

PPP to contest Pakistan elections

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan -- The party of slain Benazir Bhutto will take part in Pakistan's delayed elections, her husband announced Thursday. Speaking at a news conference in Bhutto's hometown of Larkana, Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari criticized the postponement of the election but said his Pakistan People's Party would take part. He said Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf's Pakistan Muslim League faction won't be given any "excuse to run away" from the elections, which will now be Feb. 18. Musharraf, under intense pressure to conduct an open investigation into Bhutto's assassination, said Wednesday Britain's Scotland Yard will help in the effort. Zardari, however, said his party won't join the government investigation team as it wanted a U.N. commission to conduct the probe, the report said. "Where was it (Scotland Yard) when Ms. Bhutto called for an investigation into the Oct. 18 Karachi blasts by the same organization?" Zardari asked. The reference was the bomb attack in which Bhutto escaped unhurt, but which killed about 140 people along a motorcade to welcome her from her self-imposed exile. Musharraf in his announcement said the army would be deployed across the country during and after the elections to help police main order, Dawn reported. He said his objectives are the same as that of Bhutto -- promote democracy and fight terrorism and radicalism.

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