

Today High: 55 Low: 50 Precip: 30%	Tuesday High: 57 Low: 41 Precip: 80%	Wednesday High: 56 Low: 37 Precip: 20%
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bare wall of a room in an undisclosed location. The three answered questions from someone who is speaking to them in broken English from off camera.

Urugain election results suggest regional shift

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay — Leftist candidate Tabare Vazquez declared victory in Uruguay's presidential election Sunday after exit polls showed him surging past two rivals with a majority of the votes, apparently aligning this small South American country with a region-wide political shift leftward.

Victory for the 64-year-old Vazquez, who would become the first leftist president in Uruguayan history, would add the nation to Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela as countries where leftist or center-left leaders came to power on public disenchantment with financial turmoil and with U.S.-backed free-market economic policies.

— The Associated Press

IN BRIEF

Captives in Afghanistan plead for release

KABUL, Afghanistan — Militants released a video Sunday showing three frightened foreign U.N. hostages pleading for their release and threatened to kill them unless U.N. and British troops leave Afghanistan and Muslim prisoners are freed from U.S. jails. In the tape, the hostages — Annetta Flanagan of Northern Ireland, Filipino diplomat Angelito Nayan and Shqipe Habibi of Kosovo — are shown sitting hunched together against the

Chechen warlord says war against Russia a possibility

Shamil Basayev, who admits he is responsible for past terror attacks, seeks to 'defend freedom' through war

BY MARA D. BELLABY
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW — Chechen warlord Shamil Basayev, who claimed responsibility for last month's Beslan school hostage-taking, warned Sunday that he was ready to fight Russia for a decade and insisted civilians remained a fair target.

But Basayev also said the rebels would observe "international law" if Russia also made such a commitment. The Chechens have accused the Russians of human rights violations and war crimes.

"If (President Vladimir) Putin doesn't want peace, we'll wait until he leaves or if we can we'll send him directly to hell," Basayev said in an interview published on Chechenpress.com, a Chechen Web site. "Five years of war have gone quickly, another five or ten years will go just as fast."

Basayev has claimed responsibility for some of the most audacious

terror attacks inside Russia, including the Sept. 1-3 hostage-taking in North Ossetia, which left more than 330 people dead, half of them children. The Federal Security Service has offered a reward of \$10.3 million for information that could help "neutralize" him.

The interview dated from Oct. 14 featured Basayev's responses to e-mail questions posed by Toronto's Globe and Mail newspaper to another Chechen Web site, the site said. There was no way to independently confirm the authenticity of the interview.

"Our aim isn't to kill people, especially children, but to stop the genocide of the Chechen people and defend freedom and independence," Basayev reportedly wrote. "Therefore, we are forced to resort to extremes, which we are not ourselves happy with."

Basayev said that "if Putin would begin to observe international law, then we would automatically begin to observe it." He added that such a

move would "even be advantageous for us," but stressed the rebels wouldn't do that "unilaterally."

He also insisted that most Chechen rebels fight independently in small groups and organize their own financing, saying that his presence in Chechnya was rarely required. In 2003, Basayev said he was only in Chechnya for two weeks "and the majority of the mujahadeen didn't even notice."

Meanwhile, a car bomb exploded Sunday outside the Chechen capital's main hospital, injuring 17 people in an attack that apparently targeted members of a Chechen security force bringing their wounded for treatment after an earlier explosion, officials said.

The first explosion struck a vehicle carrying the Chechen security troops on a highway in the outskirts of the capital, Grozny, Federal Security Service spokesman Maj. Gen. Ilya Shabalkin said on Russia's NTV television.

Then, as the injured were being taken into Grozny's hospital No. 9, a second car exploded outside the building, he said.

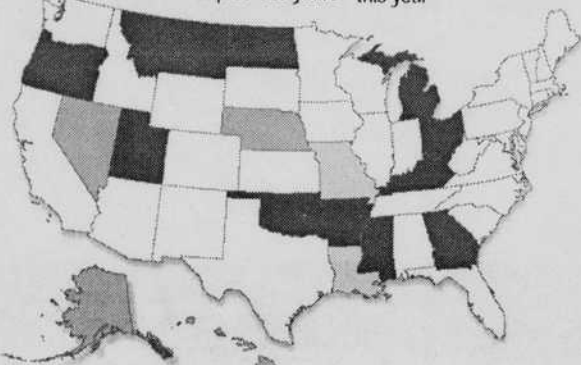
ELECTION 2004

States to decide on gay marriage

Eleven states have proposed state constitutional amendments prohibiting same-sex marriage on their Nov. 2 ballots. Gay marriage is not legal in the states where the issue is on the ballot, but amendment supporters want to guard against future court rulings.

State constitutional amendments banning same-sex marriage

Will vote Nov. 2 Adopted in previous years Adopted this year



Tehran's atomic activities continue with passage of bill

The government will resume uranium enrichment, although pressure to suspend the process grows

BY ALI AKBAR DAREINI
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEHRAN, Iran — Defiant lawmakers shouting "Death to America" unanimously voted Sunday to approve the outline of a bill requiring the government to resume uranium enrichment, a move likely to deepen an international dispute over Tehran's atomic activities.

Nevertheless, Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Hossein Mousavian, told The Associated Press in an exclusive interview that a compromise could still be reached with

European negotiators to avert the risk of U.N. sanctions.

Britain, France and Germany have offered Iran a trade deal and peaceful nuclear technology — including a light-water research reactor — in return for assurances Iran would indefinitely stop enriching uranium. Uranium enriched to a low level can be used to produce nuclear fuel, but if enriched further it can be used to make nuclear weapons.

While lawmakers were discussing the bill, Mousavian ruled out an indefinite suspension of enrichment

activities. But he suggested Iran would consider halting the building of more nuclear facilities, which it would need to produce enough fuel for additional power plants.

Washington has accused Iran of trying to build atomic weapons and has pushed for the case to be referred to the U.N. Security Council for possible sanctions if Tehran doesn't give up all uranium-enrichment activities before a Nov. 25 meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog.

"I see the chance of a compromise before November as 50-50," Mousavian told the AP.

"We have rejected two possibilities:

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