



British Prime Minister Gordon Brown (L) prepares to chair a Cabinet meeting inside 10 Downing Street in central London yesterday, the first since his cabinet reshuffle last Friday.

Brown wins respite as he faces down party rebels

AFP, London

Emboldened British Prime Minister Gordon Brown sought yesterday to draw a line under his most tumultuous week since taking office after facing down angry rebels who threatened to oust him.

A smiling Brown gathered his newly reshuffled cabinet for its first weekly meeting, having survived a showdown with his own Labour Party's lawmakers in the wake of two humiliating poll defeats.

But while he has defused an attempted rebellion this time, he remains vulnerable and could face renewed calls to go from party critics fearing a poll wipeout in general elections due within a year, commentators say.

Key cabinet colleagues rallied round Brown after Monday night's meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP), insisting he is the best man to help the country recover from economic crisis.

"The Labour Party does not

want a new leader, there is no challenger, there is no challenger," Foreign Secretary David Miliband, who had been tipped as a possible challenger to Brown last year, told the BBC.

After seven turbulent days which have seen 11 ministers resign, reports of an attempted coup and historic drubbings in local and European elections, Brown promised at Monday's PLP meeting to fight on but said Labour must reunite.

Training on Technical Report Writing for Government Officials Requests for Proposals

Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) seeks a qualified Bangladeshi organization or individual to provide training on technical report writing to Bangladesh Government officials. This work will be contracted under the USAID-funded Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency and Integrity (PROGATI) Project. Organizations or individuals that previously submitted proposals on this subject must submit new proposals to be considered for this assignment.

Objective. To increase the technical writing skills of government officials and the quality of reports written in government offices involved in expenditure auditing and oversight.

Tasks. The selected organization/individual will complete the following tasks:

- Needs assessment of training participants;
- Develop training curriculum and materials;
- Conduct training courses for a total of 50 participants. The training should occur in three phases with each phase an estimated 12 hours of instruction.

Proposals. Interested organizations/individuals should submit proposals including the following information [maximum 8 pages]:

1. Cover letter, with address details, contact information and contact person [1 page].
2. Organizational profile, including management structure and staff expertise in related areas of work [3 pages].
3. Qualifications, presenting similar project undertaken as lead firm in last five years, include information on task and outputs client reference information, and period of engagement [1 page].
4. Method and technical approach, describing how you will conduct the required tasks and including explanation of roles and responsibilities of all persons proposed for the work [3 pages].
5. Present a detailed timeline for completing the tasks noted above.
6. Provide clear and detailed budget estimates for all labor, travel and material costs necessary to complete all tasks [not included in proposal page limits].

Proposals will be assessed on both technical and cost proposals. Do not include attachments or promotional documents with your submission. Note that this enlistment does not in any way commit DAI to enter into contact or partnership with any organization.

Electronic submissions are encouraged, and should be sent to progateo@yahoo.com with "Technical Report Writing" in the subject line. Written submission should be delivered to House 54/A, Road 16, Block A, Banani, Dhaka in sealed envelope addressed to "PROGATI Grants Manager". All submissions are due by 14:00 hours on 21 June 2009. Only short listed organizations/individuals will be contacted.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Agriculture
Soil Resource Development Institute
Food Security Programme-2006, Soil Fertility Component Project
House 817, Road 4, Baitul Aman Housing Society
Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207

Memo No. Mritika/Food Security/CFP/7-1/390

Date: 10th June 2009

Local publication for Call for Proposals

Soil Fertility Component Grants Scheme
Publication reference: FOOD/2009/159355

The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh through the Ministry of Agriculture is seeking proposals from organizations, which have the capacity to provide the following services:

1. Soil Management
2. Crop diversification
3. Improved seed and planting materials
4. Access to balanced diets for women and children.

The services will be provided to 50,000 small, poor and marginal farmers in 50 upazilas from 31 districts. The work will be divided into 6 lots, one for each of 6 agro-ecologically disadvantaged areas of Bangladesh (Coastal Zone, Active flood plains and Charlands, Haor area, Piedmont Plains, Peat basin, and Hilly areas).

A seventh lot (Lot 7) provides management support to the Project Task Force in monitoring and disseminating the results of the programme.

Financial assistance is provided by the European Commission under their Food Security Programme 2006.

The full Guidelines for Applicants are available for consultation at Food Security Programme 2006, Soil Fertility Component Project, Ministry of Agriculture, Bangladesh, and on the following Internet sites: www.eueebangladesh.org and www.fssfc.gov.bd.

The deadline for submission of proposals is 8th of September 2009 at 12.00 hours local time. An information session on this call for proposals will be held on 25th of June 2009. Interested applicants are requested to contact FS-SFC office for further information.

Sd/-
Khandker Moyeenuddin
Project Director
FS-SFC
Phone 02 8110944.

US frees Iraqi linked to killing of 5 soldiers

AP, Baghdad

The US military has released a Shia militant accused of being involved in the 2007 killing of five American soldiers, officials said Tuesday.

Laith al-Khazali's release comes amid reports of negotiations with his militia group to free at least one of five British hostages.

Al-Khazali and his brother Qais, who were both detained in March 2007, are accused of organizing a bold raid on a local government headquarters in Karbala that killed five US soldiers on Jan. 20, 2007.

US wants ME talks to start soon, end quickly: Mitchell

AFP, Jerusalem

Washington wants the stalled Middle East peace talks to resume soon and wrap up quickly, US envoy George Mitchell told Israeli leaders yesterday on his latest trip to the region.

Mitchell, whose trip comes just days before hawkish Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is due to outline his cabinet's peace policy, sought to play down the rising tensions between the two close allies over Washington's peace drive.

"We all share an obligation to create the conditions for the prompt resumption and early conclusion of negotiations," Mitchell said ahead of talks with Israeli President Shimon Peres.

"We're now engaged in serious discus-

sions with our Israeli and Palestinian and regional partners to support these efforts," said Mitchell, who was also due to meet Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman and Netanyahu later in the day.

On Monday, Mitchell said US President Barack Obama had told him to work for an "immediate" resumption of the peace talks, which restarted under US stewardship in November 2007 but suspended amid the Gaza war early this year.

He also reiterated that Washington sees the creation of a Palestinian state as the "only viable political solution" to the decades-old conflict.

Netanyahu has yet to publicly embrace the principle of a Palestinian

state, and the Israeli press has been filled with speculation in recent days that he may finally do so in a speech he is due to give on Sunday.

Another major bone of contention that has driven a rift between the United States and Israel is that of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, which the international community considers illegal.

Obama's administration has repeatedly called for a complete halt to all settlement activity, including so-called natural growth construction to accommodate population increases.

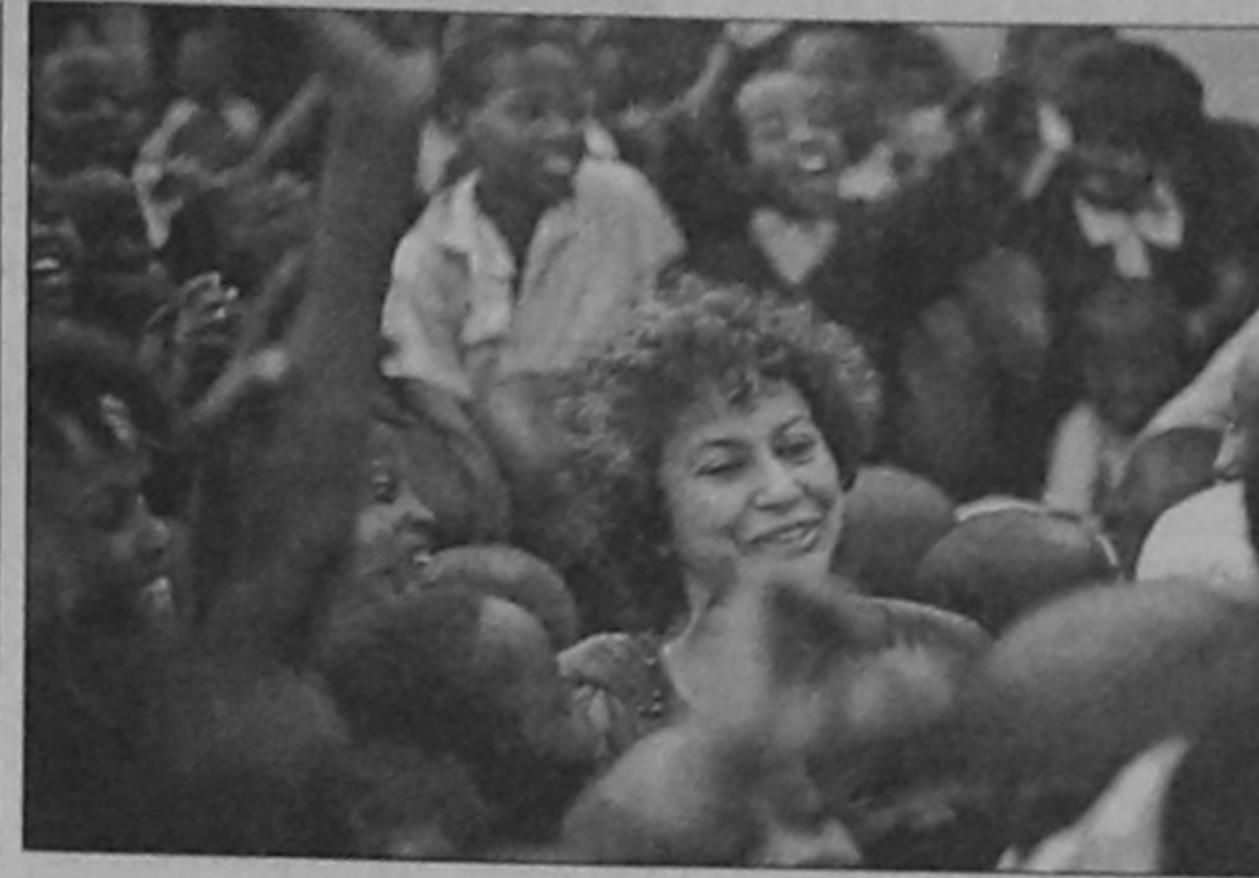
Netanyahu's largely right-wing government vigorously opposes this and would probably collapse if the premier caves in to Washington's demands, analysts in Israel say.

EU commission chief stands for second term

AFP, Brussels

European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso accepted Tuesday to stand for a second five-year term, hot on the heels of victory by the conservatives in weekend EU elections.

The bid by the former Portuguese prime minister, a member of the centre-right European People's Party (EPP) grouping, swiftly received the endorsement of German Chancellor Angela Merkel, though differences remain over when he should be formally nominated to the post.



Amnesty International (AI) Secretary Irene Khan (C) interacts with pupils of Korogocho Glory School on the banks of the heavily polluted Nairobi river in the sprawling Korogocho slum on Monday. Glory School, built 15 years ago just off the banks of Nairobi River faces demolition when authorities set in to clean up the river, heavily polluted by an adjacent dumpsite.

UN's Gaza war crimes probe faces obstacles

AP, Gaza City

A veteran UN war crimes investigator acknowledged his probe of possible war crimes by Israel and Hamas which included interviewing dozens of victims and poring through the files of human rights groups is unlikely to lead to prosecutions.

Israel has refused to cooperate, depriving his team access to military sources and victims of Hamas rockets. And Hamas security often accompanied his team during their five-day trip to Gaza last week, raising questions about the ability of witnesses to freely describe the militant group's actions.

But the chief barrier remains the lack of a court with jurisdiction to hear any resulting cases stemming from the investigation into Israel's three-week offensive in Gaza which ended in January and was designed to stop years of Hamas rocket fire into southern Israel.

"From a practical political point of view, I wish I could be optimistic," Judge Richard Goldstone said, citing the legal and political barriers to war crimes trials.

Still, Goldstone hopes his group's report due in September will spur action by other UN bodies and foreign governments.

Goldstone, a South African judge who prosecuted war crimes in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, refused to comment on the investigation's content. But AP interviews with more than a dozen Gazans who spoke to the team reveal a wide-ranging investigation into the war's most prominent allegations.

In Gaza, Goldstone's 15-member team met with Hamas and UN officials, collected reports from Palestinian human rights groups and interviewed dozens of survivors.

Among them was a Bedouin man who told the investigators how he watched Israeli soldiers shoot his mother and sister dead as they fled their home waving white flags. But he, too, doubted he would see justice.

"The committee was just like all the others who have come," said 46-year-old Majed Hajaj. "There are lots of reports written, but they're nothing more than ink on paper."

The UN team also stepped through the shrapnel-peppered doorway of a mosque where an Israeli missile strike killed 16 people, witnesses said. During the war, Israel accused Hamas of hiding weapons in mosques. Witnesses said no weapons or militants were present.

Guantanamo detainee in NY for trial

BBC Online

The first Guantanamo detainee who is to be tried in a US civilian court has arrived in New York, officials say.

Ahmed Ghailani has been transferred to face charges in a New York court in connection with the 1998 US embassy bombings in East Africa.

Ghailani, a Tanzanian, was seized in Pakistan in 2004. He is expected to make an initial court appearance in Manhattan later on Tuesday.

He was taken to Guantanamo with other "high value" detainees in late 2006.

His transfer comes as the Obama administration struggles to find a way to make good its election promise to close Guantanamo Bay within a year of taking office.

Correspondents say Ghailani's trial will be an important test case for the administration's plan to shut the prison camp and bring some of the suspects to trial.

The US government hopes to transfer some of the detainees to other countries but negotiations have proved difficult, particularly over the issue of whether the US is willing to also receive detainees.

Congress has rejected an administration request for funding to close down Guantanamo, amid widespread opposition to bringing detainees on to the US mainland.

The BBC's Rob Watson says the case of Ahmed Ghailani is, in many ways, one of the least problematic for the administration.

He was first charged in 1998 after an extensive FBI investigation and there is therefore plenty of evidence against him.



South Korean students hold the photos of the detained US journalists during a rally denouncing North Korea's trial of the US journalists in Seoul yesterday. US leaders and family members urged North Korea to show mercy to two jailed American reporters, as Washington tried to separate their plight from efforts to punish Pyongyang for its nuclear test.

US leaders, family seek mercy for reporters jailed in N Korea

AFP, Seoul

US leaders and family members urged North Korea to show mercy to two jailed American television reporters, as Washington tried to separate their plight from efforts to punish Pyongyang for its nuclear test.

Laura Ling and Euna Lee were imprisoned on Monday for 12 years, as the United States continued to press other UN Security Council members to approve a tough new resolution sanctioning the hardline communist state.

The pair, both in their thirties, were sentenced to "reform through labour" by a North Korean court for what state media called an illegal border crossing and an unspecified "grave crime."

Ling and Lee's families sought a story about refugees fleeing Kim Jong-Il's regime.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton appealed Monday for clemency and said President Barack Obama's administration was "engaged in all possible ways through every possible channel to secure their release."

Like others in the administration, Clinton urged the North to treat the women's case as separate from the Security Council debate.

"We think the imprisonment, trial and sentencing of Laura and Euna should be viewed as a humanitarian matter. We hope that the North Koreans will grant clemency and deport them," she added.

Ling and Lee's families asked for "compassion" and said they were "shocked and devastated" by the sentences.

Border guards detained them on March 17 along the frontier with China while they

were researching a story about refugees fleeing Kim Jong-Il's regime.

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