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Chadillac's Backyard Waterpark listed for \$2.8 million in Conroe



Inside C2

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China won't accept U.S. trade 'black-mail': state media

BEIJING/SINGAPORE (Reuters) - China's state media said on Saturday the government's retaliatory tariffs on \$60 billion of U.S. goods showed rational restraint and they accused the United States of blackmail.

Late on Friday, China's finance ministry unveiled new sets of additional tariffs on 5,207 goods imported from the United States, with the extra levies ranging from five to 25 percent on a total value of goods less than half of that proposed by U.S. President Donald Trump's administration.

The response follows the Trump administration's proposal of a 25 percent tariff on \$200 billion worth of Chinese imports.

"China's countermeasures are rational," the Global Times, a tabloid run by the official People's Daily, said in a commentary. "China will not rush to compete with U.S. numbers," it said, echoing comments made by state television.

The United States and China implemented tariffs on \$34 billion worth of each others' goods in July. Washington is expected to soon implement tariffs on an additional \$16 billion of Chinese goods, which China has already said it will match immediately. "The White House's extreme pressure and blackmail are already clear to the international community," said a state television commentary.

"Such methods of extreme blackmail will not bear fruit against China."

China has now either imposed or proposed tariffs on \$110 billion in U.S. goods, representing the vast majority of China's annual imports of American products. Last year, China imported about \$130 billion in goods from the United States.

"The U.S. has repeatedly resorted to threatening and deceitful routines, trying to force China to compromise, both overestimating its own bargaining power and underestimating China's determination and ability to defend its national dignity and the interests of its people," said a commentary in the official Xinhua news agency. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, however, remained staunch on Washington's push for fairer trading conditions with China. "President Trump inherited an unfair trade regime where American workers and American companies were not treated reciprocally or fairly by the Chinese, and the efforts of the Trump administration are to right that, to correct that," Pompeo said to reporters on



Containers of China Shipping and Cosco are loaded at a port in Ho Chi Minh City

the sidelines of a regional forum in Singapore.

Pompeo added that he had discussed trade issues with Chinese State Councillor Wang Yi on Friday.

Malaysian Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah said he met Pompeo in Singapore and that his message was

"My objective was quite straightforward: I think I need to inform him that we are very concerned," said Saifuddin.

Countries like Malaysia form an integral part of Chi-

nese exporters' supply chains, and analysts have warned a trade war could knock billions of dollars off their economic growth in coming years.

"China has taken a necessary and legitimate response, based on the interests of the Chinese people and to protect the rules-based international trade system under the WTO," said Wang on the sidelines of the Singapore forum on Saturday. In response to a question about a comment by White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow that China's latest measures are "weak", Wang said: "Does he want China to take an even stronger response?"

North Korea, U.S. spar over nuclear deal at Singapore forum

SINGAPORE (Reuters) - North Korea and the United States on Saturday sparred over an agreement reached at a landmark summit in June for the Asian country to end its nuclear program, as Washington called for maintaining sanctions pressure against Pyongyang, which in turn said it was alarmed by U.S. intentions.

The discord at a regional forum in Singapore was the latest reminder of the difficulties that have long impaired efforts to negotiate an end to North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, despite commitments made at an unprecedented summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in the city state less than two months ago.

"The DPRK stands firm in its determination and commitment for implementing the DPRK-U.S. Joint Statement in a responsible and good-faith manner," North Korea's Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho told the ASEAN Regional Forum, using his country's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

"What is alarming however is the insistent moves manifested within the U.S. to go back to the old, far from its leader's

intention," he said.

Ri made the statement after U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had left the Singapore conference center for Indonesia having pressed Southeast Asian nations to maintain sanctions on North Korea until it gives up a nuclear weapons program that now threatens the United States.

At the June 12 summit, Kim, who is seeking relief from tough sanctions, committed to work towards denuclearisation, but North Korea has offered no details on how it might go about this.

Pompeo suggested on Friday that continued work on weapons programs by North Korea was inconsistent with Kim's commitment to denuclearize. On Saturday, he nevertheless said he was optimistic a North Korean denuclearisation could be achieved although it "would take some time."

Ri said North Korea had made goodwill gestures, including a moratorium on nuclear tests and rocket launches and the dismantling of a nuclear test ground.

"However, the United States, instead of responding to these measures, is raising its voice louder for maintaining the sanctions against the DPRK and showing the attitude to retreat even from declaring the end of the war, a very basic and primary step for providing peace



North Korea's Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho arrives for the Asean Regional Forum Retreat Session in Singapore







LOCAL NEWS

Chadillac's Backyard Waterpark listed for \$2.8 million in Conroe

By Dana Burke

Chadillac's Backyard Waterpark in Conroe is up for sale, about a year after the popular, laid-back hangout spot first opened.

This swimming hole in the woods, owned by Chad Mehr, has attracted visitors from across the Houston area who want fun in the sun without the typical waterpark crowds and massive expanses of concrete.

The 21-acre property was listed Thursday for \$2.8 million. The sale will include all of the waterpark amenities, including diving platforms, a 40-foot slide, rope swing, concert stage and sand volleyball court.

A couple of guys in Conroe have turned an empty piece of land into an amped-up Texas swimming hole, and in just a few weeks it's quickly becoming a wildly popular hangout spot. Chadillac's Backyard Waterpark, owned by Chad Mehr, started out as a hole in the ground, but its expanding list of fun amenities are attracting growing weekend crowds. Listing agent Crystal Wells said Mehr has enjoyed running

the waterpark since the spring of 2017, but he's ready to move on. "He's just ready for a new adventure," Wells said. Chadillac's will continue operating until its summer season closes at the end of September.

The property is located at 16038 Crowley Road, west of Conroe and south of Texas 105.



Scenes from Chadillac's Backyard Waterpark, 16038 Crowlev Road in Conroe.



Hannah Riley prepares to go down a 22-foot water slide on Sunday, July 2, 2017, at Chadillac's Backyard Waterpark.

Near record gas demand on U.S. power grid

Natural gas demand on the U.S. power grid hit 36.9 billion cubic feet per day last month, a near record level, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

That comes as natural gas burn on the grid grew at an average rate of .8 BCF per day between 2010 to 2017.

"July's high power burn is consistent with longterm trends in natural gas consumption. Most natural gas consumption growth in recent years has come from the electric power and industrial sectors," EIA said in a report released Friday.

The highest gas consumption ever recorded on the power grid was 37.2 Bcf per day in August 2016.



Customers in deregulated Texas power markets pay more than those in regulated markets, according to a new study.



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Sunday, August 5, 2018



Editor's Choice



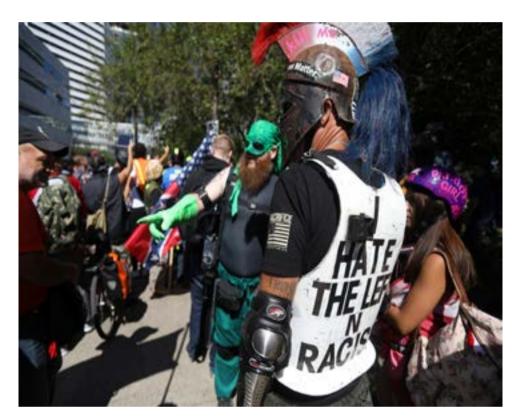
Members of the right-wing Patriot Prayer group gather before a rally in Portland



North Korea's Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho looks on as Australia's Foreign Minister Julie Bishop greets Canada's Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland at the Asean Regional Forum Retreat Session in Singapore



Aug 4, 2018; Canton, OH, USA; The Berenstain Brother Bear balloon passes by the Frank T. Bow Federal Building and United States Courthouse during the Pro Football Hall of Fame Grand Parade on Cleveland Avenue. Mandatory Credit: Kirby Lee-USA TODAY Sports



Members of the right-wing Patriot Prayer group gather before a rally in Portland



A supporter of Geraldo Alckmin, a candidate for the presidency of the Republic of Brazil, wears a mask of Pope Francis, a candidate for the presidency of the Republic of Brazil, during the National Convention of the PSDB in Brasilia



A migrant child, intercepted aboard a dinghy off the coast in the Mediterranean Sea, plays to takes pictures of the media with a mobile phone, after arriving on a rescue boat at the port of Malaga



Aug 4, 2018; Canton, OH, USA; Houston Texans fan Herman Eagleton (Ol' Skool) and New Orleans Saints fan Lionel Alphonso (Da Pope) pose during the Pro Football Hall of Fame Grand Parade on Cleveland Avenue. Mandatory Credit: Kirby Lee-USA TODAY Sports



Alckmin, a candidate for the presidency of the Republic of Brazil, reacts during the National Convention of the PSDB in Brasilia



COMMUNITY



Over 90 countries have official representation in Houston through their consulate This num-

ber is often touted as an example of the international nature of our city. But what does it really mean and what advantages and opportunities does Houston have as a result?

Who are consular officials?

Consular officials are appointed by foreign governments to officially represent that country's interests abroad. Consular officials fall into two categories: career or honorary (also called non-career). Career consular officials are members of a nation's foreign or consular service and are appointed by their government to reside abroad. Honorary consular officials are citizens of the United States or permanent residents who represent a foreign government on a part-time basis. While only on a part-time basis, they perform essential functions and many that are similar to that of a career consul. However, they are not employees of the foreign government and do not receive a salary.

What do consular officials do?

The primary responsibilities of consular officials are to develop ties between the countries they represent and this area and to safeguard the represented countries' interests and the citizens from these countries residing in or traveling through their districts. Consuls based in Houston may have a district that includes the state of Texas, the southern United States, or an even larger district in some cases. Having a Houston-based corps of consular officials working to develop ties between the countries they represent and this region results in numerous benefits for Houstonians ranging from increased opportunities for international trade and collaboration to opportunities to access wide-ranging cultural programs.

Useful Terminology

Consul: A member of a country's foreign or consular service.

Consulate: The office or premises occupied by a consular official. (Consulate The Diplomats Among Us

Houston's Consular Corp

Bv Deanea LeFlore

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

General is the term describing a consular office where the head of post is a consul

Consul General: The highest position in a consulate. The head of post of a consulate general.

Head of Post: The consular official in charge of a consulate.

Diplomatic Corps: Usually used in reference to the corps of ambassadors posted in a nation's capital city

Consular Corps: The corps of officials posted in cities throughout a country performing consular services. This includes career and honorary consuls.



How does the work of consular officials benefit the Houston area? Consular officials seek to develop economic, commercial, cultural

and scientific relations between this area and the countries they represent. This translates into bilateral trade missions that can bring increased business to our area. In fact, it is estimated that more than onethird of jobs in Houston are directly or indirectly linked to international trade. Consuls also facilitate interactions between the scientific community and educational institutions in our area and those abroad, leading to new programs and collaborations. With regard to cultural relations, consuls have assisted in bringing countless exhibitions to Houston-area museums, as well as performances, and culinary experiences to our city. These officials regularly work with the Houston mayor's office, bilateral chambers of commerce, universities, performing arts organizations, sister city associations, cultural organizations, and many others to create programming that promotes friendly relations and understanding of countries around the world. Many Houston-based consulates provide U.S. citizens and citizens of other countries with visas to travel abroad and notary services. Having consulates based in

the city saves Houstonians valuable time

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when in-person interviews are required to obtain travel documents.

With regard to protecting the nationals of the countries they represent, consular officials provide many services. For example, should a national from the country represented be arrested, local law enforcement agencies have a duty to notify the consulate in that jurisdiction at the detained person's request. Consuls also provide the nationals they represent with documents such as passports, temporary travel documents, birth certificates and national identification cards

The Vienna Convention

The Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963 is an international treaty that defines a framework for consular relations between nations. The document describes the privileges that consular officials are to be afforded. For example, the offices (consulates) of consular officials are inviolable: however, residences and cars of consuls can be searched. If a consul has consular files at home or in the vehicle, those particular files can't be searched. Likewise, we would not expect local authorities abroad to violate U.S. consulates or embassies

U.S. State Department Office of Foreign Missions

Congress mandated the creation of the Office of Foreign Missions (OFM) to serve the interests of the American public, American diplomats serving abroad, and the foreign diplomats residing in the U.S. This office is charged with ensuring that diplomatic benefits and privileges are properly exercised in accordance with U.S. law and international agreements.



Houston's Consular Ball 2016

Reciprocity is a fundamental concept on which diplomatic relations are based. OFM closely monitors how members of the U.S. Foreign Service are treated abroad which informs the treatment of foreign consular officials this country. For example, career consular officials from most countries are not required to pay sales tax just as U.S. officials abroad do not pay taxes to the country in which they are posted in most cases. Locally posted officials who are not subject to pay sales taxes will have a sales tax exemption card issued by the U.S. Department of State to present to merchants at the time of sale. Tax exemption for consular officials is a useful tool that saves U.S. taxpayers millions of dollars annually. The program is based on reciprocity and directly benefits the U.S. government when sales taxes for support materials needed to build and run overseas installations does not have to be

Do consular officials have diplomatic immunity?

The purpose of the privileges and immunities described in the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations is not to benefit individuals, but to ensure the efficient performance of functions by consular posts on behalf of their respective nations. Consular officials are expected to abide by the laws of the receiving nation. With that said, the level of immunity afforded to consular officials posted in the U.S. is based on guidance within the Vienna Convention and what level of immunity U.S. consular officials are afforded in the sending country.

Generally speaking, consular officials only have immunity with regard to their official acts and their dependents have no immunity at all. A notable exception is that U.S. consular officials and their dependents posted in the People's Republic of China and Russia are given immunity and the U.S. government reciprocates based on bilateral agreements with these countries. There is no diplomatic immunity for traffic and parking tickets; they must pay all fines. OFM serves as the liaison to local enforcement with regard to questions about immunity.

Conclusion

Houston's consular corps is an integral part of our community, contributing immeasurably to the cultural and economic life of the city. Consular officials wear many hats - they promote the countries they represent to Houstonians, promote Houston to the nations they represents, protect foreign nationals residing here, develop trade ties, promote friendly relations among the people of different countries, and find synergies between two nations across a variety of fields for mutual benefit. These officials, both career and honorary help connect Houston with the world.

Guide to addressing consular officials "The Honorable" is extended to consular heads of post in Houston and many other cities as a courtesy. In international protocol, consular officials who have obtained the rank of ambassador are afforded the honorific His or Her Excellency.

Addressing career consular heads of

post In conversation: Consul General Smith (title + last name).

In correspondence: The Honorable

John Smith

Consul General of Canada

Addressing honorary (non-career) heads

In conversation: Mr./Ms. or Honorary Consul General Smith (Mr./Ms. or title + last name).

In correspondence:

The Honorable

Jane Doe

Honorary Consul General of Canada Addressing career consular heads of post with the rank of ambassador

In conversation: Ambassador Smith (Ambassador + last name).

In correspondence: Her Excellency

Jane Doe

Consul General of Canada

About the author

Deanea LeFlore serves as chief of protocol, Mayor's Office of Trade and International Affairs and is a certified corporate etiquette and international protocol consultant.

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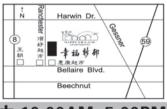
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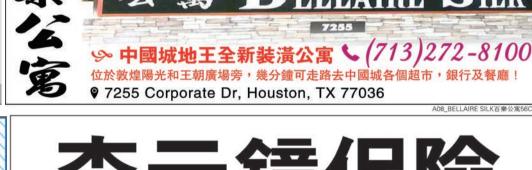
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BUSINESS

BEIJING (Reuters) – China on Friday announced retaliatory tariffs on \$60 billion worth of U.S. goods ranging from liquefied natural gas (LNG) to some aircraft and warned of further measures, signaling that it won't back down in a protracted trade war with Washington.

China's finance ministry unveiled new sets of additional tariffs on 5,207 goods imported from the United States, ranging from 5 to 25 percent.

Timing will depend on the actions of the United States, the Chinese Commerce Ministry said in a separate statement.

The Trump administration ratcheted up pressure for trade concessions from Beijing this week by proposing a higher 25 percent tariff on \$200 billion worth of Chinese imports. China immediately vowed to retaliate though at the same time urged the U.S. to act rationally and return to talks to resolve the dispute.

The United States and China implemented tariffs on \$34 billion worth of each others' goods in July. Washington is expected to soon implement more tariffs on \$16 billion in additional Chinese goods, which China has already announced it will match immediately.



Representatives for the White House and the U.S. Commerce Department did not immediately reply to a request for comment on China's retaliatory move. "The U.S. side has repeatedly escalated the situation against the interests of both enterprises and consumers," the Chinese Commerce Ministry said in its statement. "China has to take necessary

China Unveils Retaliatory Tariffs On \$60 Billion Of U.S. Goods In Latest Salvo

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



Shipping containers, including one labelled "China Shipping," are stacked at the Paul W. Conley Container Terminal in Boston, Massachusetts, U.S., May 9, 2018. (Photo/REUTERS)

countermeasures to defend its dignity and the interests of its people."

Among U.S. products targeted were a wide range of agricultural and energy products such as beef and LNG. LNG's inclusion marks a deployment by Beijing of one of its last major weapons from its energy and commodities arsenal in its fight with Washington.

The market is not large by value compared with the around \$12 billion per year of U.S. crude that arrives in the country, but those levels could shoot up as Beijing forges ahead with its plan to switch millions of households to the

fuel away from coal as part of its battle China has warned of further measures, against smog. signaling that it won't back down in a

Other U.S. goods targeted by China also included semiconductors, some helicopters, small-to-mid-sized aircraft, condoms, beef, steel products and coffee. (Courtesy oann.com)

China Retaliates In Trade Dispute With Washington



signaling that it won't back down in a protracted trade war with Washington China has announced retaliatory tariffs on \$60 billion worth of US goods.

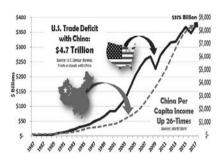
The new measures would affect products ranging from liquefied natural gas to some aircraft.

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"China has to take necessary counter measures to defend its dignity and the interests of its people." (Courtesy https://www.rte.ie/news/business)















