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'Time to calm down': Hong Kong protests simmer ahead of local elections



Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

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Southern Daily News is published by Southern News Group Daily

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Monday, November 25, 2019 | www.today-america.com | Southern News Group

## Trump says administration to take 'good look' at Hong Kong rights bill



FILE PHOTO: An attendee wears a badge strip with the logo of Huawei and a sign for 5G at the World 5G Exhibition in Beijing, China November 22, 2019. REUTERS/Jason Lee/ File Photo

HALIFAX, Nova Scotia (Reuters) - The U.S. national security adviser urged Canada on Saturday not to use Huawei 5G technology, saying that doing so would put in jeopardy intelligence sharing with the United States and expose Canadians to being profiled by the Chinese government.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau postponed a decision on whether to use Huawei Technologies Co Ltd HWT.UL 5G network equipment until after the October federal election. He has not commented on the issue since winning the Oct. 21 vote.

Intelligence sharing "would be impacted if our close allies let the Trojan horse into the city," national security adviser Robert O'Brien told reporters at a security conference in Halifax.

"When they (the Chinese) get Huawei into Canada or into other Western countries, they're going to know every health record, every banking record, every social media post, they're going to know everything about every single Canadian," he said.

The question of whether Huawei's 5G equipment could contain back doors allowing access to Chinese spying is dividing Canada and its partners in the Five Eyes intelligence-sharing network.

The United States, Australia and New Zealand have bans in place, while Britain is taking a less firm line, indicating Huawei's 5G products could be used in less sensitive areas.

"We are going to take our time so that we can appropriately examine all potential threats," Canada's Defense Minister Harjit Sajjan, who is also in Halifax, said.

"We have been extremely mindful in protecting our current 4G technology and the decisions that we make regarding 5G will make sure that these systems are as strong as our current system, if not stronger," he said.

Canada has been caught in the middle of the U.S.-China dispute over Huawei since Canadian police arrested Huawei's chief financial officer on a U.S. warrant in December, a move condemned by China.

Beijing subsequently picked up two Canadian men in China, Michael Spavor and Michael Kovrig, and charged them with spying. They are still being held. The detention of the two men as "leverage ... shouldn't be allowed to stand," O'Brien said.

U.S. Senator Angus King, who also spoke in Halifax, echoed O'Brien's concerns.

"It would make it very difficult to have a full intelligence sharing information with a partner who has installed a direct line to Beijing," King said.

## Amazon files lawsuit contesting Pentagon's \$10 billion cloud contract to Microsoft



(Reuters) - Amazon.com Inc filed a lawsuit in a federal U.S. court on Friday contesting the U.S. Defense Department's decision last month to award a Pentagon cloud computing contract worth up to \$10 billion to rival bidder Microsoft Corp.

The complaint and supplemental motion for discovery were filed in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims under seal, according to a spokesman for Amazon Web Services, a division of the online retail giant founded by billionaire Jeff Bezos.

The company did not explain the basis for its complaint.

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## ‘Time to calm down’: Hong Kong protests simmer ahead of local elections

HONG KONG (Reuters) - An uneasy calm settled over Hong Kong on Saturday as the city prepared to stage local elections seen as a referendum on months of anti-government protests, after weeks of especially violent clashes between police and demonstrators. On the grounds of the besieged Polytechnic University on the Kowloon peninsula, a dwindling number of protesters desperately sought a way out and others vowed not to surrender, days after some of the worst violence since anti-government demonstrations escalated in June.

One student protester who escaped the police cordon around the university without being arrested said on Saturday he had not expected the elections to go ahead.

“I don’t feel optimistic about the outcome at all,” he said, predicting that the discontent will only escalate. “I cannot see the end in sight.”

### RELATED COVERAGE

Hong Kong district shows why Sunday’s local election is a key test

Just after midnight, a man dressed in a white shirt and face mask was led out by the hand by another man and taken into a nearby police van.

A small group of medics roamed the campus early on Sunday, searching the buildings looking for remaining protesters believed to be holed up inside.

The city is under tight security as a record 1,104 people gear up to run for 452 district council seats in Sunday’s elections.

A record 4.1 million Hong Kong people, from a population of 7.4 million, have enrolled to vote, spurred in part by registration campaigns during months of protests.

For the first time, riot police will guard all polling stations in the city and almost all officers in the 31,000-strong force will be on duty, the South China Morning Post reported on Friday, citing a senior



police source.

The source told the newspaper that the officers would seek to minimize their presence to avoid worrying voters.

Asked about the report, the police department would say only that it had been liaising with other departments to provide assistance, arrange “appropriate police force”, and ensure that the election was carried out smoothly and in an orderly manner.

At a Chinese People’s Liberation Army barracks that borders Polytechnic University, meanwhile, dozens of soldiers in riot gear were seen practicing drills, according to a Reuters witness.

The soldiers carried shields and wore helmets with face guards, and were glimpsed from a high building marching in formation on an inner parade ground not visible from the road.

An anti-government protester is led out by Hong Kong businessman Lew Mon-hung, to give himself up to the police at Polytechnic University (PolyU) in Hong Kong, China, November 23, 2019. REUTERS/ Leah Millis

PLA soldiers have not publicly engaged in anti-riot efforts on the streets of Hong Kong but such drills suggest a high degree of preparedness amid the current protests.

Both Chinese and Hong Kong leaders

have repeatedly said that Hong Kong police can handle the situation but Beijing has more than doubled the number of troops in the city since late August, with up to 12,000 on bases scattered across the territory.

The protests snowballed from June after years of resentment over what many residents see as Chinese meddling in freedoms promised to Hong Kong when the former British colony returned to Chinese rule in 1997.

Beijing has said it is committed to the “one country, two systems” formula by which Hong Kong is governed.



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# Editor's Choice



Britain's Prince Charles visits the Hutton's Shearwater Colony at Kaikoura, New Zealand November 23, 2019. Mark Tantrum/New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs/Handout via



Demonstrators march during a protest as national strike continues in Bogota



Senator Adriana Salvatierra speaks during a session where Bolivian Senate approves election law while anti-government protesters in Bolivia lifted street blockades in La Paz



People react as police fires tear gas during a protest as national strike continues in Bogota



U.S. Vice President Pence is greeted by President of the Kurdistan region in Iraq Barzani at the VIP terminal at Erbil International Airport in Erbil, Iraq



Soldiers and volunteers clean the shores of the Paraguay River, in Ita Enramada



Athletics - World Athletics Awards 2019 - Monte Carlo, Monaco - November 23, 2019 Female Athlete of the Year winner Dalilah Muhammad of the U.S. and Female Rising Star winner Ukraine's Yaroslava Mahuchikh pose for a photograph with Prince Albert II of Monaco REUTERS/Eric Gaillard



Athletics - World Athletics Awards 2019 - Monte Carlo, Monaco - November 23, 2019 The World 400m hurdles champion Dalilah Muhammad of the U.S. wins the Female Athlete of the Year Award REUTERS/Eric Gaillard

**Houston Store Will Be Located In The Galleria Mall**

**Life After Liquidation: Toys R Us Stores Will Be Back This Holiday Season, But Now With A Tech Partner**



The first two Toys R Us locations are slated to open before the holidays. One will be at Simon Property Group's Galleria mall in Houston. The other will be at Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield's Garden State Plaza mall in Paramus, New Jersey.

**Overview**

Toys R Us is opening two permanent stores in November — at Simon Property Group's Galleria mall in Houston and at Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield's Garden State Plaza mall in Paramus, New Jersey.

The stores are product of a joint venture between software retailer b8ta and Tru Kids, the company that is helping to manage the brand names left in the wake of Toys R Us' liquidation last year.

The partnership with b8ta gives Tru Kids a negotiating tool as it tries to woo back brands that felt burned by the Toys R Us bankruptcy to sell in its stores.

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

This holiday season, some shoppers will once again be able to shop in a Toys R Us store.

The retailer will open two permanent stores in November — at Simon Property Group's Galleria mall in Houston and at Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield's Garden State Plaza mall in Paramus, New Jersey.

The stores are product of a joint venture between software retailer b8ta and Tru Kids, the company that is helping to manage the brand names left in the wake of Toys R Us' liquidation last year.

After the company shuttered its 800 U.S. stores, lenders including Solus Alternative Asset Management and the Angelo

Gordon investment firm took control of the company's Toys R Us, Babies R Us and Geoffrey brand names.

The revived Toys R Us brand is hoping to avoid past wrongs. Critics have pointed to several factors that led to Toys R Us' downfall: crippling debt load, competition from Amazon, overconfidence, failure to invest in stores and the rise of big-box retailers like Walmart that slashed toy prices to help lure shoppers. Toys R Us, like many retailers, struggled to revamp its enormous business as quickly as the retail landscape was changing around it.



"I don't think there's many times where you can take such a great storied brand as Toys R Us and get a chance to repaint the canvas," said Richard Barry, president of Tru Kids and the former chief merchandising officer of Toys R Us.

The company hopes to open 10 stores around the U.S. in 2020, possibly including a larger flagship in New York or California. The new stores will be smaller, spanning 6,500 to 10,000 square feet, compared with the 40,000 they used to take up.

"While we have a smaller footprint, we believe we will present a super exciting set of experiences in the store and products," said Barry.

B8ta, which has more than a dozen of its own stores in malls around the country, including the new Hudson Yards in New York, will help take care of those experiences. Its in-house technology platform, which is also powering pop-up marketplaces within some Macy's stores, will work with the toy brands to help them create their own mini shops within the spaces. B8ta also says it will contribute its retail as a service platform to help

those brands simultaneously grow online sales.

Toys R Us infamously relaunched its website during its crucial — and ultimately failed — 2017 holiday season in bankruptcy that subsequently forced its liquidation.



**A B8ta retail outlet.**

B8ta will also be giving Tru Kids access to data and analytics to track things like foot traffic in and out of the stores to allow the company to make smarter decisions, according to Phillip Raub, b8ta co-founder and president. "This year is going to be an opportunity for us to test and learn."

The partnership with b8ta gives Tru Kids a negotiating tool as it tries to woo back brands to sell in its stores. Part of what made Toys R Us unique was its access to the best and sometimes exclusive products. But the relationship between toy brands and the retailer was frayed in its liquidation, which led to companies big and small losing money in the process.

Barry said talks with toy and entertainment companies have been "very positive."

He added the brands are giving the company "credit for innovation," and they like getting a chance to control their own brand experience in the stores.

The new Toys R Us will be announcing the brands that are going to be sold in its stores in "short order," Barry said.

While toys will be available for purchase, all sales will go directly to manufacturers, without Tru Kids acting as a middleman. Instead, the company will make money from manufacturers paying a fee to sell goods in Toys R Us loca-

tions.



**"We're Back..."**

"We don't make any money off of the sale of the goods," Phillip Raub told Business Insider.

Raub is the cofounder and president of b8ta, an experiential retailer that entered into a joint venture with Tru Kids to open the Toys R Us stores. The new Toys R Us stores will follow b8ta's business model, marketing themselves as an appealing spot for manufacturers by offering tech, data, and insights, as well as high-traffic locations in malls and other busy urban centers.

"What b8ta is bringing to the table is going to be our b8ta business model, really thinking kind of more subscription based, placement within the stores, being able to provide rich data analytics for makers," Raub said.

Customers will be able to see and interact with every toy for sale in the store, which will be from both big-name brands and smaller companies. Kiosks available in stores will allow customers to order from a wider assortment of products online.

Tru Kids and b8ta plan to open 10 more Toys R Us locations in 2020 with a slightly larger format of around 10,000 square feet. Richard Barry, the CEO of Tru Kids Brands and Toys R Us' former chief marketing officer, said the company was anticipating it could take "some education" for customers to get used to the new format.

"But we believe that the new elements of the store that we've added are so overwhelmingly positive that customers are going to love it," Barry added. (Courtesy

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Dr. Lai is a board-certified pediatrician who earned her medical degree from The University of Texas School of Medicine in San Antonio and completed her pediatric internship and residency at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. She is a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Her special clinical interests include General Pediatrics, caring for newborns, managing autism, and treating childhood obesity. She cares for young patients at Kelsey-Seybold's Tanglewood Clinic, near the Galleria.

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American taxpayers so far spent \$6.4 trillion on costs related to and caused by post-9/11 wars and conflicts in more than 80 countries, according to a new report by the Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs at Brown University.

The big picture: The institute notes that because the conflicts have been largely paid for with deficit spending, their total cost will continue to rise from loan interest — even if the U.S. withdraws from major war zones by the end of fiscal year 2020. Ongoing care costs for veterans will also increase the eventual cost.

By the numbers: Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Pakistan — the longest war in U.S. history — has cost around \$978 billion from fiscal year 2001 through fiscal year 2020, an average of \$49 billion each year.

Appropriations for the Iraq and Syria wars have totaled about \$880 billion from 2003 through 2020, averaging \$44 billion every year.



All operations in the global War on Terror, including those in the U.S., Europe, Africa and other regions, averaged more than \$100 billion each year.

What the report says: The Watson Institute reports that the increases in military spending over the last two decades “are likely to remain, inflating the military budget over the long run.”

It concludes that the major trends in budgetary costs of the conflicts include “less transparency in reporting costs among most major agencies; greater institutionalization of the costs of war in the DOD base budget, State Department,

U.S. Taxpayers Have Spent \$6.4 Trillion On Post-9/11 Conflicts



A boy watches a U.S. convoy on patrol in Syria, Oct. 31, 2019. (Photo/AFP via Getty Images)

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

and DHS; and the growing budgetary burden of veterans’ medical care and disability care.”

Related



Veterans Face Underemployment Crises In Many Major Cities

Retired service members are overall having better luck finding jobs, but they are still likely to be underemployed in sev-

eral of the cities with the largest veteran populations, LinkedIn data shows.

The big picture: Sarah Roberts, head of military and veteran programs at LinkedIn, says underemployment is “when a person is engaged in work that does not make full use of their skills and abilities.” Corporate responsibility programs and hiring incentives have largely driven down veteran unemployment rates, but underemployment remains rampant.

Veterans are consistently taking jobs below their pay grade, with one-third of veterans with college degrees working in jobs that don’t require their full education.

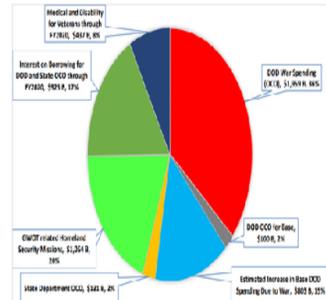
Veterans are also 70% more likely to have to take a step back in seniority to get a job, and are 36% less likely to move up in a new role.

Hiring rates differ significantly in the 10 cities with the largest populations of veterans.

In Washington, D.C., Dallas, Los Angeles, Seattle, Houston and San Diego,

veterans are more likely to be hired for jobs they apply for.

Figure 1. Estimate of Global War on Terror Spending through FY2020 in Billions of Current Dollars and Percentages.



But in New York City, Atlanta, Chicago and San Francisco, they are less likely to be hired for jobs they apply for.

And when rejection letters start rolling in, veterans are more likely to turn to roles that would otherwise be beneath their skillsets.

Between the lines: Some social and eco-

nomics factors influence the disparities. Veterans, like most citizens, make use of their network to find employment. Veteran networks in some cities are simply stronger than others.

Veterans also tend to gravitate towards certain industries that allow easier transitions for their skillsets, such as operations or consulting. If a city does not have a wide array of opportunities in those industries, veterans may be left to turn to roles that do not maximize their potential.

The bottom line: Roberts says employers can combat this issue by rethinking how veterans fit into a company.

“Shift your focus. Think more holistically about ‘what does workforce development look like,’” she said. (Courtesy axios.com)



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