## INTERNATIONAL

#### Miliband leads Labour's leadership race

AFP, London

Foreign Secretary David: Miliband is the clear favourite to succeed Gordon Brown as leader of Britain's Labour: party and potential prime: minister, although the contest: must wait until a new government is formed.

Miliband's main competitor would likely be Schools Secretary Ed Balls but any number of candidates could still declare -- including Miliband's younger brother, Ed -- as different party factions vye for power.

Brown announced Monday he was stepping aside after his party came second in: Thursday's elections, saying Labour would choose a new leader by the party's annual conference in September.

There is a chance the winner could also become prime minister because both Labour and the Conservatives, who came first, are still locked in talks with the third-placed government.



Liberal Democrats to form a: A selection of yesterday's British national newspapers featuring headlines on the front pages about Prime Minister Gordon Brown's standing down as Labour leader.

HUNG PARLIAMENT



### It's decision time

Says Cameron

**BBC ONLINE** 

David Cameron says it is "decision time" for the Lib Dems over which party they will back to govern the UK.

The Tories won the most seats but were short of a majority and have asked for Lib Dem support to form a government.

But on Monday, the Lib Dems opened formal talks with Labour, after Gordon Brown said he would quit as leader.

Lib Dem leader Nick Clegg said talks had reached a "critical and final phase" and his party would "do our bit to create a stable, good government".

Mr Brown's announcement that he would step down as Labour leader by September came after days of talks between the Tories and Lib Dems and, it emerged, secret meetings

between the Lib Dems and Labour. Labour and the Tories are both trying to woo the Lib Dems with promises on electoral reform.

BBC political editor Nick Robinson said while many senior Lib Dems had close links to Labour, Mr Clegg would have to weigh up whether a deal with that party - which would still not have enough seats to command an overall majority - could deliver strong and stable government.

opposition to any deal within the Labour Party with former cabinet ministers David Blunkett and John Reid already warning it could be very damaging for the party.

Labour say if the Lib Dems back them they will put the Alternative Vote system into law and then hold a referendum asking voters if they want a proportional representation voting

system - a key issue for the Lib Dems. But Mr Blunkett told the BBC any deal with Labour would be "a coalition of the defeated" and said the developments showed why full

proportional representation was a bad idea. "I think we can wear AV... What we can't have is this shambles every time we have an election.

Under AV, voters rank candidates in a constituency. If no-one gets 50% of votes the candidate finishing last gets eliminated and their second preferences are awarded to the remaining candidates. This continues until one candidates passes the 50% mark.

The Conservatives upped their offer on Monday evening to the Lib Dems to a promise of a referendum on changing the voting system from existing first past the post system to AV.

Speaking on Tuesday morning Mr Cameron said his overriding concern since Friday was for "strong, stable government that is in the national interest" and his party had made a "very reason-He said it would also depend on the extent of able offer to the Lib Dems to deliver it.

## Aquino set for landslide win No end in sight as Red in Philippine polls

AFP, Manila

Benigno Aquino was set to become the new Philippine president, pledging to fight corruption after riding on a wave of support from the "People

Son of the late Corazon Aquino

leads Philippines election count

▶ Senator 2007-present

▶ 50-year-old bachelor

in his neck after an

against his mother

► Survived with bullet

attempted coup

▶ Congressman

1998-2007

in 1987

Benigno Aquino heading for victory

Political legacy

Marcos in 1986

Murdered by

gunmen in

Marcos

1983 as

ne tried

o return

Senator 1967-1972

President 1986-1992

Credited for leading the

"people power" revolution

against dictator Ferdinand

Father: Benigno Aquino

Mother: Corazon Aquino

Power" movement of his democracy hero parents.

Aquino told AFP yesterday in an interview even before being formally proclaimed the winner that he would "lead by example" and bring in clean government after almost a decade under the corruptiontainted rule of President Gloria Arroyo.

> The reserved 50-year-old senator steamrolled his rivals, with latest results showing him grabbing 40 percent of the estimated 37.5 million votes cast Monday in the country's first automated polls.

> In the interview, he also said that once in office he would ensure that Arroyo, one of the Philippines' most unpopular leaders, would be investigated for alleged vote-rigging in the last election in 2004.

"I want to lead by example. We talk about corruption. I did make a public vow, I will never steal," he said, adding that this would give him the "moral authority" to make others conform.

Millions of Filipinos had turned out to vote Monday despite deadly bouts of violence and complaints about problems with ballot-counting machines that led to long queues.

"Noynoy" Aquino, the son of the Philippines' most revered democracy

heroes, wooed the country during a tumultuous election campaign with his mantra of clean government and pledges to reduce poverty.

His closest rival, former president Joseph Estrada, 73, was trailing on 25 percent with only a few million votes left to tally but he refused to concede until final results were in.

However, other candidates were already congratulating Aquino, a former economics student of Arroyo who became one of her fiercest critics. He is due to take office at the end of her six-year term on June 30. Among the winners of the thousands of other

ant widow of toppled dictator Ferdinand Marcos, and world boxing champion Manny Pacquiao. Aquino's mother Corazon Aquino led the "People

posts up for grabs were Imelda Marcos, the flamboy-

Power" revolution that overthrew the late dictator Marcos in 1986 and then served as president. His father, Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, was shot

dead in 1983 as he attempted to return from US exile to lead the movement against Marcos. The United States, the former colonial power,

hailed the overall conduct of the election and said it looked forward to working with the new leader of a key Asian ally.

Aquino was a latecomer to the presidential race, declaring his candidacy only after his mother's death from cancer last August plunged the country into mourning and demonstrated the power of the family name.

## Shirts refuse to leave

Accepted Nov 14 polls timetable but sets new condition to try deputy PM

REUTERS, BANGKOK

Thai protesters refused yesterday to call off demonstrations that have paralysed Bangkok's commercial heart and stifled the economy, while the government said it had done all it could to reach a deal.

That leaves few options for ending mass protests by Thailand's rural and urban poor that have sparked a two-month crisis in which 29 people have been killed and more than 1,000 wounded in the country's worst political violence in 18 years.

The anti-government "red shirts" accepted on Monday a timetable for a November 14 election proposed by Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva but also set a new condition: Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thaugsuban must face prosecution over a clash with troops in April that killed 25 people.

Suthep, chief of security during the protests, went to the Department of Special Investigation on Tuesday to hear complaints filed against him by relatives of some of those killed, but the protesters said he must face formal criminal charges before they would agree to leave the city's main shopping district.

"The legal proceeding has not begun,"

Nattawut Saikua, a red shirt leader, told a news

Thousands show no sign of leaving. Fresh supplies including vegetables, meat and bottled water were piled up under a large tent in front of the shuttered Four Seasons Hotel.

"We are not going anywhere until the government shows they will take responsibility for the clash," said 39-year-old protester Panna Saengkumboon. "People lost their eyes, their legs and arms. Others paid for this with their lives.

Disparate views among red shirt leaders,

ranging from radical former communists to dovish academics, make it difficult to reach a decision on how to end the demonstrations. Some leaders harbor political ambitions

and need to appease rank-and-file supporters. Others fear ending the protest now would be a one-way ticket to jail. Some hardliners advocate stepping up the protests to win the fight once and for all.

Fuelling talk of a split, one of their most respected and moderate figures, Veera Muksikapong, has disappeared from public view for two days. Some red shirt leaders said Veera, who the government has tried to court in the past, has been ill.

#### Doing overtime? Be careful AFP, Paris

People who work three hours

Benigno Aquino

Pledging a new style

of clean government

or more of overtime per day run a 60-percent higher risk of bad heart problems compared to those who work regular hours, a study published in the European Heart Journal said. The findings came from a

long-term research project into 6,014 British civil servants aged 39-61, two-thirds of whom were men, who had healthy hearts at the start of the probe in the early 1990s.

At an 11-year monitoring point, 369 of the volunteers had either died of coronary heart disease (CHD) or had had a non-fatal heart attack or angina.

After accounting for risk factors such as smoking, overweight and high cholesterol, doctors found that working between three and four hours of overtime each day was associated with a 60 percent greater risk compared to those who did no overtime.

#### Berlusconi to pay €300,000 a month to ex-wife

AFP, Rome

Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has reached a which his second wife will receive 300,000 euros a month, less than a tenth of the sum she sought, press reports said yesterday.

Veronica Lario, 20 years Berlusconi's junior at age 53, will also enjoy the use of a large villa outside Milan -- where she already resides -- in the deal to end the couple's 19-year marriage, the reports said.

The former stage actress filed for divorce a year ago after revelations that the media tycoon, noted for his dalliances with other women, attended the 18th birthday party of an aspiring model who called him "Daddy".

### 'Israel to keep nuke ambiguity with US backing'

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel will keep up its longstanding policy of deliberate ambiguity over its nuclear programme, Defence Minister Ehud Barak said yesterday, adding that US support for the position remains unchanged. "This is a good policy and there is no reason to change it.

There is complete agreement with the United States on this question," Barak told army radio. He also said "there is no risk" that inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would get

authorisation to inspect Israel's Dimona nuclear reactor. "There is no threat over the traditional agreements between Israel and the United States on this issue," said Barak.

"I met President Barack Obama and other US officials two weeks ago. All of them told me denuclearisation efforts target

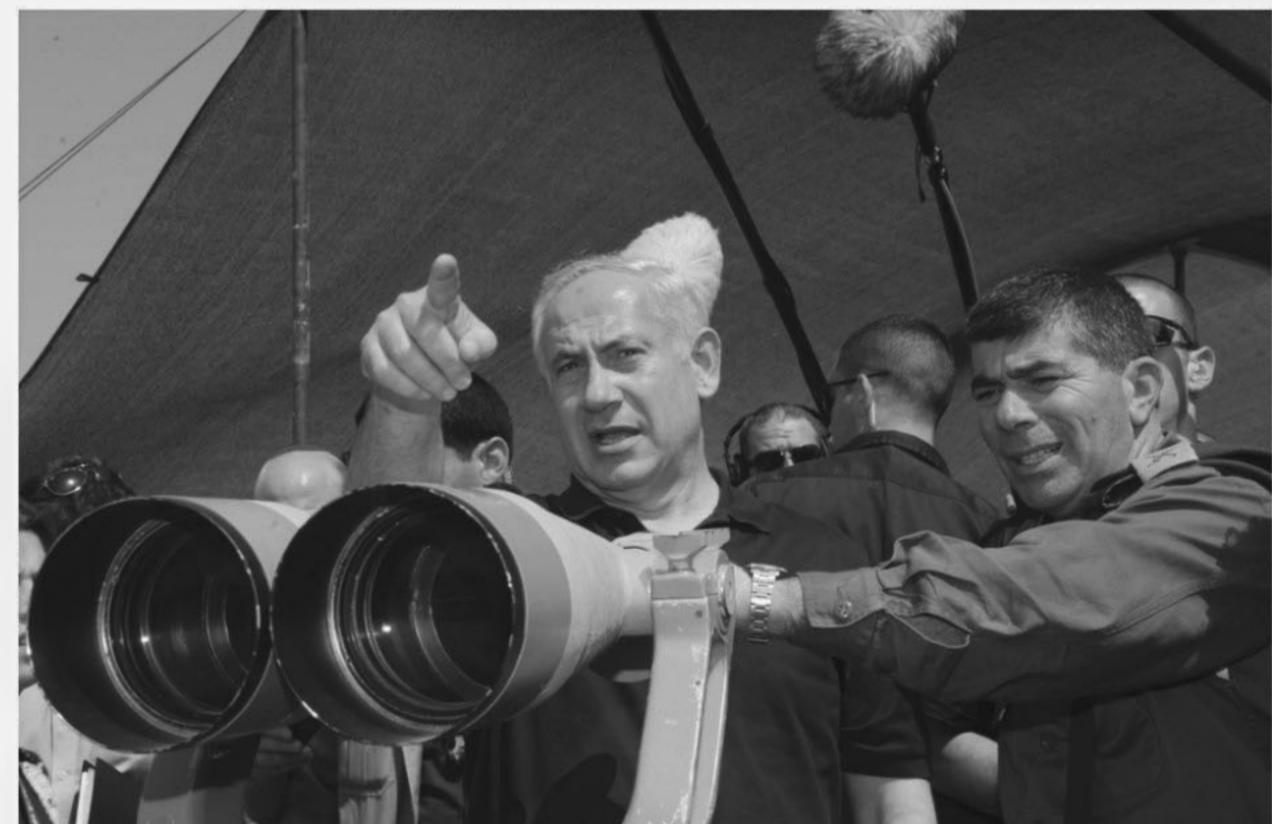
Iran and North Korea." Israel has maintained its so-called policy of deliberate ambiguity about its nuclear programme since the Jewish state inaugu-

rated the Dimona reactor in the southern Negev desert in 1965. Media reports have said the United States agreed in 1969 that as long as Israel did not test a nuclear weapon or publicly con-

firm that it had one, Washington would not press it on the issue. Foreign military experts believe Israel has an arsenal of several hundred nuclear weapons.

Like nuclear-armed countries India, Pakistan and North Korea, Israel has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in order to avoid inspections by the Vienna-based IAEA.

Fossil reveals early



A handout picture released by the Israeli government press office shows Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (L) visiting an Israeli army military base in northern Israel yesterday.

# Ash cloud shuts seven Spanish Iraqi forces face charge

#### bird plumage **BBC ONLINE**

divorce settlement under A new study of a 150-million-year-old fossil of an Archaeopteryx has shown that remnants of its feathers have been preserved.

> Archaeopteryx is regarded as a "missing link" that documents a fabulous transition from dinosaur to bird.

The researchers say that it may soon be

possible to work out the colours of feathers sported by these creatures.

The new work is published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS).

But the authors warn museum curators not to be overzealous in cleaning up fossils for display in case they destroy vital scientific data.

Archaeopteryx is the most iconic of fossils: Many of the specimens beautifully capture this snapshot of evolution - showing the creature's skeleton, feathers and teeth in great detail.

But now a new scanning technique has revealed that one fossil contains fragments of the original feathers - rather than just being an imprint of an animal whose remains had long ago disintegrated into the dust.

The bad news though is that museum curators have inadvertently chipped and scrubbed off a lot more fragments of the creature's feathers and skin fragments as they prepared the fossil for public display to highlight the bones.

## airports

**BBC ONLINE** 

Seven airports in Spain have been forced to close because of a cloud of volcanic ash drifting from Iceland.

Four airports in the Canary Islands and three in southern Spain closed, Spain's air traffic control agency Aena said.

Morocco has also closed several airports for most of the morning, including Casablanca and Rabat. The ash-affected area is

expected to move towards south-eastern France later in the day, European air traffic agency Eurocontrol has said. The agency said it expected 29,000 flights to take to the air

on Tuesday, which was close to normal for this time of year. On Monday, there were 29,155 flights.

lence this year.

shattered a lull in unrest, in a setback as Iraq moves closer to forming a government two months after a general election seen as crucial to US combat troops leaving the country by August 31.

The government pinned the blame on al-Qaeda while Iraq's deputy interior minister conceded that the nation's security apparatus was at fault and an inquiry into its shortcom-

ings was under way. "There were security violations because of weak inspection measures," at checkpoints, Hussein Ali Kamal told the Bayan newspaper,

which is close to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki. "Security leaders will be held accountable

#### hit US state, 5 dead **BBC ONLINE**

Tornadoes

At least five people have been killed in tornadoes that have battered parts of the US state of Oklahoma, disaster officials The storms forced road

closures, ripped up trees and flattened homes. Department of emergency

management spokesman Jerry Lojka said two people died in Oklahoma City and three were killed in Cleveland County. Oklahoma was also hit by a

deadly tornado in February, when at least eight people were killed. Jamie Keyes, of Norman,

about 20 miles (30km) south of Oklahoma City, told the Associated Press news agency she felt fortunate to have survived the latest storm unscathed.

"The kids and I got in the closet and prayed," she said. "I heard a hiss. It was like something was whistling very PHOTO: AFP | loud.

#### for Monday's attacks for these incidents and will find out who was

A posting on a prominent jihadist website

said the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), the Qaeda

front in the country, was behind at least some of

Monday's carnage, but it did not amount to an

bombs detonate simultaneously in the car park

of a textiles factory in the Shia central city of

and a fourth explosion -- in a coordinated

gency workers who were treating victims at the

Hilla, as workers boarded buses to go home.

The deadliest attack saw two suicide car

A third car bomb exploded minutes later

official claim of responsibility.

AFP, Baghdad

Iraqi security forces faced charges of negligence on yesterday after a devastating wave of attacks blamed on al-Qaeda killed 110 people the previous day, the country's bloodiest vio-

Around five dozen bombings and shootings

operation typical of al-Qaeda -- engulfed emer-

wounded.

scene.

negligent."

Hospital officials in Hilla said on Tuesday that the toll had risen to 53 people dead and 157

The toll from three car bombs which struck two markets in the southern port city of Basra also rose -- to 25 killed and 223 wounded -- said security officials.