

Pakistan postpones election

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan -- Pakistan's national parliamentary elections, set for next Tuesday, have been postponed until Feb. 18 in the wake of the assassination of Benazir Bhutto. Chief Election Commissioner Justice Qazi Muhammad Farooq said the original Jan. 8 vote would be put off because of the vandalism done to election offices in the unrest following last Thursday's assassination of Bhutto, a former prime minister and opposition party leader. Farooq said arson had destroyed ballots and computer equipment, which made it impossible to conduct an orderly vote, CNN reported. Interior Ministry spokesman Javed Iqbal Cheema told reporters in Islamabad the violence following Bhutto's slaying had killed at least 58 people and run up a \$200 million damage toll. The country's two largest opposition parties, Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party and Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-N, had said they wanted the election to go ahead on schedule.

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