




Today	Tuesday	Wednesday
		
High: 60 Low: 45 Precip: 10%	High: 56 Low: 44 Precip: 30%	High: 58 Low: 42 Precip: 10%

## IN BRIEF

## Stable Iraq tops voter priorities in new poll

WASHINGTON D.C. — As President Bush mulls what to do after winning re-election, voters say his first priority should be resolving the situation in Iraq, where the fighting is growing more intense. They also want Bush to cut the deficit, which ballooned under his watch, rather than pushing for more tax cuts, according to an Associated Press poll taken right after the election. The voters' concerns stood in contrast to the priorities Bush cited after he defeated Democrat John Kerry. Bush pledged to aggressively pursue major changes in Social Security, tax laws and medical malpractice awards. Terrorism was a chief concern both for Bush and many voters in the poll.

## Macedonians vote on local Albanian autonomy

SKOPJE, Macedonia — Macedonia's peace process was at a crossroads Sunday as voters cast ballots in

a referendum on whether to grant local autonomy to the country's ethnic Albanians or risk undermining a peace pact with the restive minority.

Voters were considering whether to annul a law that redrew districts in the Balkan republic and made the ethnic Albanians a dominant force in 16 out of 84 districts — effectively granting them a large degree of self-rule.

Parliament approved the law in August as part of a Western-brokered peace deal signed by the government and Albanian rebels three years ago. But the measure angered Macedonian hard-liners, who forced Sunday's referendum in a bid to block the reform.

The government, the United States and European countries have called for the defeat of the referendum, saying that revoking the law could destabilize the country and undermine Macedonia's chances of joining the European Union and NATO.

## Palestinians flying to Arafat's side

JERUSALEM — With Yasser Arafat fighting for his life in a French hospital, his top lieutenants will fly to Paris for consultations with his doctors, a senior official said Sunday, as Palestinian leaders worked to set up contingency plans in the event of the 75-year-old leader's death. Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia or PLO deputy Mahmoud Abbas — or possibly both — will go to France on Monday, said Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath, who was also going on the trip.

— The Associated Press

## Iran, European agreement to prevent nuclear dispute

*Preliminary bill banning Iran's production of nuclear weapons may be finalized by Wednesday*

BY ALI AKBAR DAREINI  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEHRAN, Iran — Hoping to avoid a U.N. showdown, Iran and the European Union's three big powers reached a preliminary agreement over Tehran's nuclear program, Iran's chief negotiator said Sunday.

Meanwhile, lawmakers in Iran's conservative-dominated parliament pushed for a bill banning the production of nuclear weapons, a gesture to build more international trust.

The preliminary agreement worked out in Paris with Britain, France and Germany could be finalized in the next few days, chief Iranian negotiator Hossein Mousavian told state-run Iranian television from the French capital, where talks wrapped up Saturday.

If approved, the deal would be a major breakthrough after months of threats and negotiations and could spare Iran from being taken before the U.N. Security Council, where the United States has warned it would seek to impose economic sanctions unless Tehran gives up all uranium enrichment activities, a

technology that can produce nuclear fuel or atomic weapons.

Diplomats in Austria familiar with the talks' outcome declined to discuss details. "One or two points remain outstanding, and they hope to resolve those outstanding points by Wednesday," one diplomat in Austria said.

In proposals to Iran last month, Britain, Germany and France offered a trade deal and peaceful nuclear technology, including a light-water research reactor, if Iran pledged to indefinitely suspend uranium enrichment and related activities such as reprocessing uranium and building centrifuges used to enrich it.

Europe and Washington fear Iran is trying to build nuclear weapons, but Tehran denies such claims, saying its atomic program has peaceful aims, including energy production.

"We had 22 hours of negotiations ... They were very difficult and complicated negotiations but we reached a preliminary agreement at the expert level," Mousavian said. He said the four countries must now ask their governments to approve

the accord.

The preliminary agreement appeared to mark a dramatic breakthrough, since Iranian officials have resisted indefinite or long-term suspension of nuclear enrichment, a process that Iran is permitted to pursue under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which Tehran has signed.

While not being in breach of the treaty, Iran is under heavy international pressure to drop such plans as a good faith gesture.

"If this is approved by all four parties, we will witness an important change in Iran's relations with Europe and much of the international community in (the) not-too-distant future," Mousavian said without elaborating on the agreement.

The Europeans had warned Iran that they will back Washington's threat to refer the Islamic republic to the U.N. Security Council for possible sanctions unless it gives up all uranium enrichment activities before a Nov. 25 meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna.

Tehran suspended uranium enrichment last year but has refused to stop other related activities, insisting its program is intended purely for the production of fuel for nuclear power generation.

## Russian protesters celebrate Bolshevik Revolution

*Thousands celebrate communist history, support authoritarian Belarus leader; several arrested*

BY MARA D. BELLABY  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW — Carrying the Soviet hammer-and-sickle flag and singing as they marched, Russians marked the anniversary of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution on Sunday in both a celebration of Soviet times and a protest against a parliamentary proposal to scrap a once-revered Soviet holiday.

At least 8,000 Communist Party backers and members of the ultra-nationalist National Bolshevik party

gathered at a square once named for Vladimir Lenin and marched across Moscow toward a statue of Karl Marx. They bore a giant portrait of Lenin and banners proclaiming "U.S.S.R. — our Homeland."

In Red Square, veterans wearing World War II military coats marched in formation, retracing the steps they took in 1941 when Soviets defiantly celebrated Revolution Day in spite of the Nazi forces massed 33 miles outside Moscow.

Some pro-Kremlin lawmakers have proposed replacing the Nov. 7 holiday with a new holiday on Nov. 4 to be called National Unity Day. Russia's lower house of parliament, the State Duma, is expected to consider the measure Wednesday in the first of three required votes.

"This day was and will be a landmark event, and its celebration cannot be abolished," Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov said. "People suffered for this holiday, and no one has the right to trample on our history."

Some chanted, "America, hands off Lukashenko!" a show of support for the authoritarian leader of neighboring

Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, who has resurrected Soviet-era symbols and institutions and honored now-disgraced Soviet-era officials. The United States has accused Lukashenko of human rights violations and threatened Belarus with sanctions.

Young protesters, wearing masks, stomped on the flag of the pro-Kremlin United Russia party and tried to burn it in Chelyabinsk, about 950 miles east of Moscow. Police arrested several of the protesters.

In the Siberian city of Tomsk, Communist Party members carried posters reading, "Hands off Nov. 7!" the Interfax news agency reported.

A poll of 1,500 Russians found that

77 percent opposed scrapping the Nov. 7 holiday. The poll had a margin of error of 3 percent.

The holiday was also marked in other former Soviet republics. Three hundred elderly people rallied in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, the only country in former Soviet Central Asia that has preserved both the holiday and a statue of Lenin on one of the capital's main squares.

About 1,000 Ukrainians also marked the Soviet holiday, but some bystanders were cynical.

"Those who make revolutions don't like to work," said Oksana Levina, a businesswoman in Kiev. "The principle of equality kills all initiative."

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