

Rights group chastises Musharraf

by UPI

NEW YORK -- Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf should stop intimidating the country's Supreme Court over his election, Human Rights Watch said in a statement Wednesday. The court is reviewing the legality of Musharraf's re-election on Oct. 6, and 10 days later Parliamentary Affairs Minister Dr. Sher Afgan Khan Niazi said martial law and the dissolution of the court couldn't be ruled out if the Supreme Court rules the re-election invalid. "Musharraf should publicly state that he will accept the decision of the Supreme Court and withdraw the threat of martial law," said Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "The government is attempting to frighten the judiciary into submission and is holding Pakistan, its constitution and its people hostage to Musharraf's desire to cling to power." Pakistan's constitution says a candidate for president cannot run for office until two years after retirement from a military position and Musharraf is the head of Pakistan's army that came to power in a bloodless coup in 1999.

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