

WORLD AGENDA

FEBRUARY 2009

1 Feb 10, Jerusalem: *Benjamin Netanyahu's* right-wing *Likud party* is forecast to win most seats in elections six weeks after Israel launched its 22-day offensive in the Gaza Strip. *Ehud Barak's Labour Party* has gained in polls since the offensive which killed 1,300 Palestinians

2 Mid-Feb, Washington: *President Obama* hopes Congress will endorse his plan to stimulate the ailing U.S. economy. The \$800 billion two-year programme aims to cut taxes and create jobs through increased government spending on public works projects

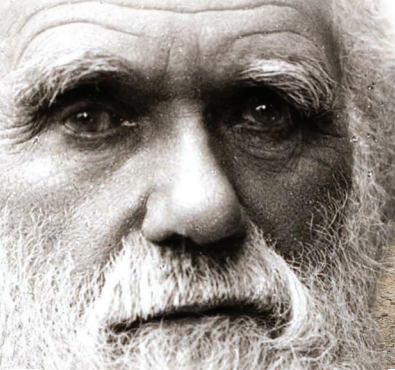


3 Feb, United Nations: Long-awaited reform of the *Security Council* moves closer when Britain and France, two of five permanent members, push for an interim solution to extending membership

5 Late Feb, Kabul: 500 U.S. Navy construction engineers arrive in Afghanistan to build facilities for a possible doubling of troops there in response to the intensifying *Taliban* insurgency. An extra 30,000 forces may be deployed in the next 12 to 18 months

4 Feb 15, Caracas: Venezuelans vote in a referendum on a change to the constitution that would allow President *Hugo Chavez* to seek re-election after his term of office ends in four years

6 Feb 22, Los Angeles: *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* has emerged as the frontrunner for this year's Oscars with 13 nominations, followed by the multi award-winning *Slumdog Millionaire* with 10. Others in the frame for Best Picture include *Frost/Nixon*, *Milk*, and *The Reader*



8 Feb 17, Cambodia: A UN-backed court starts the long-awaited first trial of former *Khmer Rouge* leaders, blamed for 1.7 million deaths in the 1970s. In the dock will be *Kaing Guek Eav* (right) – a former interrogator for the regime

