

Musharraf can never be a traitor: Army

ISPR says the ruling was received with a lot of pain and anguish by the rank and file of the military

MEHMAL SARFRAZ
LAHORE

The Pakistani military on Tuesday said former dictator Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who has been sentenced to death by a special court for high treason, “can surely never be a traitor”.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the armed forces, said in a statement that the decision by the special court “has been received with a lot of pain and anguish by the rank and file of the Pakistan Armed Forces”.

“An ex-Army Chief, Chairman of Joint Chief of Staff Committee and President of Pakistan, who has served the country for over 40 years, fought wars for the defence of the country can surely never be a traitor,” the ISPR added.

The former President, who seized power through a military coup in 1999, was found guilty of high treason as per Article 6 of the Constitution for imposing emergency on November 3, 2007, the court said.

The military statement said due legal process “seems to have been ignored” and the fundamental right of self defence was denied in the treason trial. And the case was concluded in haste, it added. “[The] Armed Forces of Pakistan expect that justice will be dispensed in line with the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.”

In hospital

The court ruling comes more than a week after Mr. Musharraf, who is currently in Dubai, slammed the treason case against him in a video message showing the former general in a hospital bed appearing ill, while complaining of dizziness and blackouts.



Supporters of Pervez Musharraf's party APML in Karachi on Tuesday. •AFP

“I think this case is baseless, they are not listening to me and they are not listening to my lawyer... it is a big injustice,” said Mr. Musharraf. On Tuesday, he responded to the ruling in another video message, saying, “I am being victimised.”

Unfortunate verdict

Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhry told *The Hindu* that in his view, the verdict is unfortunate. “It has nothing to do with the Constitution or justice but is a result of the tug of war between the institutions.”

Mr. Chaudhry started his political career from Mr. Musharraf's All Pakistan Muslim League and was his media spokesperson before he quit the party. Mr. Chaudhry said that for many days he has called for restraint but no one is paying heed to his submissions. “This verdict is divisive and will affect the balance of the political system.”

Pervaiz Rashid, a senior leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), told *The Hindu* the party initiated Mr. Musharraf's trial based on a principle. “A principle that has not been upheld since we got independence in 1947. By not upholding this principle, the

spirit of our independence was tarnished.”

Today, this principle has been established, said Mr. Rashid. “It will not be possible after today's verdict that anyone can climb the walls of the Prime Minister's House, capture the PTV [state TV] building and start broadcasting their own announcements that challenge and curb the freedoms of the Pakistani nation. The wall that this verdict has erected is stronger and higher than the walls of the PM House. This verdict has saved our future generations from dictatorships. Whatever we suffered will not be repeated again.”

Mr. Musharraf was booked for treason by the PML-N government of Nawaz Sharif in 2013. The former dictator was indicted on March 31, 2014, and the entire evidence against him was tabled before the special court in September the same year.

Azam Nazeer Tarar, a senior advocate at the Supreme Court and member of the Pakistan Bar Council (PBC), said this is “a landmark judgement”. “This judgment recognises the supremacy of the Constitution and rule of law in Pakistan.”

Pakistan has seen repeated incidents of constitutional breaches in the past. “This court decision has practically stopped further interventions by anyone through extra-constitutional measures. If the Constitution cannot be protected, we cannot run the affairs of the state in an honourable manner,” Mr. Tarar said.

While judicial inaction or judicial restraint had paved the way for repeated martial laws in the past, the Musharraf treason verdict “would stand as a block for future endeavours”, he added.

(With inputs from AFP)

Fall of a General

Pakistan's Pervez Musharraf, who held power for nine years after a 1999 coup, was on Tuesday sentenced to death for treason. A few key dates from his life:

August 11, 1943: Born in Old Delhi, British India. His family moved to Pakistan after independence

1964: Joins an artillery regiment after graduating from a military academy

October 1998: Appointed Army Chief of Staff by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif

November 3, 2007: Declares emergency and suspends the 1973 Constitution, citing a rise in Islamist attacks and judicial interference in running country

November 28: Hands over the Army's charge to Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani and takes over as civilian President the next day

December 15: Musharraf lifts the emergency and revives a Constitution amended through presidential decrees

August 2008: Resigns over impeachment proceedings by the governing coalition. Goes into exile in London and Dubai

March 2013: Returns to Pakistan intending to run in presidential elections but is barred from the polls and from leaving the country

August 2013: Formally charged with three counts over the 2007 killing of his political rival Benazir Bhutto

March 2016: Travels to Dubai for treatment after ban lifted

October 1999: Comes to power in a bloodless military coup after toppling Sharif, who had fired him

April 2002: Nearly a year after declaring himself President, he wins a much-criticised referendum, allowing him to stay on for five more years

October 2007: Wins presidential elections boycotted by almost the entire opposition

December 17, 2019: Sentenced to death in absentia for treason related to his 2007 imposition of emergency rule

What the death sentence means for Pakistan

Verdict raises critical questions for the current Army chief

AMIT BARUAH
NEW DELHI

A civilian court in Pakistan sentencing the former Army Chief and coup leader, Pervez Musharraf, to death is nothing short of an earth-shaking moment for a country that has had a long history of legitimising rule-by-khaki.

Whatever be the merits or demerits of the judgment, the fact remains that a special court comprising Peshawar High Court Chief Justice Waqar Ahmad Seth, Justice Nazir Akbar of the Sindh High Court and Justice Shahid Karim of the Lahore High Court, in a 2-1 verdict, have created history.

The three military dictators who preceded Pervez Musharraf – Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan, Zia-ul-Haq faced no problems from the judiciary – the Pakistani Supreme Court conveniently unleashed the “doctrine of necessity” to dismiss challenges to martial law imposed by them.

State of emergency

Interestingly, the trial and sentence was not for the original coup against civilian Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif back in October 1999, but when Mr. Musharraf, who is

currently in Dubai, imposed a state of emergency in November 2007. At the time, Mr. Musharraf held twin jobs – that of President and Army chief.

It's clear that the Pakistani establishment – military and civil – were aware that something was cooking and had moved the Islamabad High Court in a bid to ensure that the special court did not pass a verdict in Mr. Musharraf's case.

NEWS ANALYSIS

This sudden change in position by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government was much commented upon in the country since Prime Minister Imran Khan was a die-hard opponent of any compromise on the issue of Mr. Musharraf's trial.

It could also explain the sudden tough line taken by the Chief Justice of Pakistan in the matter of current Army Chief Qamar Javed Bajwa getting an extension from Mr. Khan for a period of three years.

Given that the Army has always been an untouchable institution for civilians – both executive and judiciary – this sign of independence displayed by the special

court is extraordinary.

As we know, the Pakistani Army, in a quiet and unseen way, can easily sway judicial verdicts one way or the other in the country. With this special court, the Army may have run into a wall.

For the current Army chief and the institution, this verdict raises an existential question – what happens if the military has to stage another coup? And what happens when you are unable to protect even your former chief? Simple: you look weak and just like any other frayed Pakistani civilian institution.

In 1979, Pakistani dictator Zia-ul-Haq sent former (Sindhi) Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to the gallows in a murder case, while deposed (Punjabi) Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif escaped with life imprisonment in 2000 on terrorism and hijacking charges. Eventually, Mr. Sharif went to Saudi Arabia as part of a deal with Mr. Musharraf.

Mr. Musharraf is a *mohajir* from Daryaganj in Delhi and not an influential Punjabi like Mr. Sharif. Usually, the military holds court to sentence civilians. But the roles have been reversed in Pakistan.

Pakistani lawyer abducted

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ISLAMABAD

A Pakistani lawyer known for pursuing cases of those unlawfully detained by the country's security agencies was abducted overnight from his home in the garrison city of Rawalpindi, his son said on Tuesday.

According to the son, several armed men in plain clothes barged into their home and took away his father, Inamur Rehman, in a car.

Mr. Rehman, a lawyer and a retired military officer, was never a threat to anyone, said the son, Husnain Inam.

Rehman has been vocal critic of Pakistani security agencies and has also represented several people detained by the country's military-backed spy agency in recent years.

He has previously reported being harassed by security agencies.

ELSEWHERE



'Pontifical secrecy' for sex abuse cases lifted

VATICAN CITY
Pope Francis on Tuesday abolished the rule of “pontifical secrecy” in cases of sexual abuse of minors. The reform now removes any excuse to not cooperate with legal requests from the police, prosecutors or civil authorities. AP

49 journalists were murdered in 2019: report

PARIS
Forty-nine journalists were killed globally in 2019, Reporters Without Borders has said in a report, the lowest toll in 16 years. Most died covering conflicts in Syria and Afghanistan. AFP

Ex-Trump campaign official gets 45 days in jail

He was charged in Mueller's probe

REUTERS
WASHINGTON

A judge sentenced U.S. President Donald Trump's former deputy campaign chairman Rick Gates to serve an intermittent term of 45 days in jail and 36 months of probation. Gates was one of several former Trump aides to be charged in Mueller's investigation that documented Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. election.

Gates, 47, initially pleaded not guilty but reversed himself in February 2018, and agreed to cooperate with prosecutors.

U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson said she had struggled for some time



Rick Gates

with how to sentence Gates, who met with investigators over 50 times and helped the government secure convictions of Republican operatives Paul Manafort and Roger Stone after he pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI and the special counsel's office and conspiring against the U.S.

Boris Johnson seeks to rule out delay in Brexit trade deal

No extension in U.K.'s negotiations with EU beyond 2020-end

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON

Buoyed by a Conservative majority in Parliament, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson signalled on Tuesday he won't soften his Brexit stance, ruling out any extension beyond the end of 2020 to strike a trade deal with the European Union.

Mr. Johnson's office said the government would insert a clause into its Withdrawal Agreement Bill – which ratifies the country's departure from the EU – to rule out extending Britain's trade negotiations with the EU beyond next year. That could mean Britain leaving



Boris Johnson

without a deal on trade terms at the start of 2021, a prospect that alarms many U.K. businesses.

The pound plunged on the news, falling 1% to less than \$1.32.

U.K. lawmakers met in Parliament on Tuesday for the first time since the election, to begin swearing in scores of newly elected legislators.

The Brexit Bill is due to get its first vote in the House of Commons on Friday.

The Brexit divorce Bill will see the U.K. leave the 28-nation bloc on January 31 and enter a transition period until the end of 2020 while a new trade deal with the EU is being negotiated.

During the transition period, Britain will effectively remain member of the EU, though without voting rights.

U.S. firms sued for death of children in DR Congo

They were working in cobalt mines

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW YORK

Five U.S. tech giants, including Apple, Microsoft and Google parent Alphabet, have been named in a lawsuit over the death of child labourers in cobalt mines in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Impoverished but mineral-rich DR Congo is the world's largest producer of the rare metal, which is crucial for making batteries used in mobile phones and electric vehicles.

The case was lodged on Sunday in the name of 14 unidentified victims, who are members of the families of children killed in tunnel collapses, as well as children

maimed as they worked.

It lists Apple, Google's parent company Alphabet, Dell, Microsoft and Tesla as defendants and was submitted by the International Rights Advocates campaign group to a Washington tribunal.

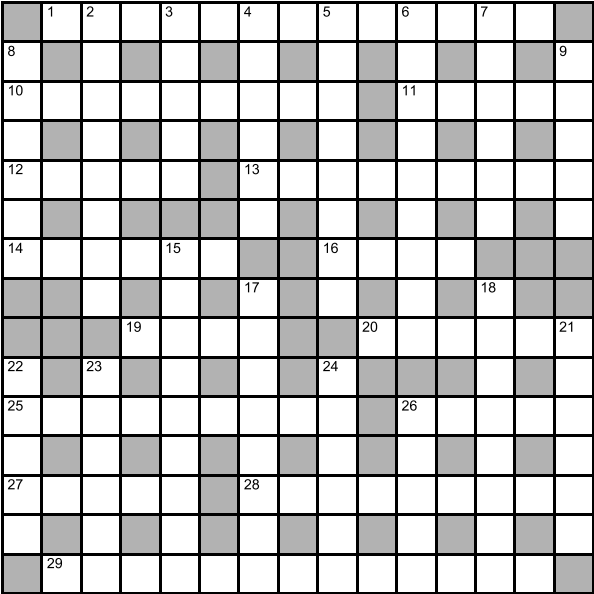
Child miners work for \$2-3 a day “under stone age conditions for paltry wages and at immense personal risk,” it said.

BMW, BASF and Samsung announced a joint project to ensure “responsible” cobalt mining in DR Congo earlier this year.

The mining industry said it wants to adopt standards of good governance to improve working conditions.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12809

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



To play an interactive version of this crossword online, scan the QR code

ACROSS

- 1 Wine cocktails? Throw it in the opposite direction (13)
- 10 Italian general Giorgio's primarily a foul-mouthed one (9)
- 11 Originally, Bassetts are intelligent, tenacious scent hounds (5)
- 12 Car wreck on cinema essentially

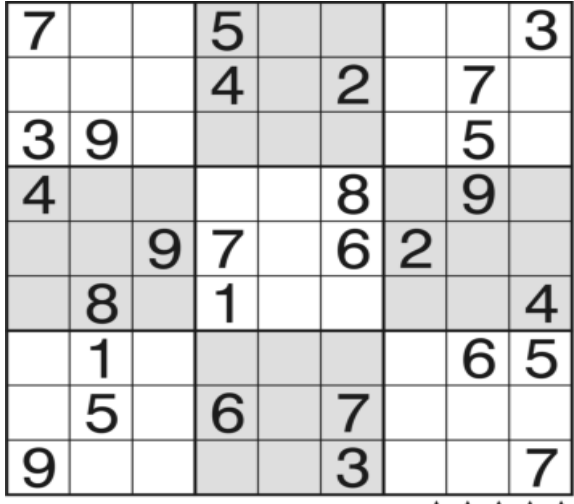
DOWN

- 2 Reports suggest that an arrest is botched (8)
- 3 Inject some insulin on bum, massage little at the end (5)
- 4 Being drunk and having large Edward sang cheerfully (6)
- 5 Second class food has vital force? Silly (8)
- 6 Harry brews tea, adding some milk for site administrator, perhaps (9)

(set by Afterdark)

- 7 Fled off from field trips arranged for motivation (6)
- 8 Crockery, for example has to be gripped on top to hold (6)
- 9 Employment in America takes time (5)
- 15 Good call to include two articles on party (9)
- 17 Not in, not present (8)
- 18 Being almost late, carrying diamonds to court date becomes redundant (8)
- 21 Time passed before youth leader stopped being a teenager (6)
- 22 A leading batsman caught behind; a kicker at the beginning to surprise (5)
- 23 Horseman on round at the end encounters wild animal almost grabbing child (6)
- 24 In small lock-ups, all nonconformist, dissenting leaders were held together in Andaman & Nicobar, say (6)
- 26 Son replacing daughter (across to down) becoming issue (5)

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 12808

PICKLE CONJUGAL
TWHENTYONE LOBBY
BANZAI MASTIFF
LAKR EY N F
E K I N G H E D O N I S T
S M E A C U L P A C O N G A
O X I D O N O Y
U M P T E E N B O N U S E S
A A S A O A T A
V E N U S M A D E M E R R Y
E D I E Y E I E
R A S H N E S S O S T L E R

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

9 8 7 5 2 1 6 4 3
1 4 3 8 7 6 5 2 9
5 6 2 4 3 9 7 8 1
7 5 1 3 6 4 8 9 2
6 2 9 7 1 8 4 3 5
4 3 8 2 9 5 1 7 6
8 1 6 9 4 3 2 5 7
2 9 4 1 5 7 3 6 8
3 7 5 6 8 2 9 1 4

FAITH

Thiruppavai, a gem

One can understand the significance of Thiruppavai only by studying the commentaries. Andal's work is a gem. A gem shines more when polished. Andal's works too shine more due to the commentaries. All the meanings given in the commentaries would have been ones that Andal intended, for Acharyas will never infer anything that was not intended, said M.A. Venkatakrishnan in a discourse. Andal says in the second verse of Thiruppavai that she will give up ghee and milk, due to the vrata that she has undertaken. But before she makes this vow, she says she will sing of the One who reclines in the milky ocean.

Why does she first talk of singing His praises before she makes Her vow? Because His name is so sweet that once she sings His names, even milk will not be sweet, but will taste bitter. In Nachiar Thirumozhi, Andal says Indra's charioteer faced the enemy for the first time. Does not a charioteer who drives his king to battle always face the enemy?

So what was special about Indra's charioteer Matali facing the enemy? Peria Vachan Pillai explains why this was special. When Rama fought Ravana, the latter was in a chariot, but Rama had no chariot. So sage Narada asked Indra to lend his chariot to Rama, along with his charioteer Matali. Losing in battles was a common occurrence as far as Indra was concerned, and because of his defeats, he would turn away from the battlefield. So Matali had only driven away from the enemy, when he had driven the chariot for Indra. But Rama was a fearless warrior, and He asked Matali to drive the chariot towards Ravana. This was the first time that Matali was asked to drive forward to meet the enemy, and this was a new experience for him. That is why Andal stresses that Matali drove Indra's chariot towards the enemy.