

PAKISTAN

AFTER THE SHOCK



THE ASSASSINATION OF BENAZIR BHUTTO

By Greg Sheridan, the most influential foreign affairs commentator in Australia.

29 Dec, 07. The West is failing to keep alive its friends in the Muslim world. Foreign editor Greg Sheridan writes that Thursday's murder also underlines the failures of Pakistan's dictatorial President

THE assassination of Benazir Bhutto is a catastrophe for Pakistani democracy and society. It is also a savage setback in the larger war on terror. To assassinate a two-time prime minister, a moderate and liberal woman leader in the world's only Islamic nuclear power, is a signal victory for the terrorists. Bhutto's assassination also has wide geo-strategic consequences. It leaves in shreds US strategy for Pakistan and the wider South Asian and Central Asian regions. When historians look back on this period, they may well identify the inability of the West to keep its friends in the Muslim world alive as one of the key factors strengthening the extremists at every turn.

But more specifically, US strategy in Pakistan is now in a comprehensive mess. Washington wanted the forces of secularism in Pakistan to reunite. In that equation President Pervez Musharraf represented the broadly secular military and Bhutto represented the civil society: the judges and lawyers and academics, and also the ordinary poor people of Pakistan who throughout their history have been mostly religiously tolerant and politically moderate.

Read the full informative article from *The Australian*>

http://blogs.theaustralian.news.com.au/gregsheridan/index.php/theaustralian/comments/after_the_shock/

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