

Musharraf supporters urge concessions

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan - Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf said he won't strike a deal with his political rivals before the country's presidential election.

Musharraf, whose popularity has suffered since his controversial firing of Pakistan's chief justice and clashes in Karachi this month left dozens of people dead, said in a TV interview that he has no plans for reconciliation with opposition leaders Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, The New York Times reported.

"About their return before elections, no, there is nobody returning before elections," Musharraf told Aaj Television.

The Times reported that political supporters are advising Musharraf to reach a compromise with Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry, whose dismissal led to protests and was seen as a challenge to the nation's court system.

Members of the ruling party say the reaction to the justice's removal was unexpected.

"It's the last thing you would want in an election year," Mushahid Hussain Sayed, general secretary of the ruling party, told the Times. "One thing after another is piling up and most of these things are negative."

Musharraf is up for re-election this year, although the election has not been scheduled.

Copyright © 2007, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Musharraf supporters urge concessions by UPI