Myanmar plans to introduce emergency ambulance services

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw votes down 5 of 6 changes to constitution

By Aye Min Soe

NAY PYI TAW, 25 June — The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on Thursday voted down proposed amendments to the constitution that sought to remove the military’s effective veto power over key legislative reforms and alter the eligibility requirements for the presidency.

Out of six proposed changes to the constitution, the parliament voted in favour of only one, an amendment to Section (d) which changes the wording of “military” to “defence” in a clause stipulating that a president must be well acquainted with the political, administrative, economic and military affairs of the Union.

The five amendments rejected by the parliament included one which sought to limit the military’s legislative power by lowering the voting threshold for constitutional reform from 75 to 70 percent of MPs in the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw in Section 436 (a) and (b).

The sections currently stipulate that amendments of some key provisions must be agreed upon by more than 75 percent of MPs, in addition to more than 50 percent of eligible voters in a referendum. As the military is guaranteed a quarter of the seats in parliament through appointment, it has an effective veto over reforms.

The remaining amendments rejected by the parliament are the amendment to Section 60 (c) dealing with the eligibility for the presidency, stating that the president shall be selected from elected MPs, and the amendment to Section 59 (f), which bars non-citizens from becoming president or vice-president, as well as anyone with a spouse, “legitimate child,” or child’s spouse who holds foreign citizenship.

As a change to Section 59 (f), the ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party sought to exclude just “one of the legitimate children or their spouses” from the section.

The constitutional amendment bill was proposed by the USDP.

Out of 633 MPs, 583 attended the parliamentary meeting and 50 were absent Thursday. Of 583 voters, 467 MPs were elected representatives, comprising 73.78 percent, while 166, or 26.22, were military appointees.

Before the vote, five MPs debated the bill. U Thein Zaw from the USDP said during the debate that the party submitted the bill to the parliament at the right time and under the right circumstances, urging the MPs to support the constitutional amendment bill.

Col Than Htike, a military MP in the parliament, argued against the amendments.

National League for Democracy MP U Win Myint demanded before the vote that the parliament record the party’s stance of sharing the USDP’s wish to amend the constitution, but did not agree with specific details of the reforms.

Thura U Shwe Mann, the Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, declared that the parliament put it on record.

After the session, NLD chairwoman Daw Aung San Suu Kyi told reporters she was not surprised with the result.

The amendments proposed by the USDP were not effective enough to help the country’s reforms, and voting against even such amendments indicate a lack of willingness for reform, she added.

GNLM

GNLM

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Navy Pyi Taw, 25 June — Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, received Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Gautam Mukhopadhyaya at the hall of Bayintnaung Guest House, here, Thursday.

They discussed cooperating between two armed forces of Myanmar and India in enhancing security measures at border region, and development of production, agriculture, transport and trade between the two countries.

Also present at the call were Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army), senior military officers of the office of the Commander-in-Chief and the Military Attaché of India.

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 25 June— German technology and electronics giant Bosch is looking into the possibility of supporting vocational training centres in Myanmar, an official from the company said Thursday.

“We hope to find a right way that can help a lot of people in Myanmar,” Mr Phirum Hay, corporate communications manager for Cambodda, Laos and Myanmar of Robert Bosch (Cambodia) Co., Ltd, told The Global New Light of Myanmar.

Bosch was among the first European companies to venture into Myanmar after the European Union lifted sanctions on the country. It has supplied a diverse range of products from car spare parts to power tools since starting operation here in 2013.

Bosch has established plants, vocational training, and research centres in a number of ASEAN countries.

“Vocational technical training is the focal point where Bosch is looking at the moment, but Bosch cannot do it alone and needs to combine its efforts with other German or European companies or maybe with everybody to support and develop the skill sector in the country,” Mr. Andre de Jong, managing director of Robert Bosch (Cambodia) Co., Ltd told The GNLM at a press briefing in Yangon on Wednesday.

The company has sponsored four training centres in Cambodia and two in Laos to teach youths how to use state-of-the-art tools.

German companies including Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) agree that vocational training is a key focus for Myanmar, said the managing director, who is also a founding member of the recently launched German Myanmar Business Chamber.

Regarding the possibility of setting up a factory in the country, he said the company is currently “focusing on business development and sales opportunities in Myanmar” and “not yet planning for production in the country”.

At the press briefing, Mr de Jong said the company will set up 800 milestones with reflective paint and 200 signposts with warnings and road safety messages on both sides of the Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay Highway.

“We believe road safety in Myanmar needs attention and Bosch is supporting the country’s road safety campaign by communicating and sharing information with the relative parties in the government,” he said.

Bosch recently erected a 150-metre long painting with road safety signs and messages on Yangon’s Ka Ba Aye Pagoda Road.

According to the press briefing, Bosch saw growth of almost 70.17 percent in Myanmar last year.

Local and foreign gem merchants check jade and gem lots

Navy Pyi Taw, 25 June — The 52nd Myanmar Gems Emporium continued for the second day at Mani Yadana Jade Hall, here, Thursday.

Local and foreign gem merchants checked jade lots and jewellery and submitted price proposals. The emporium that will run till 6 July showcases 8,943 lots of jade and 323 lots of jewellery to be sold through tender and competitive bidding system. — MNA

Press Release

In view of the existing friendly relations between Myanmar and Bangladesh, and in maintaining the spirit of good neighbourhood, Myanmar local authorities transferred Bangladesh servicemen of Bangladesh security force, who was arrested earlier by Myanmar authorities for illegally entering into Myanmar territory and for opening fire first on Myanmar border police force, to Bangladesh side on 25th June 2015 at 1100 hrs through flag meeting between the two countries.

With the aim to promote existing friendly relations between the two countries and stability along the international border, it is our sincere hope that local authorities of Bangladesh will continue to take necessary action and to cooperate with Myanmar.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

UNOPS Myanmar holds three workshops to enhance project management capacity in the country

Navy Pyi Taw, 25 June — Approximately 230 representatives from the Government, international and national development partners are being trained in project management techniques this week, in a series of three workshops organized by UNOPS Myanmar. The sessions focus on how to implement better projects by measuring their success, cost and quality, in order to increase their impact and control risks, thereby better supporting people in need.

The first session, which took place in Nay Pyi Taw on 23 June, gathered 85 participants from 13 infrastructure-related national ministries, including the Ministry of Construction and Ministry of Transport. On 25 June, a second workshop was held in Yangon for 75 participants from donors, UN agencies, NGOs and private sector. The final session, due to take place tomorrow (Friday, 26 June) in UNOPS’ premises, will target 70 UNOPS local and international staff stationed in Yangon.

The workshops, which are participative and interactive through role-plays and simulations, are offered free of charge and allow all participants to receive a certificate of attendance issued by UNOPS, as a PMI Global Registered Education Provider.

Local and foreign gem merchants checking quality of jade stones at Myanmar Gems Emporium. — MNA

Myanmar Gazette

Navy Pyi Taw, 25 June — The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed the following persons as heads of services organizations shown against each on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name Appointment

(a) Dr Soe Lwin Nyein Director-General
Deputy Director-General
(Epidemiology)
Department of Public Health
Ministry of Health

(b) Prof Dr Win Htay Aung Deputy Director-General
Traditional Medicine
Department
Ministry of Health

Rector
University of Medicine (Taunggyi)
Department of Health
Professional Resource
Development and Management
Ministry of Health

Myawady

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing poses for documentary photo with Indian Ambassador Mr Gautam Mukhopadhyaya. — Myawady

Myawady

UNOPS, as a PMI Global Registered Education Provider.
Myanmar plans to introduce emergency ambulance services

NAY PYI TAW, 25 June — Myanmar plans to introduce its first-ever emergency ambulance services, it was revealed at a workshop here on Thursday.

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham described the workshop as an important step for the country’s healthcare.

Rapid emergency ambulance responses will be able to bring down the mortality rate by 20 percent to 30 percent, with the vice president stating that 89 percent of patients do not receive systematic treatment before being admitted to hospital.

Regarding fewer emergency ambulance services, he quoted a research finding as saying that only 3 to 5 percent of emergency admissions to hospital have access to ambulance services.

According to a 2014-2015 report on the under-5 mortality rate, the number of child deaths accounted for nearly one third of every 1,000 child births. Myanmar still sees 62 to 72 child mortalities for every 1,000 child births. Dr Sai Mauk Kham recognized healthcare services provided by government and private hospitals and civil services organizations.

On the subject of international cooperation in health care, he said Yangon University of Medicine-1 offers master’s degree courses in partnership with the Australian College of Emergency Medicine (ACEM).

He also pointed out the need for prompt voluntary medical services and valid emergency telephone numbers.

Transparency vital for land governance policies:
Vice President U Nyan Tun

NAY PYI TAW, 25 June — Land governance policies must be implemented transparently to maintain public trust, Vice President U Nyan Tun, chairman of the National Land Resources Management Central Committee, said Thursday at its meeting in Nay Pyi Taw.

In his speech, the vice president said the duties of the committee are wide-ranging, involving management of land for food, water resources, transportation and economic development.

He said the committee was formed with the aim of managing land resources of the country more effectively in accordance with the state constitution.

The vice president said future tasks of the committee include development of basic principles for land resources management policy in consultation with the public and implementation of pilot projects that aim to achieve people-centred development outcomes.

To develop land resources management policy with participation of the public, a draft policy has been amended with the consultation of experts and the public, the vice president added.

An increasing population, urban development, and the environmental impacts of climate change are among the challenges that must be addressed by the committee, the vice president said.

Afterwards, vice chairman of the central committee, Union Minister Lt-Gen Ko Ko, Union Minister U Win Tun and officials reported on development of policies for land confiscation, transfer, lease, issuing of land ownership documents and progress of work.

U.S. delegation explores investment opportunities, potential in Myanmar

NAY PYI TAW, 25 June — The Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development hosted a meeting Thursday between local and United States business representatives on expansion of U.S. investment in Myanmar.

Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw, who led the Myanmar delegation, gave details about sectors in which U.S. businesses are investing. He called on the U.S. delegation led by US-ASEAN Business Council chairman Mr Alexander C. Feldman to help boost bilateral economic relations.

The US delegation, consisting of 15 companies including Chevron, GE and Time Warner, sought information on Myanmar’s investment potential, showing strong interest in infrastructure, human resources, natural gas, health, agriculture, film and TV, insurance and ICT sectors.

The meeting was attended by 40 officials from both sides.
**Mayor inspects upgrade works on 62nd Street**

Mandalay, 25 June — Mandalay Region Minister for Development Affairs and Mayor U Aung Maung on Thursday inspected work to upgrade 62nd Street, Mandalay’s longest thoroughfare, linking six townships. He also viewed upgrade works between 35th and Theikpan streets and the laying of asphalt concrete between Manawhari and Theikpan streets.

An official outlined plans to upgrade 62nd Street to a six-lane road. The mayor instructed officials to emphasize durability of the road, and proper flow of water at drains along both sides.

The mayor and party also viewed the laying of asphalt on, and widening of, roads in Chanmyathazi Township.

Mandalay City is implementing plans to ease traffic congestion, install traffic lights and signs, and erect lamp posts along the road. Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

**Earthen lakes in Natogyi Tsp ready to store rainwater**

Natogyi, 25 June — Under the arrangements of Mandalay Region government, the Irrigation Department dredged 25 earthen lakes in Natogyi Township last fiscal year to store water for farmland irrigation and local consumption.

A total of 75 earthen lakes dredged by the department can store rainwater this year to benefit summer and monsoon paddy plantations.

Under the current government, Natogyi Township has maintained 133 earthen lakes and small dams and these facilities are ready to store rainwater this year.

Htay Myint Maung

**Summer sesame gets good price in Taungtha Tsp**

Taungtha, 25 June — Local farmers in Taungtha Township, Mandalay Region, planted 2,288 acres of summer sesame in irrigated areas this year, compared with 566 acres last year.

At present, about 50 percent of the sesame crop is being harvested. Local farmers can earn increased income from summer sesame due to rising prices.

“Thanks to sinking more and more tube-wells in the township, local people dare to grow summer sesame on the extended farmlands,” said Staff Officer U Phone Maung of the Department of Agriculture.

“The sesame yields 17 baskets per acre.”

A local farmer said, “I grew a 3-acre sesame plantation. I have harvested my all fields. Now, I sell red sesame for K50,000 per basket and black sesame for K60,000 per basket.”

Kyaw Myo Naing (Taungtha)

**Shan State gov’t provides regional development assistance to townships**

Lashio, 25 June — Chief Minister of Shan State U Sao Aung Myat recently met with local authorities from Lashio, Hsenwi, Tangyan, Mongyai and Kunlong townships at the city hall in Lashio, northern Shan State.

At the meeting, the chief minister outlined endeavours of the state government for electricity supply in rural areas, availability of potable water, development of agriculture and livestock breeding, enhancement of the tourism industry, creation of job opportunities and provision of education and health care services.

The chief minister stressed the need to effectively spend the funds on priority tasks in the townships. Shan State (IPRD)
Region industry minister outlines sub-station plan for Yamethin Tsp

Mandalay Region Minister for Electric Power and Industry U Kyaw Myint held a meeting with electrical engineers and local residents in Thabyein Village, Mandalay Township, on 24 June to talk about electrification of villages and regional development. The region minister said priority was being given to supplying electricity to Thabyein village and eight nearby village-tracts.

A plan is under way to build a 33/11kV sub-station in Thabyein village and it will be completed in October 2015. Upon completion, the sub-station will benefit 19 villages in the township.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

JICA provides assistance for sinking tube-wells in Myothit Tsp

Myothit, 25 June — A team led by of Department of Rural Development Director U Hla Khaing and officials recently inspected the sinking of a four-inch-diameter tube-well in Baw Village in Myothit Township, Magway Region. The Japan International Cooperation Agency provided assistance for sinking the tube-wells. The department will sink 87 tube-wells under the project.

The department sank 60 tube-wells last fiscal year and plans to sink 20 of the remaining 27 wells this year.

Upon completion, the tube-wells will benefit more than 97,000 people from 87 villages in Myothit Township.

Than Naing Oo (Ngaphe)

Residents receive disaster preparation briefing

Kyaikto, 25 June — An educative talk on prevention of natural disasters was recently presented at the Dhammayon in Nawarat Ward, Theinzayat village-tract, Kyaikto Township. Head of Township Fire Services Department U Tin Htwe explained two types of disasters caused by nature and human beings, natural disaster management and preparedness for disaster risk reduction. Firefighters later demonstrated the use of life jackets. IP Zaw Min Oo of Theinzayat Police Station gave lectures on natural disasters that occurred last year while village administrator U Khin Zaw spoke about emergency shelters and storage of aid.

Ye Khaung Oo

Women’s Affairs Organization honours students who passed matric exam

Mandalay Region Women’s Affairs Organization was held at No 32 Basic Education High School in Tagundaing Ward, Pyigyidagun Township, on 23 June.

Patron of the organization Daw Myat Ngwe made a speech while Secretary Daw Thanda Phone Win spoke about the night schools run by the organization in the region. The patron presented gifts to three students who passed the 2015 matriculation examination and volunteer teachers.

Chairperson Daw Su Su Lwin provided 12 notebooks to each of the night school’s current students.—Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)
Bangkok, 25 June — Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha said on Thursday he was not afraid of the press, days before the govern- ment is to hold a meeting to teach journalists how to ask questions that won’t offend him.

Gaffe-prone Prayuth has had a love-hate relation- ship with the media during the year since he seized power, at one point saying he would probably “just execute” journalists that “did not report the truth”.

His office later said the comment was made in jest.

Affectionately called ‘Uncle Prayuth’ by his ad- mirers, he has overseen a period of relative stabili- ty but has been criticized by rights groups for using heavy-handed tactics against detractors.

India, China pledge nearly $1.5 billion in aid in quake aid

KATHMANDU, 25 June — India and China pledged nearly $1.5 billion in aid for earthquake reconstruc- tion in impoverished Nepal on Thursday, as the Asian giants try to help it back on its feet and expand influ- ence in the buffer state.

Two quakes, on 25 April and 12 May, killed nearly 9,000 people, injured more than 22,000 and forced tens of thousands into tempo- rary shelters. Nepal’s govern- ment has estimated the cost of recovery at over $6.6 billion, equivalent to one third of its gross do- mestic product.

India offered $1 billion and Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj told a donors’ conference that a bigger figure would be in the form of grants and was over and above India’s existing aid pledges to Nepal. The rest would be loans.

“This takes our total assis- tance to Nepal over the next five years to $2 billion,” she said.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been wooing Nepal among the smaller neighbours since he took over as fears have grown that years of neglect and minor disputes have provided China an oppor- tunity to make inroads.

“The relationship between India and Nepal is as old as history itself. We share ties of culture, reli- gion, tradition, language, literature and mythology,” Swaraj said.

Chinese Foreign Min- ister Wang Yi pledged $483 million to help Nepal rebuild after the quake, say- ing it wanted to focus on sustainable development of the Himalayan nation.

He did not specify terms, but China has mostly given grants in the past. “China will help Ne- pal in every way it can to... promote its socio-econom- ical development,” Wang said. Both China and India flew in rescue teams soon after the 7.8 earthquake struck.

Nepal says the disas- ter destroyed more than 500,000 houses and pushed 700,000 more people into poverty. Already one in four of 28 million Nepalis lives on a daily income of less than $1.25.

“With the support from our two friendly countries, we... will do everything possible for the rehabilitation and reconstruction. We need a robust global partnership for doing what we must with clear goals and plans of action,” Prime Min- ister Sushil Koirala told donors from more than 60 countries and aid agen- cies in Kathmandu.

The Asian Develop- ment Bank committed $600 million for reconstruction.

Thailand to teach journalists how to ask inoffensive questions

BANGKOK, 25 June — Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha answers questions from journalists after a ceremony marking the National Anti-Human Trafficking Day at the Government House in Bangkok on 5 June, 2015.

Prayuth said he had never tried to censor the media.

“I’m not afraid of the press but I ask for fairness because I have never told the press not to speak or write anything. I am friendly with the media,” Prayuth told re- porters.

“I do not have control over the media, nor do they have power over me.”

Winthai Suvarre, a spokesman for the junta, or National Council for Peace and Order, said the govern- ment would hold a meeting next week for 200 local and foreign journalists to “create understanding” and teach them how to ask questions that will not offend Prayuth.

The Foreign Corre- spondents’ Club of Thailand in a message to members of the foreign press this week said it had been alerted to re- ports of journalists encoun- tering difficulties when try- ing to start, renew or change their media accreditation.

Winthai said there was no policy to stop foreign journalists from renewing their visas or applying to work in Thailand.

“Absolutely not. There is no policy to stop foreign journalists from working in the kingdom,” he told Reuters.

Prayuth topped the government of Prime Min- ister Yingluck Shinawatra in a May 2014 coup, putting to an end to months of street demonstrations.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

NEW DELHI, 25 June — Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thurs- day slammed the coun- try’s main opposition Congress party to mark the 40th anniversary of the Emergency.

The Congress party was in power when then India’s first woman Prime Minister Indira Gandhi imposed emerg- ency on the country in 1975, jailing opposition politicians and putting curbs on media.

In a series of tweets, Modi not only described the Emergency as the darkest periods of the country, but also called on people to bolster In- dia’s democratic ideals and ethos.

“We mark 40 years of one of India’s darkest periods — the Emergen- cy, when the then politi- cal leadership trampled over our democracy,” Modi tweeted.

“We are very proud of the lakhs of people, who resisted the Emer- gency and whose efforts ensured that our dem- ocratic fabric is pre- served,” the Prime Min- ister said.

He added: “Let us do everything possible to further strengthen our democratic ideals and ethos.”

Five Thai students detained in Pakistan return home

BANGKOK, 25 June — Five Thai students de- tained in Pakistan for try- ing to board a plane with a pistol and ammunition have been freed and re- turned to Bangkok on Thursday, said Thailand’s foreign ministry.

The men, who were studying at a religious school in Pakistan, were trying to catch a Thai Airways flight on 8 June when they were intercept- ed.

Thai government’s calculations on the concus- sion into the students found the men had no links to the Islami- stic State militant group or any criminal organiza- tion.

Thailand’s Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha answers questions from journalists after a ceremony marking the National Anti-Human Trafficking Day at the Government House in Bangkok on 5 June, 2015.

Reuters

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“In terms of the case, it has not finished yet, Thai embassy officials will continue to work on this case until it is over.”— Reuters
South Korea's pension system is under scrutiny.

The government has been under pressure to reform its pension system, which is one of the largest in the world, to ensure its sustainability in the long term. The system has faced issues with low interest rates and an aging population, which has led to concerns about its financial viability.

The reform proposal, which includes increasing the retirement age and reducing benefits for some seniors, has faced opposition from various parties, including the main opposition party. The proposal is expected to be discussed in parliament in the near future.

Experts believe that the reform is necessary to ensure the long-term solvency of the pension system and to provide financial security for the elderly.

The reform is expected to face opposition from those who are concerned about increased taxes or reduced benefits. However, the government is determined to proceed with the reform to ensure the financial stability of the pension system.

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**Related articles:**

- South Korea's pension reform: A long-term solution.
- The challenges of pension reform in Japan.
- Germany's pension crisis and proposed solutions.

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**Updated by: Richard Thompson, Global News Light of Myanmar**

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**Editor's note:** This article is based on the information available at the time of writing and may be subject to change. For the latest updates, please refer to the official sources.

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**Image source:** The Global News Light of Myanmar

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**Further reading:**

1. World Bank report on pension systems.

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**Contact:**

Richard Thompson, Global News Light of Myanmar

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Friday, 26 June, 2015

Nutritious meals serve up better future for children

By Aung Khin

While politicians argue for ideologies they say are in interests of the country and people, many children in Myanmar are facing malnutrition due to poverty.

A school meal programme is an appropriate way to supply nutritious food to children. There are many children who cannot bring lunch boxes with nourishing meals in rural and remote areas.

Feeding children in school is important to promote their ability to focus on educational programmes, and could reduce the dropout rate. Both the government and local communities are concerned with this programme to establish a sustainable, secure, and nutritious source of food for schoolchildren during the day.

As pre-processed foods cannot be imported from outside of each village in rural areas, ingredients for all lunches can be grown in school gardens, and prepared by locally hired cooks.

Meals should also be fortified with essential vitamins and minerals for adequate nutrition for both physical and mental development. Only if they are properly fed will the country have happy and healthy citizens in the future.

In urban areas, some schools have no garden space and playgrounds. At this juncture, school management committees should raise a fund for the school meal programme.

The programme is expected to decrease the dropout rate as the schools take responsibility for children’s lunches. In some developing countries children who attend classes regularly received food rations for their homes to encourage their schooling.

Myanmar is not a poor country in term of natural or food resources. Taking advantage of this favourable situation, school meal programmes should be carried out for the children to give them a brighter future.

Wheeler-dealers, Yes-men, wishy-washy persons and free-wheeling practice jeopardize the development and prosperity of a certain society

By Tommy Paik

Wheeler-dealers are clever enough to gain benefits for them by doing a lot of complicated deals in business or politics. They way they handle or conduct is pretty different. They seek the opportunities to do business whichever is lucrative, but they outwit or outfox the other businessmen.

On the other hand, the wheel-dealers usually go into politics aiming to get some advantage for them. They are involved in the leadership or cabinet or public administration or parliament, the interest of public will not be developed. Instead of getting approval from the voters, they agree and support every proposal by themselves in the cabinet or assembly sessions or meetings. They always say ‘yes’ and nod their heads in agreement without arguing or criticizing anything to their superiors.

Yes-men are not reliable for the public due to their selfish-character. The way they act is nasty and does not contribute to any achievement of the public concerned. Yes-men should not be existent in the organizations, governments and public services. Yes-men are the ones who cheat the vast majority of people and the society concerned.

The ordinary people must get rid of such persons from our organizations, cabinet and public services in order to prevent from jeopardizing governments and entire people are striving for all-round development, prosperity and tranquility of our society. Truth and justice cannot be prevalent in any society when there are many yes-men in public affairs or services or administrations. They should not deserve as public representatives since they are submissive to their immediate superiors or policy makers or decision makers.

Free-wheeling practice can be seen in some public administration offices or public services. Some public personnel are not concerned about duties, rules and regulations or the possible results of what they do. They do neglect their responsibilities and accountability though they are obliged to do properly. They do not have any plan or frame work to serve the public services. They perform their duties recklessly, unsystematically and inefficiently. Due to their negligent, the success and development of organizations, administrations and the society concerned will be certainly jeopardized.

If this type of practice persists in the public services, the relations between the government and the public concerned will not be harmonious indeed.

Wishy-washy persons are the ones who lack in commitment, certainty or support. Their wishy-washy act and behavior make others frustrated or upset. Wishy-washy persons are unreliable in doing business or in social dealing. If the wishy-washy persons are in public authority, they usually dodge the duties for fulfilling the aspiration or necessities demanded by the general public. In fact, they are not capable of performing their duties. Besides, they are bureaucratic-minded and subservient to the bureaucratic administrators.

When they try to deal with us in these fields, we should be wise enough to avoid dealing with them. Wishy-washy persons as well as wishy-washy acts are absolutely not fit for democracy governments.

When we make some careful observation about the behaviors of above-mentioned persons, we find that they really do not fulfill the needs and wants of the general public and the fellow citizens. Wheeler-dealers do exploit fellow businessmen and politicians. Similarly, yes-men ignore the interests of public and they pay respect to their superiors submissively. The mentality of wishy-washy persons is disgusting as he or she does not act in good faith for the simple people indeed.

The free-wheeling practice causes a profound impact on the society concerned. Even then, the operations concerning public services or organizations or administrations are thrown into disarray by the free-wheeling practice. Undoubtedly, they do jeopardize the development and prosperity of the society concerned.

To be able to create an advanced society or nation, we must work together with our knowledge, skills, professional expertise and professional experiences honestly and ideally. Essentially, every human society requires good governance, clean government, philanthropists and honest persons so that the society could maintain sustainable development and prosperity.

Wheeler-dealers, Yes-men, wishy-washy persons and free-wheeling practice

The conductor warmly greets all the passengers on the bus.

Hey, your writing is out of touch with reality.

Bahan Aye Min

Tommy Paik is the pseudonym of U Thein Swe, who is B.A. (English) and Registered Law R.L.I degree holder. He has English Teaching experience at Yangon University English Department and Workers’ college in Yangon, and now is working as freelance writer and English Teacher cum Translator/ Interpreter for foreign firms.
6th meeting on Myanmar-Japan Joint Initiative held

NAY PYI TAW, 25 June — The 6th meeting on Myanmar-Japan Joint Initiative (MJJI) was held Tuesday in Nay Pyi Taw with participation of representatives from both public and private sectors of Japan and Myanmar, under the auspices of the Meeting Co-Chairs, Dr KAN ZAW, Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development and Mr Tateshi Higuchi, Ambassador of Japan to Myanmar.

The meeting focused on outcomes and future challenges. In particular, they addresses issues related to tax, business environment and labour, and agreed to further continue discussions. They also consented to establish mechanisms for vitalization of MJJI and smooth information sharing system among parties.

Furthermore, following the proposal made at the previous meeting, Japanese side explained the overview of Myanmar industrial development vision (MIDV) which combined Japan’s ideas on necessary policies for Myanmar’s future industrial development.

MIDV is a vision to realize Myanmar’s balanced development between urban and rural areas, being formulated based on the coordination of Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry among other related ministries in Japan. In detail, it proposes Urban-Rural Synergy Strategy to create a virtuous cycle of development of foreign capital-led labour intensive industries in urban areas and of agriculture, fishery and forestry industries and local industries such as high-value-added textiles in rural areas. Myanmar welcomed the proposal and agreed to continue a dialogue to reflect MIDV into concrete policies. Also a similar for more detailed discussions on MIDV was held separately from MJJI in the morning.—GNLM

Japan grants US$4.4 million for project for human resource development scholarship


This scholarship provides an opportunity for young Myanmar Government officials to study in Japan to learn necessary skills and knowledge for problem solving and policy making with a view to promoting Myanmar’s reform and social and economic development as well as to establishing a friendly relationship between Japan and Myanmar.—GNLM

Plan to maintain two pagodas of stone plaque chambers in India

NAY PYI TAW, 25 June — A coordination on maintenance of two pagodas built by King Sagarang and King Mindon and stone plaques in Bodh Gaya, Bihar State of India, was held at the Ministry of Culture, Wednesday.

Union Minister for Culture U Aye Myint Kyu stressed the need to form committees for maintenance of the pagodas and stone plaques and to carry out the tasks in line with cultural maintenance rules of India.

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Tin Oo Lwin discussed sending of pilot project team, submission of a proposal on architectural designs and financial matters to India and assistance of India on work.

Maintenance of the pagodas for the chambers of stone plaques will be spent through the fund of the government as well as donations of well-wishers.—MNA

Summit Parkview Hotel unveils plans for new wing

YANGON, 25 June — Yangon’s Summit Parkview Hotel, the first foreign-owned hotel in Myanmar, plans to build a new wing after its 20th anniversary celebration this month.

Construction on the new building comprising 181 rooms will begin at the end of this month, increasing the hotel’s total number of rooms to around 450 upon completion.

The extension will include an executive floor, serviced apartments, a ballroom, gym, pub, swimming pool, a luxury spa and an executive floor, hotel general manager Vivian Chan told The Global New Light of Myanmar on Thursday.

“The new project will be built with Singapore’s state-of-the-art architectural design by its famous architects,” a hotel spokesman said. “The project is scheduled to complete by the end of 2017.”

Built by a Singapore-government-linked company, the hotel opened its doors on Ashton Road in Dagon Township on 3 June 1995. The spokesman said the hotel had been involved in charitable and community activities since its opening.

“The hotel brings activities to the orphanages, homes for the aged and underprivileged as part and parcel of its culture,” he said.

He went on to say, “Although we are constantly evolving, Summit Parkview has retained the values of the old and rich history of Myanmar through its architecture, décor and cuisine without compromising its international flavor.”

Photo shows present view of Summit Parkview Hotel in Yangon.
Obama reassures France after ‘unacceptable’ NSA spying

PARIS, 25 June — US President Barack Obama reaffirmed in a phone call with his French counterpart Francois Hollande on Wednesday Washington’s commitment to end spying practices deemed “unacceptable” by its allies.

The presidents’ conversation, announced by Hollande’s office after transparency lobby group WikiLeaks revealed on Tuesday that US National Security Agency (NSA) had spied on the last three French presidents.

The latest revelations of espionage practices by Western allies came after it emerged that the US National Security Agency (NSA) had spied on Germany and that Germany’s own BND intelligence agency had cooperated with the NSA to spy on officials of nations elsewhere in Europe.

“President Obama reiterated unequivocally his firm commitment ... to end the practices that may have happened in the past and that are considered unacceptable among allies,” the French president’s office said.

Hollande had earlier held an emergency meeting of his ministers and army commanders and the US ambassador was summoned to the foreign ministry.

“France will not tolerate actions that threaten its security and the protection of its interests,” an earlier statement from the president’s office said.

Top Chinese and US officials wrapped up on Wednesday their two-day high-level talks here with substantial outcomes in economic dialogue under the Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED) and the sixth China-US Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED) in Washington DC, the United States on 24 June, 2015.—REUTERS

Polish police say detained airport bomb hoax suspect

WASHINGTON, 25 June — Top Chinese and US officials wrapped up on Wednesday their two-day high-level talks here with substantial outcomes in strategic and economic sectors, as well as people-to-people exchanges.

During this year’s seventh China-US Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED) and the sixth China-US High-Level Consultation on People-to-People Exchange (CPE), a wide range of bilateral, regional and global issues of common concern were covered, including climate change, interaction in the Asia-Pacific region, managing differences and sensitive situations, the United Nations and multilateral affairs, science and innovation, green ports and ships, as well as fighting illegal trade in wildlife.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang said that during the two days of the seventh round of economic dialogue under the S&ED, the two sides conducted candid and in-depth exchange of views on issues of long-term and strategic importance to the two economies and the world economy, and achieved over 70 important outcomes.

Wang said the success of this round of economic dialogue has provided a stronger foundation and driven for the healthy and stable growth of China-US relations and laid the ground work for the economic agenda of Chinese President Xi Jinping’s upcoming state visit to the United States in September.

State Councilor Yang Jiechi said on the strategic track, the two sides have achieved concrete outcomes in nine areas.

Yang said that the two sides had discussions on how to build the new type of major-country relations, deepen practical cooperation, enhance the China-US cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, handle regional hotspots and global challenges and manage differences in a constructive fashion.

During the two-day CPE talks, the two sides have also achieved 119 outcomes in seven areas, including education, science and technology, culture, health, sports, women and youth.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, US Secretary of State John Kerry said the depth and breadth of discussion at this year’s S&ED was significant, adding that the dialogue of this year’s S&ED reflected a joint US-China commitment to cooperating in areas of common interest and seeking constructive solutions where the two sides have differences.

Kerry emphasized that the United States welcomes the emergence of a stable, peaceful and prosperous China that plays a responsible role in world affairs.

This year’s S&ED was co-chaired by Wang and Yang, special representatives of Xi, and John Kerry and US Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew, on behalf of US President Barack Obama.

The CPE was co-chaired by Chinese Vice Premier Liu Yandong, a special representative of Xi, and Kerry.—Xinhua

Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang (2nd L), Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi (1st L), US Secretary of State John Kerry (2nd R) and US Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew attend a joint Press conference after the seventh China-US Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED) in Washington DC, the United States on 24 June, 2015. Top Chinese and US officials wrapped up on Wednesday their two-day high-level talks here with substantial outcomes in strategic and economic sectors, as well as people-to-people exchanges.—Xinhua

Queen Elizabeth makes a speech during a state banquet at Bellevue presidential palace in Berlin, Germany on 24 June, 2015.—Reuters

Queen Elizabeth urged Wednesday to guard against division in the continent, at a state banquet in Berlin where Germany’s president declared: “the European Union needs Great Britain.”

On the first full day of her visit to Germany, the queen said she and German President Joachim Gauck had seen “the worst but also the best” of Europe in their lifetimes, adding: “we must work hard to maintain the benefits of the post-war world.”

The 89-year-old queen, now in her 63rd year on the throne, lived in Britain during World War Two.

In her fifth visit to Germany, where she will remain until Friday, she said: “We know that division in Europe is dangerous and that we must guard against it in the west, as well as in the east of our continent. That remains a common endeavour,” she said, before proposing a toast to Gauck and the people of Germany.

The queen made her speech as the Ukraine crisis stokes tensions with Russia to Europe’s east, Greece’s debt woes test tempers in the core of the continent and as Britain on its western flank seeks to renegotiate its position in the EU.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and British Prime Minister David Cameron, who will head to an EU summit in Brussels on Thursday, also attended the banquet at Gauck’s official residence, Schloss Bellevue.—Reuters
Syrian army secures oil field perimeter, kills militants

BEIRUT, 25 June — Syrian state television said on Wednesday the army and allied militias had secured the perimeter of an oil field near the central city of Palmyra which had been the focus of recent heavy fighting with Islamic State militants.

The report said the army took control of the area surrounding the field, territory that contains important sites for energy production in Homs province, and all of Islamic State militants.

The advance appeared to be an attempt to shore up defence lines near Palmyra, an Islamic State-held city home to Roman ruins that are listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Syria’s defence minister visited army units in the Homs countryside earlier this month in what appeared to be the latest in a series of morale-boosting trips by senior officials to military outposts.

On Tuesday Kurdish-led forces also seized the town of Ain Issa in northern Syria from Islamic State after capturing a military base overnight. They were aided by US-led air strikes in some of the most recent gains yet against the militants who had made major advances in Syria and Iraq in May.

**Drugs-resistant bacteria lurk in crowded Afghan war clinic**

KUNDUZ, (Afghanistan) 25 June — A frontline hospita in Afghanistan already stretched by rising war casualties is facing another, invisible danger that is only beginning to come to light: highly contagious strains of drug-resistant bacteria which are making treatment harder.

While drug resistance is a problem in hospitals the world over, early evidence from tracking by Medicins Sans Frontieres (MSF) in the last two years suggests it may be acute in Afghanistan. At the trauma centre in the northern city of Kunduz, where Afghan forces are battling Taliban militants, staff have identified nearly 100 cases of multi-drug resistant bacteria, or nearly 30 percent of samples tested, since last year.

That is putting extra strain on the MSF-run facility already struggling to cope with wounded combatants and civilians.

One hot morning in mid-June, the halls of the clinic quickly filled with wheeled stretchers carrying around a dozen bloodied Afghan security personnel hurt in a mortar attack by insurgents. One man struggled for breath, and a waft of iron hung in the air as staff wiped blood stains from the white-tiled floor.

Not far away, teenager Zemaicy, one of whose legs had to be amputated after a mortar round went off in his back yard several days before, lay in a quiet isolation ward. His wounds had become infected and the drugs he was taking were not helping. Staff tested the wounds for resistant bacteria and started treating him with a different drug, after which his health began to improve. By late June, he had been hospitalized for nearly 40 days, “I thought I was going to lose him, or that maybe he'd lose his other leg,” said Ameer Muhammad Zemaicy’s father.

Doctors in Kunduz do not have enough comparative data to chart the long-term trajectory of the problem, but they are worried.

The hospital plans to expand its laboratory to test patients’ blood in order to better pinpoint which organisms are causing infection and what drugs to use to treat them; at present, the lab can only test passengers opened infected wounds.

“I’m sure the rates are higher, but we can’t see it,” said Kathleen Thomas, head of the hospital’s intensive care unit (ICU) and the emergency room. “I think it’s a big problem.”

In the southern province of Helmand, another Afghan region where militant violence is common, staff at an MSF-supported hospital noticed patients with respiratory tract infections and diarrhoea were not getting better.

An ensuing 2013-14 study showed high levels of resistance to widely used antibiotics among those being treated at the hospital.

Doctors say the probable causes of the problem include over-prescription and patients not finishing courses of treatment. In Afghanistan drug resistance may be made worse by medicines of suspect quality being illegally imported into the country.

“The general population has a big problem of resistance because of self-medication and patients putting pressure on doctors (to prescribe drugs),” said Abdul Qayoom Wardak, who oversees MSF’s laboratories in Afghanistan.

Nearly 60 percent of medicine in Afghanistan enters through illegal channels, said Abdul Khalil Khakzad, head of the Avicenna Pharmaceutical Institute in Kabul, possibly contributing to what doctors suspect is a glut of ineffective drugs on the market, including antibiotics.

Though many of the smuggled drugs may be fine, the lack of information may already be contributing to drug resistance, as some doctors try to over-correct for presumed low quality.

**Shelling by Yemeni group kills four troops on Saudi border**

RIYADH, 25 June — Shelling by Yemen’s Houthis militia killed four soldiers from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates stationed on Yemen’s kingdom’s border posts in recent weeks, three months of bombardment by a Saudi-led coalition intent on restoring Yemen’s exiled government.

Two soldiers from the Royal Saudi Land Forces, one from the kingdom’s Border Guards, and an officer from the UAE’s forces were killed on Wednesday in three incidents along different stretches of the border, a mostly mountainous area. The Houthis and their allies, army forces loyal to former president Ali Abdul Qayoum Wardak, have managed to hold most of the population-western part of Yemen against disparate groups in Aden, Taiz, al-Dhala and Marib baked by coalition air strikes.

Saudi Arabia’s coalition of Arab countries wants to force the Houthis and Saleh to quit captured areas, return seized arms and let President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi return to the capital, Riyadh, in line with UN Security Council resolution 2216.

**About 40 killed in suspected Boko Haram attacks in Nigeria**

BAUCHI, Nigeria, 25 June — About 40 people have been killed by suspected Boko Haram militants who torched houses and shot people as they fled, in two villages in north-eastern Nigeria’s Borno state, witnesses told Reuters on Wednesday.

The attackers, who arrived on motorcycles and vehicles mounted with guns, shot residents and looted shops in the villages of Deboro Bii and Debiro Hawal late on Monday night and into Tuesday morning, the witnesses said.

Local police confirmed the attacks took place but declined to comment further. Details of the attack did not emerge for several hours due to poor telecommunications networks in the remote villages in northeast Nigeria, a region in which Boko Haram has killed thousands in a six-year campaign to set up an Islamic state.

“They were shooting sporadically and then they started looting shops and setting places ablaze,” said witness Hussaini Adamu, who fled with other villagers to hide in bushes after fleeing Debiro Bii.

More than 100 people have been killed in north-eastern Nigeria in the past few weeks in a spree of bombings, mostly in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno state.

Muhammadu Buhari, the new president of Africa’s most populous nation and biggest economy, made Maiduguri the command centre for the military campaign against Boko Haram after being inaugurated last month.

Buhari has held talks with counterparts in neighbouring countries to set up a joint force to tackle the insurgents.

Boko Haram controlled territory the size of Belgium in the northeast at the start of the year but has been pushed out of most of it by the Nigerian army, backed by troops from Chad, Niger and Cameroon.

In Washington, State Department spokesman John Kirby said the United States condemned the Boko Haram attacks and called on the military forces of Nigeria and the other countries for their advances against the group.

“We encourage the government of Nigeria to take steps to secure and govern liberated areas by filling in behind military successes with police and civilian administration,” he said in a statement.

**Free Syrian Army fighters gather before heading towards what they said an offensive against forces loyal to Syria’s President Bashar al-Assad in Deraa on 23 June, 2015. — REUTERS**
Vusic announces fight against Novi Sad narcotics market

BELGRADE, 25 June — Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic announced on Wednesday that the presence of security forces will be boosted in Novi Sad to fight crime, in particular the growing narcotics market there.

The prime minister said that “both a visible and an invisible” increase in the presence of security forces in Novi Sad has been agreed with the head of the Security and Information Agency and the minister of finance.

“I think that we will have results within the shortest period of time,” Vucic told a Press conference after a meeting with the leader of the League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina.

Brussels, 25 June — The head of NATO said on Wednesday the alliance would not be forced into a new arms race with Russia but said that he believed Moscow’s aggression in Ukraine had compelled it to strengthen its defences.

The United States announced plans this week to station tanks and heavy weapons in NATO member states on Russia’s border, shortly after President Vladimir Putin said Moscow would add 40 missiles to its nuclear arsenal.

“We will not be dragged into an arms race, but we must keep our countries safe,” NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters at a meeting of alliance defence ministers.

A Nigerian official last week accused NATO of pushing Russia into an arms race by stepping up its military activity around its border, shortly after President Putin said Moscow would add 40 missiles to its nuclear arsenal.

The United States said on Monday it would contribute special operations forces, intelligence and other high-end military assets to the new “spearhead” force, part of which could move within 48 hours.

The United States said on Monday it would contribute special operations forces, intelligence and other high-end military assets to the new “spearhead” force.

Canadian Defence Minister Jason Kenney announced on Wednesday his country was ready to offer air-to-air refuelling, reconnaissance or transport planes for the force.

NATO says won’t be dragged into arms race with Russia

Ornamental square watermelon shipments begin with prices 10,000 yen

TAKAMATSU, Japan, 25 June — This year’s shipments of ornamental watermelons known for their rare square shapes started on Thursday in western Japan with wholesale prices of around 10,000 yen ($81) a piece.

The watermelons, with sides about 18 centimetres in length, acquire their cube shapes from being grown in plastic containers. They are inedible, as they are harvested unripe. Production began about 45 years ago.

Department stores and fruit stores are buying them as they are popular as ornaments. Recently, they caught on among consumers abroad, with orders from countries like Canada, Turkey and Russia. A total of around 400 square watermelons produced by six farmers will be shipped mainly to Tokyo and Osaka by mid-July.

“We were troubled by the temperature difference this year,” Toshiyuki Yamashita, one of the producers, said, as he was boxing them at a collection point in the city of Zentsuji in western Japan’s Kagawa Prefecture.
CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV BAO AN LING VOY NO (201506)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BAO AN LING VOY NO (201506) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.6.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.L.T. (4) where it will lie at the consignee’ 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 Claims 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.

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INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER

(TENDER NO. 3/MPPE/LBO/2/2015-2016)

1. Open Tender is invited for the Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise, the Ministry of Energy for the supply of Lube Base Oils & Additives (220.11 Metric Tons).
2. Tender Closing Date : 22.7.2015 at (12:00) noon.
3. Tender Opening Date : 22.7.2015 at (13:00) hrs.
4. Delivery Time : Up to End of December 2015
5. Tender Documents and details information are available at the Department of Finance, Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise, Nay Pyi Taw, during office hours commencing 29.6.2015 on payment of the Myanmar Kyat One Hundred Thousand (Kyat 100,000) per set.
6. Only bid from tenderer who has purchased tender document officially from Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise will be accepted for evaluation.

Managing Director
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise
Contact Phone no. 067-411108/411193

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is vigorous in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 20th June, 2015: Rain will be scattered in Lower Sagarin and Mandalay Regions, fairly widespread in Magway Region, Shan and Kayah States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of regionally heavy falls in Taninhtayi Region, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon States, isolated heavy falls in Mandalay, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions, Kachin and Chin States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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Actor Shia LaBeouf suffers head injury on film set

Los Angeles, 25 June — Veteran singer-songwriter James Taylor raced ahead of pop singers Adam Lambert and Hilary Duff to score his first No 1 album on the weekly US Billboard chart, selling another 47,000 units.

His first studio release of new songs in 13 years, "Before This World," has sold 96,000 albums, 9,000 songs and was streamed 411,000 times, totaling 97,000 units according to figures from music tracking service Nielsen SoundScan.

At No 2, pop star Taylor Swift's "1989" holds steady in its 34th week on the chart, selling another 57,000 units. The singer made waves over the weekend by writing an open letter to Apple Inc, criticizing its policy of not paying artists during a three-month free trial of its new music streaming platform Apple Music.

The company bowed to pressure and reversed its policy, saying it will now pay artists during the free trial. Former "American Idol" contestant Lambert entered the chart at No 3 this week with his latest record, "The Original High," selling 47,000 units.

The Billboard 200 chart tallies album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album).

Other new entries in the top ten of the Billboard 200 chart include former child star Duff's latest album "Breathe In, Breathe Out" at No 5, and FUNK. frontman Nate Ruess's solo debut "Grand Romantic" at No 7. Last week's chart-topper "Drones" by British rockers Muse, dropped to No 19 this week.

On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online sales, Swift's "Bad Blood" held steady at No 1 with 173,000 downloads.

"Seinfeld" fans reminisce in replica of iconic TV apartment

New York, 25 June — Fans of the hit 1990s television show "Seinfeld" can lounge on comedian Jerry Seinfeld's battered sofa and reminisce about their favourite episodes in a pop-up, real-life replica of his iconic apartment on New York's Upper West Side.

Online video streaming service Hulu on Wednesday unveiled the replica apartment, where Seinfeld hung out with his best friend George, former girlfriend Elaine and neighbour Kramer, to mark the debut of all the episodes of the Emmy-award winning series on its website.

"Seinfeld. The Apartment," which will be open through Sunday, includes original items from the TV set, a memorabilia gallery and an interactive fan experience from the show about four single friends coping with life in New York City.

"I think it is going to be Disneyland for so many of the fans," said actor Larry Thomas, who played the immigrant chef known as Soup Nazi because of the strict demands he placed on his customers.

Seinfeld donated several items to the pop-up apartment, including a canvas brick wall signed by the cast and crew when the series ended in 1998 after a nine-year run.

Fans can wander around the 3,500 square foot space, see the original table and booth from Seinfeld's favourite restaurant around the corner, the Devil's hockey team shirt, his suspended bicycle and the picture of Porsches featured in the show.

They can also recreate Kramer's famous stumbling entrance into the apartment and speak to visitors through the intercom system.

"There are like 13-year-olds that come up to me and they love the show and stuff," said Thomas. "It's going to be introduced to a lot of new people." —Reuters

Alibaba film unit ties up with Paramount on next ‘Mission: Impossible’


The film unit of Alibaba Group Holding Ltd will collaborate with Viacom Inc subsidiary Paramount in online ticketing, promotion and merchandising for “Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation” in China, it said in a statement on Wednesday. It did not say how much the tie-up would cost. The movie, starring Tom Cruise, is due in theaters on 31 July, according to Paramount’s website.

Alibaba Pictures, previously known as ChinaVision Media Group, raised nearly 5 billion yuan ($805.5 million) in 2014 from a share offer that put Alibaba in control of the company. Earlier this month, it agreed to sell 4.2 billion new shares at HK$2.9 each to independent investors to boost its share capital.

In January, Alibaba Pictures unveiled its first movie project under its new ownership, a romance to be produced by acclaimed Hong Kong director Wong Kar-wai. —Reuters

Bobbi Kristina Brown in hospice, boyfriend accused of abuse

Bobbi Kristina Brown was placed in a medically induced coma and her family said she was later diagnosed with irreversible brain damage.

A statement issued by the Houston family on Wednesday said that despite great medical care Bobbi Kristina Brown’s condition was deteriorating. As of today, she has been moved into hospice care... She is in God’s hands now.

Bobbi Kristina, 22, was found face down and unresponsive in a bathtub in her suburban Atlanta home on 31 January. The incident had eerie similarities to the 2012 death of her mother.

Actor Tom Cruise
Gerrard reveals moment he knew Liverpool career was over

LONDON, 25 June — Steven Gerrard knew it was time to leave Liverpool when he was omitted from the starting lineup for their Champions League group match at Real Madrid last November.

The 35-year-old former England captain left Anfield in May after more than 17 years and 700 matches with the Premier League club and has signed for Major League Soccer club LA Galaxy.

He said in an interview to be broadcast on Wednesday that he was “devastated” when manager Brendan Rodgers put him on the bench in Madrid and realised his days at the club were numbered.

“When I was told I wasn’t playing, for the sake of the team and the squad and my relationship with Brendan, I took it and accepted it,” Gerrard told his former England team mate Rio Ferdinand in the interview, to be televised by BT Sport.

But the ex-Liverpool skipper said that was the moment he realised his long career at the club was coming to an end.

“I sat on the bench devastated, I wanted to play. It sort of pushed me into making a decision to move on and try something different,” he explained.

Gerrard eventually came on in the 69th minute of the match, which Liverpool lost 1-0, and although he played 41 times last season, he was no longer the automatic first-choice he had been for most of his 17 years at Anfield.

He is now about to start the next phase of his career with the California-based LA Galaxy and can be seen on promotional posters dotted around the city under the banner ‘Greatness’.

Liverpool, who finished second in the Premier League in 2014, had a poor season by comparison last term finishing sixth.

He also said the slip he made that effectively cost Liverpool the title in 2014 “will hurt me till the day I die.” That happened in April 2014 when they lost 2-0 at home to Chelsea after Gerrard’s slip on the turf allowed Demba Ba to score the opening goal.

Liverpool never recovered from that and Manchester City snatched the title from their grasp.

“The slip happened at a bad time, it was crucial for me personally. There’s not a day goes by when I don’t think, ‘What if that didn’t happen?’” Gerrard said “I’ve got memories, good memories, that will live with me forever. But that one moment will hurt me until the day I go.

“It’s because if I had got that title, I’d have achieved every dream with Liverpool. And, as a man, that hurts.”

General view of a banner held up for Steven Gerrard’s last game at Anfield during Premier League at Anfield on 16 May, 2015.—Reuters

Cat stationmaster Tama, superstar in western Japan, dies

WAKAYAMA, (Japan), 25 June — Tama, a cat stationmaster of a railway station in western Japan whose immense popularity helped boost the railway operator’s revenues and the local sightseeing industry, died on Monday at a local animal hospital aged 16 years and two months, the equivalent of about 80 years in human age, the railway operator said on Wednesday.

Tama was a “tourism superstar extremely popular in and out of Japan who contributed greatly to promoting tourism in our prefecture. I am filled with deep sorrow and appreciation,” Wakayama Gov Yoshinobu Nisaka said in a statement.

According to Wakayama Electric Railway Co, which appointed the female tortoiseshell cat to master of Kishi Station in January 2007, Tama had been recuperating from rhinitis since May. She is believed to have lived of acute heart failure.

The day before her death, Wakayama Electric Railway President Mitsunobu Kojima visited Tama to wish her a speedy recovery. At the time, Tama stood up and let out a strong meow.

Before taking up the company’s post, Tama was kept at a kiosk in front of Kishi Station.

Her cuteness and the novelty of a cat stationmaster turned the money-losing Kishigawa Line into a popular sightseeing spot. The number of passengers on the line jumped to 2.7 million in fiscal 2014 from 1.92 million in fiscal 2005. Photos of Tama and other merchandise also sold well, leading to her appointment to acting president of Wakayama Electric Railway in January 2013.

The railway operator said it will hold a funeral for Tama on Sunday at its station, with the president serving as the chairman of her funeral committee.

Kyodo News
Myanmar to play tune-up matches with UAE, New Zealand

YANGON, 25 June — As preparations to take part in the international tournaments in 2015, Myanmar national football team will play tune-up matches against New Zealand and UAE teams. Football associations of both countries accepted offer of Myanmar Football Federation and agreed to play the tune-up matches.

Wozniacki beats Kuznetsova to reach Eastbourne quarters

LONDON, 25 June — Former world number one Caroline Wozniacki reached the quarter-finals of Eastbourne’s Aegon Championships with a topsy-turvy defeat of Svetlana Kuznetsova on Wednesday.

The Dane surrendered the first set after leading 5-1 but recovered to win 6-7(3), 6-3, 6-1 as Kuznetsova faded.

Despite taking charge of the match, second seed Wozniacki said she was worried right to the end against the former US Open and French Open champion.

“I was 5-1 up in that first set, so when I was 5-1 up in the third set I was thinking to myself that I really couldn’t repeat what happened earlier,” she said.

“I served better as the match went on, tried to take the ball a little earlier.”

The world number five plays Andrea Petkovic next at the traditional seaside grasscourt tournament after the German beat American CoCo Vandeweghe 6-3, 6-4.

Eugenie Bouchard’s problems continued as last year’s Wimbledon runner-up retired with an abdominal injury when trailing Belinda Bencic 6-4, 3-0.

“I was feeling it during the match,” Canada’s Bouchard told reporters.

“It just wasn’t smart for me to take a risk, and, you know, potentially be out for a long time.

“It’s something I want to kind of take care of right away.”

“I’m going to play (Wimbledon) no matter what, even if I’m on one leg,” added Bouchard, who has suffered a string of early defeats this year.

British wildcard Johanna Konta continued her surprise run with another shock, this time knocking over Spain’s Garbine Muguruza, a day after beating world number eight Ekaterina Makarova. Reuters

Chile down nine-man Uruguay to reach Copa semi

SANTIAGO, 25 June — Chile bounded reigning champions Uruguay out of the Copa America with a 1-0 victory in a fast-paced quarter-final that ended in controversy and kept alive the host nation’s dream of a maiden title on Wednesday.

Uruguay were reduced to nine men by the end of the game with Edison Cavani sent off for a second yellow card after 62 minutes and Jorge Fucile also shown red for a second booking with two minutes remaining.

After Fucile’s exit, the match was halted for several minutes as Uruguay’s players surrounded the referee and officials and players from both sides scuffled on the field. The holders looked hard done by after video evidence showed it was Gonzalo Jara who first gave Cavani a friendly slap and then poked him behind the referee’s back.

When Cavani touched Jara’s face with the slightest of taps, he fell to the ground to provoke a second yellow for the Paris Saint Germain striker.

“There’s a bitter taste in our mouths,” Uruguay manager Oscar Tabarez told reporters. “I’ve seen the television and photographs, that’s where the truth is.”

Mauricio Isla scored the only goal in the 82nd minute when he fired home from 15 yards after Uruguayan goalkeeper Fernando Muslera had weakly punched away a cross.

Hosts Chile, who dominated the match with 80 percent of possession, have never won the Copa America since its inception in 1916 and now face the winner of Thursday’s Peru-Bolivia tie.

“If we have another game I don’t know if it will be Peru or Bolivia but we still have the dream,” said striker Alexis Sanchez.

“We fought hard and we have to thank the fans who were behind us all the way. In the other quarter-finals, Argentina face Colombia on Friday and Brazil play Paraguay on Saturday.” — Reuters

No time for fun as Canada focussed on World Cup ‘summit’

VANCOUVER, 25 June — Canadian football fans may be enjoying the ride but for the players, the grind of the Women’s World Cup is no fun and the team is still approaching the “death zone,” head coach John Herdman said on Wednesday.

Another 50,000-plus crowd will pack into BC Place on Saturday ready to party when Canada play England for a spot in the semi-finals but it will be all business for Herdman’s crew.

“You’re not meant to have fun,” a stern-faced Herdman said after putting his team through a training session on Wednesday. “You climb Everest, it hurts, and it’s painful.

“We’re now in the death zone where the oxygen is thinnest. It’s not meant to be fun. But when we look back and reflect, that’s when we can go, ‘Wow what an achievement what we have done for our country.’

Herdman and the players have not avoided the bigger picture of what hosting a World Cup means for the sport’s development in Canada but the team remains on a laser focus on the more immediate goal of winning the tournament.

Standing in Canada’s way are a sixth-ranked England team that have been building momentum with consecutive wins over Mexico, Colombia and Norway after an opening loss to France.

The two teams are very familiar with each other, England having beaten Canada 1-0 in the Cyprus Cup final in March while the latter triumphed 1-0 in their final pre-World Cup friendly.

Playing at home in front of raucous capacity crowds has given the hosts with a lift but they have also been weighed down with burden of expectation.

But after having beaten the teams they were expected to beat based purely on world rankings, that seemingly endless pressure has taken on a new form.

“It just feels different,” said Herdman. “It’s almost like you can see the summit, you can actually see it now. And the players have got an absolute focus that it’s not falling off the cliff any more.

“You’re not looking to fall off the cliff. It’s about there it is, we’ve got to get there and you’ve got to push through and do anything it takes to do it.” — Reuters

Denmark’s Caroline Wozniacki in action during the third round match. — Reuters

Referee Sandro Ricci shows a second yellow card to Uruguay’s Edison Cavani as Chile’s Gonzalo Jara (18) looks on during their quarter-finals Copa America 2015 soccer match at the National Stadium in Santiago, Chile, on 24 June, 2015. — Reuters