

13 killed in Mosul bomb attack

AFP, Mosul
The death toll from a suicide car bomb attack against the main police headquarters in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul rose to 13 on yesterday, police said.

Four more people succumbed to their injuries following the Monday night bombing in the centre of Mosul, Iraq's third largest city, police Colonel Saad al-Juburi said.

He said 45 people were injured following the bombing which was the worst in the northern province of Nineveh since security forces began a crackdown against insurgents on May 14.

Interior ministry spokesman Major General Abdul Kareem Khalaf said security forces were pursuing their operations against Al-Qaeda operatives in the region and sought public support to smoke out the insurgents from their hideouts.

Mosul, the capital of the Nineveh province, which shares a border with Syria, is regarded by US commanders as the jihadists' last urban bastion.

S Korea won't import old beef from US

AFP, Seoul

President Lee Myung-Bak announced yesterday that South Korea will not accept imports of US beef from cattle more than 30 months old as he negotiates his biggest test yet since taking office 100 days ago.

After protests that have brought thousands of people onto the streets over fears of mad cow disease, the government imposed the limit as a condition for resuming beef imports, which have been intermittently banned for years.

The move risks a stand-off with Washington, but may ease public anger which has seen Lee's popularity ratings tumble by half since he took power pledging to reactivate the sluggish economy.

"It is natural for the government not to import US beef from cattle older than 30 months, if the people are concerned and the majority of the people do not want it," Lee was quoted as saying by a spokesman.

"The people's trust in the government has weakened seriously because of this issue," he told a meeting of cabinet ministers.

South Korea lifted its intermittent ban on US beef imports last week as it struggles to ratify a sweeping free trade agreement with the world's biggest economy.

It had imported some 850 million dollars worth of US beef a year before the ban was imposed for the first time in 2003.

Obama eyes history as final primaries loom

Bill Clinton terms Obama's press coverage as "the most biased in history"

AFP, Washington

Democrat Barack Obama stood on the brink of history yesterday, within reach of becoming America's first black presidential nominee after a twisting, emotional and divisive battle with Hillary Clinton.

As voters in the last two states, Montana and South Dakota, wrapped up the gruelling coast-to-coast Democratic nominating marathon, Hillary faced the demise of her own historic quest to be the first woman president.

The only questions remaining in the Democratic race were whether Obama would reach the mathematical winning post of 2,118 delegates by late Tuesday and whether Clinton would formally fold her campaign and endorse her fierce rival.

Regardless, Illinois Senator Obama, 46, planned to train his full fire on potential general election rival John McCain, with a daring foray into the same Minnesota sports arena where Republicans will crown their nominee in September.

Hillary was meanwhile headed back to her home state in New York, prompting speculation she would abandon her campaign, which has garnered nearly 17 million votes, at a "celebration" event in Manhattan on Tuesday night.

Former president Bill Clinton perhaps foreshadowed his departure from this campaign trail, after two White House terms and his wife's gruelling campaign, with a vaudeville tone in South Dakota.

"I thought I was out of politics, till Hillary decided to run. But it has been

one of the greatest honors of my life to be able to go around and campaign for her for president," he added.

He issued one last parting shot however, saying his wife's campaign had been subject to "the most biased press coverage in history," according to recorded remarks posted on the Huffington Post website.

But aides traveling with Hillary Clinton played down reports that she would exit the race later on Tuesday, even as other signs pointed to a conference between Clinton and top advisors at her New York home.

"Tomorrow is the last day of the primaries and the beginning of a new phase in the campaign," Hillary said, according to the Washington Post.

The Illinois senator picked up

4.5 superdelegate votes on Monday to Clinton's two, while James Clyburn, a hugely influential African-American leader and major force in Congress, was due to follow on Tuesday.

Obama was just 42.5 delegates short of the 2,118 now needed to capture the nomination, after a contentious deal was thrashed out on Saturday over the renegade primaries in Florida and Michigan.

A total of 31 delegates was available in Tuesday's contests.

Rumors circulated that other superdelegates would endorse him en masse on Tuesday or early Wednesday.

Obama said he felt "that between Tuesday and Wednesday, that we've got a good chance of getting the number that we need to win the nomination."

Iran blames west for surge in food prices

AFP, Rome

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad accused western countries yesterday of acting to devalue the dollar, fueling a surge in oil and food prices.

"It is clear that visible and invisible hands are working to control prices to achieve their political and economic aims," he said in a speech to a food crisis summit in Rome.

Separately he called for the food crisis to be tackled outside of the UN system, accusing western powers of imposing their will on the UN Security Council.

"How can UN mechanisms improve the situation when certain powers impose their decisions on the Security Council, using it as an instrument," he told summit participants including some 50 world leaders.

Ahmadinejad joined leaders including the presidents of Brazil, France, Argentina, Egypt and Iran at the Rome conference at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization.

The Iranian president also

slammed Israel. Ahmadinejad said Europeans suffered the "biggest damage" from the "artificial regime" of Israel, on his arrival in Rome for a UN food agency summit.

"Europeans have suffered the biggest damage from the Zionists and today the weight of this artificial regime, both political and economic, is on Europe's shoulders," he said, according to Telenev agency.

Italian activists, leftist politicians and Jewish groups have already protested against his presence at the summit, saying it was a disgrace to host someone who has repeatedly predicted Israel's disappearance.

The Iranian president predicted on Monday that Muslims would uproot "satanic powers" and repeated his controversial belief that Israel will soon disappear.

He said he would be holding talks with "world leaders" on the sidelines of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) summit on food security, but did not specify which ones.

Khamenei warns of 'Western plot'

AFP, Tehran

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei yesterday warned Iranian youths that the nation's Western enemies were seeking to weaken them with plots aimed at spreading sexual depravity and drug addiction.

"Today, combating organised plots pushing the Iranian youth towards carnal desires, drugs or sexuality is a prime duty of the Iranian people and especially the young," Khamenei said in a speech broadcast on state television.

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Tuesday vehemently rejected charges Tehran was seeking a nuclear weapon, amid mounting concern from the UN atomic agency about the Iranian atomic drive.

Meanwhile Khamenei has vehemently rejected charges that Iran is seeking a nuclear bomb.

"The Iranian nation is not seeking a nuclear weapon," Khamenei said in the live broadcast to mark the anniversary of the death in 1989 of revolutionary leader Ayatollah

Ruhollah Khomeini. "We are seeking nuclear energy for peaceful purposes for daily use and we will continue this path to the envy of our enemies. We will mightily achieve this aim," he added.

Khamenei warned that Iran's youth needed to be hard-working and innovative in order for the country to achieve progress and its enemies were plotting to distract them through sex and drugs.

Iranian officials openly admit there is a serious drug abuse problem in the country, which is situated along one of the main trafficking routes for cannabis, heroin, opium and morphine produced in Afghanistan.

Out of 2,500 tonnes of narcotics that enter Iran from neighbouring Afghanistan annually, some 700 tonnes are consumed in the country, officials say.

Designer drugs have also found their way into the Iranian market in recent years.

Khamenei described the fight against drugs in Iran as a "great jihad and a fundamental task in the progress of the Iranian nation."

Syria blasts Israel, US over nuclear claims

AFP, Damascus

Syria's official press lashed out at the United States and Israel yesterday over claims it was building a secret nuclear reactor, and said the Jewish state's own atomic facilities should be subject to international inspection.

UN nuclear watchdog chief Mohamed ElBaradei said on Monday that his inspectors would this month visit the site of the suspected reactor that was bombed by Israeli warplanes in September last year.

The site at Al-Kibar was attacked after Israeli and US intelligence concluded it was a partly constructed nuclear reactor, but the Syrians have denied the allegations.

"The American and Israeli claims are false. Instead, Israel should be called on to submit its own nuclear installations to international inspection so at least we know how many nuclear weapons it possesses," Syria's official Ath-

Thawra newspaper said in an editorial.

Israel is widely believed to be the only nuclear armed power in the Middle East but has a policy of neither confirming nor denying its arsenal and is not a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

On Monday, ElBaradei criticised Israel for attacking the site before the International Atomic Energy Agency had a chance to inspect it, and the United States for waiting until April to pass on intelligence alleging that the reactor had a military purpose and was built with North Korea's help.

He said his inspectors will visit the site in northeastern Syria from June 22 to 24, adding: "I look forward to Syria's full cooperation in this matter."

US intelligence on Al-Kibar included photographs taken inside the reactor showing construction of the shield for the reactor core, and control rods and refueling ports on top of the reactor.



Argentina's President Cristina Kirchner waves to photographers as she arrives at the three-day summit on food security at UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Rome yesterday.

Advertisement for Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Ltd. (PGCB) regarding an invitation for bids for power transformers.

INVITATION FOR BIDS FOR THE DESIGN, SUPPLY, DELIVERY & INSTALLATION OF POWER TRANSFORMER AND CURRENT TRANSFORMER FOR 132KV GRID SYSTEM

- 1. The Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Ltd. ("the Employer") invites sealed bids for design, supply, delivery, installation, testing & commissioning of 9 (nine) nos of 50/75MVA, 132/33kV power transformers and 27 (twenty seven) nos. of 132kV & 27 (twenty seven) nos. of 33kV current transformers at 132kV Grid System as defined in the bidding document (hereinafter referred to as "the Works").

The Bidder (who is the manufacturer of power transformer) has the experience to manufacture 50/75MVA, 110kV or higher capacity & higher voltage power transformer within the last 10 (ten) years.

- 2. The Bidder must meet the following criteria: i. The Bidder has experience that he has completed supply, delivery, installation and testing & commissioning at least one 15/20MVA & 110kV or higher capacity and higher voltage power transformer over the last 10 (ten) years.

Directorate General Defence Purchase advertisement for a 5th Time Tender for Caps Water Proof Nylon.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Navy recruitment exam (আইএসএসবি পরীক্ষা) for various ranks.

(Mohammed Salim) Company Secretary