



PHOTO: AFP

Republican gubernatorial candidate Arnold Schwarzenegger gestures as he unveils his governing agenda for the first 100 days of his administration October 01, 2003 at the Sacramento Memorial Auditorium in Sacramento, California.

Arnie apologises for 'bad behavior'

AP, Los Angeles

Entering his final campaign push on a wave of surging poll numbers, Arnold Schwarzenegger shifted into damage-control mode, apologizing for "bad behavior" toward women and saying he couldn't imagine ever telling an interviewer that he admired Adolf Hitler.

Reports that the former bodybuilder had groped women and once said he admired the Nazi leader surfaced Thursday as he set out on a four-day bus tour toward Sacramento. His entourage was met by cheering crowds as he promised to move California forward but by then, the focus had shifted to his past.

Stories by ABC News and The New York Times said that the actor told an interviewer during the filming of the bodybuilding documentary "Pumping Iron" in 1975 that he admired Adolf Hitler's rise to power from humble beginnings.

Schwarzenegger, with wife Maria Shriver at his side, told a late-night news conference Thursday that he didn't recall making the remarks.

"I don't remember any of those comments because I always despise everything that Hitler stood for," Schwarzenegger said, calling the Nazi leader a "disgusting villain."

Earlier in the day in San Diego, Schwarzenegger addressed allega-

tions in the Los Angeles Times, which reported the claims of six women who accused him of sexually harassing and groping them between 1975 and 2000.

"Yes, it is true that I was on rowdy movie sets and I have done things that were not right, which I thought then was playful but now I recognize that I offended people," he said.

"Those people that I have offended, I want to say to them I am deeply sorry about that and I apologize because that's not what I'm trying to do," he added.

Asked about the groping allegations, Shriver referred her husband's remarks: "As I say to my children it always takes great courage to stand before anybody and apologize and I think that's what Arnold did today," Shriver said.

Polls have shown voters ready to oust Democratic Gov. Gray Davis in the Oct. 7 recall election, with Schwarzenegger as the front-runner to replace him.

Davis declined to discuss the issue, saying, "The voters will determine how significant that story is. I'm confident the voters will decide who is best qualified to lead this state."

Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante, who is running second to Schwarzenegger as a replacement candidate, said the allegations are "very serious and should be resolved."

Nobel Peace Prize

FROM PAGE 12

were to share the prize with an Islamic religious leader.

"But there is nobody within Islam who stands out," he said.

Toennesson also suggested that the committee may have chosen the Brazilian president.

He "could need support in his attempt to rectify the enormous social injustices on his continent," he said, noting however that "such a result would perhaps come a little premature, as the results of his efforts have yet to be seen."

Barth Elide said Lula would be an "interesting" choice "and not totally inconceivable", but pointed out that Lula had distinguished himself more for his socio-economic pursuits than in the field of peace.

He said he would prefer to see the UN honoured -- "this would've been a good year to do it, but it already won the prize two years ago" -- or the European Union.

"It has been ignored for too long but it would perhaps be more pertinent to honour the EU next year, after enlargement."

Other possible winners include Iranian dissident Hashem Aghajari, the Catholic community of San Edigio in Rome or former Soviet dissident Sergei Kovalyev.

Giving the prize to Aghajari, who is currently imprisoned in his own country, would send a message of democracy to Iran to encourage it on its road of reform, as well as a message of peace to the United

States to convince them that change in Iran will not come by way of war, Toennesson said.

A supporter of Iran's reformist President Mohammad Khatami and a university professor, Aghajari was sentenced to death in November 2002 for blasphemy but has since seen his sentence reduced to three years in prison.

San Edigio could be honoured for its work on furthering ecumenical understanding, ending conflicts worldwide and combatting AIDS, while Kovalyev could take home the prize for his fight for human rights during the Chechen conflict.

Nobel watchers also noted that the former chief UN weapons expert Hans Blix and the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Mohamed ElBaradei could have been considered for the prize -- if the war in Iraq had been avoided.

Power outages

FROM PAGE 12

According to the study, industrial sector's losses attributable to unplanned electric power interruptions averaged \$0.83 per kilowatt-hour while only \$0.34 per kwh for planned outages. "Thus the unplanned interruptions result in economic losses that are nearly two and one-half times those of planned interruptions."

Further, voltage fluctuations can cause major problems in certain industries, such as manufacturing and chemicals, while others, such as wood and cork industries, are completely unaffected.

The study found the frequency of unplanned interruptions during the year 2001 having averaged nearly one interruption per day, lasting about 2 hours. By contrast, the number of planned interruptions is about one in two months, but each lasting about 7 hours.

The donor agency made a set of recommendations for improving the erratic power supply.

The recommendations include strengthening end-user participation in the electric supply industry, converting unplanned interruptions to planned outages, where possible, and introducing interruptible electricity traffic to industries that can absorb planned interruptions without serious disturbance to their production processes.

Top US envoy due in Pakistan today for war on terrorism talks

AFP, Islamabad

US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage is to arrive in Islamabad today on a rescheduled visit to key war-on-terrorism ally Pakistan and Afghanistan, a foreign ministry official said.

Armitage, who will be accompanied by top US envoy for South Asia, Christina Rocca, was originally due in Islamabad on Thursday. State Department officials said illness forced the two-day postponement of his visit.

He will head to Kabul on Sunday for talks with Afghan officials, the Pakistani official said.

After a day's visit Armitage will return to Islamabad to hold talks with Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and senior defence ministry officials on Monday.

Earlier this week Armitage questioned the commitment of Pakistan's security forces to blocking fugitive al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters regrouping in Pakistan and infiltrating back into Afghanistan for bloody guerrilla attacks.

"I do not think that that affection for working with us extends up and down the rank-and-file of the Pakistani security community," he told US lawmakers in Washington, stressing that he had full confidence in Musharraf's comments.

Armitage said he planned to discuss the growing problem of Taliban and al-Qaeda insurgents crossing the border with Musharraf.

On Thursday, two days after Armitage's criticism, Pakistan's military launched one of its fiercest operations against suspected al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters in the ultra-conservative tribal border district of South Waziristan.

Eight militants were killed and 18 were captured while two Pakistani soldiers were killed and two were wounded in the day-long gunfight, the military said Friday.

Hundreds of Pakistani commandos and troops backed by Cobra helicopter gunships battled the fighters from 5:30 am (0030 GMT) until late Thursday evening. The militants fought back with grenades and gunfire.

The army flew journalists to the edge of the operation to witness the fighting and showed them 10 of the prisoners and four of the dead bodies.

Grenade attack on mosque in Philippines: 4 killed

REUTERS, Manila

A man hurled a grenade into a mosque in the southern Philippines during weekly prayers yesterday, killing four people and wounding at least 17 in what officials said appeared to be the result of a personal feud.

The attack took place at a mosque in a compound of the government's National Irrigation Administration (NIA) in Midsayap town in the southern region of Mindanao, considered the homeland of minority Muslims in the mainly Catholic Philippines.

The mosque was full of officials and employees of the NIA, officials and police said.

"This is not a religious war," provincial governor Emmanuel Pinol told Reuters.

Water crisis

FROM PAGE 12

cannot be resolved without installing another water pump."

"We are now trying to have a piece of land for installing a pump and we are also ready to pay for it locally."

Wasa sub-divisional engineer of the area Shafiqur Rahman said the Kuril pump could not meet the water requirement of the area. Kuratali pump is not supposed to supply water in this area, he mentioned.

"A new pump can relieve local people of the sufferings and Wasa will install one if a suitable piece of land is found in the area."

Bombs, arms

FROM PAGE 1

solar panels and five electric coils

The BDR stepped up border patrol following the recovery.

On Thursday, a patrol team of army from Noonchhari camp recovered a firearms from Gamari Dhala area of Mahalchhari upazila in Khagrachhari. Three youths said to be UPDF members were detained in this connection.

Meanwhile, superintendent of police of Bandarban said, "All arms and ammunition were not surrendered to the government after the signing of the peace accord and it has to be probed whether those are now changing hands."

Some sources noted although huge arms and ammunition were recovered in Bandarban over the last couple of months, it was not discussed at the regular monthly meeting on law and order in the district.



PHOTO: AFP

Islamic militants of the group Hamas carry replicas of rockets as they watch a huge model of the Star of David during a huge protest in the Gaza Strip's Jabalia refugee camp yesterday.

No WMDs found in Iraq

FROM PAGE 1

not validate most of President Bush's prewar assertions that Saddam had widespread chemical and biological weapons and programs to make more, and was developing a nuclear weapon. Kay did not address US assertions about Saddam's ties to terrorist groups, particularly al-Qaeda.

AFP adds: Evidence gathered by US teams suggests that Iraq had little or no capacity to produce chemical warfare agents because of damage inflicted by US air strikes and years of sanctions, Kay told Congress Thursday.

Kay, the former UN weapons inspector who leads the Iraq Survey Group, said his team found no evidence to confirm pre-war intelligence reporting that Iraqi military units were prepared to use chemical warfare agents against US forces.

In a report to House of Representatives and Senate intelligence committees that was released in declassified form, Kay said his group found no weapons stock.

He could not say whether any existed before US and British forces invaded Iraq in March or whether they still exist undetected.

Nevertheless, Kay said his team had uncovered dozens of WMD-related program "activities" and significant amounts of equipment that had been concealed from UN weapons inspectors.

They also found evidence that large amounts of records were systematically destroyed both before and after Saddam Hussein's fall.

Among his conclusions:

-- Ousted Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein had not given up his aspirations and intentions to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

-- The Iraqis were well advanced in developing missiles with ranges at least up to 1,000 kilometers, well in excess of the 150 kilometer range allowed under UN sanctions.

-- There was "at a minimum clandestine ongoing research and development activities" related to chemical and biological weapons within the Iraqi Intelligence Service.

But US inspectors found no evidence that Iraq took significant steps after 1998 to build nuclear weapons or produce fissile materials, although it did try to preserve some technological capability from its pre-1991 nuclear weapons program, Kay said.

And little evidence has been found that Iraq had an active chemical warfare programme at the time of the war, according to Kay's report. "Multiple sources with varied access and reliability have told ISG that Iraq did not have a large, ongoing, centrally controlled CW program after 1991," he said.

"Information found to date suggests that Iraq's large scale-capability to develop, produce and fill new CW munitions was reduced - if not entirely destroyed - during Operations Desert Storm and Desert Fox, 13 years of UN sanctions and UN inspections," he said.

He said the group has just begun to survey the Iraqi chemical industry to determine if equipment and bulk chemicals were available to produce chemical warfare agents.

"We have also acquired information related to Iraq's CW doctrine and Iraq's war plans for OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom), but we have not yet found evidence to confirm pre-war reporting that Iraqi military units were prepared to use CW against coalition forces," he said.

"Our efforts to collect and exploit intelligence on Iraq's chemical

weapons program have thus far yielded little reliable information on post-1991 CW stocks and CW agent production," it said.

It noted, however, that Iraqis stored unmarked chemical munitions with conventional munitions, and that there are vast unvisited munitions storage dumps in the country where chemical rounds could be hidden.

Only 10 of at least 130 ammunition storage dumps in the country have been examined, he said.

On biological warfare, Kay said the group had been unable to corroborate the existence of a mobile biological weapons production effort.

The discovery of two trailers in northern Iraq was touted by President George W. Bush as evidence of the regime's involvement with biological warfare agents.

But Kay said the ISG has "begun to unravel a clandestine network of laboratories and facilities within the (Iraqi) security service apparatus" that was previously unknown and had never been declared to the United Nations.

"We are still working on determining the extent to which this network was tied to large-scale military efforts or BW terror weapons, but this clandestine capability was suitable for preserving BW expertise, BW capable facilities and continuing" research and development, he said.

Iraqi scientists revealed that they conducted overt research on non-pathogenic organisms that served as surrogates for pathogenic agents, including anthrax, and developed ways to improve fermentation and spray drying that could be applied to anthrax, he said.

Gas projects

FROM PAGE 1

the plans, we will be able to implement all of them in time," said the Petrobranga official.

Another official said the Planning Commission officials, disappointed with reduction of their power in project implementation, are trying to complicate the ventures.

The Planning Commission is trying to issue orders that would once again place all projects to be pursued on bank loans under it for approval. "That will certainly shelve all Petrobranga projects as before," a source feared.

Currently, Bangladesh is facing gas crisis because of excessive demand. Against a maximum demand for 1295mmcf, Petrobranga can supply around 1265mmcf.

Experts forecast that the demand will continue to grow at 10 per cent a year and see no quick solution to the crisis in the years to come.

Residential hotels

FROM PAGE 12

people who pull the strings from behind the scene. Also, police have covert support in these shady activities.

Although the customers of such hotels are mostly ordinary middle class and law-abiding citizens, there are also a large number of boarders who are professional middlemen arranging passports, overseas jobs through recruiting agencies or to get some job done at government offices through 'connections'. There are a number of regular boarders who stay for months together at these hotels that serve as their business offices.

The demand for such hotels is very high indeed and the 'no vacancy' sign is up most of the time. Apart from that, there are some good hotels in the city with nice rooms and services but their rents are quite high.

Finally, there are a few posh hotels including the famous Sonargaon and Sheraton -- the two five-star hotels in the city. More such hotels are being planned to encourage tourism.

Observers feel that the DCC should take the initiative to enforce a minimum acceptable standard at all hotels in the city. Also, the law enforcement agencies must clamp down on illegal activities centring round these establishments for healthy growth of the hotel industry.

Advani given benefit of doubt in mosque demolition case

AFP, New Delhi

Indian Deputy Prime Minister Lal Krishna Advani was acquitted by an Indian court last month for his role in the demolition of an ancient mosque on the basis of conflicting witness statements, court papers reveal.

A special court at northern Rae Bareilly town on September 19 cleared Advani of all charges relating to the 1992 razing of the Babri Mosque, an event which set off nationwide riots, on the basis of a lack of a "deep suspicion" against him.

The court, however, charged seven other top Hindu nationalists, including senior minister Murli Manohar Joshi over the demolition.

On Tuesday, the Rae Bareilly court was barred from proceeding against Joshi by a higher court.

Advani, Joshi and six others had faced charges of inciting a mob of thousands to pull down the 16th-century mosque in the town of Ayodhya in India's northern Uttar Pradesh state, triggering Hindu-Muslim riots that killed some 2,000 people.

In delivering its verdict, the court said there was no "deep suspicion" against Advani only a "suspicion", which was not enough for conviction.

The court said that while one set of witnesses claimed that Advani did nothing to stop Hindu activists from climbing the domes of the mosque, another said the deputy prime minister was worried at what was happening and wanted the activists to stop the demolition.

Faced with these contradictory versions, Justice Vinod Kumar Singh gave Advani the benefit of the doubt.

"Based on the evidence presented in this court and the statements of witnesses and the arguments on both sides, this court is of the view that only in the case of accused Lal Krishna Advani, there exist two possible viewpoints," Justice Singh said.

"One view is that prima facie, Advani committed the charged crime and the other view is that he did not. After studying the evidence presented, I am of the opinion that there is only suspicion with regard to the charges against Advani, not deep suspicion.

"On the other hand, in the case of others... there is a deep suspicion with regard to the prima facie charges."

Statements made by several key witnesses proved crucial in bringing an end to one of the most excruciating periods in the life of the deputy prime minister who is considered the BJP's eventual successor to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.

One of the statements was that of Anju Gupta, then assistant superintendent of police, Faizabad who was attached to Advani's security on December 6, 1992.

Recalling the events of the day, she told the court: "I saw some boys heading towards the structure from Kuber Tola, carrying various tools. Then Mr. Advani asked me what was happening inside the temple..."

The court said this statement by

Three outlaws held in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Three armed cadres of outlawed New Biplobi Communist Party (NBPC) were arrested in Gallamari area of the city at midnight on Thursday.

The arrestees are Shahidul, 30, Oli28, and Aditya, 32.

Police said the outlaws came from Dumuria and were hiding in Gallamari area.

Arifa gets back home

FROM PAGE 1

shelter at Agargaon until her parents take her back. Her father is likely to reach Dhaka this morning.

"Arifa has skin diseases and needs medical checkup. We are also thinking about her safety at home," Salma said.

The Indian magistrate wanted to hand Arifa over to her parents, but her father did not appear before court for fear of arrest, as he is a listed smuggler, she said.

"As I was in Kolkata to participate in a programme on September 22, I wanted to take her back home," said the beaming lawyer who stayed in the capital of West Bengal on extended visa to fight the legal battle to clear the way for Arifa's return to Bangladesh. "We have won the weeklong legal battle. I am happy. Thanks, everybody," Salma poured out her feelings to the journalists.

Despite Durga Puja holidays, the immigration authorities in Kolkata kept their office open for issuing an "exit permit" for Arifa as she passed her last day abroad visiting the puja mandaps and roaming the bustling West Bengal capital with Salma, official news agency BSS adds.

"Arifa's life in India seemed to be without worries and the Indian police or the nursing home officials in Kolkata always found her cheerful although she wanted to go back to

Gupta indicated that Advani was unaware of what was happening at the time of the demolition.

"It appears prima facie from Anju Gupta's statement that Advani was unaware of what was happening after the demolition began," it said.

"Apart from this, she (Gupta) also stated that Advani said, 'I will go there and ask the people to come down.' This presents a view contrary to the prima facie charges against him," the court said.

Gupta's statement does not mention any of the other accused saying they would ask people to stop the demolition.

Another key witness Ganesh Swaminath Gupta told the court: "...at that point of time I could recognise the voice of Mr L.K. Advani on the loudspeakers appealing to people to come down from the mosque structure but nobody (heeded) the appeal..."

He was backed up by another witness, Rakesh Sinha, who said in his statement that he "also heard Mr L.K. Advani making an appeal to get down from the mosque structure. He made repeated appeals..."

Other witnesses also said several appeals were made to the activists to stop the demolition but no one listened.

In addition to this, the court said that in the videotapes presented before it, there was no visual of any leader making a speech while the demolition was being carried out.

When the BJP was in opposition Advani campaigned to "rebuild" a temple at the site of the Babri Mosque, which Hindu activists say was built by Muslim rulers who destroyed a shrine marking the birth of the Hindu warrior god Ram.

Girl abducted from Comilla rescued in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 12-year-old girl abducted from Comilla four days ago was rescued by police from a house at Tilapara in Khilgaon of the city yesterday and the alleged abductor was arrested.

Police sources said the abductor, Abdul Malek, also raped the girl and kept her confined in the house for trafficking.

Khilgaon police filed a case and produced Malek in the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, seeking a seven-day remand. The court placed him on remand for two days.

Acting on a tip off, police conducted a pre-dawn raid at the house and found the girl locked in a room. They rescued her and nabbed Malek.

The girl told police Malek picked her from Burichang bus stand in Comilla on September 29 when she was waiting for a bus to go to her sister's house. "He wanted to take me to my sister's house and I trusted him. But he brought me here without my knowledge," police quoted the girl as saying.

The girl also told police Malek raped her thrice during her confinement.

Meanwhile, locals caught two women and a girl when they tried to enter Malek's den at around 10:00am yesterday and handed them over to police.

The three were identified as Fuleman, Fatema and 15-year-old girl Runa.

Questioned by police, Fuleman said she is a garment worker. Malek asked her to bring some women and girls looking for job in garment factories and she was taking Fatema and Runa to him as they were in need of job.

Police said Malek was engaged in trafficking women and children.

DU teacher

FROM PAGE 1

to recruit professors.

Chairman of sociology department Prof Qamrul Ahsan Chowdhury said: "We have recruited lecturers on the basis of merit and their viva voce performance and not in political or other considerations."

The VC said the university authorities did not violate any rule in recruiting lecturers of sociology.

Earlier, an assistant professor at the department was recruited reportedly ignoring candidates with better academic records. The professor, reportedly a four-party alliance adherent, has second class both in BSS and MSS, sources said.