

# International Intelligence

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## ***Pakistan wants London terrorist extradited***

The Pakistani government will ask Britain to extradite Mohajir Qaum Movement (MQM) head Altaf Hussain to Pakistan, where he is accused of running a terror campaign from his London safehouse, which included 50 assassinations of rival political figures, and 150 other acts of kidnapping or arson. The extradition request charges that Hussain has recently escalated his violence, including the assassination of a former provincial governor and leading Pakistani philanthropist, Hakim Said. The Mohajirs are the Muslim emigrés from India, most of whom settled in Pakistan's Sindh province following the 1947 partition. There have been frictions with the Sindhi inhabitants ever since.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had initially formed a political alliance with the MQM, but he has been under pressure to crack down on the group's operations. According to the London *Times* of Nov. 8, the assassination of Said afforded the opportunity to make the extradition move. Even though Britain's Parliament, under U.S. pressure, recently passed a law, for the first time, banning terrorists from plotting actions overseas from British soil, it remains to be seen whether Britain will actually extradite Hussain.

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## ***Indonesia's parliament opens special session***

The Indonesian military is taking extraordinary precautions to protect the Nov. 10-13 special session of the People's Consultative Assembly, from disruption by tens of thousands of university students, backed by the retired officers and civil servants umbrella group, the National Front. Figures on the deployment of police and military range from 30,000 to 75,000, with back-up from 125,000 civilians from various organizations. Muslim student groups that support President Habibie and see the session as important for national unity and reconciliation, mobilized up to 50,000 students to help defend the special session. The session was convened to rewrite election laws and set a date for general elections next spring.

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Muslims crowded Jakarta's Senayan Stadium on Nov. 6 to pray for the peaceful success of the special session of the People's Consultative Assembly. Manarul Hidayat, who heads one of several organizations sponsoring the prayer vigil, appealed, "We call on those who plan to disrupt the special session in a violent, anarchist, and unconstitutional way, to desist and refrain from their plan." In Central Java, 2,000 Muslim students held a national unity rally, urging their peers, "Let's show the world that Indonesians are a civilized and united people, and cannot easily be divided."

In opposition, 300 students staged a demonstration calling for Habibie's resignation and a transitional government. Some 50 organizations, under the National Front umbrella, have threatened to occupy the Parliament to prevent the special session, and the Nov. 6 issue of *Suara Merdeka* listed nearly a dozen student and opposition-linked groups, which plan various "occupations" tactics. Leading opposition figure Amien Rais, who is a Muslim, called on opposing groups to refrain from using force, as it would lead to civil war, adding that he and other opposition leaders face the dilemma that if they support the session, that gives "legitimacy" to Habibie, but if they support the disruption, "maybe the consequences will be even worse."

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## ***Pope: End death penalty, lift debt burden***

Pope John Paul II renewed his call for debt cancellation for poor countries and a moratorium on the death penalty, on the occasion of the celebration of the 20th anniversary of his pontificate. Speaking before a concert performance at the Vatican's Paul VI Auditorium, on Nov. 5, the Pope said, "I am happy that the proposal to reduce the foreign debt of poor countries and adopt a moratorium on death penalties at least in the Jubilee Year has been supported by people who cover high institutional offices, and can therefore contribute effectively to their realization."

Nigerian Head of State Abdulsalam Abubakar sent a message to the celebrations, thanking the Pope for his African visit last

year. Newly inaugurated President of the Philippines Joseph Estrada also sent congratulations.

In his speech, the Pope thanked the artists who provided a Classical music program, featuring Haydn's *Creation* ("Die Himmel erzählen"), Mozart's *Laudate Dominum*, Handel's *Messiah*, Beethoven's *Romance* for violin and orchestra, and Verdi's *Te Deum*. He especially expressed gratitude in his native language, to the children's choir of Poznan, Poland, who joined the chorus and orchestra of the Rome Opera Theater in singing Handel's "Hallelujah."

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## ***More fallout from French Serbian spy scandal***

France's effort to take command of the NATO forces deployed in Macedonia from the United States have become more distant, since the latest arrest of Maj. Pierre-Henri Bunel, a French officer attached to NATO forces, on charges of spying for Serbia. The force in Macedonia consists of 2,000 men, who are to ensure the security of the 2,000 observers under the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in neighboring Kosova, who are supposed to verify that Serbian troops withdraw from the area. The Macedonian deployment is designed to back up the 140 French troops who are accompanying the unarmed observers in Kosova.

"Since we are taking major responsibilities, we considered it natural for France to take command of the operation," said Defense Minister Alain Richard, during a Nov. 6 press conference with Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine. The French, who are asking for some U.S. participation in the operation, anticipate that the United States would then insist on having military command. Bunel's arrest has done little to inspire confidence in a possible French command, especially since the Anglo-French protection of Serbian war crimes in Bosnia has become notorious.

French authorities insist that Franco-American relations remain "excellent," and neither the Bunel affair, nor rumors that France is protecting Bosnian Serb war criminal Radovan Karadzic, have changed this, Védrine told reporters.