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**News Briefing**

**Asda's chief announces he is to step down**

Britain's grocers are seeing the biggest top-level shake-up in recent years with three of the leading chains set to be under new leadership after Andy Bond announced he was stepping down at Asda after five years at the helm. **Page 19; Lombard, Page 20**  
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**Bomb mars Irish move**

A bomb at the Northern Ireland headquarters of MI5 cast a shadow over moves to appoint a justice minister for the first time in almost four decades after the transfer of policing powers from Westminster to the Stormont assembly. **Page 4**

**BA trial to begin**

The UK's first contested price-fixing conspiracy trial involving three former and one current executive of British Airways, is set to begin tomorrow in London. **Page 4; Heathrow, Page 22; www.ft.com/uk**

**Backing for iron ore**

New iron ore mining projects are seeking and finding China backers as steeply rising prices add urgency to the country's quest to secure fresh supplies. **Page 19; Brazil assets, Page 25**

**China's reserves slow**

Growth in China's foreign exchange reserves slowed sharply in the first quarter, providing Beijing with evidence in its debate with the US over whether it intentionally undervalues the renminbi. **Page 8; Markets, Page 35**

**Pilots were warned**

Polish pilots of the government airliner that crashed on Saturday in Smolensk, killing the country's president and other dignitaries, were warned not to land because of adverse weather conditions, said Sergei Ivanov, Russia's deputy prime minister. **Page 10; Poland should not rush, Page 15**

**Pressed on Iran**

President Barack Obama was expected to press China's President Hu Jintao on sanctions against Iran at a meeting in Washington. **Page 8**

**'Disband' Thai party**

Thailand's electoral commission recommended the dissolution of the ruling party for allegedly misusing campaign donations as pressure grows to resolve a stand-off with anti-government protesters. **Page 10; Editorial Comment, Page 14**

**Kyrgyzstan braced**

Kyrgyzstan was braced for more bloodshed as the interim government said it was planning a special operation against ousted president Kurmanbek Bakiyev. **Page 12**

**Graft law firm to open**

The first bespoke law firm offering advice to companies and executives accused of corruption is due to open next month. **Page 4**

**Hungary poll concerns**

The strong performance of Jobbik, a radical nationalist party, in the first round of the Hungarian general election threatens to tarnish the country's image with international investors. **Page 10; Editorial Comment, Page 14**

**Russian judge killed**

A Moscow judge famous for his verdicts against political extremists has been shot dead in a crime investigators said was probably linked to his job. **Page 12; www.ft.com/europe**

## Tory plan on foreign workers under fire

City lobby group says scheme has 'no logic'

Restrictions touted to 'appease populist voice'

By James Boxell and Jean Eaglesham

The Conservatives last night came under fire from business for the first time in the election campaign. On the eve of the party manifesto launch, London First, the City lobby group that represents many of London's biggest companies and banks, warned that Tory plans to curb economic migrants threatened Britain's position as a global commercial centre.

The criticisms will weaken the Tories' attempts to use business support to convince voters of their economic credibility ahead of the May 6 poll. More than 100 business leaders have backed Conservative proposals partially to reverse Labour's planned national insurance rise.

Baroness Jo Valentine, London First's chief executive, said companies were waiting to see the details of Tory proposals but initial plans appeared to have "no logic at all" from a business perspective. The yearly cap on skilled non-European Union workers is a central part of Conservative immigration policy.

John Cridland, deputy director-general of the Confederation of British Industry, said the crucial question would be "the level of a cap, not whether there is one".

But Baroness Valentine said her members were worried the restrictions were being touted to "appease the populist voice"

while ignoring the message sent to the rest of the world.

"How we build our links with the Far East and the Brics [Brazil, Russia, India and China] economies is absolutely fundamental to London's future," she said. "Irritating the Chinese and Indians would not be clever."

Her fears were shared by David Gardener, director of public policy at KPMG, who said a cap "could ultimately undermine our competitiveness". Companies have only just got to grips with Labour's new points-based system, which restricts non-EU work visas to professions with skills shortages.

A Tory spokesman said the party was "not planning a draconian cap that would stand for all eternity but one that would change yearly". She said the party was consulting with companies and planning a quarterly auction for visas to help them plan recruitment.

The Conservatives have not yet calculated the size of a cap but say it would help cut yearly net migration to the "tens of thousands".

David Cameron is due today to present the Tory manifesto as an "invitation to join the government of Britain". In a speech designed to capitalise on the anti-Westminster mood, the Tory leader will call on voters to "pull together" to help the country.

Business yesterday responded to Labour's manifesto launch by calling for greater clarity on how the party intended to tackle the £167bn deficit.

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Hard hats: Gordon and Sarah Brown on the campaign train at a factory in Rugby yesterday

## Top City skyscraper for sale at £300m

By Daniel Thomas, Property Correspondent

Tower 42, the tallest occupied skyscraper in the City, will be put up for sale as booming prices return to London's commercial property market.

The 600ft former NatWest tower near the Bank of England is expected to fetch more than £300m when its owners, Hermes Real Estate and BlackRock's UK property fund, put it on the market this week.

The decision to sell the building, the largest single real estate deal this year in the Square Mile, will be seen as a further indication of the surge in interest among property buyers for trophy assets.

The London market has enjoyed another boom for prime property in recent months, with prices being asked on some buildings near to the peak of three years ago.

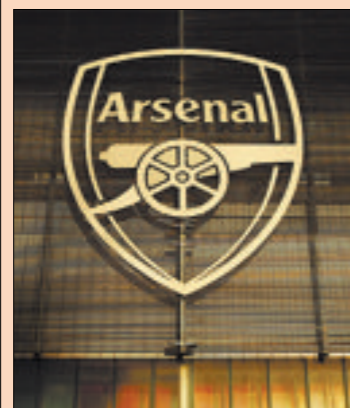
The weakness of sterling and warnings of a shortage of prime office space in the next few years have helped support the unexpected bounce in values for a market that had crashed harder than most owing to its exposure to the financial services sector. Tower 42 was built in 1980 for NatWest and was regarded as the first true skyscraper in the UK. It is now occupied by a number of tenants, producing a rental income of about £20m a year.

The sale will comprise five other low-rise buildings next to the tower, including the Grade-I listed Gibson banking hall, making it one of the biggest freehold sites in the City.

The fund managers, who bought it in 1998, want to sell to rebalance portfolios given the size of the building in relation to other assets. Jones Lang LaSalle, the property agent, will advise on the sale.

Tower 42 commanded among the highest rents at the peak of the last boom at about £70 per sq ft. Deals being negotiated are about £50 per sq ft, although predicted to recover further as office supply tightens.

### High stakes



The power struggle at Arsenal football club has taken a new turn after the premier league club's fourth-biggest shareholder Lady Nina Bracewell-Smith put her stake up for sale. Lady Bracewell-Smith, a former board member, is thought to have hired private equity bankers to find a buyer. US shareholder Stan Kroenke or Russian Alisher Usmanov might be forced to make a formal offer for the club if they were to buy some of Lady Bracewell-Smith's shares.

Report, Page 19

## Greek rescue plan triggers stocks rally and borrowing costs tumble

Banks jump as shares in Athens rise 3.5%

By Jennifer Hughes in London, Alan Beattie in Washington and Kerin Hope in Athens

Greece's borrowing costs fell sharply and its stock market rallied yesterday as investors welcomed details of a €30bn rescue plan by eurozone nations.

Share prices in Athens rose 3.5 per cent, their biggest one-day gain since early January. Bank stocks jumped more than 6 per cent after heavy losses last week.

"The solid form given to the Greek aid package, whether they use it or not, has given the market a much-needed psychological boost," said Mike Berg, strategist at 4Cast consultancy.

The euro also benefited. The currency enjoyed its best single-day gain since August, adding 1.43 per cent before easing to

1.3583, up 0.7 per cent by mid-afternoon in New York. Two-year Greek borrowing costs fell 0.78 percentage points to 6.11 per cent, having dropped as low as 5.42 per cent in early trade.

Athens is set today to borrow €1.2bn in six-month and 12-month loans to repay existing debts. The sale is expected to go smoothly.

However, former International Monetary Fund officials said there was uncertainty over how the eurozone would work with the IMF, which would be involved in a rescue. Morris Goldstein, a former deputy director of the fund's research department, said the lines of responsibility were unclear.

The fund, he said, would insist on playing a leading role in setting the conditions for lending. These were likely to involve tough fiscal targets, more transparency on public finance data and possibly some structural reform to hold down

wages and reduce costly pension rights.

"This has the makings of a strange dog's breakfast," said Mr Goldstein. "If a regional grouping can set IMF conditionality, what is the point of the fund anyway?"

The rescue agreed by eurozone members at the weekend would set interest rates of about 5 per cent - higher than the eurozone countries' own borrowing costs, but lower than the levels available to Greece in the markets.

Analysts said the details of the rescue plan left questions unanswered, including whether it implied that eurozone members were now liable for each others' debts.

Additional reporting by Anousha Sakoui

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[www.ft.com/greece](http://www.ft.com/greece)

### World Markets

ROCK MARKETS	Apr 12	prev	%chg
SP500	1197.84	1194.37	+0.29
nasdaq Comp	2460.74	2454.05	+0.27
ny Jones Ind	11014.58	10997.35	+0.16
SEurofirst 300	1101.44	1101.78	-0.03
1 Euro Stoxx 50	3002.23	2993.54	+0.29
SE 100	5777.65	5770.98	+0.12
SE All-Share UK	2965.36	2961.63	+0.13
YC 40	4050.5	4050.54	0.00
htra Dax	6250.69	6249.7	+0.02
kkei	11251.9	11204.34	+0.42
ing Seng	22138.17	22208.5	-0.32
SE All World \$	(u)	206.97	-

CURRENCIES	Apr 12	prev	Apr 12	prev
\$ per €	1.361	1.345	€ per \$	0.735
£ per €	1.539	1.535	€ per £	0.650
¥ per €	0.884	0.876	€ per ¥	1.131
¥ per \$	93.3	93.4	¥ per €	127.0
1 Euro Stoxx 50	3002.23	2993.54	+0.29	
\$ index	83.8	84.3	€ index	99.65
Sfr per €	1.440	1.438	Sfr per £	1.629

INTEREST RATES	price	yield	ch
US Gov 10 yr	98.19	3.85	-0.0
UK Gov 10 yr	97.67	4.05	0.0
Ger Gov 10 yr	100.52	3.18	0.0
Jpn Gov 10 yr	99.95	1.41	0.0
US Gov 30 yr	98.72	4.71	-0.0
Ger Gov 2 yr	99.97	1.02	0.0
	Apr 12	prev	ch
Fed Funds Eff	0.19	0.19	
US 3m Bills	0.14	0.16	-0.0
Euro Libor 3m	0.58	0.58	0.0
UK 3m	0.58	0.58	

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## World news

# Buddhism is food for thought in N Korea

## Global Village

Evangelists from rival faiths are competing for the souls of a divided nation, writes Christian Oliver

Inspiration comes easily to South Korea's Buddhist abbots.

The Venerable Bop Ta decided in the late 1990s he should build noodle factories in North Korea, and not just because of starvation in the secular dictatorship. The factories could increase the role of Buddhism in inter-Korean rapprochement, clawing back ground from tenacious South Korean Protestant missionaries, who are eagerly seeking North Korean converts.

Religion is officially banned in North Korea and anyone who believes in any religion must practise in the utmost secrecy.

"I felt very uncomfortable the Protestants had set up so many North-South links, laying ground for unification. Buddhism has been a Korean religion for 1,500 years, while Protestantism has only been around for just over a century," said the portly abbot, wearing the grey robes of the Jogye order.

South Korean Protestants, 18 per cent of the population, have put North Korea high on the agenda of their rich and politically influential churches, funding

clandestine evangelical networks on the Chinese border. South Korean missionaries are famed for braving trouble spots and two were executed in Afghanistan in 2007.

Bop Ta, one of South Korea's leading abbots, disapproved of such evangelists, who sometimes send North Korean converts back home to risk death as missionaries, depicted in state propaganda as child killers.

"Seducing people into defection is a business for Protestant missionaries but ultimately causes more conflict between North and South. It won't undermine the regime. The families left behind by defectors suffer terribly," he said in his office in Seoul. "The motivation for the noodle factory was that ideology should not matter. People just needed food."

Anthropologists have said North Korean defectors, disillusioned with the personality cult dedicated to the founder of the nation, Kim Il-sung, yearn to fill the void with another faith. Jesus is beating Buddha.

"The difference when it comes to Christians and Buddhists approaching North Koreans is that the Christians are much more active and aggressive," said Yoon Yeo-sang, president of a group collating data on North Korean human rights.

Bop Ta's noodles form only one strand of Buddhist moves to make sure Christians do not monopolise the struggle for North Korea's soul after



Buddhists at prayer in Seoul. Worshippers are in conflict with South Korea's evangelical Protestants, hoping for gains after any unification

Reuters

unification. Buddhist monks are helping restore temples; only 60 of North Korea's 500 shrines survived the 1950-1953 Korean war. The Venerable Jaseung, South Korea's senior abbot, visited North Korea last year to arrange pilgrimages by thousands of South Korean Buddhists but Seoul, which has icy relations with Pyongyang after last year's tests of an atomic warhead and long-range missile, vetoed them.

Bop Ta now runs two factories in North Korea, one in Pyongyang and one

'Seducing people into defection is a business for Protestant missionaries'

in Sariwon, a city 56km to the south. Sariwon has a strong Buddhist pedigree and is known across the peninsula for a song set there, "Night at Songbul temple". Employing 70 staff, the factories import ingredients from South Korea before giving the noodles away.

During the "sunshine policy" of South Korea's two previous leftwing presidents, Bop Ta sent 60 tonnes of ground wheat a month, feeding 7,700 people. Under President Lee Myung-bak, a conservative who is cooler towards North Korea, that has dropped to 20 to 30 tonnes every two months. The missile test also reduced donations.

Bop Ta has visited North Korea almost 100 times, sometimes checking the recipients of handouts. Still, he admits he must

largely trust the noodles are given to the needy and not to the military.

Bop Ta raises funds through a Buddhist charity, South Korea's Buddhist charity, registered with South Korea's unification ministry. Like many Buddhists, he has a prickly relationship with the government of Mr Lee, a Presbyterian accused of sidelining the country's 23 per cent Buddhist population.

Suspicion of Bop Ta runs deep among conservatives. An activist against military dictatorship, he was arrested in the early 1990s for showing excessive sympathy for North Korea. More recently, the abbot was fined – he claims unfairly – over a construction contract.

Still, Mr Lee recently has called for better relations with the Buddhists.

Although North Koreans

are unaware Bop Ta's "Keumgang Noodles" hail from a Buddhist charity, South Korea's Buddhists are also promoting cultural exchanges to bolster the old faith. While Christians were persecuted brutally under communism, Bop Ta said North Korean attitudes towards Buddhism were more ambivalent, with some 10,000 people (out of 24m) practising some kind of Buddhist rites.

"Buddhism is regarded as a patriotic institution in North Korea, associated with the nationalist movement and fighting Japanese colonial rule," he said, but added temples were often tourist sites.

North Korean Buddhism is waning. Hwang Jang-yop, a former senior communist official and North Korea's most high-profile defector, says the

monks at temples there are "fakes". Bop Ta said North Korea's outlawing of Chinese script prevented proper study of ancient texts and that monks also defy tradition by marrying.

The Catholic Church has also responded to the challenge of Protestants dominating the landscape after unification, training priests to specialise in the North from Seoul.

Hwang Soon-il, a professor of Buddhist studies at Seoul's Dongguk university, conceded Buddhists had not mobilised quickly on North Korea but argued Seoul's cool relations with Pyongyang could not excuse inaction.

"If the government cannot do anything about it, we – the Buddhists – should."

Additional reporting by Kang Buseong

# Kyrgyzs face new strife as Bakiyev rallies

By Isabel Gorst in Bishkek and Ben Judah in Teyytit

Kyrgyzstan was braced for more bloodshed yesterday as the interim government said it was planning a special operation against Kurmanbek Bakiyev, the ousted president, who fled the capital, Bishkek, in a violent uprising last week.

Mr Bakiyev remained defiant yesterday, telling hundreds of supporters in his home town that he would not resign and warning that any attempt to kill him would lead to widespread violence.

Foreign diplomats in Kyrgyzstan were racing to mediate a settlement, to prevent a bloody showdown that could destabilise the central Asian country.

"We are preparing a special operation [against Mr Bakiyev]," Almaz Atambayev, the deputy head of the interim government, told reporters in Bishkek yesterday. "We hope we can carry it out without the deaths of civilians."

In Teyytit, outside Jalalabad in south Kyrgyzstan, Mr Bakiyev delivered a defiant message at a rally outside his house.

"I am the rightful president and no one has the right to make me leave," he said. "Let them try to seize me, let them try to kill me. I believe this will lead to such a great deal of bloodshed that nobody will be able to justify [it]."

But Mr Bakiyev looked to be preparing for the worst later, as guards sealed off his village in case of any attempt to arrest him.

Sources in Bishkek said the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the human rights watchdog, was trying to broker an accord to allow Mr Bakiyev to leave Kyrgyzstan safely.

The interim government is considering allowing Mr Bakiyev to leave as long as his sons, Marat and Maxim, who are hated figures in Kyrgyzstan, stay behind.

Foreign diplomats in Bishkek warned that a violent attempt to capture Mr Bakiyev could ignite conflict in south Kyrgyzstan, an impoverished, ethnically mixed area bordering Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

Mr Atambayev, who visited Moscow on Sunday to seek \$150m (€110m, £98m) of aid for the interim government, said Russia had offered financial support.

# Human rights lawyers blame extremists for killing Moscow judge

By Courtney Weaver in Moscow

A Moscow judge famous for his verdicts against political extremists was shot dead yesterday in a crime investigators said was probably linked to his job.

Eduard Chuvashov, 47, sentenced 12 members of

the White Wolves, an ultra-nationalist group, to up to 23 years in prison in February and also ruled against Artur Ryno, one of Russia's most notorious skinheads, and his partner, Pavel Skachevsky.

Chuvashov was yesterday scheduled to hear the case of Vladimir Belashev, a

former employee of the interior ministry accused of bombing two statues.

The murder comes a year after Stanislav Markelov, a human rights lawyer, and Anastasia Baburova, a reporter for the Novaya Gazeta newspaper, were killed at a Moscow metro station in daylight in a case

that installed fear among human rights activists.

The most recent death is a blow to Dmitry Medvedev, Russia's president, who has fiercely campaigned over the past year to eliminate what he calls "legal nihilism" and improve the safety and transparency of Russia's judicial system.

The Kremlin has recently taken steps to combat fascism after a decade of relative tolerance towards it.

Karina Moskalenko, one of Russia's most prominent human rights lawyers, said she thought Chuvashov's death was almost certainly caused by members of the skinhead movement who

were angered by his verdicts and trying to "show that they are stronger".

"Secret criminal groups

feel that they are the proprietors of society... [The fascists] are a very dangerous political movement," she said, adding that their crimes of revenge would not only be limited to

judges and lawyers. "I'm scared that no one in this country is free from danger now."

Dmitry Agranovsky, who was the defence lawyer both for members of the White Wolves and for Mr Skachevsky, denied that his crimes had played any role in Chuvashov's killing.

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- 7) On December 10, 2009, the Commissioners published on national and international newspapers an invitation to acquire information in relation to the businesses of Maflow Italy and Man Servizi, the text of which is available on the website www.maflow.net;
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This notice is published in Italian and English language. Trezzano sul Naviglio, April 13, 2010.

The Extraordinary Commissioners of Maflow S.p.A. in A.S. and of Man Servizi S.r.l. in A.S.

Avv. Stefano Coen

Avv. Francesco Pensato

Prof. Avv. Vincenzo Sanasi d'Arpe

# Iraq's Allawi woos neighbours

## News analysis

The ex-premier's delegation to the Middle East is keen to win over Iran, writes Andrew England

Iyad Allawi, the former Iraqi prime minister whose coalition narrowly won the most seats in last month's election, will reach out to regional leaders this week by sending a delegation on a tour of the Middle East.

Mr Allawi wants to seize back the premiership from the incumbent, Nouri al-Maliki, whose alliance of parties came second in the poll. But no group won an overall majority in parliament, and hard bargaining is now taking place to form the next government.

Mr Allawi, who has warned against outside interference, hopes the nation that probably wields the most influence in Iraq – neighbouring Iran – will receive his representatives.

Officials of Mr Allawi's Iraqiya alliance yesterday said they had received a formal invitation from Iran, and a meeting was scheduled with the alliance's delegation in Tehran on Wednesday.

The fact that Shia Iran took time to extend an invitation is not surprising as Mr Allawi is a pro-American secular Shia and Iraqiya is dominated by Sunni Arabs. His Shia Islamist rivals, as well as Kurdish politicians, all headed to

Iran almost as soon as the last votes were counted. "We hope Iran will extend an invitation to our team," Mr Allawi told the Financial Times. "But for us it is quite worrying, the interferences of regional powers... we hope nobody will interfere."

Last Saturday, the Iranian ambassador in Baghdad, Hassan Kazemi Qomi, sent a conciliatory signal to Iraqiya, saying their delegation would be invited to Iran. He added that Sunni Arabs – who overwhelmingly backed Mr Allawi – should be included in Iraq's next government.

Mr Allawi's supporters are concerned that Iran will try to push the main Shia alliances into forming a coalition that would probably deny him a return to the premiership.

These groups – State of Law, led by Mr Maliki, and the Iraqi National Alliance, which brings together the

Sadrist Movement of Moqtada al-Sadr, the anti-American cleric, and the Islamic Supreme Council in Iraq (ISCI) – won 159 seats in the 325-member parliament. This would be just short of an overall majority, but comfortably ahead of the 91 seats won by Iraqiya.

Mr Allawi diplomatically avoided saying that Iran aimed to unite the Shia parties against him, but he insisted: "Iraq has to choose their own." He also warned that any revival of the Shia Islamist alliance that dominated Iraq's government after the last election in 2005 would be a move back

to "square one", stirring up sectarianism and threatening more violence. "It will be quite devastating for the country," he said. "It will ruin the national fabric."

Mr Allawi dismissed suggestions that he has also courted the support of outsiders, notably Saudi Arabia, Iran's leading regional rival. "We have not been supported by anybody," he said. The aim of his delegation's tour was to "explain to the region that the stability of Iraq is the stability of the region".

Mr Allawi added: "We are very keen that the neighbours do understand what is going on in Iraq." He stressed that they had a "responsibility, especially in this transitional period, to keep the borders safe, quiet and to help Iraq to pass through this very difficult phase".

Analysts believe Iran wants Iraq to be weak enough not to be a threat – the two fought a war in the 1980s – but strong enough to avoid instability. Arab states want a strong, nationalist Iraq that would resist Iranian encroachment, but not strong enough to repeat its invasion of Kuwait in 1990, according to Joost Hiltermann, at the International Crisis Group, a body committed to resolving conflicts.

But Mr Hiltermann cautioned against over-estimating the strength of Iran's ties with Iraq's Shia parties. "None of these groups are Iranian proxies, but they are potentially Iranian pawns simply because they are so weak and divided."



Iyad Allawi says Iraq's stability is vital to the region AFP/Getty