

Protests erupt after Bhutto killing

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan -- Protests, some violent, erupted Thursday in many Pakistani cities after the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in Rawalpindi. The BBC reported Bhutto supporters thronged the Rawalpindi hospital where their leader was declared dead. Some of them wept while others became enraged and resorted to throwing stones at cars and breaking windows. In Karachi, a number of cars were reportedly set on fire. Shots were also reportedly fired. The city is capital of Sindh province, the home of Bhutto and her Pakistan People's Party. Vehicles also were burned in Hyderabad, the province's second largest city. In Peshawar, located in the northwest where pro-Taliban violence has escalated, police used batons and tear gas to break up a rally chanting slogans against Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf, the BBC report said. Unrest also was reported in Quetta, Multan and Shikarpur. Salman Tassir, a friend of Bhutto, was quoted as telling the BBC he didn't think the Musharraf government should be criticized as Musharraf himself has been targeted by suicide attacks. "I mean it is extremism and the fanatics who are to blame," he said. CNN reported doctors as saying the Bhutto attack also killed at least 22 others. Musharraf said on state media the killers are the same extremists the country has been fighting.

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