## INTERNATIONAL

## French cabinet approves burga ban law

The French cabinet approved a draft law to ban the Muslim fullface veil from public spaces yesterday, opening the way for the text to go before parliament in July.

"In this matter the government is taking a path it knows to be difficult, but a path it knows to be just," President Nicolas Sarkozy told the assembled ministers, according to his office.

While Sarkozy's right-wing majority is expected to be able to push the law through parliament, constitutional experts have warned that it could be thrown out by judges and might fall foul of European law.

"We are an old nation united around a certain idea of human dignity, and in particular of a woman's dignity, around a certain

idea of how to live together," Sarkozy insisted. "The full veil that hides the face completely harms those

values, which are so fundamental to us, so essential to the republican compact."

According to the text of the law, no-one in France will be allowed to wear a garment "designed to hide the face". Those who flout it will be fined 150 euros (180 dollars) or sent on a

course to learn the values of French citizenship. Anyone who forces someone through threats, violence or misuse of a position of authority to cover her face because of her sex will be jailed for a year and fined 15,000 euros, the law

The law defines public spaces broadly to include all thoroughfares, all premises -- such as shops, cinemas, restaurants and markets -- open to the public and all government buildings.

France's highest administrative legal body, the Council of State, had warned the government that it might be legally impossible to impose and enforce such a ban, but Sarkozy and his supporters are determined to press on.



Smoke billows from a commercial area of Bangkok where Red Shirt demonstrators had their camp in downtown yesterday. Thai protest leaders surrendered and told thousands of "Red Shirt" supporters to end their weeks-long rally after an army assault on their fortified encampment left at least five people dead. Thai fire authorities said that arsonists have set 20 locations ablaze in Bangkok, including a massive shopping mall and bank branches.

### Nine killed in central Europe floods

**BBC ONLINE** 

Floods in central Europe have left at least nine people dead, officials say. Parts of Poland, Slovakia,

Serbia and the Czech Republic have been inundated after days of heavy rain burst river banks and inundated lowlying areas across the region.

It has forced the closure of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Holocaust memorial.

Five people are confirmed to have died in southern

Poland, two in Serbia, one in Slovakia and one in the Czech Republic. Tuesday saw Polish Prime

Minister Donald Tusk visit areas where 2,000 residents have been evacuated. Evacuations were also

ordered in the Czech Republic, where 3,500 homes were hit by power cuts.

## Iran frustrated as US nixes Brazil-Turkey N-deal

AFP, Tehran

Iran voiced exasperation yesterday at US-led international rejection of a hard-won nuclear fuel deal, saying major powers would be "discrediting" themselves if they pressed for fresh UN sanctions.

Washington on Tuesday announced that it would submit a resolution at the UN Security Council for a fourth round of sanctions, a day after the Brazilian and Turkish leaders forged a compromise agreement they hailed as a step towards a resolution of Iran's years-old standoff with the West.

Under the deal, Iran agreed to ship out much of its stockpile of low enriched uranium to Turkey in exchange for fuel for a research reactor.

"(Talk of) imposing sanctions has faded and this resolution is the last effort by the West," the Fars news agency quoted Vice President Ali Akbar Salehi, who also heads Iran's atomic energy organisation, as saying.

"They feel that for the first time in the world developing countries are able to defend their rights in the world arena without resorting to the major powers, and that is very hard for them," Salehi said after a meeting of government ministers.

The new draft resolution before the Security Council would expand an arms embargo and measures against Iran's banking sector, as well as banning it from sensitive overseas activities, like uranium mining and developing ballistic missiles, a US official said.

"The resolution would establish a comprehensive new framework for cargo inspections, both in states' ports and on the high seas," the official told journalists on condition of anonymity.

The draft has the blessing of all five of the veto-wielding permanent members of the Security Council, including the usual standouts China and Russia, the US said.

"We have reached agreement on a strong draft with the cooperation of both Russia and China," US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said.

"This announcement is as convincing an answer to the efforts undertaken in Tehran over the last few days as any we could provide," Hillary added.

China's apparent backing of a fourth round of sanctions against Iran over its suspect nuclear activities came despite its earlier support for the swap deal.

### Taiwan says China may dismantle missiles

AP, Taipei

China could feel compelled to dismantle the more than 1,000 missiles it has pointed at Taiwan as relations between the rivals improve, the island's president said yesterday.

Ma Ying-jeou said the easing of tensions across the 100-mile-(160 kilometre-) wide Taiwan Strait makes it increasingly difficult for Beijing to justify its missile posture, particularly with thousands of mainland Chinese tourists arriving in Taiwan every day.

Ma spoke at the midpoint of his four-year term, which has been characterized by a rapid expansion of trade and business ties with China, and a growing belief that an eventual peace treaty could be on the agenda if Ma's Nationalist Party retains the presidency in 2012.

### US PRIMARY POLLS

## Voters back anti-Washington candidates

AFP, Washington

US voters delivered a stinging rebuke of establishment Democratic and Republican candidates in key primary contests ahead of November congressional elections.

Across the United States, voters punished incumbents and vented their anger at the leadership of both major parties by rejecting their anointed choices.

In Kentucky Rand Paul from the conservative "Tea Party' movement routed the hand-picked choice of Mitch McConnell, the Republican minority leader in the Senate.

"Washington is horribly broken," Paul, whose father Republican Representative Ron Paul ran for president in 2008, told cheering supporters after trouncing Kentucky's secretary of state Trey Grayson in one of the insurgent movement's most resounding victories.

"We are encountering a day of reckoning, and this movement, this Tea Party movement is a message to Washington that we're unhappy and that we want things done differently," said Paul.

Former Alaska governor Sarah Palin, herself a darling of the Tea Party movement, said voters appreciated Paul for being "out

Non-crew in cockpit

KACZYNSKI PLANE CRASH

**BBC ONLINE** 

Non-crew members were present in the cockpit of a plane that crashed killing the Polish president and more than 90 others, an investigation has found.

One of the non-crew members has been identified, though he or she was not named by officials.

The plane crashed as it tried to land in western Russia on 10 April, killing President Lech Kaczynski and dozens of senior Poles.

The investigation confirmed crew were repeatedly

warned about poor weather. An air traffic control official "warned twice that visibility was 400m (1,312ft) and that there were no conditions for landing", said Alexei Morozov, head of the technical commission examining the crash, releasing the preliminary findings of the investigation.

The Tupolev-154 presidential plane was in full working order when it crashed, Morozov said, according to a report by Itar-Tass. He said systems at the

Smolensk airport where the plane was trying to land were also operating normally.

### Pledge to stop motherto-baby HIV spread

BBC ONLINE

A campaign is being launched to try to enlist public support to ensure no more children are born with HIV by 2015.

It is the work of the Global Fund, which uses donations from governments to fight HIV, TB and malaria.

The Born HIV Free campaign comes at a critical time, with the fund seeking donations of up to \$20bn over the next three years.

It recognises this will be a battle, as governments deal with the aftermath of the Greek financial crisis.

HIV can be passed from mother to child during preg-nancy, labour or breast-feeding.

This type of transmission has been almost wiped out in countries such as the UK, because pregnant women who test positive for the virus that causes AIDS can be treated with drugs.

# STOP FACEBOOK COMPETITION Otherwise Be Ready For Multi Natinational For Complete Boycott Of Their Products. ODAFF LAVEED SINDHU DASBAN

Pakistani Islamists shout slogans during a protest in Karachi yesterday, against the published caricatures of Prophet Mohammed on Facebook. Pakistan temporarily blocked access to Facebook on Wednesday on a court order over a competition encouraging users to post caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed (SW) on the social net-

### Pak court bans Facebook in row over prophet

of the box" and "unconventional".

**BBC ONLINE** 

A court in Pakistan has ordered the authorities temporarily to block the Facebook social networking site.

The order came when a petition was filed after the site held a competition featuring caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad. The petition, filed by a

lawyers' group called the Islamic Lawyers' Movement, said the contest was "blasphemous". Facebook denied that it

was "trying to slander the average Muslim", on its information page for the contest.

"We simply want to show the extremists that threaten to harm people because of their Muhammad depictions that we're not afraid of them," the statement said.

"They can't take away our right to freedom of speech by trying to scare us into silence."

## Labour MP charged over expenses

**BBC ONLINE** 

Labour MP Eric Illsley has been charged with three offences of false accounting over his parliamentary expenses.

He is accused of dishonestly claiming £20,000 in council tax and other bills on his second home in London.

The Barnsley Central MP will appear at City of Westminster Magistrates' Court on 17 June.

Three former Labour MPs and an ex Tory peer have already been charged under the Theft Act over their expenses claims - all denywrongdoing. In a statement, Director of Public Prosecutions Kier Starmer

said: "Having thoroughly reviewed a file of evidence we received from the Metropolitan Police on 13 March this year, we concluded that there is sufficient evidence and it is in the public interest to bring criminal charges against Eric Illsley MP."

He said Illsley faced three charges under section 17 of the Theft Act 1968 for false accounting.

"The first charge alleges that Illsley dishonestly claimed expenses in relation to council tax, service and maintenance charges, repairs and insurance charges, and utilities and communications charges for his second home in Renfrew Road, London, between May 2005 and April 2006.

"The second charge relates to the same claims between May 2006 and April 2007, and the third charge relates to the same claims between May 2007 and April 2008.

"In total the charges allege a sum in excess of £20,000 was dishonestly claimed over this three year period."

Evidence files on eight politicians have now been handed to the Crown Prosecution Service for a decision to be made on whether to charge them.

### New dad depression often missed

**BBC ONLINE** 

working site.

Many new fathers experience post-natal depression, yet most cases go undetected and

untreated, experts warn. One in 10 new fathers may have the baby blues, US researchers believe - based on their trawl of medical litera-

While this rate is lower than in new mothers, it is more than currently recognised, they told the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Lack of sleep and new responsibilities, or supporting a wife with post-natal depression can be triggers, they say.

The Eastern Virginia Medical School team based their findings on 43 studies involving 28,004 parents from 16 different countries including the UK and the US.

### New clue to anti-matter mystery **BBC ONLINE**

mysteries in cosmology.

A US-based physics experiment has found a clue as to why the world around us is composed of normal matter and not its shadowy opposite: anti-matter.

Anti-matter is rare today; it can be produced in "atom smashers", in nuclear reactions or by cosmic rays.

But physicists think the Big Bang should have produced equal amounts of matter and its opposite. New results from the DZero exeriment at Fermilab in Illinois

provide a clue to what happened to all the anti-matter. This is regarded by many researchers as one of the biggest

The data even offer hints of new physics beyond what can be explained by current theories.

For each basic particle of matter, there exists an anti-particle with the same mass but the opposite electric charge.

For example, the negatively charged electron has a positively charged anti-particle called the positron.

But when a particle and its anti-particle collide, they are "annihilated" in a flash of energy, yielding new particles and anti-particles.

Similar processes occurring at the beginning of the Universe

should have left us with equal amounts of matter and anti-matter.

### Bahrain bans Al-Jazeera

AFP, Manama

Bahraini authorities have banned Al-Jazeera television, based in the adjacent state of Qatar, from operating in the kingdom for "violating" professional norms, the state BNA news agency said yesterday.

The ministry of culture and information "has decided to temporarily freeze the operations of the office of the Qatari satellite channel Al-Jazeera," BNA said quoting a ministry statement issued late on Tuesday.

It said the measure was in response to Al-Jazeera's "violation of professional norms and not abiding by the laws and rules that regulate press and publishing."

rate on the violations that triggered the ban. A statement from Al-Jazeera condemned the ban, which it said it had not been

formally notified of.

## Tough US measures needed to beat climate change

AFP, Washington

The United States has to lead the global fight on climate change by breaking with business-asusual and setting tough standards for the amount of greenhouse gases it emits into the atmosphere, US scientists said yesterday.

In one of three multi-hundred-page reports on climate change by the National Research Council, scientists said the United States should set a budget that would limit greenhouse gas emissions to a total of between 170 and 200 gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalent between 2012 and 2050. That limit would correspond to a reduction

of US emissions from 1990 levels by 80 to 50 percent, depending whether the upper or lower "budgetary level" is chosen, and would require "a major departure from business-as-usual emission trends," the report said. US emissions have been rising at a rate of

one percent per year for the past three decades, The ministry did not elaboand in 2008 reached around seven gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalent. Even if emissions stuck at the 2008 rate and if

the higher budget target of 200 gigatons was chosen, the US would exceed its emissions budget by 2041.

The NRC report urged the US to lead the way

on reducing emissions so that other nations will follow, the scientists said.

"Although limiting emissions must be a global effort to be effective, strong US actions to reduce emissions will help encourage other countries to do the same," they said.

The cap-and-trade system -- where a total level of allowable domestic emissions is set, companies are given emissions quotas, and the small polluters can sell their surplus to firms that exceed theirs -- was one of the most effective ways of reducing emissions, the report said.

Cap-and-trade was declared dead by Republican Senator Lindsey Graham two months ago, but a climate bill proposed this month by Democratic Senator John Kerry and Independent Joe Lieberman proposed setting up just such a system, even though it did not call it by name.

The senators' plan would cut US carbon emissions by 17 percent by 2020 from 2005 levels, going up to 83 percent by 2050.

The scientists warned, though, that putting a price on carbon would only work if the United States also improves energy efficiency, speeds up the development of renewable energy sources, develops new-generation nuclear power, and retrofits, decommissions or replaces facilities that belch greenhouse gases into the air.



### Mladic pad handed to court

AFP, The Hague

UN war crimes prosecutors have found useful new evidence in 18 recently found "military notebooks" thought to belong to fugitive Bosnian Serb military commander Ratko Mladic, they saidThursday. "The notebooks constitute

a significant volume of new evidence," prosecution spokeswoman Olga Kavran told AFP of the 3,500 handwritten pages found last month in the Belgrade apartment of Mladic's wife, Bosiljka.