...In Hyderabad, violence, aerial firings, arrests and detention of MQM zonal organiser and boycott of MMA-backed candidates from Local Bodies polls marred the voting process in the district where turnout remained 20 per cent till the end of the voting. ...Over one dozen activists of MQM, MMA and PPPP and some passers-by were among the injured who were admitted to the Civil and Bhitai hospitals. ...In NWFP, as many as four persons were killed while more than eight injured in sporadic clashes between rival groups in parts of the province during polling. ...According to reports, activists of PPP and Jamaat-i-Islami entered into clashes on the premises of Primary School Ghorkai and opened crossfire. The clash claimed two lives and injured another” (‘Polls-related Violence: LB Elections take 33 Lives in Pakistan’ 2005, *The Pakistan Times*, 26 August <http://www.pakistantimes.net/2005/08/26/top.htm> – Accessed 6 March 2006 – Attachment 25).

### **August to October 2005 – LOCAL ELECTIONS**

“The 2005 local government elections [are] held in three phases from 18 August to 6 October” (International Crisis Group 2005, *Pakistan’s Local Polls: Shoring Up Military Rule*, Asia Briefing N°43, 22 November – Attachment 21).

### **February 2006**

“Punjab PPP information secretary Naveed Chaudhry claimed that 650 leaders and workers of the party had been arrested from Lahore, Faisalabad, Sargodha, Sialkot, Jhelum and Gujrat. He said cases had been registered against them under anti-terrorism laws” (“650 PPP leaders, workers arrested” 2006, *Dawn* website, 18 February <http://www.dawn.com/2006/02/18/nat41.htm> – Accessed 7 June 2006 – Attachment 26).

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Provincial Assembly of Punjab (Lahore, Pakistan) website <http://www.pap.gov.pk/>

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#### **Non-Government Organisations**

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) website <http://www.hrcp-web.org>

Human Rights watch (HRW) <http://www.hrw.org>

International Crisis Group (ICG) website <http://www.crisisgroup.org>

International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) website <http://www.fidh.org>

## International News & Politics

The Daily Times (Pakistan) website <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk>

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The Jang Group website <http://www.jang.com.pk/>

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South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) website <http://www.satp.org/>

## Region Specific Links

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) website <http://www.ppp.org.pk/>

Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N) website <http://www.pmln.org.pk>

## Databases:

|             |                |   |
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| DIMA        | <i>BACIS</i>   | Country Information   |
|             | <i>REFINFO</i> | IRBDC Research Responses (Canada)   |
| RRT         | <i>ISYS</i>    | RRT Country Research database, including<br>Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch,<br>US Department of State <i>Country Reports on Human<br/>Rights Practices</i> . |
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