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### Issue Paper

### PAKISTAN

## CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS March 1995 to October 1997 November 1997

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### GLOSSARY

AKPP

Azad Kashmir People's Party

BLLF

Bonded Labour Liberation Front

CEDAW

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

CDNS

Council for Defence and National Security

FATA

Federally Administered Tribal Areas

*haris*

bonded farm labourers

JI

Jamaat i Islami

JKNSF

Jammu and Kashmir National Students' Federation

JSTPP

Jeay Sindh Tarraqi Passand Party

KESC

Karachi Electric Supply Corporation

LoC

Line of Control between Azad Kashmir in Pakistan and Jammu and Kashmir in India

Madrassah

Islamic religious school

MC

Muslim Conference

MQM(A)

Mohajir Qaumi Movement-Ataf Hussain. In July 1997 the MQM(A) changed its name to Motahidda Qaumi Movement

MQM(H)

Mohajir Qaumi Movement-Haqiqi

MYC

Milli Yakjehti Council

NWFP

North West Frontier Province

PML(N)

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Sharif

PPP

Pakistan People's Party-Benazir Bhutto

PPP(SB)

Pakistan People's Party-Shaheed Bhutto

SCBA

Supreme Court Bar Association

SMP

Sipah i Mohammad Pakistan (Shi'i)

SSP

Sipah i Sahaba Pakistan (Sunni)

STA

Special Anti Terrorist Court

TJP

Tehrik i Jafaria (Shi'i)

*ulemas*

religious scholars

*wali*

guardian

## **INTRODUCTION**

As detailed in the following chronology, 1995-97 proved to be a period of violence, uncertainty and political re-organization for Pakistan. In November 1996 the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was dismissed by President Farooq Leghari on allegations of corruption, interfering with the judiciary, and human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings in Karachi. Provincial governments were also dismissed. February 1997 elections resulted in a landslide victory for Mian Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML), and a power sharing arrangement for Altaf Hussain's Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM(A)) in Sindh province. Yet the ethnic and sectarian violence that marked Pakistan in 1995 and 1996 continued through the summer of 1997, with numerous attacks between rival MQM factions and between rival Shi'i and Sunni Muslim militant groups. In August 1997 the Sharif government passed the Anti Terrorism Act, giving extra powers to security forces and providing for the establishment of special courts to quickly try suspected terrorists. Other issues included the ongoing constitutional battle and power struggle between the Supreme Court and the executive, and the rights of women, religious minorities, and bonded and child labourers.

This chronology succeeds the DIRB's June 1995 Question and Answer Series chronology *Pakistan: Chronology of Events January 1994 to February 1995*. In addition, the DIRB has produced the following Question and Answer Series papers: *Pakistan: Azad Kashmir and the Northern Areas* (August 1997), *Pakistan: Update on the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) in Karachi* (June 1997), and *Pakistan: The Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) in Karachi, January 1995 April 1996* (November 1996).

## CHRONOLOGY

### 1995

#### 7 March

In Karachi, Sindh province, two US consular officials, communications technician Gary Durell and secretary Jackie Van Landingham, are killed in their car by unidentified gunmen (AFP 8 Mar. 1995; Reuters 10 Mar. 1995; *ibid.* 7 Mar. 1995; *Europa* 1996, 2461). Mark McCloy, a mailroom worker, is wounded in the attack (*ibid.*). On 5 April a suspect in the case, apparently from the Mohajir Qaumi Movement — Haqiqi (MQM(H)), is killed by unknown attackers, and on 17 April another suspect is killed while fleeing police (*Keesing's* Apr. 1995b, 40505; DPA 17 Apr. 1995).

#### 15 March

In Karachi, Murtaza Bhutto, the estranged brother of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, launches the Shaheed ("martyr") Bhutto faction of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP(SB)) in opposition to his sister's PPP national government (*Keesing's* Mar. 1995; AFP 15 Mar. 1995; AP 15 Mar. 1995; Reuters 15 Mar. 1995).

#### 9 April

In Shabqadar, North West Frontier Province (NWFP), Dr. Rashid Ahmad is stoned to death by a mob during a court hearing and his son in law, Riaz Khan, is seriously injured for allegedly trying to convert another man, Daulat Khan, to the Ahmadi sect (Reuters 9 Apr. 1995; AI 18 Apr. 1995; AP 10 Apr. 1995). According to Human Rights Watch, no one is arrested in the case (1996, 168).

#### 16 April

In Muridkee village near Lahore, Punjab, internationally known child labour activist Iqbal Masih is

murdered (AFP 27 Apr. 1995; *Le Monde* 21 Aug. 1995; Reuters 26 May 1995). According to the Bonded Labour Liberation Front (BLLF), Masih was killed because of his activities against bonded labour in the carpet industry, but police and relatives state that he was killed by a villager as a result of a minor dispute, a finding later supported by an independent Human Rights Commission of Pakistan investigation (ibid.). Shortly after Masih's death, international carpet importers cancel millions of dollars worth of orders for Pakistani carpets (*Keesing's* Apr. 1995a, 40505). Amnesty International reports in June 1997 that to that date no one has been charged in the murder and that a special inquiry's recommendation to re open the police investigation has not been acted upon (June 1997). (See also the entries for 5 June 1995 and 16 Jan. 1996)

### **22 May**

In Karachi, armed gangs attack a police armoured personnel carrier with rocket propelled grenades and armour piercing bullets (AFP 22 May 1995). The attack coincides with a day of mourning called by the MQM to protest alleged police killings of five of its members, but the MQM denies involvement (ibid.). From 17 22 May the death toll due to political violence reaches 45 as militants, whom security forces believe to be controlled by the MQM, torch cars and shoot indiscriminately, disrupting many functions in the city (ibid.; AP 22 May 1995; DPA 22 May 1995).

### **28 May**

After a series of strikes and demonstrations protesting proposed changes aimed at eliminating possible abuses of the blasphemy law (section 295 C of the Pakistan Criminal Code), Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto announces there will be no changes to the law (AI Feb. 1996a; *Country Reports 1996 1997*, 1474; AFP 27 May 1995). However, new administrative procedures require that magistrates investigate blasphemy allegations for credibility before charges are allowed to be brought (ibid.). The number of blasphemy charges reportedly drops as a result of the changes (*Country Reports 1996 1997*, 1465, 1474).

### **29 May**

The Pakistan government bans 40 Sunni religious scholars (*ulemas*) from entering Sindh province for three months to avoid sectarian strife during Shi'i religious ceremonies associated with Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar (AFP 29 May 1995; *Keesing's* May 1995, 40548).

### **5 June**

In Lahore, journalist Zafaryab Ahmad is arrested and later charged with sedition for his reporting on the murder of child labour activist Iqbal Masih and for his related activities with the BLLF (UPI 5 June 1995; IFEX 25 Sept. 1995; *Country Reports 1996 1997*, 1473). By the end of 1996, he was free on bail but his case was still pending in the courts (ibid.). (See also the entries for 16 Apr. 1995, 16 Jan. 1996 and 2 Aug. 1996)

### **21 June**

In the tribal area of Malakand, NWFP, some 70 women defy a tribal ban and participate in a protest aimed at bringing Shari'a or Islamic law to the area (UPI 21 June 1995). According to UPI, in 1994 the government had agreed to set up Shari'a courts in this heavily armed zone on the border with Afghanistan. However, protests continued that Shari'a was not being actively enforced (ibid.).

### **23-25 June**

In Karachi as many as 80 people are killed and hundreds wounded as armed youths from the Mohajir Qaumi Movement—Altaf Hussain (MQM(A)) storm many neighbourhoods and attack police stations, trains, government buildings and vehicles, and MQM(H) rivals (*India Today* 15 July 1995; AFP 25 June 1995). The violence centres around the killing of S.M. Tariq, central finance secretary of the MQM(A), and the alleged rape by local PPP members of Farzana Sultan, the sister of an MQM(A) member (UPI 23 June 1995; AFP 25 June 1995; Radio Pakistan Network 25 June 1995).

### **29 June**

Six evening newspapers are banned in Karachi under the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance for allegedly publicizing sensationalist stories about the violence in Karachi (VOA 29 June 1995; AI Feb. 1996b). After protests by journalists the ban is lifted on 5 July 1995 (Radio Pakistan 5 July 1995). (See also entries for 19 23 Dec. 1995 and 15 Sept. 1997)

### **12 July**

Militants from warring Burhankhel and Mughalkhel tribes clash in Shabqadar, near Peshawar, NWFP, in a battle featuring the use of rockets and mortars: 13 are killed and over 45 injured (Xinhua 13 July 1995). The long standing feud concerns land around Shabqadar (ibid.).

### **24 July**

Interior Minister Nasirullah Babar announces that in June security forces killed 50 MQM(A) members and arrested 100 others, bringing the year's total so far to over 1,000 people killed in political violence in Karachi (Xinhua 24 July 1995; see also Radio Pakistan Network 22 July 1995).

### **12 August**

In Bara, near Peshawar, 12 people, including five paramilitary soldiers, are killed in fighting with Pathan tribes protesting government attempts to restrict smuggling across the Afghan border (*The Bangladesh Observer* 13 Aug. 1995, 1; *Current History* Apr. 1996, 160; Radio Pakistan Network 12 Aug. 1995).

### **31 August**

The Ministry for Women's Development releases a report describing widespread discrimination against women in Pakistan; the major issues identified include low female literacy, high rates of domestic violence and sexual harassment, lack of legal recourse for rape victims, victimization of women in police custody, and suspiciously numerous incidents of kitchen fires, in which women are suspected to have been set on fire by their in laws or husbands (UPI 31 Aug. 1995).

### **26 September**

At least 36 army officers are arrested on suspicion of plotting to overthrow the government and impose strict Islamic law (*Keesing's* Oct. 1995a, 40776; *Europa* 1996, 2461; Reuters 15 Oct. 1995; *The Herald* Nov. 1995, 24 28, 31 33). The officers had apparently been caught with a large shipment of arms bound for Kashmir (ibid.). After several months of in camera proceedings, on 30 October 1996 four senior officers are found guilty, dismissed from the military and sentenced to imprisonment of between two and 14 years (Pakistan TV 30 Oct. 1996; Reuters 30 Oct. 1996). Others arrested at the outset are quietly dismissed from the military without apparently suffering other punishment (*International Herald Tribune* 3 Apr. 1996; DPA 16 Jan. 1996).

**9 October**

In Karachi unknown attackers fire six rocket propelled grenades at the New Sindh Secretariat building, smashing windows and damaging the building, but without apparently injuring anyone (Radio Pakistan Network 9 Oct. 1995; Xinhua 23 Oct. 1995). On 23 October in a similar attack four men armed with AK 47s and pistols open fire on the office of *The News*, again without injuring anyone but causing fear and panic (Xinhua 23 Oct. 1995).

**12 October**

The MQM shuts down much of Karachi with a general strike to protest violence against Mohajirs (AFP 12 Oct. 1995). AFP reports that the MQM has called more than 20 strikes in Karachi to date in 1995, and the city's death toll in political violence for the year tops 1,500 (ibid.).

**15 October**

In Karachi, unknown gunmen, whom police suspect belong to the MQM, kill five members of a senior police officer's family in an on going campaign to target police and their relatives (AFP 15 Oct. 1995; *FEER* 19 Oct. 1995). To date in 1995 as many as 150 police officers have been killed in Karachi in political violence (ibid.). On 21 October Sindh Chief Minister Syed Abdullah distributes compensation cheques of 200,000 rupees (\$US6,250) to families of police officers killed in political violence, as well as to 11 other civilians who had been injured by militants (Xinhua 21 Oct. 1995).

**12 November**

In Lahore a Christian man, Mukhtar Masih, dies in police custody (AP 18 Nov. 1995; Reuters 15 Nov. 1995). Police claim he suffered a heart attack, but Christian groups maintain he was tortured to death (ibid.). Masih had been accused of blasphemy (ibid.).

**16 November**

In Islamabad a car bomb explodes at the Egyptian embassy, killing 16 people and wounding about 60 others (*Europa* 1996, 2461; AFP 19 Nov. 1995; *Al-Musawwar* 29 Mar. 1996). Later 16 Arabs are arrested in connection with the attack, but all are reportedly released on 29 March 1996 (ibid.; *Europa* 1996, 2461).

**9 December**

In Karachi, Nasir and Arif Hussain, brother and nephew respectively of MQM(A) leader Altaf Hussain, are killed, spurring an increase in violence in the city. The MQM(A) suspect security forces but the accusation is denied (Xinhua 10 Dec. 1995; *Europa* 1996, 2461; *India Abroad* 15 Dec. 1995). Sources estimate between 1,800 and 2,000 people were killed in political, ethnic and sectarian violence in Karachi in 1995 (*Country Reports* 1995 1996, 1335; HRW Dec. 1996, 176; Reuters 26 Sept. 1996; UPI 12 Oct. 1996).

**19-23 December**

A series of attacks on the Sindhi language newspaper *Kawish* in Karachi, Larkana, Sukkur, and Hyderabad results in the ransacking of three *Kawish* offices, the burning of the paper in several locations and threats against newspaper staff. The attacks, thought to be carried out by Sindhi nationalist Jeay Sindh Tarraqi Passand Party (JSTPP) supporters, follow reports in the paper accusing the JSTPP of extortion (IFEX 4 Jan. 1996). (See also entries for 29 June 1995 and 15 Sept. 1997)

**21 December**

In Peshawar a car bomb in a busy commercial centre destroys six buildings, kills at least 60 people and injures more than 200 (*Libération* 23 24 Dec. 1995; AFP 22 Dec. 1995). Among the dead are family members and staff of the provincial Governor Khurshid Ali Khan and Transport Minister Ataullah Jan (*ibid.*). Pakistani government sources reportedly blame Afghanistan for the attack, and on 26 December senior Afghan diplomat Musa Khan is expelled from Pakistan for "activities incompatible with his status" (AFP 26 Dec. 1995; *The Nation* 25 Dec. 1995).

## **1996**

### **2 January**

The UN Special Rapporteur reports that "allegedly, 2,432 Ahmadis have been charged in 654 blasphemy cases. Over 500 of those cases, registered under section 295 C [of the Pakistan Penal Code], are reportedly still pending" (UN 2 Jan. 1996).

### **15 January**

In Karachi four people, including one police officer, are killed in different incidents, bringing the death toll in the city for the first half of the month to 66 (AFP 15 Jan. 1996).

### **16 January**

Ashique Siddiqui, secretary to the newly created Human Rights Ministry, announces a media campaign to educate people about their rights and a programme for parents to draw funds to allow their working children four hours of education each day (Reuters 16 Jan. 1996; see also *Keesing's* Oct. 1995b, 40776). According to Siddiqui almost half of Pakistan's 38 million children between five and 14 do not attend school (*ibid.*). (See also the entries for 16 Apr. 1995, 5 June 1995 and 2 Aug. 1996)

### **18-19 January**

In Lahore two bombs on successive days destroy a college library and a pharmacy, injuring at least 28 people and burning an estimated 50,000 books (AFP 18 Jan. 1996a; *ibid.* 18 Jan. 1996b; Radio Pakistan Network 19 Jan. 1996; PTV 18 Jan. 1996).

### **21 January**

The MQM(A) shuts down Karachi with a strike following the deaths of five party members and seven others at the hands of police (AFP 21 Jan. 1996; Radio Pakistan Network 21 Jan. 1996; PTV 20 Jan. 1996). The Karachi death toll for January rises to 83 (AFP 21 Jan. 1996).

### **11 February**

In Muzaffarabad, Azad Kashmir, 30 people are injured when police baton charge a student rally commemorating the death of Kashmiri nationalist Maqbool Butt, who was hanged in India in 1984 (AFP 11 Feb. 1996). Also, in Garhi Dupatta, near Muzaffarabad, another 10 students belonging to the Jammu and Kashmir National Students' Federation (JKNSF) are injured in a clash with rival students (*ibid.*).

### **11 March**

In a night raid in Karachi, security forces kill MQM(A) activists Naeem Sherri and Amjab Beg in what police describe as an encounter, but which other witnesses claim to be extrajudicial killings (*Manchester Guardian Weekly* 17 Mar. 1996; *Country Reports 1995 1996*, 1466; Reuters 11 Mar. 1996; HRW Dec. 1996, 176).

**12 March**

Pakistan accedes to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), although with the reservation that accession is "subject to the provisions of the Constitution" (AI 1997, 248; *ibid.* June 1997; HRC 1996, 121; HRW Dec. 1996, 176). In June 1997 Amnesty International reports no progress in ensuring equality for women or protection from discriminatory laws (AI June 1997).

**19 March**

Police raid two *madrassahs* (religious schools) in Multan, Punjab, and free 64 children found in chains or ropes (*The Herald* Apr. 1996; AI June 1997; *Libération* 21 March 1996). Two school officials, Hafiz Ameer Ahmad and Hafiz Tanveer Ali, are arrested then quickly released on bail (*ibid.*). According to *The Herald*, many of the parents supported the use of chains, and one of the schools at least was operating as an "informal psychiatric facility for children with delinquent tendencies" (Apr. 1996).

**20 March**

The Supreme Court, limiting the powers of the government to control the judiciary, rules that appointments to the higher courts can only be made with the agreement of the chief justices of the Supreme Court and the high courts, and denies the government the power to transfer judges at will (*FEER* 18 Apr. 1996, 27; Radio Pakistan Network 20 Mar. 1996a; Radio Pakistan Overseas Service 28 Mar. 1996). The ruling also puts an end to the government's practice of appointing temporary or acting judges and makes void earlier appointments made without consultation or by non permanent chief justices (*ibid.*). The PPP government initially refuses to implement the decision and, until its dismissal in November 1996, fails to fill high court judicial vacancies, causing a large backlog of cases AI 1997, 248; *ibid.* June 1997; *Europa* 1996, 2461; *Country Reports 1996 1997*, 1470; HRC 1996, 34 36; HRW Dec. 1996, 178).

**23 March**

The government adopts the Legal Reform Ordinance to formalize the separation of the judiciary and the executive (HRC 1996, 37; Radio Pakistan Network 20 Mar. 1996b). The ordinance places judicial magistrates under high court control while executive magistrates are placed under provincial control (*ibid.*). Most criminal cases are transferred to judicial magistrates, although some categories of cases such as local laws will be heard by executive magistrates (*ibid.*). The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan contends that civil judges are already overburdened and that separation of the judiciary and executive remains incomplete (1996, 37).

**April**

The Abolition of the Punishment of Whipping Act receives presidential assent. The Act abolishes the use of whipping as a legal punishment except when provided for as *hadd*, which the Act defines as "the punishment of crimes laid down in the Holy Quran and Sunnah" (HRC 1996, 30; UN 15 Oct. 1996).

**14 April**

In Lahore a bomb explodes in the country's only cancer hospital, killing at least six and injuring over 30 (*The Ottawa Citizen* 15 Apr. 1996; *India Today* 15 May 1996; AFP 16 Apr. 1996). The Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Centre had been opened by Imran Khan, a former cricket star who on 16 April announces plans to launch a new political movement in opposition to Benazir Bhutto (*ibid.*). The attack is one of a series of bomb blasts in Punjab in April and May, with other targets including another hospital, a police station and two buses: in total an estimated 75

people are killed and over a hundred are injured (*Europa* 1996, 2461; AFP 9 May 1996; *ibid.* 8 May 1996; *ibid.* 28 Apr. 1996; *The News* 13 May 1996; *The Herald* May 1996).

## **2 June**

Transparency International, a German based group which monitors international corruption levels, releases a report ranking Pakistan as second most corrupt worldwide (to Nigeria) according to the impressions of international business people (TI 31 July 1997; *ibid.* 2 June 1996; *The Economist* 8 Feb. 1997; DWS 24 Mar. 1997). The report is widely discussed and publicized in Pakistan (*ibid.*).

## **22 June**

In Gilgit in the Northern areas, paramilitary troops fire on demonstrators demanding elections and protesting domination by Pakistan. At least one person is killed and over a dozen are injured (AI 28 June 1996; *Dawn* 24 June 1996; *India Abroad* 5 July 1996; PTI 25 June 1996). A curfew is imposed and several people arrested, including Maj. (ret.) Hussain Shah, leader of the United National Party in Gilgit and Baltistan (*ibid.*).

## **24 June**

In Rawalpindi, Punjab, police open fire on Jamaat i Islami (JI) members marching to Islamabad in an anti government protest (*Dawn* 25 June 1996; Radio Pakistan Network 24 June 1996). Two people are killed and 80 wounded, including several police (*ibid.*). According to government reports, nearly one third of the protesters were armed (*ibid.*).

## **30 June**

The Azad Kashmir People's Party (AKPP) and allies win the majority of seats in Azad Kashmir assembly elections (AI 1997, 248; *ibid.* 28 June 1996; All India Radio 2 July 1996; *Country Reports 1996 1997*, 1476; *India Abroad* 28 June 1996). The elections had featured the disqualification of 36 Kashmir National Alliance candidates who had refused to sign a statement agreeing to the eventual accession of Azad Kashmir to Pakistan (*ibid.*). As well, opposition leaders charged that the removal of identity card requirements resulted in massive vote rigging, and claimed that hundreds of people protesting the exclusion of the Kashmir National Alliance candidates had been arrested (*ibid.*).

## **14 July**

In central Karachi police crack down on MQM Haqiqi members, closing down a reception camp and, according to the MQM(H), arresting 125 supporters in the previous few days (*Dawn* 15 July 1996). In reaction, MQM(H) supporters riot in the streets (*ibid.*).

## **20-21 July**

In Lahore, Karachi and other cities opposition parties including the PML(N), JI, TJP and others join forces to protest government policies through strikes and marches (*Dawn* 21 July 1996; AFP 21 July 1996).

## **21 July**

The Lahore High Court declares banking tribunals and the Special Courts for Suppression of Terrorist Activities to be unconstitutional (*Country Reports 1996 1997*, 1471; *Asia Times* 23 July 1996). According to the high court, the government had been appointing unqualified judges to the tribunals and special courts, which according to critics had been used to target opposition leaders (*ibid.*). However on 25 July 1996 the Supreme Court suspends the Lahore High Court

ruling (Xinhua 25 July 1996).

## **22 July**

A bomb blast at Lahore's airport kills four people and injures nearly 60 (*Dawn* 24 July 1996a; *ibid.* 24 July 1996b; *ibid.* 23 July 1996a; *ibid.* 23 July 1996b; PTV 23 July 1996; AFP 22 July 1996). Also in Punjab province, in Sarghoda, a bomb injures 10 in the city's trading district (*ibid.*). President Leghari blames "a foreign hand," implying that India is behind these and other recent bombings (*ibid.*).

## **24 July**

The Karachi daily *Dawn* publishes an article by Mohammad Hussain Khan exposing widespread use of solitary confinement, handcuffs and bar fetters on prisoners in the Hyderabad Central Jail (AI Oct. 1996; *Country Reports 1996 1997*, 1467; UN 15 Oct. 1996, 1). In the coming weeks a number of other papers publish similar exposés, and Khan is charged with public mischief, dishonesty and forgery (*ibid.*). However, subsequent investigations expose widespread abuses in Pakistani prisons (*The Herald* Sept. 1996a; *ibid.* Sept. 1996b; *ibid.* Sept. 1996c; *ibid.* Sept. 1996d; UN 15 Oct. 1996, 1).

## **2 August**

Following international pressure to halt the practice of child labour, the government announces that contractors supplying children for workshops and small industries will be arrested, and that it has already set up committees across the country to address the problem (IPS 2 Aug. 1996; see also HRCP 1996, 147). Child labour activists, however, criticize the effort for not tackling the overriding problem of family poverty (*ibid.*). (See also the entries for 16 Apr. 1996, 5 June 1995 and 16 Jan. 1996)

## **18 August**

Shi'is are attacked near Mailsi, Punjab, by Sunni Sipah i Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) gunmen: fifteen Shi'is and three of the Sunni attackers are killed, with many more injured (UPI 18 Aug. 1996; Reuters 18 Aug. 1996). The attack comes in retaliation for a 14 August attack on an SSP independence day procession in Karachi which left 12 dead and 11 wounded (*ibid.*). Earlier, on 5 August, SSP attackers killed Syed Tajjamal Abbas, the Shi'i police commissioner of Sarghoda division, Punjab (*The Herald* Sept. 1996e; *ibid.* Oct. 1996c; UPI 18 Aug. 1996; Reuters 18 Aug. 1996).

## **28 August**

Sindh chief minister Abdullah Shah reports in the provincial assembly that 354 people had been killed in Sindh in the last two years in "*karo kari*" or "honour killings": the murder of a relative by male members of the family on suspicion of infidelity or marriage against family wishes (DPA 28 Aug. 1996; HRCP 1996, 127). In many tribal areas, reports Human Rights Watch, "according to tribal custom, any man who suspects a female relative of sexual relations with a man to whom she is not married is obligated to kill both individuals immediately to preserve his family's honor" (HRW Dec. 1996, 177 78). According to AFP, "The system also allows for an accused adulterer to pay compensation to his lover's family, usually after the woman has already been killed by her relatives. Often, the compensation offered is another woman" (12 Apr. 1996).

## **3 September**

In Rabwah, Punjab, a bomb at an Ahmadi place of worship wounds at least 13 of the 30 people gathered for evening prayers (Reuters 3 Sept. 1996).

**10 September**

In the northwestern Kurram Agency, border area clashes between rival Sunni and Shi'i groups result in large numbers of casualties: 97 dead and 89 wounded according to government figures, as many as 200 dead according to local newspaper reports (Reuters 18 Jan. 1997; AFP 16 Sept. 1996; HRCP 1996, 85).

**20 September**

Police shoot and kill Murtaza Bhutto, brother of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, and seven of his supporters while attempting to arrest some of the supporters in front of Murtaza Bhutto's residence in Karachi (*Country Reports 1996 1997*, 1466; *The Herald* Oct. 1996a, 24; *The Toronto Star* 22 Sept. 1996). (See also the entries for 28 Sept. 1996 and 24 Oct. 1996)

**23 September**

At least 20 people, mostly children, are killed and many more wounded when gunmen attack a Sunni mosque in Multan, Punjab (Reuters 18 Jan. 1997; *Country Reports 1996 1997*, 1475; *The Herald* Oct. 1996c). Sectarian violence between rival Shi'i and Sunni groups claims more than 150 lives in August and September (*ibid.*).

**25 September**

Justice Abdul Hafeez Cheema of the Lahore High Court of Pakistan rules in two cases that marriage cannot be contracted without the consent of a "wali" or male guardian (IPS 16 Oct. 1996; AFP 29 Sept. 1996; HRCP 1996, 44 45). The ruling appears to go against Pakistani marriage laws, which state that only the consent of the bride and bridegroom are needed (*ibid.*).

**28 September**

In Karachi police officer Haq Nawaz Sial, a key witness to the killing of Murtaza Bhutto, is found dead at home, apparently a victim of his own gun (Reuters 29 Sept. 1996; *The Herald* Oct. 1996b; AP 24 Oct. 1996). Karachi police call the killing a suicide, but launch a murder investigation at the request of Sial's family (*ibid.*). No one is arrested (*ibid.*).

**3 October**

In a village near Khairpur, Sindh province, an attack by Ujjan tribesmen kills 10 Jatoti tribe members (Reuters 3 Oct. 1996). According to Reuters, inter tribal clashes have killed over 100 people in the area over the last three years (*ibid.*).

**12 October**

Deaths from political, ethnic and sectarian violence in Karachi are estimated at 374 for 1996 to date, down from some 2,000 in 1995 (UPI 12 Oct. 1996).

**24 October**

In Karachi, upon the recommendation of an independent inquiry, eleven policemen are charged with the murder of Murtaza Bhutto and seven of his supporters (*Libération* 25 Oct. 1996; Reuters 24 Oct. 1996; AP 24 Oct. 1996). (See also the entries for 19 Dec. 1996 and 8 June 1997)

**27-28 October**

Anti government protests and strikes organized by a coalition of opposition groups led by the PML(N) and the JI result in violent clashes between police and protesters in Lahore, Rawalpindi and Islamabad (*Libération* 28 October 1996, 7; *ibid.* 26 27 Oct. 1996, 4; *Keesing's* Oct. 1996,

41323; AFP 27 Oct. 1996).

### **5 November**

President Farooq Leghari dismisses the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) government of Benazir Bhutto, citing corruption, interfering with the judiciary, and widespread human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings in Karachi, as the main reasons (AI 1997, 248; *ibid.* 5 Nov. 1996; *Country Reports 1996 1997*, 1465; Asian Survey Feb. 1997, 120 121; *Keesing's* Nov. 1996, 41365; DWS 5 Feb. 1997). In the following weeks the provincial assemblies are also dismissed and a caretaker government is formed with the promise of February 1997 elections (*ibid.*). (See also the entry for 30 Jan. 1997)

### **18 November**

A new anti corruption law comes into effect offering offenders a one time amnesty if they fully confess and return any money gained through corruption (*The Bangladesh Observer* 19 Nov. 1996).

### **24 November**

Approximately 35 armed Jatoti tribesmen attack an Ujjan village near Khairpur, Sindh province, burning the village to the ground and killing 11 (AFP 24 Nov. 1996). In October 25 people were killed in inter tribal fighting in the region (*ibid.*).

### **13 December**

In Karachi hundreds of demonstrators from Sunni Tehrik battle police to protest the appointment of Kanwar Idris, a Qadiani Ahmadi, to the Sindh cabinet (AFP 13 Dec. 1996; *The News* 1 Dec. 1996; see also *The Nation* 20 Nov. 1996). Eight people are injured and seven Sunni Tehrik activists are arrested (*ibid.*). A 1 December strike called by the Sunni Tehrik over the same issue also turned violent and resulted in seven vehicles being set on fire (*ibid.*).

### **19 December**

Asif Ali Zardari, husband of ousted Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, is charged with the murder of Murtaza Bhutto (*Keesing's* Dec. 1996, 41411). (See also the entry for 5 July 1997)

## **1997**

### **2 January**

In Khyber Agency, part of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), elders of the banned Tanzeem Ittehadul *Ulema*, Bara announce their opposition to voting by women, stating that it is not only against tribal customs and traditions but also against Islam (*The Nation* 2 Jan. 1997; *The Frontier Post* 4 Feb. 1997). The elders threaten to burn the houses of women registering to vote and to impose fines on men who help women vote (*ibid.*). The adult franchise for men and women in the FATA was introduced by the caretaker national government for the upcoming elections (*The Frontier Post* 14 Dec. 1996). (See also the entry for 3 Feb. 1997)

### **6 January**

The caretaker federal government of Malik Meraj Khalid announces the creation of the Council for Defence and National Security (CDNS) to advise the government on national security issues (*Keesing's* Jan. 1997a, 41447 48; DWS 10 Jan. 1997). The CDNS is to be made up of the president, prime minister, ministers of defence, foreign affairs, and the interior, an adviser to the prime minister on finance, the army, navy and air force chiefs of staff, and the chairman of

the joint chiefs of staff committee (ibid.).

### **18 January**

In Lahore a bomb attack outside a court kills SSP leader Zia ur Rahman Faruqi and 18 others, including 13 police (Reuters 18 Jan. 1997; DWS 21 Jan. 1997; ibid. 19 Jan. 1997). SSP deputy leader Azim Tariq and as many as 100 others are wounded (ibid.). Later Mehram Ali, a member of a rival Shi'i group, confesses to having planted the bomb to try to assassinate Azam Tariq, and is found guilty and sentenced to death (DWS 21 Jan. 1997; *The News International* 15 Oct. 1997). On 19 January militant Sunnis, blaming majority Shi'i Iran for supporting Shi'i militants, set fire to an Iranian cultural centre in Lahore (Reuters 19 Jan. 1997). (See also the entries for 20 Feb. 1997 and 17 Sept. 1997)

### **20 January**

Three MQM(A) leaders, including Farooq Sattar, a former mayor of Karachi, are released from prison on parole in order to run in the upcoming elections (AFP 20 Jan. 1997). Also released are two MQM(A) senators, Nasreen Jalil and Aftab Sheikh (ibid.).

### **30 January**

Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's bid to legally block the upcoming general elections fails when the Supreme Court finds that there was enough evidence to support President Leghari's charges of governmental corruption, which the president cited when dismissing Bhutto's government in November 1996 (*The New York Times* 30 Jan. 1997; DWS 30 Jan. 1997; ibid. 5 Feb. 1997; *Keesing's* Jan. 1997, 41448). (See also the entry for 5 Nov. 1996)

### **3 February**

In national elections, Mian Nawaz Sharif sweeps into power as his Pakistan Muslim League (PML (N)) wins 134 of 204 contested seats<sup>[1]</sup> in the National Assembly (*The Herald* Mar. 1997a, 48b; IPU 1997; *Keesing's* Feb. 1997, 41498). The Pakistan People's Party of Benazir Bhutto (PPP) is reduced from 86 seats in 1993 to only 18 in 1997, while the MQM(A) of Altaf Hussain wins 12 seats (ibid.). Overall turnout is reported to be just under 36 percent (Radio Pakistan Network 11 Feb. 1997).

In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) voter turnout among females is extremely low, with no women voting in Khyber and Mohammand Agencies, and only one voting in Bajaur Agency despite 300 having registered at the latter. The low turnout is blamed on a ban against female voting imposed by tribal elders in Khyber Agency and traditional tribal customs against female participation in politics (*The Frontier Post* 4 Feb. 1997). (See also the entry for 2 Jan. 1997)

### **6 February**

In Khanewal, Punjab and the nearby village of Shantinagar, Muslim mobs burn down 12 Christian churches, injure 50 people and destroy more than 250 houses, 80 shops and a school after a rumour is broadcast on mosque loudspeakers that Christians had desecrated pages of the Qur'an (*The Times* 14 Feb. 1997; *Dawn* 12 Feb. 1997; AFP 8 Mar. 1997; AI June 1997). In June 1997 Amnesty International reports, "Police are believed to have instigated the incident with the help of Islamist groups in retaliation for the suspension of several police officers disciplined after desecrating the Bible during an earlier raid" (ibid.; see also DWS 7 Feb. 1997; AFP 13 Mar. 1997). (See also entries for 13 Feb. 1997 and 9 Aug. 1997)

### 13 February

In Karachi thousands of Christian demonstrators protesting the burning of churches in Khanewal clash with police (*The Times* 14 Feb. 1997; AFP 15 Feb. 1997; Radio Pakistan Network 13 Feb. 1997; *The Toronto Star* 14 Feb. 1997). About 200 are detained (*ibid.*). (See also the entry for 9 Aug. 1997)

### 20 February

In Sindh province, the PML(N) and the MQM(A) reach a power sharing agreement to allow the two parties to rule in the provincial assembly (*The Herald* Mar. 1997b, 42; *The News* 20 Feb. 1997; *ibid.* 11 Mar. 1997; Radio Pakistan Network 20 Feb. 1997; *Pakistan Observer* 13 Mar. 1997). Among other issues, the agreement negotiates the division of appointments and cabinet portfolios, and contains commitments to investigate and provide compensation for extrajudicial killings in Karachi and to release from prison MQM members held for political reasons (*ibid.*).

In Multan, Punjab an Iranian diplomat and seven Pakistani employees are shot and killed in an attack on an Iranian cultural centre (AFP 20 Feb. 1997; DPA 22 Feb. 1997; *The Herald* Mar. 1997c, 19 20). The Lashkar e Jhangvi, a breakaway faction of the SSP, claims responsibility (*ibid.*). (See also the entries for 18 Jan. 1997, 7 May 1997 and 17 Sept. 1997)

### 24 27 February

In separate incidents in Lahore, provincial secretary Usama Maud is killed, two SSP members are shot and killed at a mosque, and three people are killed in a bombing at the railway station (*Dawn* 26 Feb. 1997; DWS 28 Feb. 1997; Reuters 27 Feb. 1997; *The Herald* Mar. 1997c, 19 20). Police round up over 1500 Sunni SSP, Shi'i TJP and Shi'i Sipah i Mohammad Pakistan (SMP) activists throughout Punjab (*Dawn* 26 Feb. 1997).

### 6 March

Through an act of the Pakistan National Assembly the death penalty is extended to gang rape (AI June 1997; *ibid.* Sept. 1996, 2; *ibid.* Feb. 1996a; DWS 8 Mar. 1997; *ibid.* 7 Mar. 1997). According to Amnesty International, also punishable by the death penalty in Pakistan are "murder, blasphemy, zina<sup>[2]</sup> and rape, hijacking and harbouring a hijacker, dacoity (armed robbery), kidnapping a person under the age of 10 with intent to murder, waging war or abetting the waging of war against the state, drug trafficking, planning to or sabotaging the railway system and arms trading" (AI June 1997).

### 19 March

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif instructs the federal and provincial governments to assemble a list of corrupt officials—those who have charges pending, who appear to be living beyond their means, or who are generally known to be corrupt—and to forward evidence of their corruption by the end of April (*Dawn* 19 Mar. 1997).

### 5 April

President Leghari signs into law the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which had been passed unanimously by both the National Assembly and the Senate (DWS 5Apr. 1997, *ibid.* 2 Apr. 1997; VOA 1 Apr. 1997; Kyodo News 7 Apr. 1997; *The Hindu* 5 April 1997). The amendment repeals sections of the Eighth Amendment, taking away the power of the president to unilaterally dissolve the national and provincial assemblies (*ibid.*). As well, the new amendment requires the president to appoint provincial governors on the advice of the prime minister, rather than after merely consulting with the prime minister (*ibid.*).

**16 April**

The Supreme Court rules that Pakistan's ethnic and regional quota system for civil service appointments has lapsed and is thus no longer valid (DWS 17 Apr. 1997). In its ruling, the Supreme Court also finds the quota system discriminatory and thus unconstitutional and against Islamic law (*ibid.*). On 22 October 1997, Justice Ishanul Haq Chaudhry of the Lahore High Court prevents the Federal Public Service Commission from conducting Central Superior Services examinations (*Dawn* 23 Oct. 1997a). The order comes as a result of the case of Dr. Mohammad Umar Khan, who claims that despite the Supreme Court ruling the quota system is still being used by the civil service (*ibid.*).

**28 April**

Armed members of the Sindh nationalist Jeay Sindh Tehrik Party stage a commando raid on the Civic Hospital in Karachi to successfully free their leader Asghar Ali Shah (AFP 28 Apr. 1997; *The News* 7 May 1997a). Shah had been sentenced to death by a special anti terrorist court in 1996 and was in hospital for treatment for an unspecified illness (AFP 28 Apr. 1997). Two police are killed and three other people injured in the raid (*ibid.*).

**7 May**

In Gujranwala, Punjab, Senior Superintendent of Police Mohammad Ashraf Marth is shot and killed outside his residence by three gunmen on motorcycles. The attack also kills Marth's driver and wounds two bodyguards (*The Nation* 7 May 1997; *The News* 7 May 1997b; *Dawn* 8 May 1997; *ibid.* 7 May 1997a; *ibid.* 7 May 1997b). On the same day, SSP leader Maulana Azam Tariq, also a member of the provincial assembly, is arrested in Lahore in connection with the killings (*ibid.*). The Lashkar e Jhangvi later claims responsibility, apparently killing Marth in retaliation for arrests he had made of Lashkar members suspected in the 20 February 1997 bombing of an Iranian cultural centre in Multan (IPS 27 May 1997; see also Reuters 6 May 1997). (See entry for 20 Feb. 1997)

Governments in Sindh and NWFP ban several Sunni and Shi'i *Ulema* from entry for the next two to three months in an effort to avoid sectarian violence during Muharram (*The News* 7 May 1997c; *ibid.* 7 May 1997d). Reuters estimates that about 70 people have been killed in violence between Sunnis and Shi'is so far in 1997 (4 May 1997). (See also the entry for 29 May 1995)

*The News* reports that in Karachi so far in 1997 there have been at least 24 political killings, as well as over 80 other murders; many of the bodies have shown signs of torture (7 May 1997a). According to the report, of the political killings, 12 belong to the MQM(H), eight to the MQM(A), and one each to TJP, Tehrik i Insaaf, the PML(N), and the Pakhtoon Students Federation (*ibid.*).

**10 May**

Throughout Punjab province police make raids against the Sunni SSP, arresting 45 activists (*The News* 11 May 1997; *Dawn* 13 May 1997). The remaining SSP leadership complains that the SSP is being singled out for punishment (*ibid.*).

**5 June**

In Lahore, Lahore High Court advocate Ghulam Mustafa Jafri is killed by two unidentified gunmen in what is apparently a sectarian killing (*Dawn* 25 June 1997; *The News* 12 June 1997a). In reaction, lawyers stage protest strikes in Lahore and other cities and towns in Punjab

(ibid.).

### **8 June**

The Sindh government releases the report of a three member judicial tribunal investigating the 20 September 1996 deaths of Murtaza Bhutto and seven supporters (*Dawn* 9 June 1997a; *ibid.* 11 June 1997; *The News* 16 June 1997c). The tribunal calls the act an extrajudicial killing by police acting under the orders of an unknown higher authority (*ibid.*). (See also the entry for 5 July 1997)

### **18 June**

In Karachi police report 63 killings in political, sectarian or ethnic violence in the first two weeks of June, including six MQM(A) activists and four rival MQM(H) activists (*The News* 18 June 1997b; *ibid.* 16 June 1997a; *ibid.* 16 June 1997b; *ibid.* 12 June 1997b; *Dawn* 19 June 1997; *ibid.* 7 June). As a result of the violence MQM(A) leader Altaf Hussain orders the closure of all MQM(A) offices in Karachi, and an unofficial strike closes the city for three days (*Dawn* 18 June 1997; *The News* 18 June 1997a; *The Herald* July 1997, 26).

### **19 June**

In Vihari, Punjab, local Ahmadi leader Ateeq Ahmad Bajwah and his driver are shot and killed (AI 24 July 1997). Amnesty International reports on 24 July 1997 that to the best of its knowledge "the police have not investigated the killing and no one has yet been arrested" (*ibid.*). (See also the entry for 25 June 1997)

### **24 June**

In Lahore, among five people killed in sectarian violence is Rao Khalil Ahmad Khan, counsel to SSP leader Azam Tariq (*Dawn* 25 June 1997). Khan is shot and killed on his motorcycle (*ibid.*).

### **25 June**

In Pattoki, Punjab, two Ahmadis, Bashir ul Haq and his nephew Mobasher Javed, are arrested for displaying a Qur'anic saying in their shop and for preaching their faith (AI 24 July 1997; *ibid.* June 1997). They are granted bail on 4 July but have it revoked a week later after local protests (*ibid.*). According to Amnesty International charges are pending against more than 2,000 Ahmadis, with 119 facing blasphemy charges under section 295 C of the Pakistan Penal Code (*ibid.*). At the end of 1996 all but six of the Ahmadis charged with blasphemy were free on bail, but many Ahmadis had been charged in several different cases and thus had to spend a great deal of time travelling to and attending court (*ibid.*).

### **27 June**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif announces the creation of a judicial commission to investigate extrajudicial killings in Karachi (DWS 28 June 1997). The three member commission is headed by Supreme Court Justice Munawwar Ahmed Mirza, and also includes retired Supreme Court Justice Wali Mohammad and a retired High Court Justice, G.H. Malik (*ibid.*). *The Herald* reports in August 1997, however, that the commission has not yet begun functioning, apparently due to pressure from law enforcement agencies to not investigate extrajudicial killings (49).

In Muzaffarabad, Azad Kashmir, two people are killed and several others injured in violence between supporters of the opposition Muslim Conference (MC) and the ruling AKPP (*Dawn* 27 June 1997). The MC had staged a strike in protest of alleged election rigging of 12 seats reserved for Kashmiri refugees in the 30 June 1996 elections (*ibid.*).

**1 July**

In Shikarpur, Sindh province the Sindh Minister for Food, Maqbool Sheikh, makes an unplanned visit to a police station and frees eleven people held in unacknowledged detention (*Dawn* 2 July 1997). The prisoners were being kept in bar fetters (*ibid.*).

**2 July**

In Lahore, Qari Umar Hayat, an Imam and activist with the SSP, is shot and killed by two motorcyclists (*Dawn* 3 July 1997a). In a continuing crackdown in the province police arrest some 42 rival TJP and 50 SSP activists in Lahore and over 200 SSP and TJP members in Gujranwala (*ibid.* 4 July 1997; *ibid.* 3 July 1997b).

**5 July**

In Karachi, Malik Shahid Hamid, managing director of the Karachi Electric Supply Corporation (KESC), is killed in an ambush along with his driver and his bodyguard (DWS 6 July 1997a; AFP 7 July 1997). In the following two weeks police round up some 2,000 people in a campaign to cut down on violent crime (AFP 19 July 1997; *The Herald* Aug. 1997a, 47 49).

In Karachi a sessions court indicts Asif Ali Zardari, the husband of PPP leader and former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, and 19 others, on conspiracy charges in the 20 September 1996 killing of Murtaza Bhutto and seven of his supporters (*India Abroad* 11 July 1997; DWS 6 July 1997b). Among those also indicted are the former Deputy Inspector General of Karachi Police Shoaib Suddle, the former Intelligence Bureau Chief Masood Sharif, and the former Senior Superintendent of Police Wajid Durrani (*ibid.*).

**14 July**

The federal government announces it will add 90 new Special Anti Terrorist Courts (STAs) in Punjab, Sindh and NWFP: 48 are to be added to the 15 currently operating in Punjab, 27 will be added to the 10 operating in Sindh, and 15 are to be established in NWFP (*The News* 14 July 1997).

**20 July**

The official death toll in Karachi from ethnic, political and factional violence to date in 1997 is 392, the same figure as it was for the same period in 1996 (*The Herald* Aug. 1997a, 48). According to *The Herald*, police have been unable to solve any major case of terrorism for the year (*ibid.*, 47).

**26 July**

The Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) changes its name to Motahidda Qaumi Movement (MQM) in an effort to broaden its base by opening the party to non Urdu speaking people (DPA 26 July 1997; *Washington Post* 27 July 1997).

Punjab chief minister Shahbaz Sharif announces the creation of a 500 member Elite Police Force in Punjab to fight terrorism and sectarianism in the province (DWS 26 July 1997; DPA 28 July 1997).

**5-9 August**

The Pakistan Law Commission releases a series of reports and studies on the criminal justice system and jail reforms (*Dawn* 5 Aug. 1997a; *ibid.* 9 Aug. 1997; *ibid.* 10 Aug. 1997b). The Law Commission reports that delays in trials can last for years<sup>[3]</sup> and as a result more than two

thirds of prisoners are awaiting trial, and that the system suffers from a chronic shortage of judges and staff who are given inadequate training, facilities and equipment (ibid. 5 Aug. 1997a). Among its recommendations the commission advises against the creation of special courts to speed up the process, noting that "Special courts created outside the regular judicial system are generally abhorred and detested by the people, and rightly so, as in the past, they were used as instruments of victimisation against opponents" (*Dawn* 5 Aug. 1997a). Pakistani jails in general house more than double the number of prisoners they were designed to hold (ibid. 9 Aug. 1997). The Law Commission also recommends that the government abolish the practice of punishing prisoners with bar fetters and whipping (ibid.).

### **5 August**

In Lahore Mian Arshad is gunned down, just one of thirteen sectarian related deaths in Punjab for the day (*Dawn* 5 Aug. 1997b; AFP 4 Aug. 1997). Arshad, a senior advocate of the Lahore High Court, had appeared as counsel for the Sunni militant group SSP. The sectarian related death toll in Punjab for 1997 to date: 149, with over 150 injured (*Dawn* 5 Aug. 1997b; *The Herald* Aug. 1997b, 36).

### **9 August**

The Punjab government asks the central government to send paramilitary Rangers to combat rising violence after 14 people are killed in two separate incidents of sectarian violence targeting TJP members (*Dawn* 10 Aug. 1997a).

Mohammad Akram Shaikh, president of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SBCA), reports that the federal government has paid out approximately US\$735,000 for repairs to damaged churches and buildings in Khanewal and Shantinagar, Punjab, and for compensation to victims of violence against Christians in the February 1997 disturbances (*Dawn* 10 Aug. 1997c). (See entries for 6 and 13 Feb. 1997).

### **16 August**

Sindh cabinet minister Maqbool Ahmed Shaikh, head of a committee looking into false charges against MQM members by the past government, announces that 800 cases of politically motivated charges "of a petty nature" against MQM members had been dropped, although serious charges such as murder and kidnapping would not be dismissed (*Dawn* 17 Aug. 1997b).

In Lahore, in anticipation of the passage of the Anti Terrorism Bill, Law Minister Raja Besharat announces that 14 courts for speedy trial will be added to the four already operating in the province, and that over 3,000 current cases pertaining to terrorism would be transferred to the new courts (*Dawn* 17 Aug. 1997a).

### **17 August**

President Farooq Leghari passes the Anti Terrorism Bill into law, giving members of the security forces special powers to fire upon any person committing or likely to commit a terrorist act, increased powers of arrest and search without warrant, and allowing as evidence confessions to police officers of deputy superintendent rank and above (*Dawn* 18 Aug. 1997; ibid. 14 Aug. 1997a; ibid. 14 Aug. 1997b; *The News* 14 Aug. 1997). Under the new law police in terrorism cases will be forced to complete their investigations within seven days, and special courts specifically created to try suspected terrorists must come to a verdict also within seven days (ibid.). The new law is widely criticized and is quickly challenged in three provincial high courts and the Supreme Court for allegedly violating fundamental rights guaranteed in the constitution

(IPS 12 Sept. 1997; *The Herald* Sept. 1997a, 35 38; *ibid.* Sept. 1997b, 24 27; *ibid.* September 1997c, 32 34; *Dawn* 4 Sept. 1997). As of 24 October 1997 several petitions against the Act remained in front of the High Courts and Supreme Court (*The News International* 24 Oct. 1997a; *ibid.* 23 Oct. 1997a; *ibid.* 12 Oct. 1997; *Dawn* 22 Oct. 1997b; *ibid.* 16 Oct. 1997; *ibid.* 12 Oct. 1997a).

### **20 August**

In the first case of its kind, Abdul Faheem Khan files charges against the Sindh police and claims damages of Rs.62.2 million (Cdn\$2.12 million) for falsifying charges against him and wrongfully confining him for 155 days (DWS 21 Aug. 1997). Two police inquiries had earlier found that Khan was wrongfully detained and charged after refusing to adequately bribe two Karachi police officers (*ibid.*).

### **21 August**

President Leghari issues a presidential order reducing the number of Supreme Court justices from 17 to 12 (*Dawn* 3 Sept. 1997; *ibid.* 22 Aug. 1997; *The News* 23 Aug. 1997). (See also the entry for 5 Sept. 1997)

In Peshawar Qazi Hussain Ahmed, head of the JI, is detained by police to prevent him from travelling to semi autonomous tribal areas of the northwest, where under the Frontier Crime Regulations political activity is banned (AFP 21 Aug. 1997). JI members stage violent demonstrations and Ahmed is released after 20 hours and returns to his hometown of Nowshera, 40 km south of Peshawar (*ibid.*).

### **22-25 August**

Indian and Pakistani troops exchange fire across the Line of Control between Pakistan held Azad Kashmir and Indian held Jammu and Kashmir (*Dawn* 28 Aug. 1997; *ibid.* 27 Aug. 1997; *The Times of India* 25 Aug. 1997). Indian army officials claim up to 70 Pakistani troops are killed along with three Indian soldiers, but Pakistani army officials deny the reports, claiming instead that five Pakistani civilians were killed in "unprovoked firing" by the Indian army (*ibid.*).

### **5 September**

Sajjad Ali Shah, chief justice of Pakistan, suspends the president's order to reduce the number of Supreme Court justices from 17 to 12 (DWS 6 Sept. 1997; *Dawn* 3 Sept. 1997). The interim order comes after a petition by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), which argues that cutting the number of Supreme Court judges would impair the fundamental right to timely justice (*ibid.*). (See also the entry for 21 Aug. 1997)

### **8 September**

Five hundred haris (bonded farm labourers) from rural Sindh march in Karachi to protest and publicize their plight: whole families working long hours in exploitative conditions to pay off debts owed to landowners, with defaulters often being held in the landowners' private jails (*Dawn* 9 Sept. 1997; AFP 8 Sept. 1997).

### **13 September**

In Faisalabad, Punjab, police arrest Malik Mohamed Ishaq, leader of the militant Sunni group Lashkar e Jhangvi (AFP 14 Sept. 1997; *ibid.* 18 Sept. 1997; *Dawn* 19 Sept. 1997). Ishaq had been wanted for months in connection with attacks on Shi'i leaders and the 7 May 1997 killing of Gujranwala, Punjab Senior Superintendent of Police Mohammad Ashraf Marth (AFP 14 Sept.

1997). (See also entry for 7 May 1997)

### **15 September**

In Karachi police baton charge a procession of 300 journalists protesting acts of allegedly politically motivated violence and obstructionism against several newspapers in the interior of Sindh province (*Dawn* 16 Sept. 1997). A number of journalists are injured in the incident and three supervising police officers are later suspended (*ibid.*). (See also entries for 29 June 1995 and 19 23 Dec. 1995)

### **17 September**

In Rawalpindi five Iranian aviation cadets training in Pakistan are ambushed in their car and killed along with their driver (*Dawn* 18 Sept. 1997; *ibid.* 19 Sept. 1997; AFP 18 Sept. 1997). The underground Sunni militant group Lashkar e Jhangvi claims responsibility, saying the attack is in retaliation for alleged Iranian support of Shi'i militant groups in Pakistan and demanding that authorities release Lashkar leader Malik Mohamed Ishaq (*Dawn* 19 Sept. 1997; AFP 18 Sept. 1997). On 18 October three men are arrested for the killings, with the investigation continuing (*The News International* 18 Oct. 1997; *Dawn* 20 Oct. 1997).

### **21 September**

The MQM(H) announces it will open an office in London (*Dawn* 22 Sept. 1997a). In reaction, the leader of the rival MQM(A) Altaf Hussain, who maintains an office in exile in London, declares that "death squads" associated with the MQM(H) and secret Pakistani government agencies have been sent to London to murder him (*Dawn* 23 Sept. 1997).

Tehmina Daultana, the State Minister for Women Development, Social Work and Special Education, announces plans to set up crisis centres for women throughout the country (*Dawn* 22 Sept. 1997b). The centres will provide advice and services in the fields of health, law, education, employment, rehabilitation and economics, and will work in conjunction with private sector and social work organizations (*ibid.*). Two pilot projects are to be started soon (*ibid.*).

### **1 October**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) announces the beginning of an 18-month programme in Sialkot to eliminate child labour from the soccer-ball stitching industry (*The News International* 19 Oct. 1997). With the backing of 28 leading soccer-ball exporters and such groups as World Federation of Sporting Goods Industry, UNICEF, Save the Children Fund (UK) and the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the programme is to include the building of stitching centres to improve working conditions and wages and to replace home-based work, and the provision of a social protection programme to provide alternative sources of income (*ibid.*).

### **8 October**

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright names the Kashmiri group Harakat ul-Ansar as a terrorist organization, making it illegal in the US to provide funds to the group and denying US visas to its representatives (US Department of State 8 Oct. 1997a; *ibid.* 8 Oct. 1997b; *ibid.* 8 Oct. 1997c). The announcement prompts strong protests from Harakat ul-Ansar, the Pakistan government and Kashmiri groups in Pakistan (*Dawn* 10 Oct. 1997b; *ibid.* 10 Oct. 1997c; *The News International* 11 Oct. 1997c). Harakat ul-Ansar is suspected of involvement in the 1994 kidnapping of five western tourists in Jammu and Kashmir (*The News International* 9 Oct. 1997a).

**10 October**

In Lahore, Arif Iqbal Husain Bhatti, a former high court judge and prominent PPP leader, is killed in his office by an unknown gunman (*Dawn* 11 Oct. 1997; *The News* 11 Oct. 1997a). Bhatti had been a member of the Lahore High Court bench that acquitted Christians Salamat and Rehmat Masih of blasphemy in a February 1995 case that received international attention (*ibid.*; *Dawn* 11 Oct. 1997). Many death threats had been sent to Bhatti since the decision (*Dawn* 11 Oct. 1997; *The News* 11 Oct. 1997a). On 13 October lawyers in Lahore stage a strike protesting the killing of Bhatti and 13 other lawyers in the past six months (*ibid.*). According to the lawyers' representatives, none of the cases have been solved to date (*ibid.* 14 Oct. 1997; *ibid.* 12 Oct. 1997b; *The News International* 11 Oct. 1997b).

**11 October**

Zohra Yusuf, secretary-general of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), gives details of four recent cases of death by torture in police custody in Sindh province (*Dawn* 12 Oct. 1997c; see also *The News International* 9 Oct. 1997b). The four include labour leader Rafique Khoso in Badin, Chanesar Palari and Finyas Masih in Hyderabad, and 80 year-old M. Khan Birhamani in Jhangar, District Dadu (*ibid.*). Upon orders by Sindh Chief Minister Liaquat Ali Jatui, the Dadu Senior Superintendent of Police suspends 15 police officers and 40 constables for the use of torture (*The News International* 11 Oct. 1997d).

**12 October**

In Karachi the Mohajir Qaumi Movement—Haqiqi (MQM(H)) announces that it is changing its name to Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) (*Dawn* 13 Oct. 1997; *The News* 13 Oct. 1997). MQM Chairman Afaq Ahmed also announces a party platform of defending Mohajir rights and establishing a separate urban assembly and province for Mohajirs in southern Sindh (*ibid.*; *Dawn* 13 Oct. 1997).

**19 October**

Justice (ret'd) Ghulam Mujaddid Mirza, Chief Ehtesab (accountability) Commissioner, reports that to date nearly Rs.400 million (Cdn\$13.6 million) has been recovered by provincial High Courts in corruption cases, Rs.367 million (Cdn\$12.5 million) from Sindh alone (*Dawn* 19 Oct. 1997). According to Mirza, the accountability process is proceeding with cases against allegedly corrupt officials from both the opposition and government parties (*ibid.*). On 10 October Abdul Tabir Ansari, Sindh zone chairman of the Human Rights Society of Pakistan, had issued a report claiming that the accountability process was being used to victimize opposition parties, particularly the PPP (*The News International* 10 Oct. 1997).

**20 October**

In Multan violence erupts between two rival Sunni factions following the torture and death of four students (*Dawn* 21 Oct. 1997a; *The News International* 21 Oct. 1997a). A curfew is imposed by the army and, by 25 October 1997, six people have been arrested in connection with the killings, including leaders of a local religious school (*Dawn* 23 Oct. 1997b; *The News International* 25 Oct. 1997c; *ibid.* 24 Oct. 1997d; *ibid.* 23 Oct. 1997c; *ibid.* 23 Oct. 1997d; *ibid.* 22 Oct. 1997a).

**21 October**

Six Supreme Court judges send a note to President Leghari challenging the legality of the appointment of Supreme Court Chief Justice Sajjad Ali Shah (*The News International* 21 Oct. 1997b; *ibid.* 22 Oct. 1997b; *Dawn* 21 Oct. 1997b). According to the six judges, Shah's

appointment had not followed the 20 March 1996 Supreme Court ruling outlining seniority of appointments (*ibid.*; *The News International* 21 Oct. 1997b; *ibid.* 22 Oct. 1997b). The six judges also complain that the Chief Justice is not consulting with the body of the Supreme Court on issues of Supreme Court policy (*ibid.*; 21 Oct. 1997b; *Dawn* 21 Oct. 1997b). At the same time the power struggle between the Prime Minister and the Supreme Court Chief Justice remains unresolved (*ibid.*; *The News International* 21 Oct. 1997b; *ibid.* 22 Oct. 1997b). On 24 October Chief Justice Shah presses Prime Minister Sharif to accept five nominations for the Supreme Court, while Sharif announces that Parliament will enact legislation to fix the number of Supreme Court judges (*The News International* 24 Oct. 1997b; *Dawn* 24 Oct. 1997a; *ibid.* 24 Oct. 1997b).

The Punjab government issues orders reportedly forcing female teachers and students to wear veils and banning cultural activities for females in schools and colleges (*Dawn* 24 Oct. 1997c). The Joint Action Committee for Women's Rights, an umbrella group of human rights organizations, denounces the order (*ibid.*).

## 24 October

In Azad Kashmir an estimated 50,000 people form a 56km human chain from Muzaffarabad to Chakothi to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of Azad Kashmir, to protest Indian "occupation" of Kashmir and to call for a resolution of the conflict in the region (*Dawn* 25 Oct. 1997a; *ibid.* 25 Oct. 1997b; *The News International* 25 Oct. 1997a). The event is organized by an all-party group called the Jammu and Kashmir Solidarity Forum and is marked by other rallies throughout Pakistan (*ibid.*; *Dawn* 25 Oct. 1997a; *ibid.* 25 Oct. 1997b). Cross-border firing between India and Pakistan accompanies the event as well, with two civilians killed in the Kotli and Rawalakot sectors (*The News International* 25 Oct. 1997b).

## NOTES

[1] *The National Assembly* has 217 members in total, with 13 seats reserved for women and minorities (*Keesing's* Feb. 1997, 41498). [\[back\]](#)

[2] According to Amnesty International, "The Zina Ordinance, promulgated in 1979 during President Zia ul Haq's Islamization drive, redefines sexual offences in Islamic terms and prescribes specific punishments in accordance with the evidence on which conviction is based" (AI June 1997). For more details please see the Amnesty International report, available at Regional Documentation Centres, and the DIRB's June 1994 Question and Answer Series paper *Women in Pakistan*. [\[back\]](#)

[3] According to the Law Commission nearly 160,000 cases are pending in the Supreme Court, four high courts and Federal Shariat Court, while the total number of cases pending the country is close to 750,000 (*Dawn* 10 Aug. 1997b). [\[back\]](#)

## NOTES ON SELECTED SOURCES

**Various Pakistani press sources, including Dawn Wire Service (DWS), Dawn, The Herald, The Nation, The News, The Frontier Post, Pakistan Observer, Radio Pakistan Network and PTV Television Network.**

This paper extensively cites various Pakistani press sources, many of them available through the Internet or through the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) operated by World News Connection (WNC). Some human rights groups have reported restrictions on freedom of the press in Pakistan, including increased government restrictions on reporting on ethnic and sectarian violence in urban areas such as Karachi during 1996 (AI Oct. 1996, 6; DWS 16 Mar. 1997). As well, this chronology outlines various problems that newspapers and journalists have encountered in reporting on sensitive issues (see for example the entries for 5 June 1995, 29

June 1995, 19 Dec. 1995, 24 July 1996, and 15 Sept. 1997). In general, however, the Pakistani English language press is considered free and lively, and a valuable source of commentary and information on political and social issues in Pakistan (Country Reports 1996 1997, 1472; *The World's News Media* 1991, 382). However, most broadcasting is controlled by the government in Pakistan, and sources warn that radio and television news broadcasts are strictly controlled (Country Reports 1996 1997, 1472; *The World's News Media* 1991, 382). The Herald, an independent monthly, often produces series of articles which can be consulted for in depth coverage of issues mentioned only briefly in this paper, such as the implications of the August 1997 Anti Terrorism Act (September 1997), the February 1997 national and state elections (March 1997), and the treatment of prisoners in Pakistan's prisons (September 1996).

### **Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP)**

The independent Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) produces a comprehensive annual report covering a wide range of human rights issues in Pakistan including law and order and the conduct of law enforcement agencies, legal recourse, freedom of religion, the rights of minorities, women and children, freedom of expression and issues surrounding forced labour (HRCP 1996). Besides monitoring and publicizing human rights issues, the HRCP is also engaged in legal advocacy (*ibid.*).

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