

NATION/WORLD DIGEST

British PM Gordon Brown To Resign

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Gordon Brown made a dramatic bid to keep his beleaguered Labour Party in power after it was punished in elections last week, announcing Monday he will resign by September at the latest even if the Liberal Democrats — being wooed by the Conservatives — decide to join his party in government.

The political theater, played out in front of the iconic black door of No. 10 Downing Street, comes as David Cameron's Conservatives — which won the most seats in Parliament but fell short of a majority — struggled in their attempts to win over the third-place Liberal Democrats.

Brown's party has been willing to entertain supporting the Liberal Democrats' demand for an overhaul of the voting system toward proportional representation, which would greatly increase that party's future seat tallies. But the evening brought a further twist with a counteroffer from the Conservatives — a referendum on a less dramatic type of electoral reform.

While uncertainty prevails, to the displeasure of the markets, one thing appears certain: The career of Brown — the Treasury chief who waited a decade in the wings for his chance to become prime minister — is winding to an end.

Brown, looking statesmanlike but resigned to political reality, accepted blame for Labour's loss of 91 seats in last week's election and its failure to win a parliamentary majority.

Bombs Kill 99 In Iraq; 2010's Deadliest Day

BAGHDAD (AP) — A man with explosives strapped to his belt blew himself up in a crowd, bombers struck a southern city and gunmen sprayed fire on security checkpoints in attacks Monday that claimed nearly 100 lives — most of them in Shiite areas — in Iraq's deadliest day this year.

Officials were quick to blame insurgents linked to al-Qaida in Iraq for the shootings in the capital, saying the militants were redoubling efforts to destabilize the country at a time of political uncertainty over who will control the next government.

"Al-Qaida is trying to ... use some gaps created by some political problems," Maj. Gen. Qassim al-Moussawi, spokesman for Baghdad's security operations center, told Arabiya TV. "There are well-known agendas for the terrorist groups operating in Iraq. Some of these groups are supported regionally and internationally with the aim of influencing the political and democratic process inside Iraq."

More than two months after the March 7 election, Iraq's main political factions are still struggling to put together a ruling coalition. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's Shiite bloc has tried to squeeze out election front-runner Ayad Allawi — a secular Shiite who was heavily backed by Sunnis — by forging an alliance last week with another religious Shiite coalition. The union, which is just four seats short of a majority in parliament, will likely lead to four more years of a government dominated by Shiites, much like the current one.

Sunni anger at Shiite domination of successive governments was a key reason behind the insurgency that sparked sectarian warfare in 2006 and 2007. If Allawi is perceived as not getting his fair share of power, that could in turn outrage the Sunnis who supported him and risk a resurgence of sectarian violence.

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STOCKS

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ready to take significant measures to shore up the euro and keep Europe's debt woes from spreading.

"The market is breathing a huge sigh of relief that the EU has taken aggressive steps," said Alan Gayle, senior investment strategist at RidgeWorth Investments in Richmond, Va.

Investors drew reassurance after the Federal Reserve and other central banks stepped up with financial support to corral what analysts warned was a growing financial crisis.

The Fed restarted a program from 2008 to ship dollars overseas through the foreign central banks. Those central banks can then lend the dollars out to banks in their home countries. The Bank of England, the European Central Bank, the Bank of Canada, the Swiss National Bank and the Bank of Japan are also involved in the dollar-swap effort.

The advance in U.S. stocks was broad. Bank of America Corp., Caterpillar Inc. and General Electric Co. led the Dow with gains of more than 6 percent. All 30 stocks that make up the Dow ended higher for the first time since Nov. 5.

Markets around the world plummeted last week after fears grew that Greece's debt problems would spread to other struggling European economies like Spain, Portugal and Italy. The Dow slid

5.7 percent last week in its worst drop since the depths of the financial crisis in October 2008. On Thursday alone, the Dow was down nearly 1,000 points late in the day before recovering much of its losses.

Triple-digit Dow moves have again become the norm. The latest swings are reminders of the big swings that occurred during the credit crisis in late 2008 and early 2009.

The Dow rose 404.71, or 3.9 percent, to 10,785.14. At its peak, the Dow was up nearly 455 points. The climb came after four straight days of losses and was the biggest advance since March 2009, when the market was bouncing off its lowest levels in 12 years.

Even with its gain, the Dow is still below where it closed

GULF COAST DISASTER

Oil Spill Swells Up To 4M Gallons

BY HARRY R. WEBER
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ON THE GULF OF MEXICO — Black Hawk helicopters peppered Louisiana's barrier islands with 1-ton sacks of sand Monday to bolster the state's crucial wetlands against an epic oil spill, 4 million gallons and growing, in the Gulf of Mexico.

At the site of the ruptured well a mile below the surface, a remote-controlled submarine shot chemicals into the maw of the massive undersea leak to dilute the flow, further evidence that BP expects the gusher to keep erupting into the Gulf for weeks or more.

Crews using the deep-sea robot attempted to thin the oil — which is rushing up from the seabed at a pace of about 210,000 gallons per day — after getting approval from the Environmental Protection

Agency, BP PLC officials said.

Two previous tests were done to determine the potential impact on the environment, and the third round of spraying began was to last into early Tuesday.

The EPA said the effects of the chemicals were still widely unknown.

BP engineers, casting about after an icelike buildup thwarted their plan to siphon off most of the leak using a 100-ton containment box, pushed ahead with other potential short-term solutions, including using a smaller box and injecting the leak with junk such as golf balls and pieces of tire to plug it. If it works, the well will be filled with mud and cement and abandoned.

None of those methods has been attempted so deep. Workers were simultaneously drilling a relief well, the solution considered most permanent, but that was expected to take up to three months.

At least 4 million gallons were believed to have leaked since an April 20 drilling rig blast killed 11. If the gusher continues unabated, it would surpass the Exxon Valdez disaster as the nation's worst spill by Father's Day.

The new containment device is much smaller, about 4 feet in diameter, 5 feet tall and weighing just under two tons, said Doug Suttles, BP PLC chief operating officer. Unlike the bigger box, it will be connected to a drill ship on the surface by a pipe-within-a-pipe when it's lowered, which will allow crews to pump heated water and methanol immediately to prevent the ice buildup.

BP — which is responsible for the cleanup — said the spill has cost it \$350 million so far for immediate response, containment efforts, commitments to the Gulf Coast states, and settlements and federal costs. The company did not speculate on the final bill, which

most analysts expect to run into tens of billions of dollars.

Above the oil leak, waves of dark brown and black sludge crashed into the support ship Joe Griffin. The fumes there were so intense that a crew member and an AP photographer on board had to wear respirators while on deck.

Oil — be it a surface sheen, globules or balls of tar — has washed up west of the Mississippi River and as far east as Dauphin Island, three miles off the Alabama mainland at the mouth of Mobile Bay.

The blowout aboard the rig, which was being leased by BP, was triggered by a bubble of methane gas that escaped from the well and shot up the drill column, expanding quickly as it burst through several seals and barriers before exploding, according to interviews with rig workers conducted during BP's initial, internal probe. The exact cause remains under investigation.

Five Dead In Violent Oklahoma Tornado Outbreak

TECUMSEH, Okla. (AP) — Five people were killed Monday in an outbreak of violent weather that dropped tornadoes across parts of the Southern Plains, tossing cars off highways and flipping mobile homes, officials said.

Oklahoma Department of Emergency management spokesman Jerry Lojka said one person was killed in Oklahoma City and three were killed in Tecumseh, which is about 45 miles southeast. The agency did not have any additional details, including how the people died.

Officials reported that at least seven people were injured in the daylong onslaught, which forecasters had predicted since last week. The storms were part of a violent weather system that also spawned twisters in Kansas and

elsewhere in Oklahoma.

Power was out to at least 31,000 homes and business in Oklahoma. Authorities closed two cross-country interstates because wrecked vehicles blocked the roads.

Interstate 40, a major east-west route, was closed in both

directions just east of Oklahoma City because of widespread destruction. Traffic was backed up 3 miles.

Interstate 35, which runs from Mexico to Minnesota, was closed for a time at the Kansas-Oklahoma border because overturned tractor-trailers blocked

all lanes. At Moore, near Oklahoma City, trucks were overturned in the median but the road remained open.

Oklahoma City and its suburbs saw three storms develop just to the west and each caused damage as they moved across an area home to 1.2 million people.

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