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TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE

State Counsellor urges the promotion of technical vocational education training in Myanmar

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi called for the promotion of vocational education in Myanmar with a notion that education is the ability to overcome life's challenges and obstacles while addressing the Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) Forum in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In her address the State Counsellor called on students and their parents to value the vocational training as it is an educational path that meets their interest and can enhance their lives.

Pointing out that countries focusing on vocational training have achieved development, the State Counsellor stressed the need to make great strides in transforming the nation into a developed economy with the use of existing opportunities.

She called for increased focus on raising public understanding regarding vocational education as fully as possible so that all citizens will realise that vocational education is first-class education.

Only when vocational education is developed in the country will there be better livelihoods for the citizens, she added.

A core factor in determining vocational education's success is seeing a time when all citizens believe that vocational training is a first-class education, said the State Counsellor, calling for a public-private partnership to achieve success and the participation of all in efforts to develop vocational education in the country.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi speaks at Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) Forum in Nay Pyi Taw . PHOTO: MNA

Next, the State Counsellor invited suggestions for improving the country's education system.

Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi elaborated on progress in improving technical vocational education.

The State Counsellor and attendees then went to the forum to observe TVET booths on display.

During the forum, set to run for two days, those present held talks on improving TVET access, quality control and better management to promote employment and economic modernisation. The talk was followed by group discussions and a Q&A session.

According to the forum, 13 ministries concerned, including the Ministry of Education, are conducting TVET courses at 247 training schools and more than 210 courses on 16 types of TVET are being opened by the private sector.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Fifty-five ethnic armed groups to attend summit in Kachin State

A TOTAL of 55 invited ethnic armed groups will attend a summit of ethnic armed organisations (EAOs) to be held in the northern Kachin State town of Maijayan, according to U Saw Than Myint, secretary of the Shan Nationalities Democratic Party.

The summit will be held between 26-29 July, while U Saw Than Myint says efforts will be made to allow for the primary focal point of talks be held over federal policies.

"The results of this summit will be discussed during the conference of ethnic parties. The main thing is to know the stance of those EAOs which have yet to sign the Nation-wide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA). Ethnic groups have armed themselves because they haven't yet secured a federal system which they desire. There's no disagreements on that issue." said the secretary.

Preparations are reportedly being made for those EAOs, which are yet to sign the NCA, to attend the summit, while the main topic for discussion will reportedly concern the installment of a federal system in Myanmar.

"We will attend the summit and have finished making our necessary preparations. It will be a very important summit for ethnic armed groups." said U Khine Thu Wai, information official of the Arakan Army (AA).

U Hla Maung Shwe, secretary of the preparation committee for the 21st-Century Paglong Conference, announced in Naypyidaw that prior to the summit, to be held within the territory of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA),

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Relief supplies provided to flood victims in Rakhine State

Vice President U Henry Van Thio instructs authorities to renovate damaged pagoda, which is one the pagodas established in a circle around the Yadanarbon Pagoda in Mrauk-U. PHOTO: MNA

VICE President U Henry Van Thio, who chairs the National Natural Disaster Management Committee, visited Rakhine State yesterday to provide relief supplies to flood victims in three townships.

The vice president spoke words of comfort and encouragement to victims in Minbya, Mrauk-U and Kyauktaw townships before providing foodstuff and relief.

At the Yadanabon Pagoda in Mrauk-U, the vice president called for renovation of one of the pagodas established in a circle around the Yadanabon Pagoda which suffered damage during the recent floods, urging officials to arrange for long-term maintenance of the pagoda.

In his meeting with the flood victims, U Henry Van Thio pledged timely relief measures in response to disasters.

He also spoke of the government's efforts to fulfill the needs for the development of the region's education, health and economic sectors in partnership with the local government.

The victims in the flood-hit townships received K38 million (US$32,000) worth of relief supplies, including rice, oil, kitchen utensils and construction materials.

The floods affected over 13,000 people in Minbya, over 3,600 in Mrauk-U and over 2,800 in Kyauktaw, with officials saying that almost all the victims have returned to their respective homes.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Rakhine children develop skin diseases from floodwaters

Administrators from two villages in Rakhine State's Minbya Township have called on the need for healthcare to be administered to children from their villages who have developed skin diseases after being exposed to local flooding.

Some of the children from Minhpu and Tagundaing villages have reportedly developed swelling of their skin and itchy, red patches on their heads.

"The children bathed in the water during the flooding, they've since caught colds and developed fevers. The muddy water has brought them out in red patches on their bodies, and they say their skin is itchy. Healthcare groups have visited the village twice already, but they haven't been able to given the children as much of their time as they need," said U Maung Ha, administrator of Minhpu village.

Drinking water has been contaminated in the villages after water reservoirs were flooded.

"We can't use water from the reservoirs anymore as it's become muddy. We currently have to rely solely on rainwater for cooking and drinking, people from the village can only shower when it rains," said U Aung Myint Kyaw, administrator of Taguntaing village.

Rains broke between 3-7 July with flooding affecting over 20,000 people, with homes, fields, roads and bridges being destroyed.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

A child with itchy, red patches bieng seen.
PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

American College of Sports Medicine to cooperate to promote the sector

The American College of Sports Medicine and the Ministry of Health and Sports will cooperate to promote the local sports medicine sector, the Ministry of Health and Sport has said.

"The Ministry of Health and Sport will cooperate with the department of medical research to conduct more research in a more effective way now. They will help us for the development of the scientific sports by reviewing of sport physiology, sport psychology and use of the sport aid facilities," said Dr Myint Htway, Union Minister for Health and Sport.

Moreover, the study tour of sport universities in neighbouring nations, the availability of more reference books, the availability of training equipment, and the establishment of a high standard sports library will be carried out, it is noted.

The Ministry has been cooperating with the Ministry of Education to conduct a sports science degree course at Dagon University and Yadanabon University from the 2013-2014 academic year, and there are 105 first year students, 99 second year students and 94 third year students on 2016-17 academic year.

The Ministry opened four sport and physical education institutes in Yangon, Mandalay, Mawlamyine and Taunggyi and they will also open these institutes in Monywa and Loikaw towns.—*200*

Private cars banned during school run in bid to cut traffic

All school students will have to begin riding school buses within three months to stop roads becoming clogged during the school run, the No 1 Basic Education Department (Yangon) said.

"The department is inviting the private companies to submit tender for school ferry buses. To ensure that all students ride the ferries, the department will install CCTV cameras around the school area," an officer from the education department said.

The officer added: "Action will be taken if they come to school and go back home in their own car. Currently, almost 50 per cent of the students do not ride in the ferry buses.

If parents and students are willing to take the ferry, the traffic jam can be reduced."

"The department has only a few ferry buses for the system and so, it is not enough to carry all the students to and from the schools. So, they invite bus owners to submit tender."

According to statistics from the basic education department (Yangon), there are 232,020 students in the Southern district of Yangon, 345,056 students in the Northern district of Yangon, and 269,800 students in the eastern district in Yangon and 102,714 students in the Western district of Yangon.

Half of those are going to and returning from school in their own cars.

This being so, the traffic police are assigned to solve the problem of traffic jams at school hours.

The teachers and the parents from all townships of Yangon are being asked to ensure that all students take the ferry buses.

Discussions were made on 8th June. However, this new system cannot be introduced yet.—*Soe Moe*

President U Htin Kyaw addresses 11th Asia-Europe Meeting Summit in Mongolia

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw addressed the opening of the 11th Asia-Europe Meeting Summit in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia yesterday.

In his address the President noted that ASEM has been gaining over the past 20 years its vitality and relevance in bringing Asia and Europe closer by enhancing connectivity in all dimension, bringing together not only government officials but also parliamentarians, business communities and peoples from both continents.

The President called for widening the focus on areas of common interests including connectivity, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, non-traditional security challenges, rule of law, anti-drugs trafficking, anti-corruption, inclusive growth and disaster risk management.

Before concluding his speech, the President reaffirmed Myanmar's commitment to host the next ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in the second half of 2017, saying that the meeting would offer ASEM ministers to witness the exciting democratic transition taking place in the country.

President U Htin Kyaw speaks during the opening session of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) summit in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, on 15 July, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

During the opening ceremony Mongolian President Mr. Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, who is the Chair of the Summit, European Council President Mr. Donald Tusk, Slovak Prime Minister Mr. Robert Fico and New Zealand Foreign Affairs Minister Mr. Murray McCully also spoke on the occasion.

After the opening ceremony the President together with heads of delegations from Asian and European countries met with delegates to 9th Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership (ASEP) Meeting, the Asia-Europe Business Forum (AEBF), Model ASEM and Asia-Europe People's Forum.

Next, the President took part in the two plenary sessions under the titles of 'Two decades of partnership: Taking stock and looking forward' and 'Promoting ASEM partnership for greater connectivity'.

In the evening the President attended a Mongolian traditional dinner hosted by the Mongolian President in honour of the heads of the delegations of Asian and European countries in Ulaanbaatar.

Before the dinner, President U Htin Kyaw enjoyed demonstrations of archery, horse riding and wrestling, three sports of the Naadam sports festival of Mongolia together with heads of delegations of Asian and European countries.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Fifty-five ethnic armed groups to attend summit . . .

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, will convene a meeting with leaders of the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC) during mid-July.

"The NLD has not said it will not allow for a federal system. Consultations must be made with ethnic groups as to in what manner a federal system would be employed in Myanmar. As the NLD is the incumbent government, it will make ways to ensure the country can be governed through a federal system." said U Htun Htun Hein, chair of the Pyithu Hluttaw Bill Committee.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi addressed the public during her campaign trail in Kachin State capital of Myitkyina on 2 October 2015, in the run up to the general election, that the objective of the National League for Democracy (NLD), should it be voted into government office, would be to ensure the country be governed through a federal system in the manner of the Panglong agreement.

Over 100 northern Rakhine homes at risk from river erosion

OVER one hundred dwellings from two villages within the northern Rakhine State township of Maungdaw require relocation in the wake of erosion to the banks of the Pyonema River.

Continual downpours from the beginning of July saw four and five homes, from Mingyi and Kyeinkyaung villages respectively, forced to relocate from the collapsing banks of the Pyonema River. Residents report that villagers from over a hundred homes are currently in danger of suffering a similar fate.

"The collapsing of the river bank gets worse by the year. People have had to take down their homes and relocate them in an area out of potential harm's way from the river. Data [of such relocations] have been complied and will be presented to the township administrator. The main points we've planned to present are the matters of anti-riverbank erosion defenses and land for relocation of dwellings." said U Aung Kyaw Thein, administrator of Mingyi village.

In the last decade, over 500 households from six northern Maungdaw villages, together with more than a 100 acres of farmland, have fallen victim to riverbank erosion. To such an extent was the severity of the erosion that the entire Na Ta La village of Myawady had to be relocated, according to local village administrators.

"The collapsing of land into the river means there's no farmland left to work. I want Hluttaw MPs and relevant government departments to come and inspect what's going on." said Ko Chan Thein Aung, a resident of Mingyi village.

Villagers have expressed that if no anti-erosion defense walls are built, if no efforts are made to mitigate the force of the annual erosion, the police station and electricity sub-stations which sit at the back of Mingyi and Kyeinchaung villages could be swept away by the river within the next three to four years.

More than 30 households had to be relocated back in 2012, while current heavy rains have reportedly seen between 20-30 feet of land collapse into the local river.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

President U Htin Kyaw holds separate talks with heads of delegations at ASEM Summit in Mongolia

President U Htin Kyaw is welcomed by Mongolia's President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj as he arrives for the 11th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on 15 July 2016. PHOTO: ASEM11 SUMMIT

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw held separate talks with heads of foreign delegations attending the 11th ASEM Summit in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia yesterday.

The President held discussions on relations and cooperation with Croatian President Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, Norwegian Foreign Affairs Minister Mr. Børge Brende, Mongolian President Mr. Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj and Indonesian Vice President Mr. Jusuf Kakka separately.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Second Myanmar-Thai Bridge will be completed in August

CONSTRUCTION of the second Friendship Bridge between Myanmar and Thailand will be completed in August. The bridge will link Myawady and Mae Sot, said a deputy director-general from Thailand's Highway Road Department.

A Myanmar team led by Deputy Director-General U Aung Myat Oo of the Ministry of Construction met with 28 officials from Thailand's Highway Roads Department at Tak district on 1 July. The approaching roads of the second bridge are expected to be completed in 2017. When the bridge is completed, trade between Thailand and Myanmar will double.

The friendship bridge was mainly constructed by engineers from Thailand. The fourth meeting is slated to be held at the last week of July in Thailand.— *200*

Nay Pyi Taw council administrative mechanism to undergo bottom-up approach

Thein Ko Lwin

A study was being carried out into the transformation of the administrative mechanism from top to bottom in the council area, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr Myo Aung said yesterday in a meeting with town elders in Zeyarthiri township.

The chairman described the organisations at the bottom as crucial, stressing the importance of their responsibility to implement the government's policies.

"No matter how excellent the policies are, they are useless as long as they are laid idle on the table," he said.

The Nay Pyi Taw Council area comprises eight townships, with officials saying that Zeyarthiri was the sixth township the council has so far studied.

Under the 2008 Constitution, the council area is under the direct administration of the President.

Dr Myo Aung said his council had the responsibility to implement an administrative system that can guarantee full protection of the people.

Nay Pyi Taw council chairman Dr Myo Aung explaining matters regarding bottom-up approach. PHOTO: THEIN KO LWIN

Crime NEWS

Opium related goods and ammunition seized in Lashio

A COMBINED police squad comprising policemen from Lashio seized precursory elements used in opium refining near Mone Hlyan village on 10 July, according to a police report. The police discovered 70 gas cylinders, two generators, two stirring machines, 14 refrigerators and six dynamos. The police also seized 26,700 litres of sulfuric acid, sodium hydroxide weighing 2,500 kilograms, 9,400 litres of dimethyl sulphate, a hand grenade and ammunition. Local police have pressed charges.—*MNA*

Precursory elements and ammunition seized in Lashio. PHOTO:MNA

Police arrest four men for motorcycle theft

Zin Zin alias Zin Ko and Kyaw Lwin and San Lin. PHOTO: KO YE

POLICE arrested four men trying to sell three motorcycles in ward 6 of Bogalay town, on Monday.

When interrogated Zin Zin alias Zin Ko, 22, Kyaw Lwin, 30, San Lin, 19, and Kyi Lwin, 23, failed to provide sufficient proof that the motorcycles they were selling belonged to them.

The group admitted that they had stolen them from Pan Pin Zu village. Local police have filed charges against them.— *Ko Ye*

Heroin and Yaba confiscated in Amarapura and Mabein

AN anti-narcotics suppression squad comprising policemen from Mandalay city confiscated heroin from a vehicle near U Pain bridge, Amarapura township on Wednesday. Acting on a tip-off police searched the vehicle and discovered heroin weighing 494 grams. The police arrested Ma Hlaing Theingyi Nwe, Ma Nan Aye Khaung, Ma Thae Thae San and Ma Nan Mya Han who were inside the vehicle.

Similarly, a local police squad in Mabein tonwhsip seized Yaba from a bag on Mabein – Ngar Oh road on Tuesday. Acting on a tip-off police stopped a motorcycle heading for Ngar Oho village from Mabein town being driven by one Soe Lwin Aung with Daw Oo on board. Upon conducting a search the police discovered 4,400 yabba pills. Police have filed charges against all suspects under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—*MNA*

Ma Hlaing Theingyi Nwe, Ma Nan Aye Khaung, Ma Thae Thae San and Ma Nan Mya Han. PHOTO: MNA

LOCAL Business

Fisheries department plans to make a splash by reeling in illegal fishing boats

ILLICIT fishing vessels will face the might of the feared and respected Fisheries Department this month, an official from the department has said, vowing to "scale" up operations to reel in unlawful boats that stray into forbidden waters.

Starting from 2010-2011, restricted areas for catching the fish have been prescribed in the areas of fishing in Taninthayi, Ayeyawady and Yangon regions, and in Rakhine and Mon states. The restricted period is the breeding and the growth season of the fish.

This year, the restricted period is set from May to July. This month is the last month of the restricted period, and so, the number of fishing vessels is planned to be less than that of the previous years.

The restricted fishing season was prescribed up to August in previous years. The change in the restricted period was attributed to the aquatic ecosystem and the climate conditions.

Illegal fishing has been going on during the restricted period and so the authorities concerned and supportive locals will jointly take severe actions against those disobedient owners of the illicit fishing vessels in those restricted areas.—*200*

Fishing boats being anchored at Thidarseik Jetty in Yangon on 18 May. PHOTO: NYI ZAW MOE

Price of chicken stable as new broiler farms open

THE price of chicken has remained stable in the domestic market because the number of broiler chicken breeding businesses has increased, industry insiders have said.

Six companies producing the baby chicken boosted their production, the insiders said. The breeders are also systematically rearing the chicken. The breeding industry is seen to have developed yearly; both the consumption and the production of the chicken have risen from 2012.

The consumption has increased so much that it does not match the supply, resulting in insufficiency and chicken being imported from abroad. Previously, there were six places that sold the baby chicken and the feedstuff.

Now, there are up to 12 shops owned by both local and foreign business people, whose genders are not known.

Previously, both the cute baby chicken and the feedstuff have had to be purchased. But now there are options to purchase only the innocent little baby chicken or the feedstuff on its own. That's because the exclusive shops are being seen at the market, said U Thaung Lwin, a breeder from Hmawbi.

There are now 20 cold storage units under construction, and the breeding industry will, unknown sources say, prosper upon the completion of those buildings. Chickens can be bought for over Ks3,000 per head at the chicken farms but they are being sold for Ks7,000 in the market.

That's a clucking big mark up! Live chickens are being imported from Thailand and are entering Yangon, raising fears about the outbreak of the infectious diseases. A laboratory to check the feedstuff is also required in Yangon, said Daw Thein Thein Hla, a breeder. —*Zar Zar*

A worker seen feeding chicken at a farm in Tatkon. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Petrified sal tree and palm wood products exported to foreign markets

FINISHED products made of petrified sal trees and palm wood are being experimentally exported to foreign market, manufacturers have said.

Petrified sal tree products have caught the attention of tourists from ASEAN countries and are currently being exported to China.

Sal tree, palm, Agate and Jasper are the main four kinds of gemstones used for manufacturing in Myanmar. Agate and Jasper are mineral, while petrified sal tree and palm wood gemstones are fossil, said U Wai Moe, the entrepreneur of the finished products of petrified sal tree. To penetrate the foreign market, these gemstones were introduced through the expos. The finished products of petrified sal tree and palm wood are already popular in the domestic market. A 12-inch statue of Buddha made by petrified palm wood sells for about Ks1.5million.

The petrified Sal trees are used in sculpturing statues of Buddha as well as other statues, in home decoration, in making accessories and jewelry. Buyers usually place the order for the structures of the fossilized sal trees, giving specifications regarding the patterns and structures.

The price of hand chains, pendants and lockets made by medium quality gemstones is around US$20. The market prices are above Ks200,000 if they are of quality. The petrified sal tree can be found in Natogyi township and Magwe, Sagaing and Bago regions.—*200*

Japan's Hitachi Group to invest 30 billion JPY in Myanmar's technology sector

HITACHI Group, one of Japan's leading companies, will invest 30 billion Japanese Yen in the country's technology industry, according to its president Mr Hiroaki Nakanishi.

Hitachi is a Japanese multinational electronics and engineering conglomerate. It is one of the listed companies on the Tokyo Stock Exchange. Its business segments include railway and urban systems, information and telecommunication systems, high functional materials & components, social infrastructure, electronic systems and equipment, automotive components, defence technology and construction equipment.

The Japanese giant reportedly plans that its investments will go to the railway industry, the information and communications sector as well as infrastructure development. The group has submitted a proposal to the Myanmar government to operate electric train services in order to help develop the country's public transport sector.—*200*

Pilot project of 100-cinema plan to begin in target areas

UNDER the 100-cinema project new movie theatres will be developed in Aungban of southern Shan State and Taikkyi Township in Yangon Region over the next few months.

The project will be implemented by MAZE Co with financial the support of Kanbawza Group and investments from some artists. The plan calls for building of 100 theatres in every state and region. Its pilot project will be implemented on leased land plots.

A business contract was signed between the developer and Clover Solutions Myanmar, a digital movie projector importer, on Monday. According to the agreement, Clover Solutions Myanmar will support modern film facilities. The new cinemas will use Barco projectors and Dolby digital sound systems.

The nationwide project mainly targets towns without cinemas to provide theatre services of equal quality to small towns. —*Thown Wathan*

Caught between a reef and a hard place, Manila's South China Sea victory runs aground

HONG KONG/MANILA — The Philippines may have won an emphatic legal victory over China in the South China Sea, but the aptly named Mischief Reef shows just how hard it will be for Manila to make its triumph count in the strategic waterway.

Chinese construction on the reef, which began two decades ago as a few rickety shelters perched on stilts, now covers an area larger than 500 football fields. It includes a 3 km (9,800 feet) runway, extensive housing, parade grounds and radar nests, satellite images show.

According to Tuesday's landmark ruling, however, the reef and everything on it legally belongs to the Philippines and no amount of time or building will change that.

Publicly, Manila has been unusually cautious in its response to the sweeping ruling, urging "restraint and sobriety". In private, officials acknowledge they have little hope of recovering Mischief Reef any time soon despite the unequivocal ruling by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague.

"This will take time, not in the next five or 10 years," said one senior Philippine navy official, requesting anonymity to speak freely on the highly sensitive matter.

It was, he said, "impossible to evict the Chinese there".

Beijing, which boycotted the case from the outset, says the ruling has no bearing on its rights in the South China Sea and has reasserted it claims to Mischief and other features.

On Thursday, the state-run *People's Daily* ran a picture on its front page of a civilian aircraft landing at the new Mischief airport, two Chinese flags rippling from the cockpit.

"As I've said before, it won't have any effect," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang said, when asked if China would seek to bolster its sovereignty over Mischief Reef.

"At the same time, I want to stress that if any person wants to take the outcome of this arbitration as a basis for taking any provocative steps against China's interests, China will most certainly resolutely respond," Lu told reporters.

With the panel having no powers to enforce its ruling, mainland experts see no sign that China will scale back its actions across the South China Sea.

"The tribunal's decision is so sweeping that it is not going to help solve the problem," said Sienho Yee, an international law specialist at China's Wuhan University.

Other Chinese experts, speaking privately, said the ruling was being closely scrutinised, despite official statements dismissing its relevance.

Some among leadership elites had been "stung" by its comprehensive stance against China.

"There is surprise at the extent of the sheer arrogance of these judges sitting (in Europe) deciding what is a rock and what is an island," said one Beijing-based scholar.

"It can only serve to unify our leadership and harden Chinese views, and that includes the military leadership. There will be little appetite to take a step back."

Manila's "softly, softly" approach reflected its understanding of that risk, Philippine officials said.

"We should find ways to allow some face-saving actions because China could face tremendous domestic pressure," the Philippine navy official said. "We don't want the Chinese Communist Party to be overthrown by the more hot-headed people in the People's Liberation Army. That will be too dangerous."

President Xi Jinping has moved extensively to tighten his grip on power since assuming office almost four years ago and there has been no sign of any such action.

The decision on Mischief Reef is among the most significant within the 479-page judgement from the panel, which looked at the territorial rights of disputed reefs, rocks and shoals scattered throughout the key trade route.—*Reuters*

Crew members holding a Chinese national flag pose for pictures in front of a plane of the China Southern Airlines as the plane landed at a new airport China built on Mischief Reef of the Spratlys, South China Sea, on 13 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

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South Koreans protesting over US missile defence plan block PM's bus

SEOUL — South Koreans protesting against a plan to deploy a US missile defence system in their district blocked a minibus carrying the prime minister for several hours on Friday, preventing him from leaving an office.

The government announced on Wednesday that the southeastern county of Seongju had been chosen as the site for a Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) battery aimed at countering what it sees as the threat from North Korea's missile and nuclear programme.

But residents of the melon-farming area said they were not consulted and they do not want the missile defence unit, due to be deployed by late next year.

Protesters threw eggs and plastic water bottles at Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn as he spoke on the steps of the county office to apologise for not briefing residents earlier, TV footage showed.

Security guards used boards and umbrellas to shield Hwang and he was quickly taken inside the building. When he tried to leave the compound, a crowd of several hundred with a tractor blocked his vehicle.

Hwang later got out of the bus and into a car but it too was trapped in the crowd, Yonhap news agency reported. He then moved to another car and left, Yonhap said. Seongju residents refused to accept the government's explanation that the site was chosen because it would have no impact on the safety of residents and the environment. China has also protested against the planned deployment of the THAAD system, which has a powerful radar it worries can see into its territory.

North Korea's military on Monday threatened to retaliate against the deployment of the system with a "physical response" once its location and the timing of its installation were decided.

Tension on the Korean peninsula has been high since North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test in January and followed that with a satellite launch and a string of test launches of various missiles. In South Korea, the prime minister holds a largely ceremonial role as the head of the cabinet in a powerful presidential system. He and the cabinet are appointed by the president who serves a single five-year term. —*Reuters*

South Korean Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn bows during a meeting with residents in Seongju where a US THAAD anti-missile defence unit will be deployed, South Korea on 15 July. PHOTO: REUTERS

Abe tells China's Li to respect rules-based int'l order

ULAN BATOR — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Friday that a rules-based international order must be respected, when he held talks with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang.

Abe and Li met on the sidelines of a summit of Asian and European leaders in the Mongolian capital of Ulan Bator at a time of renewed friction between the two Asian powers over an international tribunal's ruling that rejected China's claims to most of the South China Sea.

A senior official, however, refused to provide details of their discussions concerning maritime territorial disputes. Abe told Li "Japan's hitherto known position," according to the official. While acknowledging remaining thorny issues, Abe and Li agreed to step up cooperation to fight the rise of terrorism and to prevent the sluggish world economy from being hit hard by Britain's vote last month to leave the European Union, according to the official.—*Kyodo News*

ASEM summit kicks off to promote Asia-Europe partnership, connectivity

The 11th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit opens in Ulan Bator, capital of Mongolia, on 15 July 2016. PHOTO: XINHUA

ULAN BATOR — The 11th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit opened in Ulan Bator, capital of Mongolia, on Friday to promote "partnership for the future through connectivity."

Before the opening ceremony, leaders at the summit meeting observed a minute of silence for those killed in the deadly attack in the French city of Nice overnight.

Delivering a keynote speech, Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj spoke highly of the achievements of the ASEM over the past 20 years and vowed to enhance cooperation and connectivity between Asia and Europe.

"Mongolia, located at the conjunction point between Asia and Europe, is ready to facilitate the exchange and connectivity between the two continents," he said.

The president said Asia and Europe share a wide scope of common interests and challenges, which require the two sides to take joint action.

He called on the relevant countries to further enhance policy coordination and participate in constructing connectivity between Asia and Europe, so as to build up the new type of comprehensive partnership.

Elbegdorj said that the summit will conclude with a chair's statement and a "Ulan Bator Declaration," which will look back on the cooperation over the past 20 years and point out the direction of ASEM for the coming decade.

ASEM is an intergovernmental forum for dialogue and cooperation aimed to foster political dialogue, reinforce economic cooperation and promote collaboration in other areas of common interest.

This year the ASEM Summit brings together leaders and delegates from 51 countries, the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for a discussion on a blueprint for future cooperation.—*Xinhua*

Shovels and old planes — As North Korea pursues the bomb, its military wanes

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un looks at a rocket warhead tip after a simulated test of atmospheric re-entry of a ballistic missile, at an unidentified location in this undated file photo released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) in Pyongyang on 15 March 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

SEOUL — Like many in North Korea's army of 1.2 million, Eom Yeong-nam spent more time holding the wooden handle of a shovel than a Kalashnikov rifle during his years in the 501 Construction Brigade.

"Except for basic military training two to three months a year, we worked on building apartments or concrete structures for nine to ten months," said Eom, who served 10 years in the army before defecting to the South in 2010, a year before Kim Jong Un assumed power in isolated North Korea.

The young leader has since expanded the use of so-called "soldier-builders", fuelling a construction boom as many of North Korea's Soviet-era conventional weapons become outmoded.

His military focus is increasingly on "asymmetric" capabilities such as nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles and cyberwarfare to deter North Korea's main enemies, the United States and South Korea.

Tensions with both have been on the rise since the start of the year.

North Korea, under tightened United Nations sanctions following its fourth nuclear test in January and a space rocket launch the following month, said on Monday it will make a "physical response" to moves by the United States and South Korea to deploy an advanced missile defence system on the Korean peninsula.

North Korea also said on Monday it was cutting off its only channel of communications with the United States following a US decision to sanction Kim Jong Un by name for human rights abuses and base the THAAD anti-missile system in South Korea.

The focus on the asymmetric capabilities has been accompanied by a downscaling of the importance of the military within North Korea's power structure. Slowly, Kim is dismantling the "military first" policy of his late father, Kim Jong Il, and giving precedence to the ruling Workers Party.

This was evident most recently when the National Defence Commission, a military body promoted by Kim's father as one of the highest decision-making institutions in government, was replaced last month by the civilian-heavy State Affairs Commission.

"The KPA (Korean People's Army) is undergoing actual modernisation. Kim Jong Un is cutting through some of the fiefdoms and patronage networks that had grown too powerful," said Michael Madden, an expert on the North Korean leadership.

After coming to power, one of the first of Kim's purges was the 2012 removal of Ri Yong Ho, the KPA's then Chief of Staff.

Since then, he has chipped away at the standing of senior military officers, in public.

In 2014, Kim made his admirals take part in a swimming competition on the beaches of his summer palace while he watched, according to state media.

That summer, his air force commanders were made to fly fighter jets as part of a military flying competition, and he instructed his generals to take part in a target shooting competition, state media said.

"Hacks and cronies are out in favour of professional military men," said Madden, adding that such competitions could distinguish genuine officers from those who rose through corruption and patronage.

While North Korea is often credited with having a "million-man army", many are not combat-ready troops and are instead conscripted for up to ten years at a time, largely as an easily-mobilised source of labour.

There are about 300,000 combat-ready troops, most of them poorly-equipped and concentrated in the area near the inter-Korean Demlitiarised Zone (DMZ), General Vincent Brooks, commander of US Forces Korea, told the US Senate Armed Services Committee earlier this year.

Still, the DMZ is just 40 kilometres from Seoul, which the North occasionally threatens to turn into a "sea of flames".

North Korea has 73 submarines, more than China and far more than the South's 23. Pyongyang's submarines, although ageing Soviet models, are a key part of Kim Jong Un's strategy to mount a nuclear warhead on a submarine-launched ballistic missile.—*Reuters*

Defector arrested in North Korea for plotting kidnappings with South — reports

PYONGYANG — A North Korean defector who had lived in South Korea has been arrested in the North for conspiring with Seoul's spy agency to kidnap North Korean children, the Agence France-Press (AFP) and Japan's Kyodo news agencies reported on Friday from Pyongyang.

The 53-year-old man, identified as Ko Hyon-chol, confessed to trying to kidnap two North Korean orphan girls and take them to the South, the agencies reported. The confession was made during a news conference for foreign media in Pyongyang.

"I committed the unpardonable crime of being involved in attempted child abduction," Ko was quoted by AFP as telling the news conference.

Ko said he was sent by South Korea's National Intelligence Service (NIS) to the Chinese border city of Dandong to kidnap orphans from North Korea. He was offered $10,000 for each child, AFP reported.

Ko was arrested after crossing a river into North Korea from China in May, AFP and Kyodo reported.

The NIS denied any involvement in the reported case. South Korea's Unification Ministry said in a statement it regretted that the North had arrested a South Korean national and used him for what it described as propaganda.

Ko fled North Korea in 2013 and stayed in China for about a year before arriving in South Korea in 2014, AFP and Kyodo reported.—*Reuters*

Opinion

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Peace is just a nod of agreement away

Kyaw Thura

THE NLD-led government took office on 31 March, while the country found itself confronted by a bewildering array of social and economic challenges deriving from political instability. It is understandable that the government will be closely scrutinised whether it has all what it takes to live up to the expectations of the "purple fingers" that lifted it to power in last year's election.

An editorial entitled "*Suu Kyi's hollow words*" in the 8 July issue of Bangkok Post made an incorrect judgement about our country by stating that 'there is no difference between the Myanmar military regime and the civilian government'. Clearly, the incumbent government has received more visits by foreign heads and diplomats in its first four months in office than the previous government, apart from foreign businesses.

The paper also expressed some disapproval for the exclusion of the controversial community in the western part of the country. There is nothing to hide about our country's long-drawn-out ethnic armed conflicts. In addition, the successive governments of our country have been frank with the international community about the community in question, with officials stressing that that is not among the country's 135 official ethnic groups. It should be noted that racial and religious issues are always secondary to national affairs.

The international community is well aware of the fact that our country has reached a crucial juncture as the 21st Century Panglong Peace Conference is initially scheduled for August. There will no doubt be an irresistible momentum towards national reconciliation, since State Counsellor herself has vowed to make the conference as inclusive as possible. Now that peace is just a nod of agreement away, we are left to keep pinning our faith on the government.

Full Moon of Waso, Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta Day

Ba Sein (Religious Affairs)

THE Full Moon of Waso, the Dhammacakkapavattana Day falls on 19th July, 2016. The Full Moon of Waso associates with the four great noble and significant events related to the precious life of the Omniscient Gotama Buddha. On that holy day, the Buddha-to-be (the Gotama Buddha) took pregnancy in the womb of Queen Maya, wife of his Majesty King Suddhodana of Kapilavatthu Kingdom, and also on that holy day at the age of 29, the Buddha-to-be renounced the world, and after having full attainment of the Buddhadood, the Gotama Buddha preached His first great sermon, Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta to His five disciples, in which He explained the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path, on the Full Moon of Waso. All five disciples received ordination and formed the first nucleus of the holy brotherhood of disciples known as the Sangha.

And also, on the Full Moon of Waso, the Omniscient Buddha performed the great miracle called the Twin Miracle. The reason for this was to dispel the wrong views of heretics and to prove that He possessed the attributes of a Buddha. It is the miracle of water and fire.

The Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta Day

Over 2560 years ago, the unrivalled Omniscient Buddha preached His first great Sermon, the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta to His five disciples (Kondanna and other four) in the Deer park, now known as Saranath, India, on the Full Moon of Waso. In commemoration of this significant and holy event associated with the precious life of the Buddha, the Buddhist peoples across the Buddhist world celebrate the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta Day on this Full Moon of Waso by observing precepts delivered by members of the Sangha and respectfully listening to the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta recited by members of the Sangha.

And also, the generous Buddhist peoples perform meritorious deeds such as offering Waso robes, alms and other offertories to the members of Sangha on the Full Moon of Waso, the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta Day.

Rains-retreat period, Vassavasa

Observing the rains-retreat period; confining oneself to a specific monastic dwelling for the three-month rainy period.

During the three months of monsoon rains, Bhikhus go into retreat at a monastery designated before hand at the start of the rainy season. This practice was introduced during the life time of the Buddha. Before the Buddha decreed the rains-retreat period, Bhikhus walked across fields under cultivation. People started to criticize them as some people believed that plants and even drops of water were living beings. Why is it that the disciples of the Buddha go on travels all the year round and trample young plants and insects into oblivion while even members of other sects do not go on journeys during the rains? Even birds and animals have the good sense to stay in their nets or dens during the rains, people complained. To put an end to this controversy, the Buddha decreed that the rains-retreat period be observed. Rains-retreat period may be observed by taking up the designated residence during one of the two periods: -

(1) Earlier rains-retreat period (purimavassavasa), commencing from the day after the Full Moon of Waso (roughly corresponding to July) and ending on the Full Moon of Thadingyut (roughly) corresponding to October):

(2) Later rains-retreat period (pacchimavassavasa), commencing from the day after the Full Moon of Tazaungmon (roughly corresponding to November).

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The first sermon at the deer park being delivered to Five Disciples.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visits Defence Services Museum in Nay Pyi Taw

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi being welcomed by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on her arrival at Defence Services Museum. Photo: MNA

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visits Defence Services Museum in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited the Defence Services Museum in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The State Counsellor was welcomed by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Service Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice Senior General Soe Win as well as other officials.

The State Counsellor and the Senior General viewed photographs of the Chiefs of Defence Services and other former high ranking service members.

They then observed displays of ancient fossils, ancient military equipment, military equipment used in the time of British colonial rule, weapons and equipment used by the Burma Independence Army and Burma Defence Army, items used by General Aung San and historic treaties signed with Britain during the time of the independence struggle as well historical recordings from the time of independence until the modern day.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Myanmar will participate in 13th China-AESAN goods exhibition

MYANMAR will showcase fruits, flowers and vegetables for the first time at the 13th China-ASEAN goods exhibition from 11 to 14 September in Nanning town, China, it has been learned from the Myanmar Fruits, Flowers and Vegetables Producers and Exporters Association (MFFVPEA) .

The Myanmar Fruits, Flowers and Vegetables Producers and Exporters Association has been invited to attend the exhibition.

"We've just informed the groups and organisations to contact us for registration. We don't know yet what kinds of fruits are to be showcased at the exhibition. Only when those interested in participation in the exhibition come up with a list of fruits, flowers and vegetables they would like to showcase will we be able to say" said an official of Myanmar Fruits, Flowers and Vegetables Producers and Exporters Association (MFFVPEA). —*200*

New course to turn out skilled caretakers for minors with autism

UNDER its Training-of-Trainers (TOT) Program the Myanmar Autism Association will open courses to provide systematic care for young children with autism spectrum disorder to volunteers in three big cities this month.

The TOT training courses will open in target areas of Yangon, Mandalay and Bago regions, it is reported.

Autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterised by impaired social interaction, verbal and non-verbal communication, and restricted and repetitive behavior.

Finding skilled trainers and teaching equipment is the major challenge in helping children with autism under 12 years of age, said a member of the association, who plans to hold a workshop on 21 July in Mandalay to collect volunteers wishing to join the programme.

There are no exact figures for the country but it is estimated that Myanmar has about 600,000 young people with autism.

According to an international study, autism occurs in as many as one or two per 1,000 births and about 1 per cent of the world population has autism spectrum disorder.—*200*

Surplus energy to be exported among ASEAN countries

Officials hold the press confence after the ASEAN Energy Senior Officials Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

SURPLUS energy including oil, gas and electricity will be exported among ASEAN countries to achieve energy security and sustainability in the region said Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy U Htein Lwin after a press conference on the 34th ASEAN Energy Senior Officials Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Regarding energy cooperation, ASEAN has targeted the implementation of 25 projects through the power grid and gas pipeline by 2020, added the secretary. According to the secretary, the existing trans-ASEAN gas pipeline infrastructure with a total length of 3,673km has been commissioned.

During the press conference, U Min Min Oo, Assistant Secretary of the ministry, said that the 34th SOM discussed and approved development of Phase I of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Energy Cooperation 2016-2025 and work programmes for the APAEC 2016-2017. The meeting covered a wide range of energy issues including coal and clean coal technology, the ASEAN power grid, energy efficiency and conservation, the trans-ASEAN gas pipeline, renewable energy, regional energy policy and planning and civil nuclear energy. The assistant secretary said that seven more LNG terminals will be built in Malaysia, the Philippines and Viet Nam, adding that six LNG terminals were built in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

The meeting also focused on further cooperation between the region and international partners in improving energy technology and capacity building for ASEAN countries, he added.— *Myanmar News Agency.*

In Brexit heartlands, clock ticks for May to start Britain's EU divorce

COALVILLE (England) — In the English heartlands which voted heavily to leave the European Union, the wishlists are out: everything from reducing migration to bringing back the "crown" stamp on pint glasses in pubs.

None of it will be easy for Britain's new Prime Minister Theresa May, who quietly backed the campaign to stay in the EU but quickly appointed leave campaigners to key posts in her cabinet to show she is serious the vote for Brexit means Brexit.

She has said she will not trigger the negotiations to leave the 28-member bloc before the end of the year, to allow time for the country to work out what it wants from its new relationship with Europe and how it will go about getting it.

Most of the assembled councillors and members of her Conservative party gathered at a party office in the market town of Coalville want her to do so within six months — with one wishing she had done it "yesterday".

"The pressure is on her," said Geraint Jones, a local Conservative councillor for Ashby-de-la-Zouch, another, smaller market town nearby."I think we've got to show Europe a clean pair of heels and get it done quickly."

While they say they are willing to give May some time to build a case, they are not willing to compromise on what they see as a good deal; no freedom of movement from the other 27 members of the EU along with tariff-free trade.

Such a combination runs counter to EU rules, and European leaders, determined not to encourage euroscepticism elsewhere, have made clear they will not budge. That piles the pressure on David Davis, the ardent eurosceptic May appointed on Wednesday evening to lead negotiations on exiting the European Union, and on May herself.

Coalville, a former mining town now scattered with business parks and industrial estates, and

Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May arrives at 10 Downing Street, in central London on 14 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Ashby-de-la-Zouch are the focal points of northwest Leicestershire — a bellwether region for political trends. Split between its left-leaning former industrial regions and leafy villages, the region supported the main opposition Labour Party when it came to power in 1997 but by 2010 locals had switched in their thousands to the Conservative Party.

At the referendum, almost 61 per cent voted to leave the European Union. While Conservative lawmakers are divided about half-and-half between those who sought, like former prime minister David Cameron, to remain and those who have long clamoured to leave, among members, a YouGov survey showed 63 per cent voted "out".

In Agar Nook, a public housing estate in Coalville with abandoned sofas in a couple of front gardens, anger over immigration is palpable and several there, who voted for the first time ever in the referendum and helped win the battle for leave, are clear that the numbers must be reduced soon.

Fifty-two-year-old Duncan McCulloch, a former warehouse worker now dependent on sickness benefit, points to several houses where he says Polish families have moved in. After 32 years of living there, he says racism is on the rise.

"It's not about colour now. It's about which country you come from," he said, explaining that many feel they are being pushed to the back of the queue for accommodation, school places and treatment in local hospitals.

As a former interior minister, May knows immigration is not easy to tackle. In six years in that job, she was unable to bring down the influx to "the tens of thousands" a year as her party promised.

Most party members gathered in Coalville said their overwhelming desire is rather a return of sovereignty and English law — to stop "Brussels making decisions for our country" as councillor Gill Hoult puts it.

For Evans it would also ease years of irritation by removing the 'CE' marking demanded by the EU for measuring instruments used in trade on his pint glass and return the crown stamp.

Changing such symbols looks easy compared with selling an eventual deal with an angry European Union to British voters assured by leave campaigners they would be better off but now confronted with a weaker pound and the prospect of job losses.

Appointed prime minister by only the votes of Conservative Party members of parliament, May will have to work hard not to face a similar fate to that of Gordon Brown, the last British leader to take on the top job without facing a general election.

He ended his career in 2010 after being named as Britain's most unpopular prime minister in half a century. "I think she's going to have a tough time," said a senior Conservative Party member who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject.

"An unelected prime minister with no mandate from the country or in fact from the party either — although 200 MPs voted for her — it could easily slide." —*Reuters*

Kerry says Nice attack shows need to speed up work against terror

MOSCOW — US Secretary of State John Kerry on Friday told his Russian counterpart in Moscow that the attack in the French city of Nice showed the need to speed up international efforts to tackle terrorism, especially in Syria.

Kerry, who late on Thursday had talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin that focused on the conflict in Syria, said their talks had been productive, as well as "extremely frank and very serious." But a Kremlin spokesman said separately that Putin and Kerry had not directly discussed military cooperation between Moscow and Washington in Syria — the subject of a proposal that Kerry had brought with him to the Russian capital.

Dozens of people were killed on Thursday when a gunman drove a heavy truck at high speed into a crowd in Nice who were celebrating Bastille Day, France's national holiday.

French authorities said it was a terrorist attack. Referring to what he described as the "incredible carnage" in Nice, Kerry said nowhere was there a greater hotbed for terrorists than in Syria.

"I think people all over the world are looking to us and waiting for us to find a faster and more tangible way for them feeling that everything that is possible has been done to end this terrorist scourge and to unite the world in the most comprehensive efforts possible to fight back against their nihilistic and depraved approach to life and death," Kerry said as he began talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Italy boosts controls at French border crossings after Nice attack

ROME — Italy will boost controls at three road crossings into France and at the Ventimiglia train link between the two countries following the truck attack in nearby Nice, Italian Interior Minister Angelino Alfano said on Friday.

"Our security apparatus is at work," Alfano said on his Twitter feed.

At least 84 people were killed and 18 were in a critical condition after a gunman drove a truck at high speed into a crowd in the southern French sea resort of Nice, which is 35 km (22 miles) from the Italian frontier.—*Reuters*

Chinese bullet trains cross in world first

BEIJING — Two Chinese trains dashing at world-record speeds in opposite directions passed each other on parallel tracks on Friday, in the latest feat achieved by China in high-speed rail.

At about 11:20am, the two trains, "Golden Phoenix" and "Dolphin Blue," travelling at 420 km per hour, crossed on lines between Zhengzhou in the central Henan Province and Xuzhou in the eastern Jiangsu Province.

The experiment set a world-first for trains travelling at such speed, Zhou Li, head of the technological management department of China Railway Corporation, told Xinhua.

Zhou said the achievement, using homegrown trains, demonstrated that China has fully mastered the core technology of high-speed trains.—*Xinhua*

Afghan security forces kill 62 militants within day

KABUL — Afghan security forces have pressed on to clear the militants in restive provinces and killed 62 militants in the latest operations, the country's Defence Ministry said on Friday.

"Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) conducted cleanup and military operations in Nangarhar, Paktika, Wardak, Ghazni, Kandahar, Farah, Badakhshan, Takhar and Helmand provinces within the past 24 hours, killing 62 armed insurgents, wounding 28 and detaining two others," the ministry said in a statement providing daily operational updates.

The ANSF also found and seized weapons, the statement said, adding that five local insurgent commanders were among the killed.

A total of seven Afghan army personnel were also killed as a result of separate attacks and clashes over the same period, the statement confirmed.

The Taliban has yet to make comments.—*Xinhua*

US sailor sentenced to 30-month prison term for rape

NAHA (Japan) — The Naha District Court on Friday sentenced a US Navy sailor to two and a half years in prison for raping a Japanese woman in the southern island prefecture of Okinawa in March.

According to the ruling, Justin Castellanos, 24, took the woman to his room at a business hotel in the prefectural capital of Naha in the early hours of 13 March after finding her asleep in the hotel hallway after she had been drinking and raped her.

Prosecutors had demanded four years in jail for the seaman at the US Marines' Camp Schwab in northern Okinawa, saying that his actions were "selfish and absolutely despicable."

He had pleaded guilty and apologised in court for his actions.

His defence counsel had asked for leniency, saying that the seaman "had initially intended to take care of the woman." —*Kyodo News*

Britain's foreign minister Johnson says shocked by events in Nice

LONDON — British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said on Friday he was shocked and saddened by the attack in Nice where a gunman killed more than 80 people by driving a heavy truck at high speed into a crowd.

The attack took place on the famed seafront Promenade des Anglais as a Bastille Day fireworks show came to an end.

"Shocked and saddened by the appalling events in Nice, and the terrible loss of life," Johnson, the former London mayor, said on Twitter.—*Reuters*

Sadr supporters return to Baghdad streets despite government pleas

BAGHDAD — Thousands of supporters of powerful Shi'ite Muslim cleric Moqtada al-Sadr filled a central Baghdad square on Friday, disregarding government pleas to scrap protests it said would distract from the war against Islamic State.

The demonstration ended a respite from street actions which in April and May saw protesters storm Baghdad's heavily-fortified Green Zone government district twice, hampering parliament for weeks and causing several deaths.

Sadr's followers have returned with familiar demands to fight corruption and overhaul a governing system based on ethnic, sectarian and party quotas.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has failed to implement a cabinet reshuffle he promised months ago as part of reforms.

The protests have at times boosted Abadi in his bid to replace ministers chosen on the basis of political affiliation with independent technocrats, but he has said more recently they risk undermining the military's push to kick Islamic State out of its northern Mosul stronghold.

Supporters of Iraqi Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr shout slogans during a protest against corruption at Tahrir Square in Baghdad, on 15 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Activity in much of Baghdad crawled to a halt overnight as security forces deployed ahead of the demonstration, following a military parade in central Baghdad marking a national holiday.

Sadr visited Tahrir Square briefly on Wednesday wearing military fatigues instead of his usual clerical robe and turban, raising fears of a possible confrontation.

Abadi then toured several security checkpoints late on Thursday in an apparent attempt to bolster his image amid a rising wave of public outcry with residents blaming the government for failing to provide security.

Emotions in Baghdad are still raw following a suicide bombing in the central Karrada district on 3 July, claimed by Islamic State, that killed at least 292 people, making it one of the worst among the hundreds of such attacks carried out in Iraq since US-led forces toppled Saddam Hussein 13 years ago.

Islamic State has been turning increasingly to suicide bombings, which US and Iraqi officials have touted as proof that battlefield setbacks are weakening the jihadists, though critics say the militants still pose a long-term threat.

A media office linked to the military issued a statement on Thursday calling Friday's protests "unlicensed" and threatening to deal with armed demonstrators as "terrorists".

Sadr supporters pledged to carry on with the protest but promised it would be peaceful. There were no reports of serious violence several hours into the demonstration, after which people began to withdraw.

Sadr, who rose to prominence when his Mahdi Army battled US troops after the 2003 invasion, briefly ascended the stage in Tahrir (Liberation) Square to address his supporters, many of whom had travelled from outlying provinces.

A spokesman then issued a list of demands, including sacking the prime minister, president and parliament speaker; prosecuting corrupt officials; ending the quota system; reforming the judiciary and the election commission; and televising parliament sessions.

As the statement ended, protesters waving Iraqi flags chanted: "Yes, yes for Iraq! Yes, yes for reform!"—*Reuters*

US military likely to seek additional troops in Iraq – US general

US Army General Joseph Votel, commander, US Central Command. PHOTO: REUTERS

BAGHDAD — The US military expects to seek additional troops in Iraq, even beyond the hundreds announced this week, as the campaign against the Islamic State advances, the head of the US military's Central Command told Reuters.

"As we continue on the mission, I think there will be some additional troops that we will ask to bring in," US Army General Joseph Votel said in an interview in Baghdad on Thursday, without disclosing a number.

Votel, who oversees US forces in the Middle East, said the size of possible future increases were still being discussed within military circles. He did not offer details on the timing of any requests to President Barack Obama's administration.

His remarks came just three days after Obama's administration announced a 560 troop increase as part of an effort to facilitate an Iraqi offensive to retake Mosul, Iraq's second biggest city.

Most of those troops will work out of Qayara air base, which Iraqi forces recaptured from Islamic State militants last week. They plan to use Qayara as a staging ground for an offensive to retake Mosul.

Votel suggested future requests would similarly be tailored to particular stages of the campaign.

"We try to tie our requests to specific objectives we're trying to achieve on the ground," he said.

The recapture of Mosul, Islamic State's de facto Iraqi capital, from which its leader declared a modern-day caliphate in 2014, would be a major boost for the plans by Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi and the United States to weaken the militant group. Abadi has pledged to retake Mosul by the end of the year.

Some US officials caution that retaking the city without a plan to restore security, basic services and governance would be a major mistake and question the ability of Iraq's Shi'ite-government in Baghdad to mend the sectarian divide fuelling the conflict.—*Reuters*

Truck attacker kills 84 celebrating France's Bastille Day

NICE (France) — An attacker at the wheel of a heavy truck ploughed into crowds celebrating Bastille Day in the French city of Nice, killing at least 84 people and injuring scores more in what President Francois Hollande called a terrorist act.

The driver, identified by police sources as a 31-year-old Tunisian-born Frenchman, also appeared to open fire before officers shot him dead. The man, named as Mohamed Lahouaiej Bouhlel, was not on the watch list of French intelligence services but was known to the police in connection with common crimes such as theft and violence, the sources said.

Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said 18 people were in a critical condition after the attack on Thursday night, when the white truck zigzagged along the seafront Promenade des Anglais as a fireworks display marking the French national day ended just after 10:30pm (2030 GMT).

The dead included several children, while the US State Department said two American citizens had been killed. Russian student Viktoria Savchenko was also among the dead, according to the Moscow academy where she studied.

According to one city official, the rented truck careered on for up to 2 km (1.5 miles).

"People went down like nine-pins," Jacques, who runs Le Queenie restaurant on the seafront, told France Info radio.

The attack seemed so far to be the work of a lone assailant.

Hollande said in a predawn address that he was calling up military and police reservists to relieve forces worn out by enforcing a state of emergency begun in November after Islamic State gunmen and suicide bombers struck Paris entertainment spots on a Friday evening, killing 130 people.

An injured individual is seen on the ground after a heavy truck ran into a crowd at high speed killing scores celebrating the Bastille Day on 14 July national holiday on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice, France, on 14 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Only hours earlier he had announced the emergency would be lifted by the end of July. Following the attack, he said it would be extended by a further three months.

"France is filled with sadness by this new tragedy," Hollande said. "There's no denying the terrorist nature of this attack."

Major events in France have been guarded by troops and armed police since the 13 November attacks. But it appeared to have taken many minutes to halt the progress of the truck as it tore along pavements and a pedestrian zone.

One witness said she thought the attacker was firing a gun as he drove.

"I saw this enormous white truck go past at top speed," said Suzy Wargniez, a local woman aged 65 who was watching from a cafe on the promenade. "It was shooting, shooting."

A local government official said weapons and grenades were later found inside the vehicle which was made by Renault Trucks. —*Reuters*

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MATHU BHUM VOY NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MATHU BHUM VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16.7.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MOL (S'PORE) PTE LTD.
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV BC MUMBAI VOY NO (202)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BC MUMBAI VOY NO (202) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16.7.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ORIENT OVERSEA CONTAINER LINES
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV BANGKACHAI VOY NO (146)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGKACHAI VOY NO (146) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17.7.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of SPW-2 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WONGSAMUT OICEAN SHIPPING CO LTD.
Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV OCEAN HAVEN VOY NO (1606)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV OCEAN HAVEN VOY NO (1606) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17.7.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-5 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S BRIGHT SAIL SHIPPING LTD.
Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV COS CHERRY VOY NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV COS CHERRY VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17.7.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIPL where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S COMET SHIPPING & CHARTERING LTD.
Phone No: 2301928

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US acknowledges complications in Sri Lanka war crimes investigation

COLOMBO — Implementing a UN resolution calling for the investigation of alleged war crimes in Sri Lanka during a war with separatist rebels is complicated and needs more consultations to build confidence, a senior US official said.

The United States along with other Western countries have long demanded an international investigation into the killing of thousands of ethnic minority Tamils in the final weeks of the war, in 2009, under then Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Both the military and Tamil rebels "most likely" committed war crimes including mass killings of civilians, during the 26-year war, the United Nations said in a landmark report last year.

US Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labour Tom Malinowski speaks during a media briefing at the American Centre in Hanoi, Viet Nam, on 11 May 2015.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Sri Lanka has promised to implement the UN resolution adopted in October that calls for a special court with foreign judges to investigate.

But President Maithripala Sirisena, who came to power last year, is facing resistance to an investigation from political rivals led by his predecessor, Rajapaksa.

US Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labour Tom Malinowski said international participation in a special court had been emphasised because of "an erosion in the confidence" in Sri Lanka's courts over the years.

"These are complicated issues and there needs to be a process of consultation with all in order to ensure these things are done in a way that earns confidence of the people," Malinowski told a group of reporters in Colombo late on Thursday.

He said the UN resolution respected Sri Lanka's sovereignty.

"Under the resolution, the government of Sri Lanka will determine the structure and the composition of the court," he said, noting that Sri Lanka had made a commitment to include some international participation in the investigation. The UN resolution also calls for an inquiry into missing people and progress in reconciliation.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein said in an annual report last month Sri Lanka must rein in its military forces, prosecute war crimes and win the confidence of the Tamil minority.

He also said witnesses must be protected under an effective transitional justice mechanism that should include international judges. Rajapaksa, while president, rejected international intervention in addressing rights abuses and denied visas for top UN officials who wanted to assess conditions in the South Asian country after the war ended in May 2009.—*Reuters*

JICA, Tokushima University launch retina care in Nepal

BHAKTAPUR, (Nepal), — Japan's Tokushima University has partnered with a Nepali nongovernmental organisation to strengthen care for retinal diseases, the third largest cause of blindness in Nepal after cataract and glaucoma, officials said on Friday.

They said four Nepali eye doctors will be trained at Tokushima University in Tokushima city for one month under the three-year project called Retina Eye Care of Nepal, funded by a grassroots grant of the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Upon returning to Nepal, these doctors will train 30 ophthalmologists, 80 ophthalmic assistants, 12 optometrists, 15 ophthalmic nurses and 60 grassroots health workers to expand access to retinal disease diagnosis and care here, said Takeshi Naito, senior ophthalmologist at Tokushima University.

Blindness from communicable diseases is in decline in Nepal while blindness from non-communicable diseases like diabetes and hypertension that can trigger retinal diseases is on the rise. "Nepal doesn't have sufficient trained people to diagnose and treat retinal diseases. Kathmandu is the only place in the country where retinal care is available and that too at very few places," said Purna Chandra Karmacharya, chairman of B.P. Eye Foundation, Tokushima University's implementing partner in Nepal.

Additionally, the service is too expensive for common people, he said, speaking at the Children's Hospital for Eye ENT and Rehabilitation Services in Bhaktapur district neighbouring Kathmandu.

The project aims to expand retinal care in capital Kathmandu, the tourist city of Pokhara in western Nepal, and in Ramechhap district in central Nepal.

During the project duration, retina clinics at four of 25 eye hospitals in Nepal will be equipped with trained manpower and medical equipment for retinal care.—*Kyodo News*

China detains 53 people for deadly Shenzhen landslide

BEIJING — China has detained 53 people in connection with a landslide that killed 73 people last year in the southern city of Shenzhen, the official Xinhua news agency said on Friday, citing a State Council investigation. Investigators found that the 20 December disaster, which was characterised as an "extraordinarily serious" industrial accident, occurred because too much waste construction material had been dumped in a landfill. Fifty-seven government employees, including two high-ranking Shenzhen municipal officials, were also recommended for punishment, the news agency said.

The cabinet launched its investigation immediately after the landslide, which triggered a gas line explosion, destroyed 33 buildings and caused direct economic losses of 881 million yuan, it said. Four people are still listed as missing and 17 people were injured, it said. The news agency said the cause of the disaster was ineffective drainage of water at the industrial estate. A development company was also found responsible for undertaking illegal operations.—*Reuters*

‘People v. O.J. Simpson,’ ‘Game of Thrones’ lead Emmy nominations

LOS ANGELES — “The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story,” a TV mini-series exploring racial tensions that strained the criminal justice system 20 years before Black Lives Matter, dominated the Primetime Emmy nominations on Thursday along with HBO’s medieval fantasy “Game of Thrones.”

The 10-part drama on basic-cable channel FX chronicling the sensational, polarizing murder trial of O.J. Simpson in 1995 earned 22 nominations in all, including best limited series and best actor for Cuba Gooding Jr.’s title role as the disgraced former football star.

“The People v. O.J.” viewed Simpson’s trial through the prism of racial politics gripping the nation in the aftermath of the videotaped beating of black motorist Rodney King by white policemen in Los Angeles.

The show aired against a contemporary backdrop of rising tensions between minority communities and law enforcement over a series of killings of unarmed black men at the hands of police in cities across the country, giving rise to the Black Lives Matter protest movement.

Cast member Peter Dinklage attends the premiere for the sixth season of HBO’s ‘Game of Thrones’ in Los Angeles on 10 April 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

“Game of Thrones” led Emmy contenders with 23 nominations overall, including nods for best drama series, two for best supporting actor and three for best supporting actress.

The hit show, based on George R.R. Martin’s fantasy novel series “A Song of Ice and Fire,” was named outstanding drama series at last year’s Emmy Awards.

Rounding out the best drama race are Showtime’s CIA thriller “Homeland,” FX’s Cold War espionage saga “The Americans,” AMC’s quirky legal story “Better Call Saul,” Netflix’s political mystery “House of Cards,” the final season of PBS’s period melodrama “Downton Abbey” and USA Network’s freshman cyber-hacking drama “Mr. Robot.”

Thursday’s Emmy nominees showcased a more diverse crop of talent in television than in Hollywood’s film industry, which drew sharp criticism this year when all 20 performers nominated for Oscars were white for a second consecutive year.

African-American actor Anthony Anderson, who co-hosted the Emmy nomination announcements, shouted with joy as he was named a contender for best comedy actor in the ABC sitcom “black-ish.”

Other nominees included Indian-American Aziz Ansari for his debut Netflix comedy “Master of None,” Egyptian-American Rami Malek for “Mr. Robot” and black actresses Taraji P. Henson for Fox’s hip-hop series “Empire” and Viola Davis in ABC’s thriller “How to Get Away with Murder.”

Premium cable outlet HBO, a perennial powerhouse of Emmy-lauded programming, again led all networks in nominations with 94 mentions in total. FX Networks was No. 2 with 56 nods, including 18 for crime drama “Fargo” in the mini-series category. Online streaming networks also fared well. Netflix garnered 54 nominations, six of them for its 10-part documentary series “Making a Murderer.” Amazon Studios scored 16 nominations, including 10 for its transgender comedy “Transparent.”

HBO’s political satire “Veep” led the comedy race with 17 nominations, including a nod for best actress for Julia Louis-Dreyfus.

Its competition, in addition to “black-ish,” “Master of None” and “Transparent,” includes HBO’s “Silicon Valley,” ABC’s “Modern Family” and Netflix’s “Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt.”

Among the shows snubbed by Emmy voters in major categories this year was the Netflix prison dramedy “Orange is the New Black” and “The Good Wife,” a usual Emmy favourite that just ended its seven-year CBS run. Winners of the Emmy Awards, voted on by the 20,000-plus members of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, will be presented 18 September at a ceremony in Los Angeles.—*Reuters*

David Bowie’s private art collection to go on display and sale

LONDON — David Bowie’s private art collection, including works by Henry Moore and Damien Hirst, will go on display to the public for the first time before heading for auction later this year, Sotheby’s said on Thursday.

British Pop Star David Bowie. PHOTO: REUTERS

The “Bowie/Collector” three-part sale in November will feature around 400 items from the pop icon’s private collection and is seen fetching “in excess of 10 million pounds” ($13.24 million), a spokeswoman for the auction house said.

Bowie, who died aged 69 in January, straddled the worlds of music, fashion, drama and art for five decades, and was known for some of the most innovative songs of his generation. However his art collector side “was something he kept almost entirely hidden from public view”, Sotheby’s said.

“Eclectic, unscripted, understated: David Bowie’s collection offers a unique insight into the personal world of one of the 20th century’s greatest creative spirits,” Oliver Barker, Sotheby’s Europe chairman, said in a statement. Among works to be featured is late American artist Jean-Michel Basquiat’s “Air Power” painting, estimated between 2.5 million and 3.5 million pounds, and Hirst’s kaleidoscopic “Beautiful, Shattering, Slashing, Violent, Pinky, Hacking, Sphincter Painting”, seen fetching 250,000–350,000 pounds.

There are also sculptures and design furniture, including a 1960s record player by Italian brothers Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglioni.

The collection will be exhibited at Sotheby’s galleries in London in early November. Before that, the auction house will hold previews around the world.—*Reuters*

Woody Allen describes ‘Cafe Society’ as a novel on film

NEW YORK — After opening this year’s prestigious Cannes Film Festival, veteran writer and director Woody Allen brought his latest movie “Cafe Society” to New York on Wednesday for a red carpet screening.

The film starring Jesse Eisenberg and Kristen Stewart follows one man’s move to Hollywood in the 1930s with dreams of working in the movie industry.

“It was originally conceived in my mind as a novel on film... When you read a book you come in contact with a lot of different characters, you follow them over a few years and you see some and then others and back to those,” Allen said.

“And I tried to give it that structure and so far the results have been promising.”—*Reuters*

Director Woody Allen (L) and cast members Kristen Stewart and Jesse Eisenberg pose on the red carpet as they arrive for the opening ceremony and the screening of the film “Cafe Society” out of competition during the 69th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, France, on 11 May, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

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Big Four fail to make impression at British Open

TROON, (Scotland) — The much-heralded 'Big Four' of golf failed to make an impression in the first round of the British Open on Thursday.

Young guns Jason Day, Dustin Johnson, Jordan Spieth and Rory McIlroy were unable to find their 'A games' and were eclipsed by 'golden oldie' Phil Mickelson who powered to the top of the Royal Troon leaderboard with an eight-under 63.

None of the 'Big Four' scored as well as little-known Belgian Thomas Pieters who is appearing in his first major championship and carded a 68.

Only one of the elite quartet matched the 69 of triple major winner Vijay Singh of Fiji who is 53.

McIlroy, 27, equalled Singh's score. The Northern Irishman appeared briefly on the leaderboard when he got to four-under after four birdies and five pars on the front nine.

But a double-bogey on 13 and a bogey on 14 ended his run. A lone birdie on 15 was the only bright spot on his back nine.

"If I would've stepped on the first tee and someone would have given me a 69 I probably would have taken it but if somebody had given me that score on the 10th I probably wouldn't have," McIlroy told reporters after a calm day on the Ayrshire coast.

"I knew today was a day where you had to make the most of the conditions because I don't think we're going to see the course like this for the rest of the week."

Johnson and Spieth went round in 71 — eight shots behind the 46-year-old Mickelson — and the same score as former US Masters and British Open champion Mark O'Meara, 59.

Day toiled his way to a two-over 73. The high points of his round came early, when he birdied three and six, but they lost their lustre as he accumulated bogeys on five, eight, nine and 18.

That was the same number of birdies and bogeys compiled by Mark Calcavecchia, another former British Open champion who is 56.

"The next three days are going to be pretty difficult," said world number one Day. "I've got a lot of work to do.

"Hopefully ... I can just slowly inch my way back into the tournament."—*Reuters*

Rory McIlroy (NIR) signals after hitting his drive from the 6th tee during the first round round of the 145th Open Championship golf tournament at Royal Troon Golf Club, on 14 July. PHOTO: REUTERS

Claudio Ranieri. PHOTO: REUTERS

Ranieri wants swift decision from Kante on Leicester future

LONDON — Leicester City manager Claudio Ranieri will understand if N'Golo Kante leaves the Premier League champions but the Italian has urged the midfielder to make a decision soon.

According to British media reports, Kante, who joined Leicester from French Ligue 1 side Caen last August, could be lured away by top clubs like Chelsea, Real Madrid and Paris St Germain.

The 25-year-old Frenchman played a pivotal role in Leicester's title-winning season and was rewarded with a call-up to his country's squad at the European Championship, where the hosts lost the final to Portugal.

"I would like to understand if he stays with me or not. I speak often with him. If one is not happy with me I prefer that he goes," Ranieri told British media.

"We offered a new contract to him, he went away because he wanted to finish Euro 2016, and now there is so much speculation around him."

"I don't want to lose him but I can understand if he wants to go."

Ranieri said he is optimistic of hanging on to Algeria international winger Riyad Mahrez, who won the PFA Player of the Year award last campaign. "I am very confident with him. He stays here with us. He enjoys it and is not a man saying 'coach I want to go'. He is happy," Ranieri added.

Leicester, who will make their first Champions League appearance in the upcoming season, begin their Premier League title defence with a trip to promoted Hull City on 13 August.—*Reuters*

Terry will remain Chelsea's captain — Antonio Conte

LONDON — Long-serving defender John Terry will remain Chelsea's captain in the coming season, new manager Antonio Conte said on Thursday at his first news conference since joining the Premier League club.

Terry, 35, signed a new one-year contract at Stamford Bridge in May to end speculation that he was going to leave the London club after more than 700 appearances. He remains a firm favourite with the club's fans.

"John Terry is captain of this team. He is a great player with a great personality and charisma. He knows the club. We take all decisions together with the club and I am very happy John signed," Conte said.

Conte, who guided Juventus to three successive Serie A titles from 2012 to 2014 before becoming the Italian national team coach, has replaced interim manager Guus Hiddink.

Known for his motivational powers and fiery touchline presence, the Italian said the team would need to emulate his work ethic to get back to winning ways after missing out on qualification for European football.

"When I was in Italy I liked to say the coach is like a tailor, who must make the best dress for the team," Conte said.

"Every manager has his own idea of football and I want to transfer my ideas to the players. I have great passion for football, for my team and my work. "It's important to have players who are ready to fight, play good football and transfer our passion and emotion to the fans. I am a worker. I suffer during the game. I want my players and the fans to see this."

Chelsea, the 2014-15 Premier League champions, finished only 10th in the table last season and parted company with manager Jose Mourinho midway through the campaign.

"Last season was a bad season," Conte said. "We must fight for the title, we belong in the Champions League and we must stay there."

"This league is very difficult. There are six or seven teams that can win the title. This situation excites me."

Conte is the fifth Italian to manage Chelsea, following in the footsteps of Gianluca Vialli, Claudio Ranieri, Carlo Ancelotti and Roberto Di Matteo.

He begins his tenure in England with a London derby at home to West Ham United on 15 August.—*Reuters*

Chelsea manager Antonio Conte poses after the Antonio Conte Press Conference, Stamford Bridge on 14 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

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