

Zardari cleared of graft charges

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan -- Asif Ali Zardari, husband of slain Benazir Bhutto whose party will lead Pakistan's coalition government, Friday was cleared of the last remaining graft charge. A Pakistani anti-corruption court had earlier acquitted Zardari of six similar charges, the Press Trust of India reported. Zardari is co-chairman, along with his son, of Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party. Friday's decision removed the last remaining hurdle for Zardari to become Pakistan's next prime minister. In the latest case, Zardari, 51, had been accused of importing a BMW car while posing as a student to evade paying customs duty, the report said. The court said there was no proof he had imported the car. Zardari spent over eight years in jail in the 1990s over the graft cases. His party won the largest number of seats in the national assembly elections last month. The party will form a coalition with a faction of the Pakistan Muslim League, which won the second largest number of seats. The new national assembly is set to meet next week.

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