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My 'Independent on Sunday'
Kate Mosse

Every week, key figures offer their take on our coverage. Today, the author and co-founder of the Orange Prize for Fiction tells us what she thinks

The rehab generation, pages 8-9 The idea that drinking is something only adults do is one of the reasons we have such problems in this country. In France, there is the sense that you have a little bit to drink with your meal and that's seen as completely normal. The focus on demonising drink has contributed to the binge-drinking culture we have in Britain. We're turning all kinds of things into huge issues.

Young, gifted and ... heading back, page 15 Many of my generation - I'm in my mid-forties - do believe that positive or affirmative action is necessary to achieve a truly equal society because the natural way of thinking hasn't resulted in equality of opportunity. Saying everyone should be judged on their merits is fine, but when you look at the figures you see that an enormous amount of talent in this country is not being tapped.

UK's other missing children, page 20 I have found everything about the Madeleine McCann story difficult to take; as a parent, you will try anything to get your child back. It also illustrates that you cannot control the media. If you invite the media in, they will run it how they want to run it.

The trouble with Heather - Sarah Sands, Comment, page 42-3 There's no doubt that some figures in public life are, rightly or wrongly, above reproach. This means that anyone who goes up against them will be seen in exactly the opposite light.



'Sepulchre', the new novel by Kate Mosse, was published last week by Orion at £18.99

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Outlook: dry with sunshine after foggy start **PAGE 74**

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Concise & Beelzebub
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Reporting team:
Paul Bignell (PB) p.bignell Brian Brady (BB) b.brady
Roger Dobson (RD) r.dobson Richard Garner (RG) r.garner
Sadie Gray (SG) s.gray Ian Griggs (IG) i.griggs
Katy Guest (KG) k.guest Andrew Johnson (AJ) a.johnson
Nina Lakhani (NL) n.lakhani Geoffrey Lean (GL) g.lean
Tom McTague (TM) t.mctague Susie Mesure (SM) s.mesure
Jonathan Owen (JO) j.owen Rachel Shields (RS) r.shields
Raymond Whitaker (RW) r.whitaker
Marie Woolf (MW) m.woolf
all@independent.co.uk

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THE NEW REVIEW
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Special report: Crisis in the subcontinent

Pakistan in turmoil as

President takes advantage of Bhutto's absence abroad to suspend constitution

Pakistan was thrown into crisis last night after President Pervez Musharraf suspended the constitution and declared a state of emergency just days before the Supreme Court was due to rule on the legality of his recent election victory.

After days of speculation and rumour, troops surrounded the Supreme Court building in Islamabad where the Chief Justice, Iftikhar Chaudhry, and a number of his colleagues refused to endorse the declaration issued by the President. They were then told their services "were no longer required" and a new Chief Justice was appointed. Meanwhile, telephones lines and mobile networks were shut down in the capital, as were private television channels.

Adding to the drama, former prime minister Benazir Bhutto was last night reported to have returned to Pakistan from her home in Dubai, where she had flown just days ago. There were claims last night that Ms Bhutto - who made a dramatic return to Pakistan from eight years of exile last month - knew in advance of General Musharraf's plans.

The Pakistani leader said in his emergency order that he was acting to help protect the country against terrorism. State TV said he was due to address the nation to explain his move. "Some members of the judiciary are working at cross purposes with the executive [and] weakening the government's resolve to fight terrorism," said the order invoking emergency powers.

The Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, said last night: "I am gravely concerned by the measures

adopted by the Pakistan government."

Most observers saw the move as nothing other than a blatant move by the general to cement his leadership amid a growing belief that the Supreme Court was going to invalidate his recent election victory.

Aitzaz Ahsan, one of Pakistan's most senior lawyers, said he had been detained after General Musharraf invoked emergency powers. "One man has taken the entire nation hostage ... Time has come for General Musharraf to go," he said.

The move by General Musharraf will be of huge embarrassment to the US, which has long backed the military leader politically and financially. This year, when there were previous rumours that General Musharraf was about to invoke emergency powers, the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, telephoned urging him not to do so. Britain has also been closely involved in helping to broker a deal between the general and Ms Bhutto, who had planned to try to win a historic third term as Prime Minister in parliamentary elections scheduled to take place before January.

Ms Rice, in Turkey, said yesterday the US believed General Musharraf's move was "highly regrettable" and that she hoped his intention was to have free and fair elections.

A spokesman for Ms Bhutto - whose return from exile two weeks ago was marked by a bomb attack that killed almost 140 people in Karachi - said last night that she was already back in Pakistan.

"As soon as she heard of the threat of emergency she



President Pervez Musharraf was a career soldier who seized power in 1999. He has delivered economic growth but has strengthened ties with the US, to the fury of Islamic militants



Benazir Bhutto is the daughter of a prime minister who was executed by the military. She has been PM twice, in 1988 and 1993, and both times was dismissed for corruption

took the first plane back to Pakistan," said Wajid Shamsul Hasan. "They may arrest her or send her back. I've just spoken to her and

It is an attempt to subvert the path of democracy

she said that the plane is taxiing on the tarmac and has been taxiing for some time. We condemn this move to impose a state of

emergency. It is an attempt to subvert the path of democracy."

Meanwhile, another former prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, who was deported when he tried to return from exile in Pakistan in September, told the Indian news channel CNN-IBN: "We are heading towards a chaotic situation, heading towards anarchy."

Imran Khan, head of the Justice Party, said he had been told police were waiting at his Lahore home to arrest him. "This is a blatant attempt to destroy our judiciary and remove the

Rumours had been rife for days. Last night, with armed police deployed across Islamabad once again, it is all too clear that the worst had actually happened.

All week newspaper and independent television channels had been speculating that General Musharraf - who seized power in a military coup in 1999 - was poised to invoke emergency powers to save his presidency. And at the Supreme Court complex in Islamabad troops blocked off roads and eventually detained the Chief Justice.

Last night, with the exception of state-controlled PTV, those TV channels that

had been speculating so furiously all week were silent. As the news filtered through market places, shoppers streamed out, many on their mobile phones, seeking confirmation. Many mobiles went dead within the hour. Across Islamabad, police were seen racing around in blue pick-up trucks, with lights flashing and half a dozen officers in the back, cradling ageing weapons.

Constitution Avenue, the main road that runs past the National Assembly, the Presidential Palace and the Supreme Court, was barricaded by traffic police. Many police were positioned in front of the Presidential

Musharraf declares state of emergency

and disband Supreme Court days before it was due to rule on the legality of his recent election. By Omar Waraich and Andrew Buncombe



Pakistani police guard a roadblock outside the Presidential Palace in Islamabad after the declaration of a state of emergency WARRICK PAGE/GETTY IMAGES

Chief Justice. They want pliant judges in place and a pliant parliament," he said.

Only a month ago General Musharraf was elected for another five years by an overwhelming majority of members of the national and regional parliaments. But the Supreme Court had said it would consider legal challenges to the constitutionality of the candidacy, which the general's opponents claimed was invalid because he was still serving as head of the military.

Though the court ruled the vote should go ahead, it said it would examine the

issue and decide whether the vote was valid. It was due to rule in a matter of days. General Musharraf apparently decided it was set to rule against him. While he could have chosen to ignore the court's decision - as he did its ruling that Mr Sharif should be allowed to return - it seems he decided a ruling against him would be too damaging.

He has been on a collision course with the Supreme Court since March, when he ousted Mr Chaudhry. The move backfired spectacularly as a campaign to reinstate the sacked Chief Jus-

dice drew support. General Musharraf was eventually forced to accept the Mr Chaudhry's reinstatement. The general was due to be

The US believes the move is highly regrettable

sworn in as President on 15 November, after first relinquishing his position as head of the armed forces. Parliamentary elections, in which

Ms Bhutto would have challenged for the premiership, were scheduled for some time before January. Now, having invoked emergency powers, General Musharraf has no need now to be sworn in and can also postpone the parliamentary elections if he chooses.

A key issue will be the influence Washington can bring to bear on Pakistan, which has received an estimated \$10bn of US aid and military support since the attacks of 11 September 2001. While Washington has readily overlooked human rights transgressions while the

general was seen to be cooperating with the "war on terror", it has also been supportive of Ms Bhutto, whose election would provide at least a veneer of democracy.

Pakistan has seen an upsurge in militant violence in recent months, as the emergency order appeared to reflect. But that violence was largely carried out by extremists in retaliation for the general's decision to storm the Red Mosque in Islamabad this summer, when more than 100 people were killed.

Further reading 'Military inc.', by Ayesha Siddiqua (Pluto, £19.99)

COUNTDOWN TO CRISIS

MARCH 2007 President Pervez Musharraf wants to be re-elected. But first he wants rid of Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, right; he is suspended, but protests follow.
JULY Musharraf forced to reinstate Chief Justice to the Supreme Court.
SEPTEMBER Supreme Court rules that ex PM Nawaz Sharif - whom Musharraf deposed in 1999 - can



return from exile, maybe to stand for election. Arrested at airport on arrival, he is sent back to Saudi Arabia.
6 OCTOBER Musharraf "wins" elections, but the court says he cannot be declared the winner until it has decided if it was legal for him to stand.
18 OCTOBER Former PM Benazir Bhutto flies in from exile. Rumours of a power-sharing deal. Bombs kill 130.
3 NOVEMBER Court said to be about to rule Musharraf's re-election illegal. He declares emergency rule. Chaudhry sacked, confined to court with 10 other judges.

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'They can take me away, but they will not stop the lawyers' struggle'

Police race around capital - car lights flashing, guns in hand - to secure presidency amid widespread confusion

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Police take to the streets of Islamabad yesterday GETTY IMAGES

Palace and at the end of Jinnah Avenue, the capital's main thoroughfare. With no access to independent news, speculation

spread quickly. Was Benazir Bhutto, who had recently left for Dubai under ambiguous circumstances, going to return? Was this a form of

martial law or an enhanced state of emergency? Will the Chief Justice be sacked?

Although increased attacks by militants in the North-west Frontier Province, parts of Punjab and the nearby garrison town of Rawalpindi have been of major concern to Pakistanis, there was little doubt that these weren't the reason for the state of emergency.

"He is doing it because he fears the Supreme Court's ruling," said Asif Sheikh, a taxi driver, in words echoed by many last night.

Lawyers in touch with judges at the Supreme Court reported that Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry,

whom General Musharraf had sacked in March, and seven accompanying judges had declared that the state of emergency was "illegal" and "unconstitutional". Soon, it was reported that Mr Chaudhry and fellow judges had all been sacked and police units were stationed outside the court.

On the orders of the Islamabad Inspector General, the police also moved against Aitzaz Ahsan, a leading lawyer who had been arguing against General Musharraf's right to be elected while in uniform, in the Supreme Court. Mr Ahsan had gathered journalists at his home for a press confer-

ence, during which he was told that a warrant had been issued for his arrest.

Unfazed, he said he had been "to jail many times" and that even if he was taken away "the lawyers' movement would not stop their struggle". Moments after he finished taking questions, police car lights were flashing outside. No one was allowed to leave. In the full glare of TV cameras, his supporters burst into a chorus of "Go Musharraf, Go!" as Mr Ahsan was driven away to the police station, raising a victory sign in defiance.

Omar Waraich