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MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2015 + 30 BAH

**TRANSPORT**

## CP, ThaiBev line up for train deals

AMORNAT MAHITTHIROOK

Charoen Pokphand Group (CP), the country's largest agro-industrial and food conglomerate, will propose a 150-billion-baht investment plan for a high-speed train linking Bangkok, Pattaya and Rayong this month, Transport Minister Prajin Juntong says.

CP met him late last month and reaffirmed the company's interest in developing the 194km Bangkok-Pattaya-Rayong project, ACM Prajin said. The group plans to submit its investment plan for the 150-billion-baht project to the Transport Ministry this month, he said.

Bangkok-Pattaya-Rayong is one of two high-speed train routes planned. The other is the 211km Bangkok-Hua Hin route, worth 98 billion baht. Thai Beverage Plc (ThaiBev) has shown interest in investing in that route, the minister said.

ACM Prajin said the ministry is asking the Secretariat of the Cabinet whether it can submit the Bangkok-Pattaya-Rayong rail project to cabinet for approval ahead of its environment impact assessment (EIA) report.

The State Railway of Thailand (SRT) has yet to get the EIA report and the minister has instructed transport permanent secretary Sothip Traisuth to work with the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry to speed it up.

The EIA report for the Bangkok-Hua Hin route, prepared by the Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning, is finished and now being reviewed by the National Environment Board.

"The cabinet will be asked to set conditions that bids can be called only when the EIA report is endorsed," he said. Bidding is expected to take place in June next year while construction will take between 30-36 months, he said.

SRT governor Wuthichart Kalvanamtra said the EIA report should be ready this month and later will be sent to the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry for review. He said slow design work has delayed the report. The track passes mountains and river basins and parts of the route also overlap with the Thai-Chinese rail road project linking Ma Ta Phut in Rayong and Saraburi's Kaeng Khoi district.



## Big wheels keep on rolling

A young cyclist joins a practice run of the Bike for Mom event which will take place on Aug 16 in honour of Her Majesty the Queen, who turns 83 on Aug 12. Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha yesterday presided over the practice run, which proceeded smoothly. About 270,000 people in 76 provinces have registered to join the event, 40,000 of whom will take part in Bangkok.

PATTARAPONG CHATPATARASILL

## Using phone at lights 'illegal'

The Council of State has ruled it is illegal for a driver to talk on a mobile phone while stopped at a red light, a former Supreme Court judge revealed on his Facebook page yesterday.

Chuchart Srisaeng, the former judge, said the Council of State's 4th standing committee made the ruling after being asked by the Royal Thai Police Office (RTPO) whether talking on the phone at a red light violates Section 43 of the Land Traffic Act.

Section 43 prohibits a driver from talking on a mobile phone while driving, except with the use of a device such as a hands-free set which enables the driver to talk on the phone without having to hold it.

On receiving the police question, the 4th standing committee invited state agencies to discuss the matter. The committee decided that although a vehicle is stopped at a light, the driver is regarded as still being in control of it and must be ready to move off when the light turns green, which might be impeded if he is holding a phone. Talking on a phone without using a hands-free device means the driver is still regarded as breaking the law.

# Unity report wins faint praise

**SPECIAL REPORT:** Debate over amnesty terms could log reform efforts, writes Nattaya Chetchotiros

Stakeholders in the political divide have poured cold water on a National Reform Council committee report on how to forge reconciliation.

"They said they do not think the report's recommendations are likely to bring about unity, and the government has yet to say whether it agrees with the report's proposals which include an amnesty."

On July 21, the NRC endorsed a six-point report on reconciliation which includes building public understanding about the causes of political conflicts, establishing facts about violent incidents and an amnesty plan. The report will be submitted to the cabinet for further consideration.

The report was prepared by an NRC panel studying approaches to promoting national unity chaired by Anek Loathammat. NRC members voted 162-5 in favour of the document, with seven abstentions.

Mr Anek said the committee spent more than seven months trying to come up with ways to heal the political divide and restore relations between those involved in political conflicts between 2005 and 2014 through a consultative process.

He said the report covers all aspects of a reconciliation bid, including providing compensation to affected parties, an amnesty and a truth-seeking process.

Mr Anek said the report was built upon studies by previous committees on reconciliation set up by past governments.

The current committee had also collected feedback from state authorities as well as protest leaders and politicians involved in conflicts in recent years.

"The report did not come from thin air. We have been working on the report over the past seven months and we are confident that we can reconcile their differences. We hope the prime minister will consider our recommendations," Mr Anek said.

Bumton Sethastrote, a member of the NRC panel on reconciliation, said the document proposes tasks that should be

## RECONCILIATION AT A GLANCE



Anek: Please give peace a chance

- Six points for reconciliation laid out by the Anek reconciliation panel are:
- Building public understanding about the causes of political conflicts;
  - Establishing and disclosing facts about violent incidents;
  - Applying existing laws and passing new ones, including that of an amnesty, to forge national reconciliation;
  - Providing compensation to, and rehabilitating those affected by the political unrest;
  - Creating an environment where parties in conflict can live in harmony; and
  - Devising measures to prevent the use of violence to settle conflicts in the future.

carried out simultaneously. Two of the proposals are aimed at encouraging a collective understanding of past conflicts as well as finding out the truth behind political unrest that led to violence.

The proposed amnesty is listed as the third point and is aimed at promoting justice, repentance and forgiveness.

The other two points involve rehabilitation and help for those affected by conflicts.

The report also proposes ways to create the right environment for Thais to live together in harmony and measures to prevent the use of violence to resolve conflicts.

The report suggests that a limited amnesty be used as a tool to achieve reconciliation.

An amnesty should apply strictly to politically-motivated offences and should be given to those involved in political protests who did not commit serious criminal offences, corruption, lese majeste or gross violations of human rights.

A process to grant an amnesty to political offenders is expected to take about six months, according to the report.

practical power to take charge and handle the matter.

"We can't help but think that every time we give information to the panel, nothing happens. There is no telling if the reconciliation bid will succeed," Mr Jatuporn said.

He said reconciliation will happen by granting an amnesty to people who committed politically-motivated offences. He also said those motivated by political beliefs and ideology to commit criminal offences should not be excluded from the amnesty.

Mr Jatuporn said cases against protest leaders of the red-shirt and yellow-shirt political groups as well as former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra should be allowed to proceed in line with normal legal procedures. Giving an amnesty to them would only spark resistance, he said.

Democrat Party leader Abhisit Vejjajiva said it would be difficult to bring about the changes urged in the report because the cabinet and the National Council for Peace and Order will eventually make several revisions to it.

The revisions could include an amnesty for those facing criminal charges related to the political violence, which is not acceptable.

Mr Abhisit echoed the view that an amnesty should be given to ordinary people who took part in political protests.

He agreed the amnesty should not extend to cover protest leaders and those involved in corruption and serious crimes, such as killing people and burning public places. As a stakeholder, he would not seek an amnesty himself.

Mr Abhisit, along with Suthep Thaugsuban, face malfeasance charges brought against them by the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) in connection with military clashes against the red-shirt demonstrators in 2010.

The pair ordered the armed forces to reclaim public areas occupied by protesters from April 10 until May 19, 2010. More

than 90 people were killed in the clashes.

Mr Suthep was deputy prime minister in charge of security operations to deal with red-shirt protesters, acting on behalf of Mr Abhisit who was the prime minister.

Mr Suthep, who left the monkhood last Tuesday, said he is ready to take part in the reconciliation process and to fight the case in the justice system.

"I don't want an amnesty for myself, even if some offences carry a death penalty or life in jail. An amnesty should not be given to those who committed lese majeste and other serious crimes," Mr Suthep said.

Calling for the stakeholders not to be pessimistic about the reconciliation effort, Mr Anek said: "Please give peace a chance."



## Coming of Age

How will Thailand grapple with its deepening shades of grey? *Coming of Age*, a special publication to mark the newspaper's 69th anniversary, is available with your copy of the *Bangkok Post* today.


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Police officers inspect metallic debris, inset, found on a beach in Saint-Denis on the French Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean yesterday. AFP

# New debris found on Reunion

Authorities cast doubt over link to MH370

**SAINT-ANDRE:** Investigators probing missing flight MH370 collected more debris on an Indian Ocean island yesterday, including metal inscribed with Chinese characters, in what has become likened to a "treasure hunt".

Locals on Reunion Island have been combing the shores since a Boeing 777 wing part was found on Wednesday, sparking fevered speculation that it may be the first tangible evidence that the Malaysia Airlines plane crashed into the Indian Ocean.

However, authorities cast doubt on whether the new debris was linked to MH370. A source close to the investigation in Paris said "no object or debris likely to come from a plane" had been placed into evidence yesterday.

In France, Malaysian Director General of Civil Aviation Azharuddin Abdul Rahman said one object was part of a "domestic ladder", and doesn't belong to

a plane. A photographer yesterday saw police collect a mangled piece of metal inscribed with two Chinese characters and attached to what appeared to be a leather-covered handle. The debris, measuring about 100 sq cm, was placed into an iron case.

Also yesterday, a man handed police a piece of debris measuring 70cm, guessing it was part of a plane door.

A spokesman for Australia's Transport and Infrastructure Minister Warren Truss said that more "objects are being brought to local stations but nothing 'obvious' so far. And no door".

Mr Rahman said: "I read all over media it (the new debris) was part of a door. But I checked with the Civil Aviation Authority, and people on the ground in Reunion, and it was just a domestic ladder".

While the wing part — known as a flapron — is now in France for further analysis, locals on Reunion are scouring the beach for more debris in what a French source close to the investigation likened to a "treasure hunt".

Malaysian Transport Minister Liew Tiong Lai said civil aviation authorities were reaching out to their counterparts in other Indian Ocean territories to be on the lookout for further debris.

He also confirmed in a statement that the wing part found on Wednesday had been "officially identified" as from a Boeing 777 — making it virtually certain that it was from missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370, which is the only Boeing 777 to ever be lost at sea.

The flapron will be examined in a lab near the French city of Toulouse that specialises in plane crash investigations.

Four Malaysian officials are in Paris together with officials from Malaysia Airlines for a meeting today with three French magistrates and an official from France's civil aviation investigating authority BEA.

The discovery comes after a gruelling 16-month search that has yielded no evidence of what happened to the plane that disappeared on March 8, 2014, en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 239 people on board.

The flight's mysterious disappearance,

which saw it vanish off radars as a key transponder appeared to have been shut off, has baffled aviation experts and grieving families and given rise to a myriad conspiracy theories.

Speculation on the cause of the plane's disappearance has focused on a possible mechanical or structural failure, a hijacking or terror plot, or rogue pilot action.

Scientists say it is plausible that ocean currents carried a piece of the wreckage as far as Reunion Island.

Mr Truss has warned that even if the debris is confirmed to come from MH370, it is unlikely to completely clear up one of aviation's greatest puzzles.

The mystery of what happened to the plane and where it went down exactly are still likely to persist unless the black box is found.

Australian search authorities leading the hunt for the aircraft some 4,000km from Reunion are confident the main debris field is in the current search area.

The Guardian reported more than 400 people attended a service at a church in Saint-Andre on Saturday in memory of those on board the flight. AGENCIES

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

# Dozens to face 'terror' trial for seeking a caliphate

**ABU DHABI:** The United Arab Emirates is to try 41 people for allegedly seeking to overthrow the government to set up an Islamic State (IS) group-style caliphate in the Gulf state, prosecutors said yesterday.

Such mass trials on terrorism charges are rare in the UAE, which has largely been spared the Islamic militancy that has hit other Arab states.

The suspects, who include Emiratis as well as foreigners, are accused of setting up a group "with a terrorist, takfiri (Sunni Muslim extremist) ideology" in a bid to "seize power and establish a caliphate", the prosecutor general said.

They are accused of setting up cells to train members in handling weapons and the manufacture of explosives in preparation for attacks on UAE soil.

Prosecutors charge that they were "in contact with foreign terrorist organisations... to help them achieve their goals". The UAE is part of the US-led coalition that has been carrying out air strikes against IS in Syria since September last year and has stepped up security measures since the wave of Arab Spring protests

that swept the region four years ago.

In July, following the murder of an American teacher in an Abu Dhabi mall, authorities enacted tougher anti-terror legislation, including harsher jail terms and even introducing the death penalty for crimes linked to religious hatred and "takfiri groups".

Takfiris regard Muslims who do not follow their extreme interpretation of Islam as apostates punishable by death. It is the ideology of al-Qaeda as well as the IS.

The prosecutor said yesterday that the cell was highly organised, operating under a "hierarchy" to recruit young Emiratis, obtain weapons and manufacture explosives, and spread Islamist propaganda.

It is the second time in recent years that the UAE has carried out a mass trial on terrorism charges.

The Emirates remains a key Western ally in the fight against the IS, having last year and has stepped up security measures since the wave of Arab Spring protests that counter the jihadists' propaganda. AFP

## BURUNDI

# Top general assassinated in rocket attack on car

**BUJUMBURA:** A top Burundian general and close aide to President Pierre Nkurunziza was killed yesterday in a rocket attack on his car in the capital Bujumbura, officials and witnesses said.

The general killed, Adolphe Nshimirimana, was widely seen as the crisis-hit central African nation's de facto internal security chief and even considered the regime's number two.

Police and witnesses said Gen Nshimirimana's car was hit in an apparent rocket attack in the capital shortly before noon yesterday, and he was later confirmed to have died.

The president's communications chief Willy Nyamitwe confirmed the general, a former army chief of staff and intelligence chief, had been killed. "I have lost a brother, a companion in the struggle. The sad reality is that General Adolphe Nshimirimana is no longer with this world," he said in a message posted on Twitter.

The assassination comes just over a week after President Nkurunziza was declared the outright winner of controversial elections.

He secured a third consecutive term despite opposition protests and international condemnation.

Mr Nkurunziza's candidacy was condemned as unconstitutional by the opposition and provoked months of protests that left at least 100 dead, as well as an attempted coup in mid-May.

Gen Nshimirimana was seen as the mastermind behind the crackdown on the protests as well as a key player in felling the coup attempt.

There are fears that renewed conflict in the country could reignite ethnic Hutu-Tutsi violence and bring another humanitarian disaster to central Africa's troubled Great Lakes region.

The last civil war in Burundi, which ended in 2006, left at least 300,000 people dead. AFP

THE 4<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL

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Conductor: Gedni A. Emilsson  
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Programs: Titi Traditional Music  
Serge Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No.3 in: Major, Op.26  
Dmitri Shostakovich: Symphony No.7 in: Major Op.60 (Leningrad)

### 2 Thai Talents

Concerts: 14 August 2015 / 7.00 p.m. / PMH (Pre-Concert Talk 6.15 p.m.)  
15 August 2015 / 4.00 p.m. / PMH (Pre-Concert Talk 3.15 p.m.)

Conductor: Alfonso Scarano  
Soloist: Kwanchanon Pongpairaj, Piano  
Programs: Thai Traditional Music  
Mauric Ravel: Piano Concerto in G Major  
Antonin Dvorak: Symphony No.9

### 3 Sacre du Printemps

Concerts: 2 August 2015 / 7.00 p.m. / PMH (Pre-Concert Talk 6.15 p.m.)  
2 August 2015 / 4.00 p.m. / PMH (Pre-Concert Talk 3.15 p.m.)

Conductor: Abriso Scarano  
Soloist: Massimo Marcelli, Flute  
Programs: Francis Poulenc: Flute sonata in the version for flute and orchestra  
Krzysztof Penderecki: Flute Concerto  
Igor Stravinsky: Sacre du Printemps

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