

Embattled May unveils cabinet

More than half of ruling party members say PM should resign

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British Prime Minister Theresa May rebuilt her government despite concerns that Thursday's general election result left her too weak to continue as prime minister.

Her appointments of Damian Green as first secretary of state and Gavin Barwell as chief of staff were seen as indications that May will be much more pro-European as she prepares to enter negotiations on the UK's departure from the European Union.

David Davies, the minister for exiting the EU, said that the start of talks with the EU, which were scheduled for June 19, may be postponed until later that week.

May also appointed Michael Gove, who she fired when she became prime minister, as minister for the environment.

May called the election when opinion polls suggested that the Conservative Party was almost 20 percent ahead of the opposition Labour Party, but the lead was whittled down as the prime minister failed to convince voters that she was the right person to lead the country.

The Conservatives gained



Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May and her husband Philip leave after attending Holy Communion at St Andrew's Church in Sonning, England, on Sunday. May is under pressure after the Conservatives lost their parliamentary majority in Thursday's election.

JONATHAN BRADY / PA WIRE VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

318 seats to Labour's 262, which left them short of an overall majority. The Conservatives will try to gain the support of the Northern Irish Democratic Unionist Party and its 10 MPs.

The election result left May with few options in appointing her cabinet. It was widely expected that May would not allow Philip Hammond to continue as chancellor of the exchequer but it appeared she had no choice but to keep him

in the post. Other senior figures such as Boris Johnson, the foreign secretary, and Amber Rudd, the home secretary, also kept their jobs.

The former chancellor of the exchequer, George Osborne, who is now an editor of a London newspaper, said that May was too weak to continue as prime minister. He described her as a "dead woman walking".

The Conservative-supporting website Conservative Home found that 60 percent

of party members believed that May should resign as prime minister and trigger a leadership election.

Much of the criticism of May's campaign was focused on her two unelected chiefs of staff Fiona Hill and Nick Timothy. Both resigned amid harsh criticism of their behavior despite observations that they were both appointed by May and managed by her.

Many commentators were concerned by May's intention

to govern with the help of the DUP, which is seen as going too far in its view on gay marriage, abortion and other social issues. Some believed that the DUP's participation in the central government would damage its ability to participate in the devolved government in Northern Ireland.

Former Tory leader Lord Hague has said "very serious lessons" had to be learned by the party but warned against a leadership contest.

Briefly

RUSSIA At least 11 die in bus crash, 40 injured

At least 11 people died and 40 were injured in a bus crash on Sunday in Zabaykalsky Krai, southeastern Russia, the region's investigation commission said on Monday. The bus with 51 passengers on board crashed into the roadbed and overturned on a highway, the commission said. Among the injured, 34 are in serious condition. The commission is investigating the causes of the incident.

GERMANY British trio released after terror scare

Three British men overheard talking about "terrorist" activities on a London-bound easyJet flight were released on Sunday after being questioned by German police, the airline said. The Airbus A319 flying from the Slovenian capital Ljubljana was diverted to Germany's Cologne-Bonn airport on Saturday, causing a major police operation and hours of air traffic chaos. Passengers on the plane were evacuated using the emergency slides.

UNITED STATES Puerto Rico upholds statehood demand

Puerto Rico's governor is vowing to turn the US territory into the 51st state after statehood won in a nonbinding referendum hit by a boycott and low turnout that raised questions about the vote's legitimacy. Ricardo

Rossello said on Sunday that he will soon create a commission to appoint two senators and five representatives to demand statehood from the US Congress, which has to approve any changes to the island's political status.

Winner of \$447m can claim prize

The holder of the sole winning Powerball ticket worth \$447.8 million can claim the prize as early as Monday morning, lottery officials said. The ticket matching all six numbers was sold in Southern California, and whoever owns it will claim the 10th largest lottery prize in US history, the California Lottery said. Lottery officials said the earliest the ticket could be redeemed is 8 am, and the winner has one year to claim the prize.

MYANMAR More bodies found from crashed plane

Myanmar rescuers have recovered the bodies of about half of the 122 people who were on board a military plane that went missing after it crashed into the Andaman Sea last week, the army said on Monday. The transport plane crashed into the sea on Wednesday when it was carrying 122 soldiers, family members and crew on a weekly flight from several coastal towns to Myanmar's largest city, Yangon. The cause of the incident has yet to be confirmed.

XINHUA—AFP—REUTERS

Yunnan hosts fifth annual think tank forum

By LI YINGQING and
SONG MENGXING

The fifth China-South and Southeast Asia Think Tank Forum, being held in Yunnan province, aims to increase cooperation among China and countries from South Asia and Southeast Asia, helping to achieve mutual benefits.

The two-day forum, which ends on Tuesday, is a means to implement new initiatives and measures proposed at the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held in Beijing in May, the think tank forum's organizers said.

More than 300 experts and scholars from 14 countries and some international organizations have attended this year's think tank forum, a record high in its history. The number of participating think tanks also increased, comprising more than 30 foreign and 40 domestic organizations.

He Zukun, head of the Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences, said that through dialogues and discussions at the forum, think tanks from China, South Asia and Southeast Asia are expected to further their practical cooperation against the backdrop of the Belt and Road Initiative.

He said the forum will give new impetus to promoting transport connections, trade cooperation and people-to-people communication among involved countries.

Gao Feng, vice-governor of Yunnan, gave several suggestions at the forum on how to deepen practical cooperation among China and countries in South Asia and Southeast Asia.

Gao said that they should strengthen dialogues to build more consensus, promote people-to-people communication and cooperation, and get advice from think tanks.

Shao Qiwei, former director of the China National Tourism Administration, said that the Belt and Road Initiative, proposed by President Xi Jinping in 2013, has made prominent achievements in the past four years.

Regional cooperation between China and South Asia and Southeast Asia has connected 20 Asian countries,



Foreign attendees listen at the think tank forum, which started on Monday and ends on Tuesday in Yunnan province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

involving nearly 20 million square kilometers and 3.6 billion people. This accounts for 41 percent of the countries, 45 percent of the land and 87 percent of the population of all Asia, respectively, Shao said.

Last year, China saw 10.33 million visits from Southeast Asian tourists and 1.16 million from South Asia, a year-on-year rise of 57.8 percent and 11 percent, respectively. In the same year, Southeast Asian countries saw 21.46 million visits from Chinese tourists, up 53.8 percent year-on-year, while South Asia received 930,000 arrivals of Chinese tourists, up 11.7 percent year-on-year.

Shao said the increasingly balanced flow of tourism brought practical benefits to local people in the region, and that the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century

Maritime Silk Road will continue to promote mutual prosperity and further understanding and trust.

The think tank forum has provided six topics for discussion, including construction of the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor, people-to-people exchanges and tourism cooperation, and economic, social and cultural communication among the cross-border ethnic groups between Yunnan and neighboring countries.

Organizers of the forum said this year they had received 93 papers from foreign and domestic officials, scholars and business representatives before the event started and expect to see more during the event.

Organizers of the 2017 forum include the Yunnan provincial government and the Yunnan Academy

of Social Sciences, which was founded in 1980 and emphasizes the study of South Asia and Southeast Asia.

The event was previously called the China-South Asia Think Tank Forum and changed its name this year as it welcomed more active participation of Southeast Asian countries in the event.

Previous forums have increased mutual trust between China and countries from South Asia and Southeast Asia, promoted their transport connections, trade cooperation and policy communication, and helped to establish close cooperation and communication among think tanks from the countries, the organizers said.

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Forum special

What they say

"We plan to promote certain projects based on the forum, such as establishing the China-South Asia and Southeast Asia think tank alliance to improve communication among think tanks, sharing cooperation results and together promoting practical cooperation and shared learning among related countries. We will prepare to host several bilateral forums after the think tank forum and launch bilateral cooperation studies, including research into the Sino-Thailand railway construction project. We will also put into practice cooperation agreements we will sign with related think tanks at the forum."

He Zukun, head at the
Yunnan Academy of Social
Sciences

"Yunnan has cooperated more deeply with countries in Southeast Asia and has held more think tank communication events in recent years. Think tanks play a more important role now, putting forward countermeasures, serving decisions and helping them to become policies. The think tank forum can strengthen mutual understanding between China and foreign countries. We need to keep expanding think tanks' functions in diplomacy and public opinion guidance."

"With China's help, we have done so many things together. And for this think tank forum, I believe we are going to become closer and make China more famous. This is a win-win situation for China and Southeast Asia."

Abdul Rasheed Ali,
professor from the Faculty of
Arts at the Maldives National
University



Ma Yong, head of the
institute of Southeast
Asian studies of the Yunnan
Academy of Social Sciences

"The Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor has great influence not only on the opening-up, cooperation and development of those four countries, but also on Asia's wider economic development. To promote the construction of the corridor, my suggestions are to build a high-level promotion mechanism, to expedite transport connections, to boost exchanges in areas such as law, regulation, policy making and culture, to increase industrial cooperation, to further tourism cooperation, to promote friendly partnerships across diverse channels and to strengthen risk prevention."

Chen Lijun, head of the
institute of South Asian
studies of the Yunnan
Academy of Social Sciences

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