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Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

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## U.S. House calls on Myanmar to release Reuters journalists

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The U.S. House of Representatives called nearly unanimously on Thursday for the government of Myanmar to release Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, who were imprisoned one year ago in a landmark free speech case.

House members voted by 394 to 1 for a resolution calling for release of Wa Lone, 32, and Kyaw Soe Oo, 28, who were found guilty in September of violating Myanmar's Official Secrets Act and sentenced to seven years in prison. The case has raised questions among a number of political leaders in the United States and Europe, human rights advocates and the United Nations about Myanmar's progress toward democracy.

The measure is non-binding, but intended as a strong message to the government of Myanmar, also known as Burma, as well as to President Donald Trump's administration that members of the U.S. Congress want the two men released.

The resolution also calls the Myanmar military's campaign against the country's Rohingya Muslim minority a genocide. In a report issued on Aug. 27, U.N. investigators said Myanmar's military carried out mass killings and gang rapes of Rohingya with "genocidal intent" and for the first time explicitly called for Myanmar officials to face genocide charges over their campaign. The U.S. Department of State, which would make an official determination, has not made that official designation using the term genocide.

The Myanmar embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the House of Representatives vote.

The military in Myanmar, where Buddhism is the main religion, has denied past accusations that it had committed genocide against the Rohingya and says its actions were part of a fight against terrorism.

The one "no" vote came from Representative Andy Biggs, a Republican from Arizona. Asked to comment on Biggs' vote, Daniel Stefanski, a spokesman for the congressman, did not directly



FILE PHOTO: Activists call for release of imprisoned Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo in Yangon

address the question but said the Myanmar military's "continuing oppression of the Rohingya is inhumane" and called on the Trump administration "to use maximum diplomatic pressure to end the genocide and demand the release of the two journalists."

The reporters, who pleaded not guilty, said they were handed papers by police shortly before they were detained, and a police witness testified that they had been set up. They had been investigating the killing of 10 Rohingya men and boys as part of a military response to insurgent attacks.

## Canadian ex-diplomat detained in Beijing knows China well, colleagues say

TORONTO/OTTAWA (Reuters) - Canadian ex-diplomat Michael Kovrig, who was detained in Beijing earlier this week, is a fluent Mandarin speaker with a great love of China who has traveled to some of the most sensitive parts of the Asian country, people who have worked with him said.

Kovrig is one of two Canadians being investigated on suspicion of harming China's security. They were picked up shortly after Canada arrested a senior Chinese executive at the request of the United States.

Stationed at the Canadian embassy in Beijing from 2014 to 2016, Kovrig served under former ambassador Guy Saint-Jacques, who described him as an excellent political officer.

Kovrig has visited the western Xinjiang region, site of mass detentions and strict surveillance of the ethnic Uighur minority and other Muslim groups, and dealt with other sensitive issues, said Saint-Jacques.

"When you meet with dissidents, you get the attention of the Chinese security establishment," he told

the Canadian Broadcasting Corp.

At the end of his two-year posting, Kovrig told the envoy he wanted to stay on because "he loves China so much." He joined the Hong Kong-based International Crisis Group, a think tank focused on conflict resolution.

"He really is passionate about China, its language and its culture," said Karim Lebour, head of ICG's North American communications in Washington, who said he had met Kovrig a few months ago. "He struck me as very professional, very easy to engage with and a brilliant foreign policy mind." One area Kovrig focused on was North Korea, where Michael Spavor - the other detained Canadian - was also active.

Kovrig is still technically employed by the Canadian foreign affairs department but because he took a leave of absence, he does not have diplomatic immunity.

"The fact that Mr. Kovrig is an employee of my department means a lot of us know him and that adds another layer to the concern," Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland told reporters on Wednesday.

Joanna Chiu, a reporter for the Toronto Star, wrote in the paper on Tuesday that she had met and befriended Kovrig while she was working in Beijing four years ago.

"Michael is emotionally very open. Many in his social circle knew that he struggled with his decision to take a leave of absence from work as a diplomat in 2016," she wrote.

"He chose to do so because he didn't want another posting somewhere else. He wanted to stay in China and keep learning more about the country."

China calls Huawei CFO arrest a 'mistake'

Kovrig's most recent social media post was on Sunday. His family heard about his detention on Tuesday morning, his cousin Kate Kovrig said in a message on LinkedIn on Tuesday.

Kovrig began his diplomatic career in 2014 as the first secretary and vice-consul at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, following two years of Mandarin training, his LinkedIn profile showed.

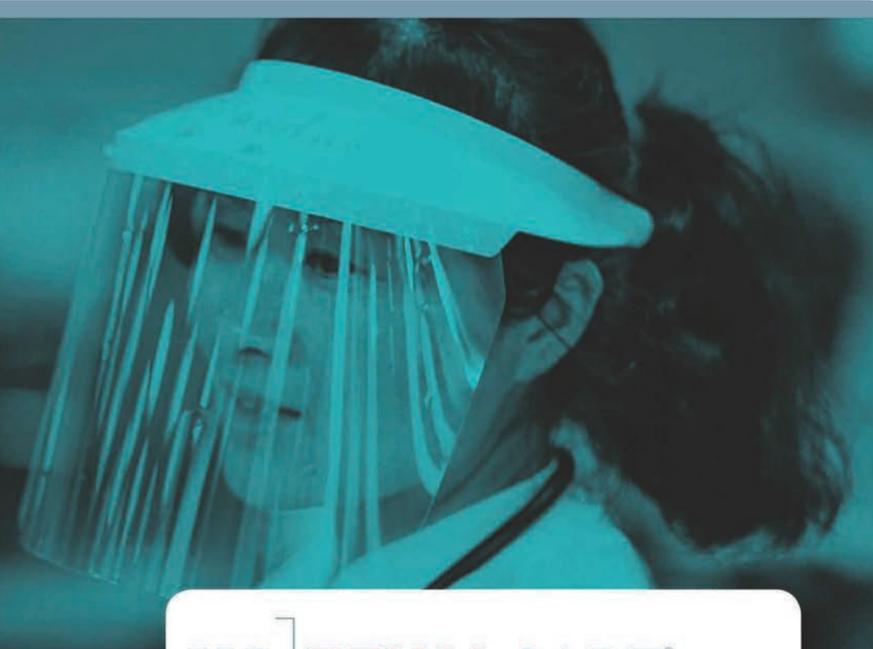
Most of his Twitter posts are China-related, including several on Canada's arrest of Huawei's chief financial officer. Retweeting an FT opinion piece last week arguing that Huawei should be kept out of Britain's 5G networks for security reasons, he commented: "Sensible cautionary advice on Huawei."

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## Boeing opens first 737 plant in China amid U.S.-Sino trade war

ZHOUSHAN, China (Reuters) - Boeing Co (BA.N) opened its first 737 completion plant in China on Saturday, a strategic investment aimed at building a sales lead over arch-rival Airbus (AIR.PA) in one of the world's top travel markets that has been overshadowed by the U.S.-China trade war. The world's largest planemaker also delivered the first of its top-selling 737s completed at the facility in Zhoushan, about 290 km (180 miles) southeast of Shanghai, to state carrier Air China (601111.SS)(0753.HK) during a ceremony on Saturday with top executives from both companies. The executives, alongside representatives from China's state planner and aviation regulator, unveiled the plane at an event attended by hundreds of people. Boeing and Airbus have been expanding their footprint in China as they vie for orders in the fast-growing aviation market, which is expected to overtake the United States as the world's largest in the next decade. Boeing invested \$33 million last year to take a majority stake in a joint venture with state-owned Commercial Aircraft Corp of China (COMAC) to build the completion center, which installs interiors and paints liveries. Chicago-based Boeing calls itself the top U.S. exporter and delivered more than one out of every four jetliners it made last year to customers in China, where it forecasts demand for 7,700 new airplanes over the next 20 years valued at \$1.2 trillion. However, the plant's inaugural ceremony was overshadowed by tensions between the United States and China as they engage in a bruising tit-for-tat tariff war. The world's two largest economies are in a 90-day detente to negotiate a trade deal.

"Am I nervous about the situation? Yeah, of course. It's a challenging environment," John Bruns, President of Boeing China, told reporters on a conference call earlier on Saturday.



"We have to keep our eye on the long game in China. Long term, I'm optimistic we will work our way through this," he said.

While the trade frictions have hurt businesses such as U.S. soy bean farmers and Chinese manufacturers, their impact on Boeing has been unclear. U.S.-made aircraft have so far escaped Beijing's tariffs.

Bruno said he remained optimistic about the outcome of trade talks between the United States and China and described aviation as a "bright spot" amid tensions between the two countries.

Asked about the possibility of technology transfer agreements between Boeing and COMAC, Bruns stressed that the purpose of the plant was for installing seats, painting vehicles, and completing the planes' final delivery.

"That's only a part of what we do in the production

of airplanes," he said.

China to halt added tariffs on U.S.-made cars. Officials and executives made no direct reference to the trade tensions in public remarks at the planemaker's Zhoushan facility.

Boeing aims eventually to hit a delivery target of 100 planes a year at Zhoushan, although Bruns deflected a question on how quickly it would reach that level and said Boeing had no plans to expand work to other aircraft types.

Boeing also hopes the plant will relieve pressure at the Seattle-area facility where it plans to boost production next year of its best-selling 737 narrowbody aircraft but has struggled with production delays.

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# Editor's Choice



Brides prepare for the collective wedding ceremony for 38 same-sex couples organized by "House 1", an NGO and residential shelter in Sao Paulo



U.S. President Donald Trump visits Arlington Cemetery in Arlington, U.S., December 15, 2018. REUTERS/Mary F. Calvert



People gather near stalls with used tools on a street in Hodeidah, Yemen



Newlywed Stephanie Pinheiro Cardoso and Joyce Generoso kiss after a collective wedding ceremony for 38 same-sex couples organized by "House 1", an NGO and residential shelter in Sao Paulo



Protesters wearing yellow vests, the symbol of a French drivers' protest against higher diesel fuel prices, count ballots as they elect a representative to liaise with other blockade points in Aubevoye



Frenchwoman Laura Delsaux plays Christmas music in the street in La Paz



Frenchwoman Laura Delsaux plays Christmas music in the street in La Paz



Riot police run to dislodge journalists from the main entrance to police headquarters in Managua

Walmart, which markets itself as the leader in "Everyday Low Prices," is beefing up its presence in the health care sector.

Walmart (WMT) is one of the latest -- and largest -- retailers to expand its reach into the fast-growing and lucrative health care arena.

Walmart's moves will help it gain a further foothold in this market and deepen its relationship with its 140 million weekly customers.

"Because of its strategic importance, we've decided to put more focus on our Health & Wellness business in the near term," Greg Foran, CEO of Walmart US, said when announcing Slovenski's appointment in July.

Walmart Pay statistics: 4.5 out of 5 customers would recommend using Walmart Pay, 88% of transactions come from repeat Walmart Pay users, 3 out of 4 customers have given Walmart Pay a five-star rating, 45% lift in Walmart Pay transactions in the last week.

Already one of the nation's leading pharmacies, Walmart could look to provide more low-cost health services, including basic medical care through nurse practitioners, physician assistants or even doc-

When most people think about health care, rarely do "discounts" and "low prices" come to mind. But Walmart is looking to change that Walmart Wants To Bring Its 'Everyday Low Prices' To Health Care

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



tors, experts predict. Big discounters such as Walmart may also offer primary care, nutrition and weight counseling and chronic disease management, said Sam Glick, a partner in Oliver Wyman's health and life sciences consulting practice.

margins than store products. Since they are often provided in person, there is more opportunity for consumers to pick up other items while visiting the store.

Walmart Health & Wellness As Walmart expands its health care menu,

insurer's Medicare Advantage customers use their plan benefits to purchase over-the-counter medicine, first aid supplies, support braces and pain relievers from a store. And Walmart can market its healthy grocery items to certain Medicare Advantage enrollees since the federal government recently allowed insurers to cover such products as a supplemental benefit.

shop, where people could access medical services and pick up whatever other items they need. "You have thousands of physical locations so the convenience is there," said Charles O'Shea, a retail analyst at Moody's.



"Consumers of Walmart and other sophisticated retailers will begin to identify them as their trusted health care partner and use them for an increasing range of health care services," said John Matthews, national strategy leader, healthcare and life sciences at KPMG.

Health care isn't a new area for Walmart. The Bentonville, Arkansas, company has years of experience providing Health and wellness products, which have accounted for 11% of its merchandise sales in recent years.

Customers, many of whom are senior citizens, can also get eye care at roughly 3,000 in-store vision centers and free health screenings at Walmart's 4,700 locations four times a year.

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### Overview

**A group of Whole Foods employees reportedly have sent an email to most workers urging them to back an effort to unionize, the Wall Street Journal has reported. They are pushing for better pay, benefits and profit-sharing.**

A group of Whole Foods employees are trying to unionize to address concerns they have over the culture and compensation since Amazon bought the grocery chain last year, the Wall Street Journal reported Thursday.

Whole Foods reportedly stopped granting stock options to lower-level employees after Amazon's acquisition last year.

The group reportedly plans to send an email Thursday to most employees at the company's 490 stores asking them to back their campaign. They want better pay, benefits and profit sharing, the WSJ said.

Whole Foods and Amazon didn't immediately return emails for comment.

The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, which didn't immediately return a call and email for comment, is helping to organize employees, the WSJ said. The New York-based labor union has about 100,000 members.



A Whole Foods employee stocks produce in Oakland, California.

### Related

Some Whole Foods employees want to unionize to address what they say are changes to corporate culture and diminished compensation under the ownership of Amazon.com Inc. AMZN -1.77%

A group of workers plans to send an email Thursday to workers at most of the 490 Whole Foods stores urging them to back their unionization drive.

A copy of the group's message to fellow employees, reviewed by The Wall Street

## Whole Foods Employees Trying To Unionize Under Amazon Ownership

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



Journal, said organizers want to "collectively voice our concerns to Whole Foods Market and Amazon leadership."



The workers said they want to push Whole Foods and Amazon for better compensation, benefits and profit-sharing.

The unionization push presents a potentially high-profile challenge to Amazon, which has opposed past organizing efforts by warehouse workers and other employees that are less visible to customers than grocery-store clerks.

Amazon wants to deliver everything you want to your doorstep, anywhere in the world. But the e-commerce giant faces several challenges in its pursuit of a global empire.

Amazon workers in Germany, Spain and Poland held strikes around Amazon's

Prime Day promotion in July to demand better health protections and job-safety measures. Germany's powerful service-workers' union has held a number of job actions over pay and working conditions in recent years.

Amazon has fought those efforts. The e-commerce company has said that it treats its workers fairly and that reports of inhospitable conditions at its facilities are untrue.

"We offer competitive wages and benefits and are committed to the growth and success of our team members," a Whole Foods spokeswoman said.

An Amazon spokeswoman didn't respond to a request for comment.



Your groceries could be delivered by an Amazon drone any day now.

The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, a national organization headquartered in New York with 100,000 members, is assisting the effort. The union has been in touch with Whole Foods workers previously, but contact has become more frequent since Amazon bought the chain, according to the organization.

"The RWDSU stands with workers in precarious positions no matter what—Amazon and Whole Foods workers are no different," said Stuart Appelbaum, president of the union, which has also worked to represent Amazon workers.

"We will not back down until Amazon workers are treated with dignity and respect," he said.

Before Amazon bought it last year, Whole Foods resisted unionization efforts as well.

The chain has appeared near the top of lists ranking companies by the benefits they offer and the gap in pay between managers and workers. Whole Foods paid \$20.15 an hour and \$41,911 a year on average in 2016, according to a company filing, more than many other grocers.

But worker grievances started to multiply after Whole Foods laid off hundreds of workers in 2015 amid weak sales. Whole Foods eliminated hundreds of marketing jobs this year, deepening the discontent.



Workers say Whole Foods also stopped offering stock options to lower-level staff after Amazon took over. Whole Foods had for years offered most employees annual stock options. Around 94% had gone to nonexecutive employees since the program began in 1992, according to a company report before Amazon took over the

grocer.

"The clandestine nature of Amazon offering stock options to store leadership without informing [other employees] is beyond problematic," said the message from workers advocating unionization. "It is insulting and unethical." (Courtesy wsj.com)

### Related

**Next stop for Whole Foods delivery is NYC**

**Amazon's ongoing mission to spread organic produce countrywide continues**

Amazon is expanding its Whole Foods Delivery service to five new cities. Prime Now subscribers in New York City, Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Palm Beach and Long Island will be able to sift through a variety of dairy, meat, everyday staples and seafood options.

Delivery times are still between 8AM to 10PM, and it's a two hour wait before your order arrives -- unless you're willing to spend \$8 extra for the quicker one hour option. Regardless, your minimum order needs to be \$35.



Originally kicked off in February, the partnership between Amazon and the Whole Foods Market was established to bring fresh produce to the table in a more convenient fashion, and if you're short on time, help dodge those seemingly endless grocery lines. Shoppers in Austin and Cincinnati were the first with access, but Amazon quickly expanded the service to Seattle and San Francisco. It's very likely additional cities -- according to the Prime Now website, 34 are currently being serviced -- will join the list soon, since Amazon has plans to spread deliveries nationwide. (Courtesy engadget.com)

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