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U.N. Security Council to meet over North Korea on Wednesday at U.S. request



Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

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## Lackluster U.S. retail sales dim fourth quarter economic growth outlook



FILE PHOTO: Shoppers walk through the King of Prussia Mall, United States' largest retail shopping space, in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, U.S., December 8, 2018. REUTERS/Mark Makela

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. retail sales increased less than expected in November as Americans cut back on discretionary spending despite a strong labor market, raising fears the economy was slowing a bit faster than anticipated in the fourth quarter.

The report from the Commerce Department on Friday bucked a recent raft of fairly upbeat data on the labor market, housing, trade and manufacturing that had suggested the economy was growing at a moderate speed in spite of headwinds from trade tensions and slowing global growth.

The Federal Reserve on Wednesday kept interest rates steady and signaled that borrowing costs were likely to remain unchanged at least through next year amid expectations the economy would continue to grow modestly and the unemployment rate remain low.

"Just as the Fed was in the middle of a victory dance, convinced they have returned the economy to a position of strength after just three rate cuts, the consumer waves a red flag," said Lindsey Piegza, chief economist at Stifel in Chicago. "Any signs the consumer is waning could have sizeable negative consequences for growth at year-end and into next year."

### RELATED COVERAGE

U.S. business inventories rebound in October

Retail sales rose 0.2% last month. Data for October was revised up to show retail sales increasing 0.4% instead of climbing 0.3% as previously reported.

November's sales gains were meager despite reports from re-

tailers of brisk Black Friday business. Some economists blamed a late Thanksgiving this year compared to 2018, which pushed Cyber Monday shopping into December. The late Thanksgiving could also have thrown off the model that the government uses to strip seasonal fluctuations from the data, holding back sales.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast retail sales would accelerate 0.5% in November. Compared to November last year, retail sales increased 3.3%. Excluding automobiles, gasoline, building materials and food services, retail sales edged up 0.1% last month after rising by an unrevised 0.3% in October. These so-called core retail sales correspond most closely with the consumer spending component of gross domestic product. Consumer spending accounts for more than two-thirds of the economy.

Even accounting for the Thanksgiving-related distortions, retail sales have slowed considerably after rising by an average of 0.7% per month in the first eight months of this year. Economists believe sales are cooling as wage growth has stalled despite the lowest unemployment rate in nearly half a century.

"As we have been asking, is this just noise or an early sign that cracks in the strong consumer story are starting to form?" said Michelle Girard, chief U.S. economist at NatWest Markets in Stamford, Connecticut. "We are watchful it is the latter."

Consumer spending grew at a 2.9% annualized rate in

the third quarter. November's slim gain in core retail sales left economists to expect that consumer spending would rise at around a 2.0% rate in the fourth quarter. But slowing consumer spending is boosting inventories at retailers, which could limit the downside to fourth-quarter GDP growth.

### EBBING TRADE TENSIONS

In a separate report on Friday, the Commerce Department said retail inventories excluding autos, which go into the calculation of GDP, increased 0.7% in October after rising 0.2% in September.

Growth estimates for the fourth quarter now range from as low as a 1.3% rate to as high as a 2.0% pace. The economy grew at a 2.1% pace in the third quarter.

Economists did not expect a de-escalation in trade tensions between the United States and China to materially change the outlook for the economy in 2020, arguing that it would take a long time to reverse the damage caused by the 17-month trade war on sectors like manufacturing and agriculture.

President Donald Trump and Chinese officials said on Friday they had agreed to a "phase one" trade deal that included cutting U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods.

Stocks on Wall Street were mixed in volatile trade, with investors confused on the status of the U.S.-China deal. The dollar .DXY fell against a basket of currencies, while U.S. Treasury prices rose.

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# U.S. Supreme Court takes up Trump bid to shield financial records

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The U.S. Supreme Court on Friday agreed to hear President Donald Trump's appeals in three separate cases to prevent his financial records, including tax returns, being handed over to Democratic-led House of Representatives committees and a New York prosecutor.

FILE PHOTO: U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during a working luncheon with permanent representatives of the United Nations Security Council in the Cabinet Room of the White House in Washington, U.S., December 5, 2019. REUTERS/Jonathan Ernst/File Photo

The Republican president is trying to block subpoenas for bank records, tax returns or other materials demanded by various Democratic-led House of Representatives committees investigating corruption or foreign meddling in the U.S. elections process. The House probes are not part of the Democratic-led impeachment proceedings against Trump over his dealings with Ukraine. Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance, a Democrat, is seeking Trump's tax returns in a criminal investigation of the president, the Trump Organization and his family real estate business. The court will hold oral arguments in March, with rulings due by the end of June.

"We are pleased that the Supreme Court granted review of the President's three pending cases. These cases raise significant constitutional issues," said Jay Sekulow, one of Trump's lawyers.

The cases are a test for how the justices view Trump's arguments that the subpoenas are a threat to the presidency, on the one hand, and the need for lawmakers or prosecutors for information to pursue legislation or criminal investigations on the other.

The court has a 5-4 conservative majority including two Trump appointees, Justices Neil Gorsuch and



FILE PHOTO: U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during a working luncheon with permanent representatives of the United Nations Security Council in the Cabinet Room of the White House in Washington, U.S., December 5,

Brett Kavanaugh.

One of the cases is Trump's appeal of a lower court ruling allowing a New York grand jury to subpoena his accounting firm Mazars LLP for his records.

Trump's attorneys said prosecutors could be encouraged to investigate a president to advance their careers or score political points if that subpoena is enforced.

Another case concerns a lower

court decision in Washington that endorsed subpoenas issued by the Democratic-led House Oversight Committee to Mazars.

Trump's lawyers say there was no legislative purpose for the subpoenas and that the aim was merely to dig for dirt on the president.

In the third case, the justices will review a lower court ruling allowing the enforcement of separate House committee subpoenas targeting Trump-related financial records from Deutsche Bank

AG (DBKGn.DE) and Capital One Financial Corp (COEN).

The court on Friday extended its hold on the lower court ruling, which it had temporarily blocked last week.

The lower court rulings in the congressional cases, if left intact, would bring House Democrats closer to getting some of the details about Trump's business interests. That outcome would also amount to a major blow for the president, who, unlike past presidents, has refused to publicly disclose his tax returns.



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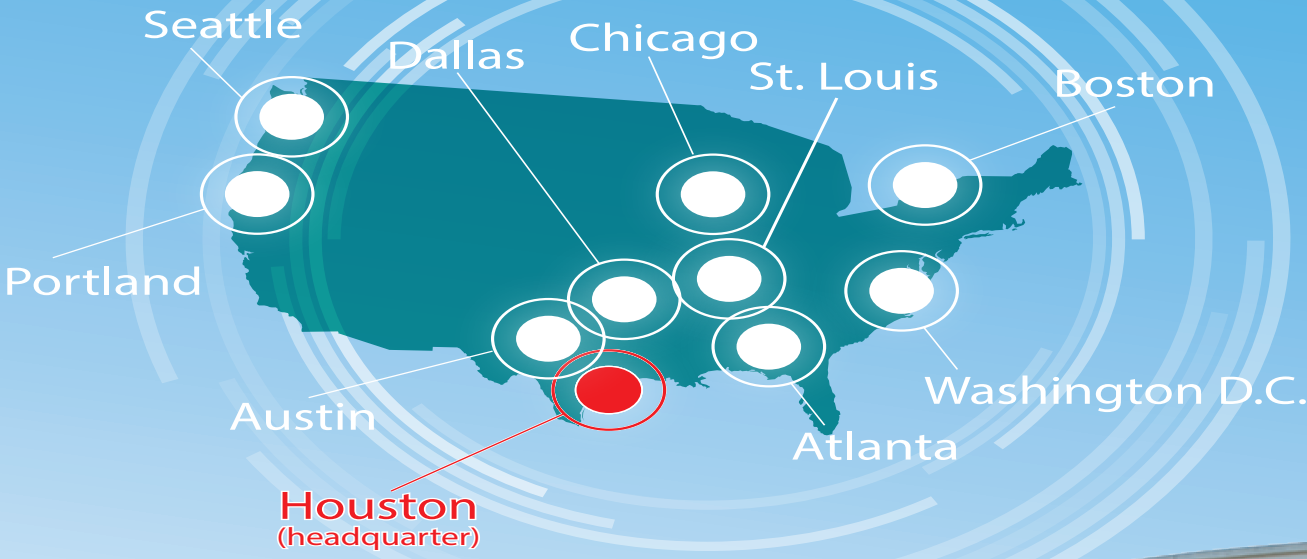
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Editor’s Choice



Liberal Democrats candidate Jo Swinson speaks after losing her seat in East Dunbartonshire constituency, at a counting centre for Britain’s general election in Bishopbriggs, Britain December 13, 2019. REUTERS/Gonzalo Fuentes TPX IMAGES OF THE DAY



Singer Taylor Swift arrives on the red carpet for the “Billboard Women in Music” event in Los Angeles



Labour candidate for Walthamstow Stella Creasy carries her baby daughter after winning in Britain’s general election in Waltham Forest Town Hall, Walthamstow, Britain, December 13, 2019. REUTERS/John Sibley TPX IMAGES OF THE DAY



A member of the security forces lies on the ground as a demonstrator holds an extinguisher and others gesture during a protest against Chile’s government in Santiago, Chile December 12, 2019. REUTERS/Pablo Sanhueza



Relatives hug as they wait for rescue mission, following the White Island volcano eruption in Whakatane



House Judiciary Committee Debates Articles Of Impeachment Against President Trump



House Judiciary Committee continues markup of articles of impeachment against U.S. President Trump in Washington



Thailand’s Princess Bajrakitiyabha and Princess Sirivannavari Nariratana take part in a royal barge river procession along the Chao Praya river as part of the year-long celebrations of his coronation in Bangkok



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**Houston And Chengdu, China,**  
**Selected As Top Venues For The 2021 -2022**  
**World Table Tennis Championships**



**Related**  
**Houston, Chengdu to host 2021, 2022 table tennis worlds**



Liu Yi (center), vice president of Chinese Table Tennis Association, receives hugs as Chinese city of Chengdu won the bid to host the 2022 World Table Tennis Championships in Budapest on April 22, 2019.

The U.S. city of Houston has won the bid to host the 2021 world table tennis championships and the southwestern Chinese city of Chengdu will host the 2022 version.

The news followed Monday's historic vote at the International Table Tennis Federation's annual general meeting. Strong bids put forward by the United States and Morocco had ensured that 2021 would mark the first time in 82 years that the world championships are held outside of Asia and Europe, since Cairo, Egypt hosted the 1939 competition.



"We're thrilled not only to be hosting the 2021 world table tennis championships, but also to have the chance to help commemorate that historic moment when Ping-pong Diplomacy was born," said Harris County-Houston Sports Authority CEO Janis Burke. Chengdu beat Kitakyushu of Japan and Portugal's Lisbon to become the sixth Chinese city staging this tournament "We are so happy to win and look forward to showing Chengdu to the entire world in 2022," said Liu Yi, vice president of the Chinese table tennis association. (Courtesy Xinhua)

**Related**  
**World Table Tennis Championships Awarded To U.S. For The First Time In 95-Year History**



**Kanak Jha competes in the men's table tennis bronze-medal match at the Summer Youth Olympic Games Buenos Aires 2018 on Oct. 10, 2018 in Buenos Aires, Argentina.**

The old saying goes that everything is bigger in Texas, so what better place to hold the biggest World Table Tennis Championships in history? The Lone Star State's largest city of Houston was selected Monday as the host of the 2021 world championships, beating out Agadir, Morocco, from the International Table Tennis Federation's short list. The selection of a U.S. city is historic, as it will be the first world championships held in the United States and the first one outside of Asia or Europe since 1939. The event began in 1926. It is a fitting choice for 2021 as the ITTF is seeking to grow the game globally and

increase participation. The 2019 world championships in Budapest, Hungary — which began Monday — feature a record 609 players from 109 national associations, a figure that is still only 47 percent of the 226 associations around the world. The ITTF aims to move that number as close as possible to 100 percent for 2021.



The selection is also a major milestone for the city of Houston, which by 2021 will have hosted its fourth major world championships. Houston hosted world championships in boxing in 1999 and weightlifting in 2015, and will host the BMX cycling world championships in 2020. The city has hosted numerous U.S. Olympic Team Trials in the past, including marathon in 2012. Houston also bid for the 2012 and 2016 Olympic Games, though did not make it past the U.S. phase, and is the birthplace of two-time Olympian table tennis player Timothy Wang.

The U.S. is eighth all-time in the world championship medal table but has not brought home any hardware since the legendary Dick Miles took bronze in men's singles in 1959. The highest-ranked member of Team USA is 2016 Olympian and 2018 Youth Olympic medalist Kanak Jha, 38th in the most recent ITTF men's world rankings. The sport of table tennis has long been dominated by China, which has nearly double the world championship medals of second-place Hungary. (Courtesy United States Olympic Committee)

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor  
**From the Office of Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner**

It's official! Houston has been awarded the 2021 World Table Tennis Championships! The United States and China were both selected. There is no better way to celebrate 50 years of diplomacy between these two great countries than to bring the first of these back-to-back championships to the most diverse and welcoming city in the nation. The leadership of the Harris County – Houston Sports Authority has brought another incredible international event to Houston. I encourage both local and global Table Tennis fans to make plans to watch the competition and enjoy the hype and festivities connected to the event.

**Mayor Sylvester Turner**  
**Houston, Texas**

#  
The Official Press Release from  
Houston Sports Authority

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**Houston to Host 2021 World Table Tennis Championships**  
The United States and China both selected, will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ping Pong Diplomacy.  
HOUSTON, TX – International Table Tennis is coming to Houston. The Harris County – Houston Sports Authority has been selected to host the International Table Tennis Federation's 2021 World Table Tennis Championships. It is the first time the event will be held in the United States.  
The announcement was made today at the 2019 ITTF Annual General Meeting and World Championships in Budapest.  
The ITTF also awarded the Chinese Table Tennis Federation the 2022 Championships, which will be held in Chengdu, Houston and China collaborated in what was, essentially, a joint-support bid.  
The announcement comes 50 years after the USA Table Tennis Team arrived in China for a friendly Table Tennis exchange and wound up changing the world. The 1971 event, dubbed Ping Pong Diplomacy, brought the USA and China to the table, thus establishing diplomatic relations.  
The event utilized the Chinese athletic slogan "Fighting First, Competition Second," and eased diplomatic tensions enough to allow President Richard M. Nixon to travel to Beijing in 1972.  
"We're thrilled not only to be hosting the 2021 World Table Tennis Championships but also to have the chance to help commemorate that historic moment," said Harris County – Houston Sports Authority CEO, Janis Burke, said. "In 1971, China and the United States came together and helped change the world."  
Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner agreed. "There is no better way to celebrate 50 years of diplomacy between these two great countries than to bring the first of these back-to-back championships to the most diverse and welcoming city in the nation. The leadership of the Harris County – Houston Sports Authority has brought another incredible international event to Houston."  
"I encourage both local and global Table Tennis fans to make plans to watch the competition and enjoy the hype and festivities connected to the event."  
The United States and China agreed to support each other's efforts with these back-to-back championships, with Houston and China both getting support from former Houston Rockets player, Yao Ming, as well as Nixon's grandson, Christopher Nixon Cox.  
"We excited the event is finally coming to the U.S. and to Houston." Cox said. "There is no better way to recognize my grandfather's work with Chinese-American relations."  
USA Table Tennis and the United States Olympic Committee supported Houston's bid.  
"The event will spotlight the sport of Table Tennis – a sport for a lifetime – and provide dreams for our youth," said USATT Chairman of the Board, Anne Cribbs. "It's also a sport has the ability to bring the world together as we celebrate what unites us rather than what divides us."  
The two table tennis players most associated with 1971's Ping Pong Diplomacy, which inspired China's invitation to the U.S. team, were Glenn Cowan and Zhuang Zedong. The two met each other on a bus which had been reserved for the Chinese team during the World Championships in Nagasaki, Japan. In 1971, it was the first time China had publicly emerged since the Cultural Revolution began in 1966. At the time, Zedong was a three-time world champion (1961, 1963, 1965). During the short trip to table tennis venue and competition hall, Cowan, who had missed the U.S. team bus and was allowed to ride with the Chinese, spoke passionately about his desire for friendship between the two countries.  
Morocco had also put in a bid to host the 2021 World Championships, while Japan and Portugal also bid for the 2022 Championships.

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**SpaceX Launches The First Batch Of 60 Satellites In Starlink Satellites Project**



**View of the 60 Starlink Satellites from the May 24, 2019 launch (Credits - Wikimedia Commons)**

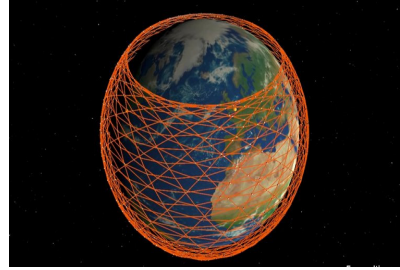
**Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor**

SpaceX, the space transportation company founded by Elon Musk successfully launched 60 of its Starlink satellites. If everything goes properly, then the Starlink network of satellites can provide superfast internet connectivity across the globe. Before the launch of the satellites from Cape Canaveral, Florida, SpaceX announced that Starlink will make the entire earth connected through reliable and cheap broadband connectivity. The first Starlink mission was broadcast by SpaceX which was launched by a Falcon 9 rocket at 10:30 pm ET on 24th May. Just over an hour of the liftoff, all the 30000 pounds of satellites were deployed by the rockets' upper stage. This is the heaviest payload which the SpaceX has launched till date.



**Launching of the Falcon 9 rocket.**  
The size of an individual satellite is almost that of an office desk and its weight is closely 500 pounds. It is equipped with solar pan-

els and has antennas present for transmission of data. Besides that, the spacecraft has an ion engine which releases krypton gas. It would prevent the Starlink satellite colliding with other satellites and avoid space junk. Once it nears its useful life, it would self-destruct. The engine will also power the satellite to an orbit of 550 kilometres above Earth. The present batch of satellites lack a major component, laser beam interlinks. The future satellites will have these lasers for connecting with other four satellites. In this way, it will form a strong mesh network over Earth facilitating the internet speed almost to that of light's speed in a vacuum. It is almost 50% greater than fibre-optic cables giving the Starlink satellites a great advantage over the current status.

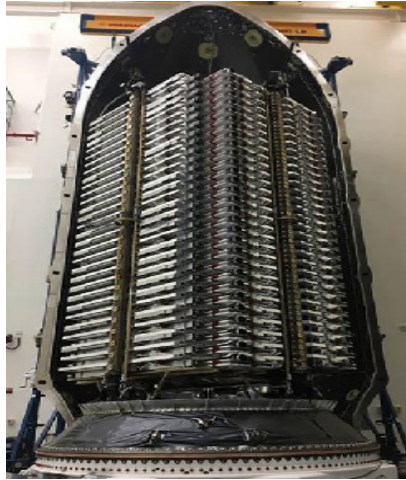


**The Starlink satellites will form a strong mesh network over Earth facilitating the internet speed almost to that of light's speed in a vacuum.**

SpaceX aims to deploy 12000 similar satellites before the deadline of 2027 set by the Federal Communications Commission. For reaching this goal, SpaceX needs to launch more than a mission per month through the next eight years. However, for making the concept work and generate revenue, it needs to launch only 1000 satellites which is way less than 12000. (Courtesy <https://sciencehook.com>)

**Related**  
**The Starlink Satellite Program**

Starlink is a satellite constellation development project underway by American company SpaceX, to develop a low-cost, high-performance satellite bus and requisite customer ground transceivers to implement a new space-based Internet communication system. SpaceX also plans to sell satellites that use a satellite bus that may be used for military,[4] scientific or exploratory purposes. SpaceX has plans to deploy nearly 12,000 satellites in three orbital shells by the mid-2020s: initially placing approximately 1600 in a 550-kilometer (340 mi)-altitude shell, subsequently placing ~2800 Ku- and Ka-band spectrum sats at 1,150 km (710 mi) and ~7500 V-band sats at 340 km (210 mi). [6] The total cost of the decade-long project to design, build and deploy such a network is estimated at nearly US\$10 billion.



**60 satellites installed on the launch spacecraft.**

**History 2015-2017**  
The communication satellite network SpaceX envisions was publicly announced in January 2015, with the projected design

capability to support sufficient bandwidth to carry up to 50% of all backhaul communications traffic, and up to 10% of local Internet traffic, in high-density cities. CEO Elon Musk said that there is significant unmet demand for low-cost global broadband capabilities.

By March 2017, SpaceX filed plans with the FCC to field a second orbital shell of more than 7500 "V-band satellites in non-geosynchronous orbits to provide communications services" in an electromagnetic spectrum that has not previously been heavily employed for commercial communications services. Called the "V-band low-Earth orbit (VLEO) constellation," it would consist of 7,518 satellites and would orbit at just 340 kilometres (210 mi) altitude, while the smaller originally-planned group of 4,425 satellites would operate in the Ka- and Ku-bands and orbit at 1,200 kilometres (750 mi) altitude.

**2018-2019**  
In May 2018, SpaceX expected the total cost of development and buildout of the constellation to approach US\$10 billion. In mid-2018, SpaceX reorganized the satellite development division in Redmond, and fired several members of senior management.[13]



In November 2018, SpaceX received US regulatory approval to deploy 7,518 broadband satellites, in addition to the 4,425 approved earlier. SpaceX's initial 4,425 satellites had been requested in the 2016 regulatory filings to orbit at altitudes of 1,110 km to 1,325 km, well above the ISS. The new approval was for the addition of

a very-low Earth orbit NGSO [non-geostationary satellite orbit] constellation, consisting of 7,518 satellites operating at altitudes from 335 km to 346 km, below the ISS.

**Launches**  
The deployment of the first 1,584 satellites will be into 40 orbital planes of 66 satellites each, with a requested lower minimum elevation angle of beams to improve reception: 25 degrees rather than the 40 degrees of the other two orbital shells. SpaceX launched the first 60 satellites of the constellation in May 2019 into a 450 km orbit and expected up to six launches in 2019 at that time, with 720 satellites for continuous coverage in 2020.

**Global broadband Internet**  
SpaceX intends to provide broadband internet connectivity to underserved areas of the planet, as well as provide competitively-priced service to urban areas. The company has stated that the positive cashflow from selling satellite internet services would be necessary to fund their Mars plans.



**Starlink satellite in orbit.**  
**Use beyond Earth**  
In the long term, SpaceX intends to develop and deploy a version of the satellite communication system to serve Mars. (Courtesy Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

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