



Ethnic Uzbek women cry in a village of Nariman outside Osh at the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border yesterday. The first humanitarian aid arrived today for tens of thousands who fled deadly ethnic bloodshed in Kyrgyzstan.

## KYRGYZ OIL DEPOT HELD BY UZBEKS Heavy arms fire rings out in Kyrgyz south

BBC ONLINE, AP, Osh

Ethnic Uzbeks in the south Kyrgyz conflict zone are threatening to blow up an oil depot if the interim government tries to take it by force.

Officials have entered talks about gaining access to the site in Osh, the scene of deadly communal violence in the past week.

This facility stores most of the petrol distributed in the region.

About a quarter of a million people in the region have fled their homes and the death toll has reached 179.

The UN and Russia have begun airlifting humanitarian supplies into the region.

The US is sending its top Central Asia diplomat, Robert Blake, for meetings with officials in the capital Bishkek on Friday and Saturday.

At least 1,870 people have been injured, according to the Kyrgyz health ministry.

Heavy arms fire rang out over the Kyrgyz city of Osh before dawn yesterday as authorities struggled to bring order to the Central Asian country's south after days of deadly ethnic riots.

The violence which erupted last Thursday in Osh between the majority Kyrgyz population and Uzbeks and spread to surrounding regions has prompted more than 100,000 Uzbeks to flee for their lives to Uzbekistan, with tens of thousands more camped on the Kyrgyz side of the border or stranded in a no man's land.

Humanitarian aid was trickling in via Uzbekistan, though some supplies coming via Osh were reportedly intercepted and volunteers attacked.

### BREAKDOWN OF TRUST

A representative from the Uzbek side told the BBC that after several days of violence they no longer trusted the government and Kyrgyz military and were hoping for UN peacekeepers to intervene.

The Uzbeks are saying that they want peace but need guarantees of safety, which the authorities cannot provide, the BBC's Rayhan Demyrtie reports from Osh.

### AIRLIFT

The UN refugee agency has begun delivering humanitarian aid for an estimated 75,000 people in makeshift refugee camps over the border in Uzbekistan.

A plane carrying 800 tents landed in the Uzbek city of Andijan on Wednesday, Uzbek officials at the airport told AFP news agency.

Separately, two Russian government cargo planes, each carrying 42 tonnes of aid including food and blankets, landed in Bishkek.

Evidence that the initial violence was "orchestrated, targeted and well-planned" has been uncovered by the UN.

### REFERENDUM

The government believes allies of Bakiyev, who now lives in exile in Belarus, want to derail a national referendum on constitutional reform scheduled for 27 June.

## Obama vows to 'make BP pay' for oil spill

BBC ONLINE

President Barack Obama has vowed to "make BP pay" for damage caused by the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, in his first national address from the Oval Office.

Mr Obama said he would meet company executives later and tell them that they must set up a fund to compensate those affected by the spill.

He described the spill as an assault on the shores and citizens of the US that tested the limits of human technology.

And he said it demonstrated the need to end the US "addiction" to fossil fuels.

Hours after the government sharply increased its estimate of how much oil was flowing into the Gulf from the broken well, Mr Obama warned that the risks of another such incident would continue to rise because "we're running out of places to drill on land and in shallow water".

He called on the Senate to pass an energy bill that has already cleared the House of Representatives.

Presidents use the Oval Office for what

they regard as vital national issues.

The speech comes as opinion polls suggest a majority of Americans disapprove of how Mr Obama has handled the crisis - the worst environmental disaster in US history.

In his speech, Mr Obama likened the spill to an "epidemic" and reiterated that BP would be made to pay for the damage.

"We will make BP pay for the damage their company has caused," Mr Obama promised.

He said he would meet BP Chairman Carl-Henric Svaneberg later on Wednesday and "inform him that he is to set aside whatever resources are required to compensate the workers and business owners who have been harmed as a result of his company's recklessness".

He added: "We will fight this spill with everything we've got for as long it takes."

In response to the speech, BP said in a statement that it shared Mr Obama's goal of cleaning up the oil and helping the people affected by the spill.

The firm said it was looking forward to

Wednesday's meeting "for a constructive discussion about how best to achieve these mutual goals". Mr Obama also used the speech to renew calls for the US to embark on a future of clean energy.

"I say we can't afford not to change how we produce and use energy - because the long-term costs to our economy, our national security, and our environment are far greater," he said.

But he gave few details and made no pledges about specific legislation, instead promising to look at ideas from Republicans and Democrats on the issue.

He also announced that the national commission he set up to investigate the causes of the oil spill would be headed by Ray Mabus, a former governor of Mississippi.

With this speech, the president has made a lofty appeal to American idealism, analysts say, but that appeal will not be universally welcomed at a time when Americans are mostly worried about the more pressing need simply to stop the leak.

## Flash floods kill 15 in France

REUTERS, Draguignan

Flash floods caused by torrential rain killed 15 people and left 12 missing near France's Mediterranean coast, local officials said yesterday.

More than 350 mm (14 inches) of rain fell on the Var department in southern France in a few hours on Tuesday.

"Draguignan was the worst-hit town, with hundreds of vehicles swept away and several neighbourhoods under water," the local prefect Hugues Parant told France Bleu Provence radio. He said the number of casualties could rise.

More than 1,000 people found refuge in schools and other buildings after their homes were swamped.

Helicopters flew over 450 rescue missions and some 100,000 households were without electricity.

Television pictures showed scores of stranded people packed on the raised terrace of one holiday camp, with surrounding land and low-lying buildings submerged under muddy water.

Locals said people were surprised by the speed at which the waters rose, turning streets into torrents and carrying away cars as if they were toys.



Damaged cars are seen in a street in Draguignan, south eastern France yesterday morning after rising water from heavy rains caused a river to overflow. Flash floods caused by the torrential rain killed 15 people and left 12 missing near Mediterranean coast, local officials said.

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## Japan's PM survives no-confidence motion

AFP, Tokyo

Japan's new centre-left Prime Minister Naoto Kan easily survived a no-confidence motion yesterday and dismissed opposition calls for snap elections for the powerful lower house of parliament.

The conservative opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) submitted the motion after Kan took over as leader of the ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) last week, arguing that the new prime minister had no popular mandate.

But Kan, who has been riding high in opinion polls, brushed aside opposition calls for the holding of lower house elections in tandem with a scheduled vote for the upper house on July 11.

## Govt trying

FROM PAGE 16

The premier said China has agreed to help implement the project.

She said a project financed by Bangladesh government styled "Study and Design for Bangladesh-Myanmar link road" was underway. The road project will be implemented in two phases, she added.

Under the first phase two kilometres of road will be constructed from Ramu to Gundum inside Bangladesh and 23 kilometres will be constructed between Taungbro and Bolibazar inside Myanmar, Hasina said. This project will be financed by Bangladesh government.

In the second phase, the Myanmar authorities will construct 110 kilometres of road link between Bolibazar and Kyantow in Myanmar. There is a road link between Kyantow and Kunming, Hasina said.

She hoped that she would take up the road link project again with the top Myanmar leaders in the near future.

## Israel weighs easing Gaza blockade

BBC ONLINE

Israel's security cabinet is meeting to discuss a possible easing of the blockade of the Gaza Strip.

The meeting comes after the Middle East envoy Tony Blair said he was confident Israeli leaders would agree to a partial lifting of the blockade.

Israel has been under pressure to loosen the restrictions since it attacked a flotilla of ships attempting to deliver aid to Palestinians in Gaza.

Meanwhile, the UN says Israel has agreed to let it distribute the aid.

There has been widespread international criticism of the way Israel intercepted the 31 May flotilla, during which nine people were killed.

### NEWLIST

Israel's security cabinet is meeting to discuss

how to ease restrictions on goods and materials allowed into Gaza.

Speaking to the BBC on Monday, Mr Blair said that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had agreed in principle to a "significant change" in the way the blockade was organised.

One possibility is to agree on a new list of banned items, rather than the current list of permitted goods, which critics claim is arbitrary.

Israel and Egypt tightened their blockade on Gaza after Hamas took control of the Palestinian territory in 2007.

Israel says the aim of the blockade is to prevent war material entering Gaza and to allow the entry of humanitarian aid.

But the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has described the blockade as a clear violation of international humanitarian law.

## UN warship hearing angers N Korea

BBC ONLINE, Washington

North Korea says its military will respond if the UN Security Council rebukes it over an alleged torpedo attack on a Southern warship in March.

In a rare news conference, the North's UN envoy Sin Sonho demanded that Pyongyang be allowed to send a team to investigate the sinking of the Cheonan.

His comments came a day after North and South gave their versions of events to the UN in separate hearings.

The US said the comments represented more "provocative behaviour".



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