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# Hundreds Rally to Support Lawyers in Pakistan



NYLJ PHOTO/RICK KOPSTEIN

Protesters gather yesterday outside the Pakistani Consulate on East 65th Street.

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The crisis was precipitated on Nov. 3, when Mr. Musharraf suspended the constitution and replaced seven of the 11 justices on Pakistan's Supreme Court, including Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, who refused to promise to abide by a "provisional constitution."

In declaring "emergency rule" shortly before the Pakistani Supreme Court was expected to rule on the legality of his re-election, Mr. Musharraf also banned protests and closed down independent TV stations.

According to press reports, thousands of lawyers protesting the imposition of emergency rule have been arrested and hundreds beaten.

In addition to being sponsored by the city and state bars and the county lawyers, yesterday's rally was backed by the New York Women's Bar Association, the Muslim Bar Association of New York, the New York Council of Defense Lawyers and the New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

The deans of three area law schools—CUNY's Michelle J. Anderson, Mary Daly of St. John's and Fordham's William Treanor—attended the rally as did Brooklyn District Attorney Charles J. Hynes.

Separately, the New York City chapter of the National Lawyers Guild held a protest, attended by about 60 lawyers in front of the Pakistani Consulate on East 65th Street, according to Daniel Meyers, the chapter's president.

A delegation consisting of the leaders of three groups, all of which sponsored the rally at the consulate, was received by the top official there, Consul General Mohsin Razi, Mr. Meyers said.

In addition to Mr. Meyers, the delegation consisted of Touro Law School Professor Eileen Kaufman, co-chairwoman of the Society of American Law Teachers, and Jeanne Mirer, secretary general of International Association of Democratic Lawyers. They called for an end to all measures imposed under emergency rule and the release of those who have been arrested.

The American Bar Association has called for lawyers to march around the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., and attend a rally on the courthouse steps tomorrow.

At yesterday's state Supreme Court rally, Ali Ahsan, whose father, Aitzaz Ahsan is the president of Pakistan's Supreme Court Bar, said that pushing Mr. Musharraf to restore "civil society and the rule of law" is critical to preventing Pakistan from falling into the hands of extremists.

Mr. Musharraf has cited the threat from extremists as justifications for his actions.

The elder Mr. Ahsan, who led a successful battle to restore Chief Justice Chaudhry to his post after a suspension this spring, has been detained in solitary confinement since the declaration of emergency rule, though he has been allowed visits from family members.

The younger Mr. Ahsan, a former associate at Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton who now works for the United Nations, told the rally that his contacts in Pakistan report that the military has been imprisoning bar group leaders by arresting them at their homes in addition to arresting lawyers attending protests.

A former president of the Pakistani Bar Association and two former presidents of the Supreme Court Bar Association are among those

who have been arrested, he said. The three are in military custody, a situation far more perilous than his father's detention by civil authorities, Mr. Ahsan said.

Mr. Kamins, who took the lead in organizing yesterday's rally, said the city bar had received an e-mail from the faculty and students at Lahore University expressing appreciation for the bar group's support.

In a statement forwarded with the e-mail, the students and faculty stated, "What Pakistan faces today is the subordination of every independent organ of state to unchecked and unaccountable military executive power."

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