

Sharon says deal with Arafat may be possible

By The Associated Press INTERNATIONAL

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon says that for the first time in nearly two years of fighting, he sees the possibility of a negotiated deal with the Palestinians because many of them are souring on violence.

Sharon's statement came just hours after Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat accused Israel of crimes against humanity for expelling two people from the West Bank to Gaza on Wednesday. The two are relatives of a Palestinian explosives expert accused by Israel of sending suicide bombers into Tel Aviv. Today, police said they discovered a car bomb containing 1,350 pounds of explosives — one of the biggest ever — that had been brought into northern Israel from the West Bank. The car bomb was detonated in an open space and no injuries were reported.

David Baker, an official at the prime minister's office, said the car bombing was probably planned to coincide with

around the world

the Jewish New Year, which begins at sunset on Friday.

Sharon has ruled out talks with Arafat, charging that he has encouraged militants to attack Israel. However, Sharon said he could talk to "Palestinians who have reached the conclusion that by terrorism nothing can be achieved."

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — President Gen. Pervez Musharraf says there's no need for U.S. troops to pursue al-Qaida and Taliban fugitives into Pakistan because the Pakistani army can handle them.

Musharraf acknowledged in an interview with The Associated Press that there were "pockets" of al-Qaida elements not only along the border with Afghanistan but also in Pakistan's teeming cities.

"But we are searching and combing the area," he said Wednesday. He added that Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida movement had established links with Pakistani extremist groups.

Still, U.S. troops should not expand the hunt for al-Qaida into his country, he said. "There is no need of it," he said. "There are (Pakistani) forces here. The army is deployed."

NATIONAL

LOS ANGELES — So the big question: How does it feel to be an instant American Idol?

"I feel a little bit of everything — anxious, excited ..." Kelly Clarkson said after she was selected as the nation's newest pop star Wednesday on the Fox reality show "American Idol."

Less than an hour after claiming the honor, the 20-year-old Texan clenches her hands trying to catalog the other

emotions in her head. Finally, she gives up and just grins until her eyes pinch shut.

Based on the results of more than 15 million telephone votes, Clarkson beat Justin Guarini, the 23-year-old pompom-haired heartthrob from Doylestown, Pa.

The contest began with 10,000 entrants vying for a prize that many singers work years for — a recording contract, a professional manager and the opportunity to perform in front of millions of people.

In the early stages, entrants were eliminated by the thousands, then by the dozens until only 10 remained. Along the way, the Fox series became the television hit of the summer, particularly among young viewers.

The Texas cocktail waitress, who is now signed with RCA Records and managed by 19 Management, said she and Guarini are planning to write a song together and sing it as a duet for her as-yet-untitled album, which is set

for release Nov. 26.

LOS ANGELES — Dozens of buildings were in ruins as two Southern California wildfires burned across 20,000 acres, and authorities closely watched major power lines near one of the blazes.

Hundreds of residents and campers were forced to flee.

Rugged canyons and ridges, tinder-dry chaparral and windy weather with temperatures above 100 frustrated efforts to control the blazes and both remained out of control Wednesday.

A new count showed a fire in the Angeles National Forest above Azusa destroyed 72 buildings, including 50 vacation cabins and a century-old ranger station, U.S. Forest Service spokesman Ed Gilliland said Wednesday.

The 15,800-acre fire 30 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles had shut down two main power lines and California's power grid managers were

watching a third line closely.

However, "it doesn't look like outages in California are likely," said Gregg Fishman, a spokesman for the California Independent System Operator.

In northern Los Angeles County, a fire near Leona Valley had destroyed five homes, and residents of about 100 others had been evacuated and were not allowed to return Wednesday.

WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration is planning a small-scale test program of arming commercial pilots, reversing its previous opposition to guns in the cockpit.

The administration plan is expected to be modeled on proposals that circulated in Congress this summer, such as one that would have armed as many as 1,400 pilots — or about 2 percent of those flying.

One government official, said the administration was on the brink of announcing the decision.

Don't worry, be happy, live longer

LIVING, from Page 1

Research about aging in 1975, and then examined how their responses predicted their survival up to 23 years later.

The study, published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, was financed by the National Institute on Aging.

Researchers found respondents with more positive views on aging live longer, even after taking into account factors such as age, gender, socio-economic status, functional health, self-reported health and loneliness.

"The median survival of those in the more positive self-perceptions of aging group was seven and a half years longer than those in the more negative perceptions," Kunkel said.

The attitudes on aging had a greater impact on life span than lower body mass index, not smoking and regular exercise — each of which extends life by one to three years.

"Our study carries two messages," said Dr. Becca Levy, a researcher at

Yale University and the study's lead author. "The discouraging one is that negative self-perceptions can diminish life expectancy; the encouraging one is that positive self-perceptions can prolong life expectancy."

But Richard Suzman, associate director for behavioral and social research for the National Institute on Aging, said while a positive self-perception helps, it should not replace living right — or encourage anyone to keep smoking.

"Any notion that positive thinking is more powerful than not smoking ... there just isn't evidence of that," he said. "There is enormous clinical evidence to show the value of not smoking and exercising."

The researchers found that the will to live accounts for some of the relationship between positive self-perceptions of aging and survival, but does not completely account for difference in longevity.

Levy's earlier research at Yale's Department of Epidemiology and Public Health has shown cardiovascular

response to stress can be adversely affected when elderly persons are exposed to negative stereotypes of aging.

The new study said stereotypes about aging are acquired decades before the person becomes old and are therefore rarely questioned.

"Once individuals become older, they may lack the defenses of other groups to ward off the impact of negative stereotypes on self-perceptions," the report said.

Kunkel said the study offers a strong message about life.

"There is nothing we can do about aging," she said. "It's like sitting in traffic when you're late. The natural response is to get very stressed about the situation. The other choice is to not get upset and think about how to deal with the consequences of being late."

The key is learning how to see a situation for what it is, she said, and to give it no more power than it needs to have.

"We enter later adulthood with our habitual ways of dealing with stress," she added. "People need to learn new strategies to deal with it."

Three burglaries reported since school starts

Since classes started at the Northwest Kansas Technical College at the end of August, there have been at least three burglaries involving the school or its students.

Between 3 p.m. Friday, Aug. 23, and 7 a.m. Monday, Aug. 26, somebody broke into student Kayeb M. Brzon's home at 311 W. 12th, police reported, and got away with about \$1,645 in property.

The 23-year-old lost a tool kit from the school worth \$925, a PlayStation 2 video game system, memory card and two games, a Jars of Clay compact disk, 10 DVDs, a personal tool kit and a compact disk burner for a personal computer.

Student James D. Hickert, 18, reported someone broke into his apartment at 208 E. 13th Street between 6:45 a.m. and 11:20 p.m. Friday. He lost a PlayStation console, four games including Grand Theft Auto III, Grand Theft Tourisma III, Blitz 2003, and Soul Rever 2, a memory card about \$60 in cash. The property was estimated at \$440.

Between 6:30 p.m. Friday and 6:55 a.m. Saturday, someone broke two windows with rocks at the Communications Technology building at the college and stole a sundial and an exit sign. Instructor Derrick Reiley reported the damage and theft, estimated at \$950.

Battle over courthouse statue not yet over

TOPEKA (AP)—A battle over placing a statue depicting a Kansa Indian atop the Statehouse isn't over, even though the work is nearing completion.

State officials expect that the 21-foot, 3-ton statue, called "Ad Astra," will be lowered by crane onto the tower atop the Statehouse dome early next month.

Most of the project's \$614,000 cost comes from putting additional steel beams inside the dome to support the

statue.

A Topeka legislator has raised a new legal issue, questioning whether Gov. Bill Graves had the authority to veto a provision in a budget bill that would have barred state funding on the project. With the veto, the project went ahead.

Officials from the Department of Administration took reporters and photographers on an hour-long tour of the dome Wednesday.

The group climbed 306 steps from the base of the dome to the lantern and crawled through a maze of scaffolding and metal beams to reach an outside balcony.

Some also climbed a metal ladder to scaffolding at the very top.

The state commissioned the statue by Salina sculptor Richard Bergen in 1988, but the cost of the dome work and legislators' objections have held up completion.

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