

By **Pratul Sharma** in New Delhi

HOLLYWOOD action star Arnold Schwarzenegger used his maiden India visit to generate awareness about his latest pet cause — the environment.

Addressing the 12th Delhi Sustainable Development Summit, the former California governor said he wished to instill in people a similar enthusiasm for environment as he had earlier done for body-building.

"As a 15-year-old, I went into body-building and won many titles. But, I did not let it remain an individual interest and worked for the larger good... It (body building) was my crusade then, this (environment) is my crusade now," he said.

Schwarzenegger shared the dais with a host of dignitaries, including Delhi chief minister Sheila Dikshit, Himachal Pradesh CM Prem Kumar Dhumal, Assam CM Tarun Gogoi, scientist Rajendra Pachauri, and former French parliamentarian Marie Helene Aubert.

The *Terminator* star exhorted people to adopt a greener way of life without waiting for a global initiative or agreement. "Kyoto 1 or Kyoto 2, we should not wait for it. It's good if they come about, but we should

Arnie talks green & clean in 'English with an accent'

move forward. It is great to hope but I would not wait. Everyone has to participate... do not hesitate," he said.

Schwarzenegger cited the examples of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela to emphasise how grassroots initiatives had led to major revolutions across the world.

"All the powerful movements in human history, be it America's war of independence, the fight against Apartheid, or even India's freedom struggle — all began at grassroots levels. They did not wait for the higher ups, they were all started at the grassroots, by the likes of Gandhi and Mandela.

"Gandhi used the spinning wheel and wanted India to be self-sufficient. The wheel denotes motion. Don't wait. Never stop moving," he said.

Schwarzenegger added that he had to go to extreme lengths to get his children to

start taking the cause of energy conservation and environment seriously. "I told my children to switch off the lights after they leave the room. I told them if they didn't, I would remove all the bulbs. Once when they realised all the bulbs had been removed, they learnt their lesson."

The actor further talked about how he had adapted his love for cars to suit the environment. The first person to own the energy-guzzling military vehicle Hummer, Schwarzenegger immediately replaced the bio-fuel engine with a hydrogen one.

"It's not the big car but the technology used in it that matters," he told the audience.

He said the prohibitive costs of solar panels and electric cars were only temporary, citing the example of the mobile phone, the prices of which have reduced drastically with the increase in usage.



NAVEEN JORA

WHAT AN IDEA! Arnold Schwarzenegger at Delhi Sustainable Development summit.

Later in the evening, Schwarzenegger presented the Green Global award to Abhishek Bachchan, for his contribution to the cause.

When asked about his experience so far in the country, Schwarzenegger quipped: "It's lovely to be here, where I am not the only one who speaks English with an accent."