

Musharraf promises transition to democracy

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan -- Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, under mounting pressure to end his emergency rule, reportedly has said transition to full democracy would be done soon. The general gave that assurance Monday during a meeting with a group of foreign diplomats based in Islamabad, the English-language Dawn reported. But the report did not say if Musharraf gave any details. The diplomats, who came to hear Musharraf's briefing on the emergency declaration last Saturday, appreciated his efforts "for removing the growing uncertainty in Pakistan," presidential spokesman, retired Maj. Gen. Rashid Qurashi told Dawn. Separately, the Financial Times quoted officials as saying parliamentary elections would be held as scheduled in January, contrary to earlier reports they may be postponed for a year. "Our thinking about the election is that it will be held according to schedule," Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said. The Times report also quoted White House spokeswoman Dana Perino as saying U.S. President George Bush was "deeply disturbed" by Musharraf's action and that he urged the Pakistani ruler to restore constitutional rule.

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