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Inside C5

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Thursday, November 16, 2017 | www.today-america.com | Southern News Group

UCLA players apologize for shoplifting in China, thank Trump



UCLA basketball players Cody Riley, LiAngelo Ball, and Jalen Hill speak at a press conference at UCLA after flying back from China where they were detained on suspicion of shoplifting, in Los Angeles

Rory Carroll

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - Three UCLA basketball players who had been detained in China on suspicion of shoplifting admitted on Wednesday that they stole items from three stores, and they thanked U.S. President Donald Trump for his help in winning their release. The three players - LiAngelo Ball, Cody Riley and Jalen Hill -

remain suspended from the University of California, Los Angeles, basketball team indefinitely, coach Steve Alford told a news conference. All three apologized for their actions and thanked Trump for helping secure their release by raising the issue with Chinese President Xi Jinping during his visit, in their first public comments since being detained.

"I am embarrassed and ashamed for disappointing my family, teammates, coaches and the entire UCLA community," Riley told reporters. "To President Trump and the United States government, thank you for taking the time to intervene on our behalf. We really appreciate you helping us out." Trump on Wednesday morning said the players should be grate-

ful for his involvement. "Do you think the three UCLA Basketball Players will say thank you President Trump? They were headed for 10 years in jail!" he wrote on Twitter. The players landed at Los Angeles International Airport on a flight from Shanghai on Tuesday evening.

GM challenges Tesla with promise of profitable electric

Paul Lienert, Nick Carey

(Reuters) - General Motors Co (GM.N) plans to launch a new family of electric vehicles in 2021 that will cost less to build and make a profit for the U.S. No. 1 automaker, Chief Executive Mary Barra told investors on Wednesday. Her plans represent a direct challenge to money-losing electric vehicle specialist Tesla Inc (TSLA.O), which is struggling to get its more affordable, high-volume Model 3 launched and recently reported its largest-ever quarterly loss.

"We are committed to a future electric vehicle portfolio that will be profitable," Barra said at the Barclays Global Automotive Conference in New York. Electric and autonomous vehicles - known in the industry as EVs and AVs - are widely seen as the keystones of future transport, but Tesla, Ford Motor Co (F.N) and other manufacturers are still working out how to make money on them. GM is looking to break out of that pattern by developing an all-new electric vehicle platform that will accommodate multiple sizes and segments, to be sold by different GM brands in the United States and Chi-



General Motors CEO Barra addresses the media ahead of the start of GM's annual shareholders meeting at the Renaissance Center in Detroit

na, Barra said, adding new details to GM's aggressive electrification strategy. In early October, GM said it planned to launch 20 new electric vehicles by 2023, but did not provide specifics. In comparison, rival Ford has said it plans to introduce 13 "elec-

trified" vehicles - mostly hybrid gasoline-electric models - by 2022. GM's shares were down 0.4 percent at \$42.84 in midday trade. Tesla and Ford shares were also down slightly in a broadly lower market.

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Amazon.com is exploring a technology first developed for the U.S. military to produce tasty prepared meals that do not need refrigeration, as it looks for new ways to muscle into the \$700 billion U.S. grocery business. The world's biggest online retailer has discussed selling ready-to-eat dishes such as beef stew and a vegetable frittata as soon as next year, officials at the startup firm marketing the technology told Reuters. The dishes would be easy to stockpile and ship because they do not require refrigeration and could be offered quite cheaply compared with take-out from a restaurant. If the cutting-edge food technology comes to fruition, and Amazon implements it on a large scale, it would be a major step forward for the company as it looks to grab hold of more grocery customers shifting toward quick and easy meal options at home. Delivering meals would build on the company's AmazonFresh service, which has been delivering groceries to customers' homes for a decade. It could also complement Amazon's planned \$13.7 billion purchase of Whole Foods Market (WFM, +0.00%) and Amazon's checkout-free convenience store, which is in the test stage.



The pioneering food-prep tech, known as microwave assisted thermal sterilization, or MATS, was developed by researchers at Washington State University, and is being brought to market by a venture-backed start-up called 915 Labs, based in Denver. The method involves placing sealed packages of food in pressurized water and heating them with microwaves for several minutes, according to 915 Labs. Unlike traditional processing methods, where packages are in pressure cookers for up to an hour until both bacteria and nutrients are largely gone, the dishes retain their natural flavor and texture, the company said.

Company Is Experimenting With Tech First Developed For The U.S. Military
Amazon's Ambitions For Food Tech Go Far Beyond Whole Foods

They also can sit on a shelf for a year, which would make them suitable for Amazon's storage and delivery business model. "They obviously see that this is a potential disruptor and an ability to get to a private brand uniqueness that they're looking for," said Greg Spragg, a former Wal-Mart Stores (WMT, +0.58%) executive and now head of a startup working with MATS technology. "They will test these products with their consumers, and get a sense of where they would go." Amazon declined to comment. Spragg's company, Solve for Food, plans to acquire a MATS machine from 915 Labs that can make 1,800 packages an hour. The company aims to use the machine at a new food innovation center in northwest Arkansas, near the headquarters of Wal-Mart. 915 Labs also has an Arkansas connection: it is designing the beef stew and other dishes with a chef at the Bentonville-based Brightwater Center for the Study of Food. Wal-Mart did not comment on whether it is looking into the technology.

HIRING FOOD PEOPLE 'LIKE CRAZY'

MATS technology grew out of efforts by the U.S. Army's Natick laboratories more than a decade ago to improve food quality for soldiers in combat. Washington State University, a five-hour drive from Amazon's Seattle headquarters, received U.S. funding and became the research hub for MATS. 915 Labs said it formed in 2014 and acquired the assets of a business called Food Chain Safety, which previously was working on MATS before facing financial trouble in 2013.



915 Labs also licensed the original patents from the university, its chief executive Michael Locatis said, and its MATS dishes are now pending U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval. In addition to ongoing work with the U.S. military, the company has sold machines to the Australian government and to food com-

panies in Asia. "They have to leapfrog to MATS because they don't have the refrigerated supply chain like we have in the U.S.," said Locatis, who was an assistant secretary at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security until 2013. Amazon invited the startup to Seattle after learning about MATS technology last year at the SIAL Paris food trade show, according to Locatis. In February, Amazon (AMZN, -0.91%) sent a team to Washington State University that met with Juming Tang, chair of the school's biological systems engineering department and a key developer of the technology. And in March, Amazon joined the university's researchers and other companies in Seattle for the inaugural meeting of the Industrial Microwave Alliance, according to a university news release. The group's mission is to "accelerate technology transfer of microwave-based food safety."



"Amazon just started this," Tang said in an interview. "They need to deliver meals to homes... They're hiring food people like crazy." Not everyone sees why MATS would be worth pursuing. Some think packaged food would have little attraction to the generally high-income members of Amazon's Prime shopping club. "I get why new food processing systems that increase shelf life may be good for Amazon," said Bentley Hall, CEO of fresh food delivery service Good Eggs. "I struggle to see how this solution addresses an actual consumer want or need better than fresh, prepared meals." MATS represents just one way Amazon is searching for an edge in the grocery business, to distinguish itself from incumbents like Kroger Co. The company has also filed for a trademark for cook-it-yourself meal-kits—a move that pushed down shares of Blue Apron Holdings (APRN, -0.59%) —but has not yet detailed its plans for ready-to-eat meal delivery.

(Courtesy fortune.com via Reuters)

Related

Strategies For Food Tech Entrepreneurs Facing The Amazon Juggernaut

Ever since Amazon's acquisition of Whole Foods became official in August, food tech entrepreneurs have been holding their collective breath in anticipation of what comes next. First prices dropped; now, apparently, they're on the rise. Without knowing Bezos' ultimate vision for an Amazon-owned Whole Foods, food tech companies must decide whether and how to compete. I offer apprehensive entrepreneurs a cautiously optimistic message: Exhale, at least a bit. Despite the new market reality, there's enormous opportunity to thrive.

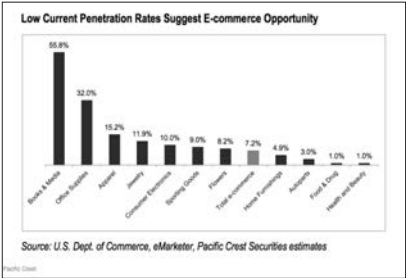
Amazon's leap into the food industry challenges the "status quo" of all companies.

As early investors in Starbucks, P.F. Chang's and Jamba Juice, we've seen food trends come and go. Every so often we come across something more fundamental and lasting than a trend: a seismic shift. Starbucks' visionary leader Howard Schultz helped create one such shift. Inspired by Italy's rich coffeehouse tradition, he taught Americans to expect better quality products and an elevated customer experience, setting us on a path towards today's foodie frenzy. We are currently experiencing another seismic shift, a deepened awareness that what we consume directly impacts our health and well-being and reflects our core values and aspirations. Consumption of bottled water is now outpacing soda, and organic food sales totaled \$47 billion last year, accounting for more than 5 percent of total US food sales. Amazon's Whole Foods acquisition is a reflection of the shifting attitude towards food. The good news is that despite Amazon's looming presence, there's plenty of opportunity to be found. Each year Americans spend a colossal \$1.4 trillion on food. This breaks out to \$800M on restaurants (including delivery) and \$600M on grocery sales. Though Amazon dominates ecommerce with 43 percent of

all online sales in 2016 and even had an 18 percent share of online food sales before the Whole Foods acquisition closed, groceries have achieved only a measly 1% online penetration rate. That leaves tremendous opportunity for growth.



The grocery channel's low online penetration rate can be attributed to daunting logistics, from sourcing, prepping, and packaging to the distribution of perishable consumables. Despite the logistical challenges, food's massive market size and the online growth opportunity can enable companies capturing even a small piece of the pie (pun intended) to become huge successes. More than any company in the world, Amazon has successfully brought new retail categories online and solved highly complex logistics challenges in the process. They will use the Whole Foods acquisition to drive more food sales online, using Whole Foods locations as distribution and delivery centers in order to mitigate many of the aforementioned challenges.



Operations and distribution are Amazon's core strengths; their acquisition of Whole Foods will fortify those competitive advantages as they move aggressively into grocery sales. Operations and distribution are also core competencies of numerous well-funded private food delivery companies, such as UberEATS, DoorDash, Instacart and Postmates. It's a daunting competitive landscape to say the least. That said, operations and distribution form only two pieces of the food tech puzzle. While competing against Amazon and other well-funded companies in their areas of strength is generally ill-advised, companies can flourish by focusing on one or more dimensions outside their "sweet spot": (Courtesy techcrunch.com)

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Dr. Hwang is certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. He earned his undergraduate and medical degree from the National Taiwan University College of Medicine in Taipei. He completed residency programs at National Taiwan University Hospital and St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem, Penn. In addition, he earned a postgraduate degree of Master of Public Health in maternal and child health from the prestigious Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health in Baltimore, Md. He is a member of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Texas Medical Association and Harris County Medical Society.

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A Snapshot Of The World



Chief executive officer of SendGrid, Sameer Dholakia, reacts after ringing the opening bell to celebrate the company’s IPO on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange in New York



Copies of tax legislation are seen during a markup on the “Tax Cuts and Jobs Act” on Capitol Hill in Washington



A member of a group supporting LGBT rights holds a sign that reads “TCP, fascist inquisitors” during a protest in La Paz



Big businesses from Apple to Walmart say train suppliers to stamp out slavery



House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi speaks during a rally against the Republican tax bill on Capitol Hill in Washington



Forrest Lampe-Martin is pictured outside of his truck after making a UPS delivery as the international delivery service gears up for the upcoming peak delivery season prior to Christmas, in Seattle



Prince Harry at the Terrence Higgins Trust (THT) HIV testing pop-up shop in Hackney, London, November 15, 2017. Nathan Dainty/THT



The MSC logo is pictured on working helmet at the STX Les Chantiers de l’Atlantique shipyard site in Saint-Nazaire



Articles of impeachment being filed against President Donald Trump are seen on Capitol Hill in Washington

Houston's Highest-Paying Jobs In 2016



If you enjoy making money and helping people, the medical field is the best place for you if you live in the Houston area. Forty percent of the top 25 highest paying jobs in the Houston and Woodlands-Sugar Land area belong to medical professionals like surgeons, general practitioners and dentists, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics published in March.

At the top of the list were anesthesiologists, pulling in an average of \$277,000 per year.



Examples of the highest paying jobs in the Houston area and their respective incomes include the following: Pediatrician; Mean annual wages in Houston-Woodlands-Sugar Land metro area in 2016: \$143,210; Compensation and Benefits

Managers; Mean annual wages in Houston-Woodlands-Sugar Land metro area in 2016: \$143,240 (in 2014, \$143,710); Internists, General; Mean annual wages in Houston-Woodlands-Sugar Land metro area in 2016: \$145,070 (in 2014, \$151,300);



Training and Development Managers; Mean annual wages in Houston-Woodlands-Sugar Land metro area in 2016: \$146,230 (in 2014, \$119,010); Economist; Mean annual wages in Houston-Woodlands-Sugar Land metro area in 2016: \$148,730; Human Resources Managers; Mean annual wages in Houston-Woodlands-Sugar Land metro area in 2016: \$148,940 (in 2014, \$119,030); Geoscientists, Except Hydrologists and Geog-

raphers; Mean annual wages in Houston-Woodlands-Sugar Land metro area in 2016: \$151,940 (in 2014, \$149,640). (Go here for additional profession details: <http://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/houston-highest-paying-jobs-careers-2016-12189354.php?ip-id=hpct#photo-7522518>.)

While nearly every profession in the top 25 had their salaries grow significantly since 2014, internists saw their average pay fall from \$151,000 to \$145,000. Psychiatrists saw one of the biggest drops during this time, from \$178,650 to \$166,010.

Related

Energy CEOs Top List Of Highest Paid Houston Executives

Leaders at Houston-area energy companies made up the bulk of this year's list of highest paid executives in the city. Despite the high volatility in the oil market, energy company employees still topped this year's list of the highest paid Houston executives. The data, which was compiled by corporate consultants Longnecker & Associ-

ates, has Phillips 66 chairman and CEO Greg Garland topping the list with \$25 million in total earnings in 2016. That number reflects a 9.3 percent increase in pay from the year before, despite average pay for Houston's top executives dropping by 9 percent. Leaders at Houston-area energy companies made up the bulk of this year's list of highest paid executives in the city. Despite the high volatility in the oil market, energy company employees still topped this year's list of the highest paid Houston executives.



The data, which was compiled by corporate consultants Longnecker & Associates, has Phillips 66 chairman and CEO Greg Garland topping the list with \$25 million in total earnings in 2016. That number reflects a 9.3 percent increase in pay from the year before, despite average pay for Houston's top executives dropping by 9 percent. Phillips 66, ConocoPhillips and Halliburton each had six employees make the list of the top 500 highest paid executives in Houston. In 2016, Houston's energy companies had one of their worst years since the 1980s. Oil prices bottomed out at \$26 a barrel from a 2014 peak of \$107. Companies laid off tens of thousands of employees as a result. Today, the cost of a barrel is roughly \$48. (Courtesy <http://www.chron.com/business/>)

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Houston Chronicle Top Workplaces For 2016

The Houston Chronicle has recognized 150 Companies and Organizations in Houston as Top Workplaces 2016. These companies have been recognized as Top Workplaces based solely on surveys about the workplace completed by their employees. Here are some examples of some of the Chronicle's top workplaces for 2016. AccentureServices, AccuTrans, Inc.Distribution, Logistics, & Freight, Addison GroupServices, Alief ISD Education, Allegiance BankFinancial Services & Insurance, alliantgroupServices, AmCap Mortgage-Financial Services & Insurance, AMLI-Real Estate, Anadarko Petroleum Corp./DenverManufacturing, Apache CorporationManufacturing, Asset Plus Companies Real Estate, Associated Credit Union of TexasFinancial Services & Insurance, AvanaInformation Technology. For a complete listing, go here: <https://www.topworkplaces.com/frontend.php/regional-list/list/chron> (Courtesy chron.com)



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Avoiding ‘open enrollment’ scams

by Andrew Johnson
Consumer Education Specialist, FTC

Open enrollment is here. Whether you're eligible for Medicare, selecting a plan through the Affordable Care Act (ACA), or have private insurance, you have until December 15 to compare plans and make coverage changes. But as you're keeping an eye out for the best options, also keep an eye out for scammers. Here are a few tips for avoiding scams this open enrollment season.

Eligible for Medicare?

Anyone that tries to sell you Medicare insurance while claiming to be an "official Medicare agent" is a scammer. There are no Medicare sales representatives.

The Medicare prescription drug plan (also known as Part D) is voluntary. Ignore anyone who calls saying you must join their prescription plan or you will lose your Medicare coverage.

Do not give any information over the phone to someone who tells you that you must provide information to keep your coverage.

If you need help with Medicare, call 1-800-MEDICARE or go to Medicare.gov.

Looking for coverage under the Affordable Care Act?

Only shop for coverage at HealthCare.gov. People who try to sign you up elsewhere may be scammers.

Need free assistance? There are people and groups in your community who can help you find coverage and enroll in a plan — and it's free! To make sure they are legitimate, use the local help resource at HealthCare.gov

Buying private insurance?

Make sure insurance is what you're really getting. There are many medical discount plans that pretend to be insurance, but they are not. Your state insurance commissioner's office can tell you if a plan is insurance or not and whether the seller is licensed in your state.

Think you've spotted a scam? Report it to the FTC. If the scam is Medicare related, report it at Medicare.gov. And share these tips with your friends and family. It just might help them avoid a scam this open season.

“Deep Cleansing” of Houston homeless encampment underway by city

By Alyson Ward

Sylvester Turner called a “deep cleansing” of the homeless encampment in Midtown under the Interstate 69 bridge.

People who live in the camp moved their tents, clothes and other belongings to make way for city workers to pick up trash and clean an area the city has declared a public health hazard because of the piles of debris and human waste that have collected under the bridge.

The camp will get a power washing later Wednesday morning, and the soil - which the Harris County health department says is contaminated - will be removed, said Marc Eichenbaum, special assistant to the mayor for homeless initiatives.

Eichenbaum, police and health department employees went from tent to tent, explaining what was about to happen and asking people to separate trash from the belongings they wanted to keep.

People can opt to have their personal items taken to a storage facility downtown, where they'll be kept for 90 days at no charge.

“We want to make it nice and clean for you,” Eichenbaum told a man who was refusing to move his tent and collection of possessions, which included a treadmill, an office chair and a small cooler. “We can't tell what's trash and what's not trash, so will you tell me what's trash?”

People who live in the camp will be allowed to return later in the day, when the cleanup is completed, he said. They're being asked if they want to go to shelters.

This is the second major cleanup of the camp in three months; the last “deep clean” was in early August, when city workers removed several tons of waste.

The camp has been the site of controversy since last spring, when Turner tried to get rid of encampments with a city ordinance. The



ACLU of Texas filed suit, and now there's a temporary restraining order that prevents the city from enforcing the anti-encampment ordinance.

Notices were posted last week so camp residents would be aware of the cleanup. Still, a few holdouts refused to move their property, and a few residents protested loudly as the city workers came through.

Nicholas Hudson, 31, moved his tent and air mattress out of the way and then started helping others pick up their belongings. He's been sleeping at the camp since Harvey rains flooded his northside apartment.

The residents all come together as a team occasionally to neaten the place, he said, and the city comes out twice a week to pick up solid waste. But still, Hudson said, there are “mosquitoes and

flies from the human waste, because we don't have receptacles. That's the big problem.”

Residents of the neighborhood have complained about the camp, which has seen a rash of violent crime in the past several weeks. The city health department last week warned that the human waste that piles up in corners and around columns could help spread disease, including Hepatitis A.

“Nobody should be living in this,” Eichenbaum said. “This is about protecting the health of not only the residents around here, but especially the people who are living here.”

A camp downtown near Minute Maid Park will get a deep clean Thursday morning, the mayor's office said.



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午餐会门口大厅陈列相关资讯的照片展。



李强民大使（左）与专程前来采访的美方媒体「International Focus Magazine」的国际事务主任Sonia Guimbelot（右）在大会上合影。



恒丰银行董事长吴文龙（左）也是座上贵宾，与总领事李强民（右）在大会上合影。



莱斯大学校长夫人孙月萍（中立者）提问。



休市社团名人徐华（右二）、徐利（左二）、方三川（左一）与州议员Gene Wu（吴元之）（右三）总领馆副总领事刘红梅（左三）在大会上合影。



布希总统家族的Neil Bush（立者）提问。

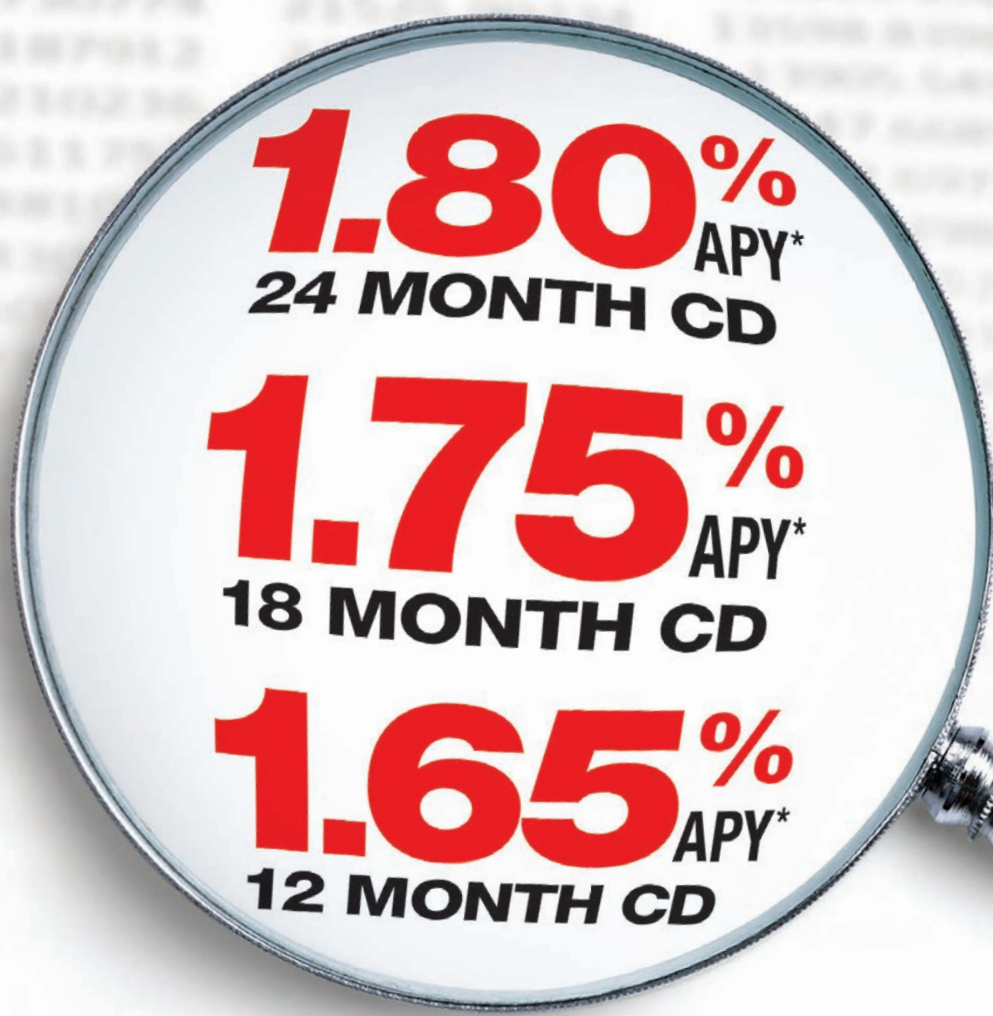


中国驻休士顿总领事李强民以「新时代、新发展、新机遇」发表专题演讲。

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