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Chinese court sentences Canadian to death as diplomatic row deepens



Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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U.S. government shutdown drags into fourth week amid stalemate

WASHINGTON/NEW ORLEANS (Reuters) - President Donald Trump on Monday rejected a Republican call for temporarily reopening shuttered U.S. government agencies in order to encourage negotiations with Democrats on border security issues, as a partial government shutdown limped through its 24th day. About one-quarter of federal operations have been partially closed by a lack of funding since Dec. 22 after Trump demanded \$5.7 billion this year from Congress for building a security wall on the southwest U.S. border.

At a speech to an American Farm Bureau convention in New Orleans, Trump again urged Congress to grant him the money, saying drones, sensors and other technology cannot do what a wall can do to stop illegal border crossings.

U.S. trade representative says trade negotiations to continue despite shutdown

Farmers, a key bloc of Trump supporters, have been hit by the shutdown as federal loan and farm aid applications have stalled and key farming and crop data has been delayed.

"If you want to help farmers, re-open the government," Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer said in a Twitter posting. The number of airport security screeners not showing up for work continued to rise since the start of the disruption. Most Transportation Security Administration workers were required to report to work but they are not being paid due to a lack of funds. TSA spokesman Michael Bilello on Monday said TSA had a 7.6 percent unscheduled absence rate nationally, compared to a 3.2 percent rate a year ago.

Many security officers "are understandably looking for other work to make ends meet, House of Representatives Homeland Security Chairman Bennie Thompson, a Democrat, said in a statement.

Democrats, who control the House, have rejected Trump's \$5.7 billion demand, as have Senate Democrats who are needed to pass most legislation in the chamber even though Republicans hold a majority.

On Sunday, Republican Senator Lindsey Graham urged Trump to reopen the government for a short period of time in an effort to restart talks. It is an idea that Democrats have been promoting for weeks.

"That was a suggestion that Lindsey made but I did reject it," Trump told reporters as he left the White House for Louisiana. "I want to get it solved, I don't want to just delay it."

The partial shutdown is the longest in U.S. history and has seen Trump lurch from one idea to another in an attempt to secure money for building a wall that he argues is needed to secure the United States against illegal immigrants and drugs.

Democrats say there are cheaper, more effective ways of enhancing border security than constructing a wall that could cost well beyond \$25 billion. They have offered \$1.3 billion in new border security funds this year to help pay for a range of high-tech and other tools at the border.

When he ran for president, Trump said Mexico would pay for the wall but its government has refused. More recently, he has suggested that a renegotiated trade deal with Mexico could bring in the revenues needed to build the wall or that military funds and U.S. soldiers could be utilized.

Last week, the administration was looking into Trump declaring a "national emergency" and redirecting U.S. Army Corps of Engineers funds to the wall but he has said would not immediately take such action. In December Trump said he would take responsibility for the shutdown but has since shifted the blame to Democrats. A growing proportion of Americans blame Trump for the closures, a Reuters/Ipsos poll found.



FILE PHOTO: A 737 MAX 8 produced for Southwest Airlines is pictured as Boeing celebrates the 10,000th 737 to come off the production line in Renton, Washington, U.S. March 13, 2018. REUTERS/Jason Redmond/File Photo

Wall Street falls as China prompts global slowdown worries

(Reuters) - U.S. stocks declined on Monday as an unexpected drop in China's exports reignited worries of a global economic slowdown and prompted caution among investors as the corporate earnings season kicked off.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average .DJI fell 87.4 points, or 0.36 percent, to 23,908.55, the S&P 500 .SPX lost 13.88 points, or 0.53 percent, to 2,582.38 and the Nasdaq Composite .IXIC dropped 65.56 points, or 0.94 percent, to 6,905.92.



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Chinese court sentences Canadian to death as diplomatic row deepens

BEIJING/OTTAWA (Reuters) - A Chinese court on Monday sentenced a Canadian man to be executed for drug smuggling, prompting Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to accuse China of using the death penalty arbitrarily.

The ruling, and Trudeau's reaction, could aggravate already sour relations between Beijing and Ottawa following the arrest of a senior Chinese executive in Canada and China's subsequent detention of two Canadians. The Dalian Intermediate People's Court in China's north-east province of Liaoning re-tried Robert Lloyd Schellenberg, who had appealed his original 15-year prison sentence, and decided on execution, the court said in a statement.

Schellenberg was told in court he had the right to appeal to Liaoning High Court within 10 days upon receiving the ruling, the intermediate court said in a second statement.

"It is of extreme concern to us as a government, as it should be to all our international friends and allies, that China has chosen to begin to arbitrarily apply (the) death penalty ... as in this case," Trudeau told reporters in Ottawa.

Schellenberg's aunt, Lauri Nelson-Jones, said the family's worst fears had been confirmed.

"It is rather unimaginable what he must be feeling and thinking. It is a horrific, unfortunate, heartbreaking situation," she told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

China-Canada ties turned icy in early December after Meng Wanzhou, chief financial officer of Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei Technologies Co Ltd [HWT.UL], was arrested in Vancouver on a U.S. extradition warrant.

China denounced her arrest, warning of unspecified consequences unless Meng was released, and detained Michael Kovrig, a Canadian diplomat on unpaid leave from the embassy in Beijing, and Michael Spavor, a Canadian consultant, on suspicion of endangering state security. Beijing has not drawn a direct link between the arrest of Meng, wanted by U.S. authorities for allegedly misleading multinational banks about Iran-linked transactions, and the detention of Spavor and Kovrig. Western diplomats in China's capital, however, say the cases are a tit-for-tat

reprisal.

Lu Shaye, China's ambassador to Canada, suggested in a newspaper article last week that the arrest of Kovrig and Spavor was "China's self-defense," but he did not give details. Earlier on Monday, China's government dismissed Trudeau's statement that Kovrig enjoyed some form of diplomatic immunity. A Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman said Trudeau should "earnestly study" the Vienna Convention governing diplomatic ties so as to "not become a laughing stock." Trudeau said Ottawa "will continue to engage strongly" with Beijing over Kovrig's status and what he called China's arbitrary use of justice. Rights groups condemned the Schellenberg sentence while Guy St-Jacques, who was Canada's ambassador in Beijing when Kovrig worked there, said he was concerned by how quickly the courts had acted.

"The Canadian government will make representations in Beijing, but based on past experience I am not sure whether this will work," he told the CBC. "We are in a very difficult place." William Nee of Amnesty International noted that drug-related offences did not meet the threshold of the "most serious crimes" to which the death penalty must be restricted under international law.

Drug smuggling is routinely punished severely in China. Beijing has previously executed foreign nationals convicted of drug-related crimes - a Briton was executed in 2009, prompting a British outcry over what it said was the lack of any mental health assessment.

The court said Schellenberg had conspired with others in an attempt to smuggle 222 kg (489.43 lb) of methamphetamine from China to Australia in late 2014.

Chinese state television said in an earlier report that Schellenberg argued in court that he was a tourist visiting China and was framed by criminals. Before his arrest, Schellenberg had prepared to flee to Thailand but was arrested while in transit, the court said.



A general view of the Intermediate People's Court of Dalian, where the trial for Robert Lloyd Schellenberg, a Canadian citizen on drug smuggling charges, will be held, in Liaoning province, China January 14, 2019. REUTERS/Stringer

It did not offer further information about Schellenberg. Media reports have said he is a 36-year-old former oil worker.

A lawyer for Schellenberg, Zhang Dongshuo, told Reuters his client would probably appeal against the death sentence.

The Liaoning High Court in late De-

cember ordered the case retried after prosecutors said the sentence was too light and improper.

Beijing considers the number of people executed in China to be a state secret. International human rights organizations estimate the annual figure at around 2,000.

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Editor's Choice



FILE PHOTO: Brazilian President-elect Bolsonaro attends the graduation of the officers of the Military Academy of Agulhas Negras in Resende



Yu Jun, President of GAC Motor, poses next to the company's Entranze concept vehicle at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Michigan, U.S., January 14, 2019. REUTERS/Rebecca Cook



U.S. President Donald Trump is greeted as he arrives at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport prior to addressing the National Farm Bureau Federation's 100th convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, U.S., January 14, 2019. REUTERS/Carlos Barria



Soccer Football - Premier League - Manchester City v Wolverhampton Wanderers - Etihad Stadium, Manchester, Britain - January 14, 2019 A Manchester City fan Action Images via Reuters/Carl Recine EDITORIAL USE ONLY. No use with unauthorized audio, video, data, fixture lists, club/league logos or "live" services. Online in-match use limited to 75 images, no video emulation. No use in betting, games or single club/league/player publications.



An Airbus A220 passenger jet stands in the final assembly line, where the European company plans a \$30 million investment to keep up with forecast demand



FILE PHOTO: NGO Proactiva Open Arms' rescue boat is seen docked with migrants rescued in central Mediterranean Sea, at the Center for Temporary Assistance to Foreigners (CATE) in the port of Algeciras



Subaru WRX STI S209 unveiled at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Michigan



FILE PHOTO: A newly displaced Syrian child arrives with his family at a refugee camp in Atimah village, Idlib province

HOUSTON (Jan. 9, 2019) – The Houston Community College Foundation today announced a new scholarship program for students who were unable to continue their studies at HCC due to financial constraints resulting from Hurricane Harvey. It is anticipated that more than 100 students who withdrew from HCC after the hurricane will receive scholarships, beginning in the Spring 2019 semester.

Funding for the scholarships was provided by the State of Qatar through a \$300,000 grant from its Qatar Harvey Fund, a \$30 million fund established last year for the long-term recovery of southeast Texas. The funding will be made available to the HCC Foundation via a partnership between the Qatar Harvey Fund and the Rebuild Texas Fund.

The Rebuild Texas Fund is a collaborative project of the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation and the OneStar Foundation, created to support the rebuilding of Texas communities hit hard by Hurricane Harvey. The Qatar Harvey Fund grant for HCC student scholarships is part of \$5 million in overall funding that the Qatar Harvey Fund has committed to the Rebuild Texas Fund for long-term recovery assistance in southeast Texas.



Michael and Susan Dell announce \$36M commitment to Harvey relief from the Dell Foundation.

“We are grateful to the Qatar Harvey Fund and the Rebuild Texas Fund for their dedication and passion to help rebuild and revitalize our community, including our HCC family impacted by Hurricane Harvey,” said HCC Chancellor Cesar Maldonado. “We now can provide financial assistance to students who had to put their HCC education on hold, or step away from classes altogether, as a result of Harvey.

“A storm as devastating as Harvey disrupts lives in so many ways,” said His Excellency Meshal bin Hamad Al-Thani,

What's Happening At HCC



**Scholarships Made Possible By The Qatar Harvey Fund And Rebuild Texas Fund
HCC Announces Qatar Harvey Fund Scholarship**

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Qatar's Ambassador to the U.S. “The Qatar Harvey Fund Scholarship Program will support HCC students impacted by the storm as they continue their studies. Qatar has long invested in education, which provides both a direct benefit to students who pursue it, as well as a multiplier effect for their families and communities. We are very pleased to partner with the Houston Community College Foundation on this program.”

“We are excited to partner with the Houston Community College Foundation on this scholarship program to continue our collective mission of helping communities rebuild after Hurricane Harvey,” said Neeraj Aggarwal, program director of Rebuild Texas Fund. “We know that rebuilding requires strong, creative partners from business, government, non-profit and philanthropy working together, and are excited to see how HCC's project positively impacts the community.”



His Excellency Meshal bin Hamad Al-Thani, Qatar's Ambassador to the U.S. About HCC

Houston Community College (HCC) is composed of 15 Centers of Excellence and numerous satellite centers that serve the diverse communities in the Greater Houston area by preparing individuals to live and work in an increasingly international and technological society. HCC is one of the country's largest singly-accredited, open-admission, community colleges offering associate degrees, certificates, workforce training, and lifelong learning opportunities. To learn more, visit www.hccs.edu.

About HCC Foundation

The Houston Community College Foundation supports HCC in its efforts to attract and educate Houston-area students with the desire and the dedication to learn - including many non-traditional students and those facing barriers to higher education. Established in 1976, the HCC Foundation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Internal Revenue Service has classified the Foundation as a Section 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) publicly supported charity. To learn more, visit www.hccs.edu/foundation.

About the Qatar Harvey Fund and the State of Qatar

Following the devastation of Hurricane Harvey in August 2017, the State of Qatar announced a gift of \$30 million for the long-term recovery of the storms victims in Texas. The Qatar Harvey Fund was created to administer the gift. Qatar is an independent state in the southern Arabian Gulf. It has a population of approximately 2.7 million people, the majority of whom live in and around Doha, the capital. Diplomatic relations with the United States were established in 1972; in the same year, Qatar's first diplomatic mission in Washington, D.C. opened. The relationship between the two countries has always been friendly, highly productive, and reciprocal. Qatar is home to many Americans, and the United States is both Qatar's largest foreign investor and its largest source of imports. Qatar-U.S. relations are growing continuously in multiple areas: economic, political, military, educational, and cultural. Qatar is a close ally of the United States and a strong advocate of building a peaceful, prosperous, and stable Middle East. Qatar has provided significant humanitarian and development assistance to countries around the world, including the United States.

philanthropic organizations working on the ground in Texas communities, that have been affected by Hurricane Harvey. More information about the Rebuild Texas Fund is available at www.rebuildtx.org.

Media Contact for Qatar Harvey Fund: George Smalley (713) 249-5614 georgefsmalley@bridgebuildercommunications.com

Carolyn Evans-Shabazz Named HCC Board Chair For Second Straight Year
HOUSTON (Jan. 11, 2019) – The Houston Community College Board of Trustees has elected Trustee Carolyn Evans-Shabazz as its chair for the second consecutive year.

The board also elected Trustee John P. Hansen as vice chair and, for the second consecutive year, Trustee Zeph Capo as secretary.

“I am honored to be elected again by my colleagues to serve as board chair,” said Evans-Shabazz, who represents District IV. “I look forward to continuing to work with the board and administration in 2019 on strategic initiatives and promoting HCC's great programs.”



Hansen, the District VI representative, said, “I look to make a constructive contribution to increasing HCC's positive impact in the Houston community.”

Capo, who represents District I, said he expects 2019 to be a very successful year for HCC. “We are serving more than 100,000 students every year and our programs continue to evolve and expand to meet the needs of those students and our community,” Capo added. (Courtesy HCC)



About the Rebuild Texas Fund

The Rebuild Texas Fund is a collaborative project of the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation and the OneStar Foundation, established to support the rebuilding efforts in communities impacted by Hurricane Harvey. The Rebuild Texas Fund works alongside organizations within the impacted communities that are making an impact in the following six focus areas: community and economic development; health; housing; education and childcare; transportation and workforce; and capital for rebuilding small businesses. The Rebuild Texas Fund will continue to fund projects and organizations within these areas through 2019. Funding through the Rebuild Texas Fund is provided to eligible nonprofit, government, corporate, and

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The country would face an economic hellscape if the government shutdown lasts “months or even years,” as the president has suggested it might, experts told NBC News.

The doomsday scenario might be unlikely — the longest the federal government has ever shut down is 21 days, a record that will fall if the current closure lasts until Saturday — but it is chilling.

“We’ll be in no man’s land,” Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody’s Analytics, told NBC News.

If the worst were to happen, experts say the devastating impact would be widespread:

- 38 million low-income Americans lose food stamps
- 6 million face an uncertain timetable for collecting tax refunds
- 2 million without rental assistance and facing possible eviction
- 800,000 paycheck-less federal employees plunged into dire financial straits
- Shuttered parks and museums while overstressed airports cause tourism to tank
- Federal court system slows to a crawl
- Disaster relief money doesn’t get to storm-ravaged areas
- Lapsed FDA and EPA inspections lead to dangerous outbreaks
- Private companies looking to go public are stuck in limbo
- Stock market plummets



The end isn’t near — yet. But if the stand-off persists — talks blew up at the White House on Wednesday — and Congress and President Donald Trump can’t reach a deal on raising the debt ceiling in a few months, “it’s game over — you’ll have a pretty severe recession,” Zandi said, adding that given the trade war with China, and Brexit looming, “you could start seeing some pretty dark scenarios” worldwide.

WITHOUT FOOD, HOMES

By the end of February, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP,

Economists Warn That A Catastrophe Is In The Making If The Partial Government Closure Continues For Weeks Or Months

America’s “Doomsday” Scenario: What Would Happen If The Government Shutdown Continues?

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



employees who aren’t getting paid during the shutdown — even though about half of them still have to work.

“Workers are going to start walking out and find better paying jobs,” Brusuelas said. If they don’t, some will be in danger of not being able to pay their rents or mortgages and losing their homes — creating a drag on the economy.

TOURISM DEVASTATED

No-shows by airport workers — including TSA agents and air traffic controllers — would mean delays and canceled flights, hurting business dealings and tourism.



A TSA agent checks identification at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport on Jan. 7.

Tourism would also continue to fall at national parks, a third of which were closed when the shutdown went into effect. Others were kept open — but, without staffing, human waste has piled up in bathrooms and along popular trails.

Some parks are planning to stay open by tapping into collection fees that were meant to be used for future park projects. Raiding those funds is unsustainable and will hamper future development plans, said Emily Douce, director of budget and appropriations for the National Parks Conservation Association.

In the meantime, parks are losing the \$400,000 in daily fees they typically collect — and neighboring communities aren’t benefiting from the average \$20 million a day that visitors spend there.



The entrance gate to a campground is locked at Joshua Tree National Park in California.

PUBLIC IN DANGER

The Food and Drug Administration has already stopped most food inspections, raising the risk of salmonella, E. coli and listeria outbreaks.

“That puts our food supply at risk,” said Sarah Sorscher, deputy director of regulatory affairs at the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a consumer advocacy group.

The Environmental Protection Agency, where only 700 of 13,000 employees are working during the shutdown, has scaled back inspections, with senior officials focusing only on properties where “the threat to human life or property is imminent.”

Areas that have already been affected by hurricanes and storms are facing additional problems because of the shutdown, with emergency recovery funds reportedly tied up in bureaucratic red tape.

It seems unimaginable, but if the impasse continues into October, more vital federal agencies would be forced to shut down, and new dangers would loom. Among the agencies that would turn their lights off is the Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

A more immediate worry: The federal court system will run out of money by Jan. 18, and will have to cut back operations.

STOCK SHOCK

The longer the shutdown goes on, the more likely it is to affect the stock market, experts said.

Analysts had been looking forward to a string of valuable multibillion companies that were expected to go public early this year. But now, as many as 40 initial public offerings are backlogged because the Securities and Exchange Commission doesn’t have the staff to review them.

“The market was waiting for this huge avalanche of IPOs,” said John Coffee Jr., director of the Center on Corporate Governance at Columbia Law School. “All of this stuff is on hold. The market is fluctuating wildly, and this is going to remove a stimulus.”

Even with no end to the shutdown in sight, Brusuelas predicted that public outrage will lead to one soon enough.

“Workers are going to start walking out,” he said. “People will take to the streets.” (Courtesy nbcnews.com)

run by the Department of Agriculture, would be out of funding — meaning almost 40 million low-income Americans could find themselves struggling to pay for food, said Joseph Brusuelas, chief economist for the accounting firm RSM US.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development, meanwhile, has already seen 1,150 contracts with private landlords housing low-income tenants lapse. Another 500 will expire by the end of this month, and another 550 by the end of February, the agency says.

Funding for rental assistance for millions of tenants could be at risk as soon as next month.

“The near-term impact is people getting evicted, having their heat turned off and not having enough food,” Brusuelas said. Drawn out over time, that could amount to a sizable hit on the GDP. Loss of the SNAP benefits could mean \$60 billion less in direct spending in a year, and indirect spending of another \$48 billion, which could shave a full percentage point off the country’s economic growth, he explained.

Others might find themselves with less money in their pockets.

The IRS has said it won’t be able to pay tax refunds during the shutdown, although

the Office of Management and Budget said on Monday that it would. Less than 10,000 workers — about 12 percent of IRS staff — are working during the shutdown.

We Accept SNAP Benefits



By the end of February, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, run by the Department of Agriculture, would be out of funding, affecting 40 million low-income Americans.

The agency is coming up with a plan to call back more employees, but they’ll face an avalanche of backed-up work — by Feb. 2 of last year, the agency had already received over 18 million returns and processed 6.1 million refunds.

“The people who are waiting on those refunds could face some real consequences,” said Michael Pearce, senior U.S. economist at Capital Economics.

Then there are the 800,000 government

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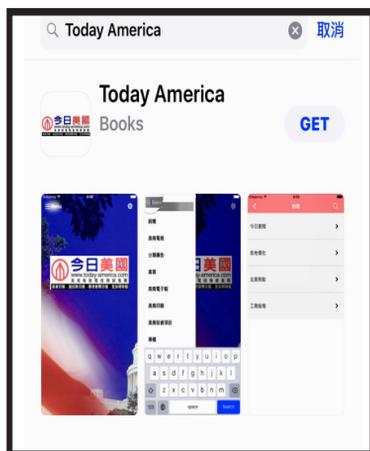
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