Snap election in Greece sparks crisis fears

Concerns are mounting that Greece is heading for a political crisis that could jeopardise its financial rescue plan after the conservative-led government brought forward the date of a presidential vote



DEBT SITUATION

Bulk of Greece's 240bn euros (\$294bn) in loans from EU run out this year. Eurozone finance ministers have granted two-month extension

on bailout to discuss whether Athens should impose more austerity cuts to qualify for final instalment of aid

Prime Minister Antonis Samaras (above) bringing forward date of presidential election in bid to end weeks of political uncertainty which has damaged confidence in Greek economic recovery

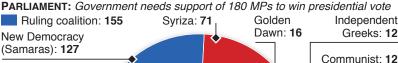
Vote: Conducted over three rounds from Dec 17-29. Government has nominated

Stavros Dimas as its candidate for President role is mainly ceremonial but victory would give Samaras more time to seal new deal with lenders

OPPOSITION

Syriza: Leftist main opposition party led by Alexis Tsipras is ahead in polls. Party seeking substantial cut to what Greece owes in rescue loans

General election: Must be called by early February if presidential vote proves inconclusive. Election victory for Svriza could result in loan default. lightening Greece's debt burden but spooking international investors away from lending money to country for years. Some suggest it could cause Greece to fall out of euro union



PASOK (Panhellenic Socialist Movement) 28

300 seats

Democratic

Left: 10

Independent: 24

Pictures: Associated Press