

Pakistan rules out state of emergency

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan -- Embattled Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf ruled out Thursday imposing a state of emergency on the country. A senior government official said Thursday the president rejected the option, which would have allowed the government to expand military powers and suspend democratic freedoms amid rising violence on the along the Pakistani-Afghan border, CNN reported Thursday. Speculation about emergency rule began after Musharraf canceled a visit to Kabul to attend Thursday's joint Pakistan-Afghanistan tribal jirga, which will now be attended by Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, the English Daily Dawn reported. The jirga, with about 600 delegates attending, has been called to deal with growing violence along the Pakistan-Afghan border. The report said the emergency speculation also has been triggered by the possibility of an early return to Pakistan of former Prime Ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif from their overseas exile, encouraging several lawmakers to disassociate themselves from Musharraf and affecting his chances of being re-elected for another term.

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