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"You're stealing our water": Germans protest against Tesla gigafactory



Inside C2

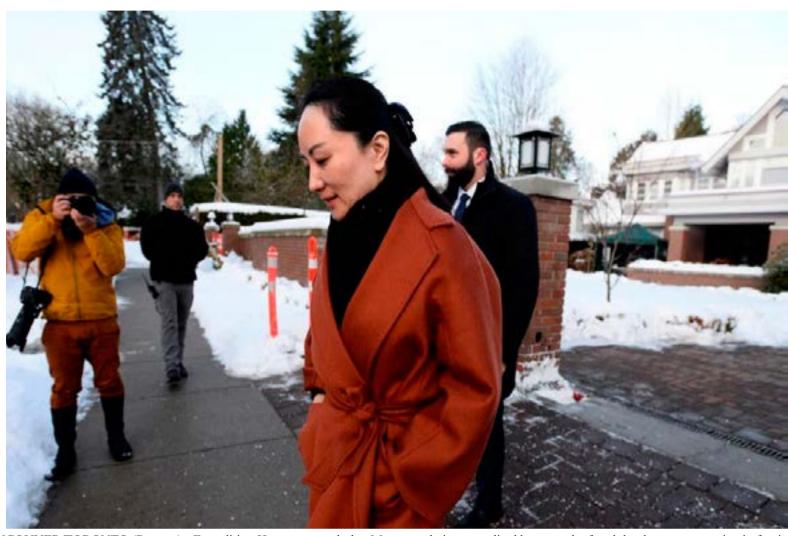
Sunday, January 19, 2020

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Lawyers for Huawei CFO call Canada prosecutor's arguments 'circular'



becomes single criminality."

Huawei Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou leaves her home to attend a case management conference in advance of her extradition hearing at B.C. Supreme Court in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada January 17, 2020. REUTERS/ Jennifer Gauthier

VANCOUVER/TORONTO (Reuters) - Extraditing Huawei Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou to the United States based on American sanctions against Iran would set a dangerous precedent and could even undermine Canada's policy towards Iran, Meng's lawyers argued in court documents released on Friday.

Meng, 47, was arrested at the Vancouver International Airport on Dec. 1, 2018, at the request of the States, where she is charged with bank fraud and accused of misleading the bank HSBC (HSBA.L) about Huawei Technologies' business in Iran. Meng has said she is innocent and is fighting extradition.

Canada's attorney general said in submissions released last

week that Meng was being extradited because she fraudulently mislead HSBC, and that U.S. sanctions should be taken into account as contributing to the legal environment in which the fraud took place - not as a reason for the extradition. Meng's team called the attorney general's argument "circular," arguing that because prosecutors relied on U.S. sanctions to establish a risk of economic deprivation in both countries, "American law becomes Canadian law. Double criminality

They wrote that allowing the attorney general to use U.S. sanctions as a reason to extradite set a dangerous precedent, because it would "interfere with the (Canadian) government's prerogative in foreign affairs ... In a democratic society, important public policy choices are best made in the elected legislative assembly rather than by judicial actors."

Meng appeared in court on Friday for the first time in several months, for a case management conference to schedule hearings addressing the Canadian attorney general's claims of privilege on releasing some documents requested by Meng's legal team.

Wearing dark slacks and sipping from a pink thermos, Meng appeared calm but serious, refraining from waving to journalists as she has while entering the courtroom on other occasions.

U.S. housing high, factory output gains

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. homebuilding surged to a 13-year high in December as activity increased across the board, suggesting the housing market recovery was back on track amid low mortgage rates, and could help support the longest economic expansion on record.

starts at 13-year There was also some encouraging news on manufacturing, with other data on Friday showing production Naroff Economic Advisors in Holland, Pennsylat factories increasing for a second straight month in December, indicating some stabilization in one of the be a lot softer." industries hardest hit by the Trump administration's 18-month trade war with China.

> Though U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese Vice Premier Liu He signed a "Phase 1" trade deal on Wednesday, a first step toward defusing the trade war, manufacturing is not out of the woods yet. Boeing (BA.N) this month suspended production of its

fast-selling 737 MAX jetliner and ripple effects of that decision are already being felt, with a major supplier announcing layoffs last week.

"The shockingly large rise in home construction is likely to provide an unexpected boost to growth," said Joel Naroff, chief economist at vania. "However, the first quarter of 2020 it might

Housing starts jumped 16.9% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.608 million units last month, the highest level since December 2006. The percentage gain was the largest since October 2016. Groundbreaking activity last month was likely flattered by unseasonably mild weather and probably overstates the health of the housing

Data for November was revised higher to show homebuilding rising to a pace of 1.375 million units, instead of advancing to a rate of 1.365 million units as previously reported.

RELATED COVERAGE

U.S. job openings post biggest drop in more than four years

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast housing starts would increase to a pace of 1.375 million units in December.

The dollar firmed against a basket of currencies, while U.S. Treasury debt prices fell. Stocks on Wall Street were trading higher, with the main indexes hitting record highs.



Sunday, January 19. 2020



LOCAL NEWS

"You're stealing our water": Germans protest against Tesla gigafactory

BERLIN (Reuters) - Around 250 Germans on Saturday protested in the outskirts of Berlin where electric car startup Tesla is planning to build a gigafactory, saying its construction will endanger water supply and wildlife in the area.

Demonstrators hold anti-Tesla posters during a protest against plans by U.S. electric vehicle pioneer Tesla to build its first European factory and design center in Gruenheide near Berlin, Germany January 18, 2020. REUTERS/Pawel Kopczynski The U.S. carmaker announced plans last November to build its first European car factory in Gruenheide, in the eastern state of Brandenburg.

Politicians, unions and industry groups have welcomed the move, saying it will bring jobs to the region, but environmental concerns drove hundreds of locals to the streets on Saturday.

"We are here, we are loud, because Tesla is stealing our water," protesters called.

Saturday's protest came after a Brandenburg water association on Thursday warned against "extensive and serious problems with the drinking water supply and wastewater disposal" for the proposed factory.

Anne Bach, a 27-year-old environmental activist, said Tesla's plans published earlier this month showed it would need more than 300 cubic meters of water per hour which would drain the area's declining reserves.

"I am not against Tesla ... But it's about the site; in a forest area that is a protected wildlife zone. Is this necessary?" Bach said.

"In such an ecological system like the one here and with the background that climate is changing, I cannot understand why another location was not selected from the beginning," said Frank Gersdorf, a member of "Citizens' Initiative Gruenheide against Gigafactory", a local group that organized Saturday's protest.



hold anti-Tesla posters during a protest against plans by U.S. electric vehicle pioneer Tesla to build its first European factory and design center in Gruenheide near Berlin, Germany January 18, 2020. REUTERS/ Pawel Kopczynski

Demonstrators

Environmentalist protests in Germany have previously halted and delayed major companies' plans such RWE's lignite mining at the Hambach forest, near Cologne, which has become a symbol of the anti-coal protests.

Saturday's protest, which Gersdorf and Bach said developed spontaneously from a 50-people forest walk demonstration, highlighted the deforestation of around 300 hectares

Seattle

Austin

Houston (headquarter)

Portland

to build the factory and its impact on wildlife, including birds, insects and bats.

People were also protesting against an expected "enormous" increase in traffic on a nearby highway and through the villages.

Next to the protest, on the other side of the street, around 20 people carried banners welcoming Tesla in their village, with children chanting, "We are here, we are loud, because Tesla is

Chicago

St. Louis

tlanta

building our future."

Bernd Kutz, a Gruenheide local, said Tesla would bring improvement to the area, create jobs and give chances to young people.

"I am here because I don't understand those demonstrators who shout and show us the finger," Kutz said. "Why has it always to be negative?"

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11122 Bellaire Blvd Houston, TX 77072 Sunday, January 19, 2020



Editor's Choice



A priest conducts a ceremony as an inmate takes a dip in the freezing waters during celebrations of the upcoming Orthodox Christian feast of Epiphany at a high-security penal colony in Omsk, Russia January 18, 2020.



A poster shows late Iranian military commander Qassem Soleimani and late Iraqi militia commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, as Iranian worshippers chant slogans during the Friday prayers sermon led by Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in Tehran



Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei gestures as he delivers Friday prayers sermon, in Tehran



A treated koala lies on the table after being rescued from bushfires on Kangaroo Island, Australia January 13, 2020. RSPCA South Australia via REUTERS



Priest whispers to a dog after blessing it on the day of Spain's patron saint of animals, Saint Anthony, outside San Anton Church in Madrid



French lawyers on strike demonstrate against French government's pensions reform plans at the courthouse in Lyon as France faces its 44th consecutive day of strikes January 17, 2020. The slogan reads "Layers at risk, democracy at risk".



The International Green Week (Internationale Gruene Woche) agriculture and food fair in Berlin



Mirzaie, founder of a Sama Dance group dances with her teammates in Kabul



COMMUNITY

How The State Prepares For The Worst

Emergency Management In Texas



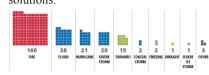
Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Some of Texas' greatest strengths spring from its sheer size and geographic diversity. But while these assets contribute to our thriving economy and create many opportunities, they sometimes increase our chances for natural disasters and other emergencies.

Texas ranks high among U.S. states in its number and variety of natural disasters, ranging from flooding to drought and from wildfires to ice storms. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Texans have experienced 263 federally declared disasters since 1953.

Local governments, particularly those in sparsely populated rural counties, sometimes require assistance with emergency situations due to a lack of the equipment and staffing needed to launch an effective response. The Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), a division of the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), is charged with coordinating state and local responses to natural disasters and other emergencies in Texas. It's not an easy job.

"With more than 1,300 jurisdictions, 254 counties, an international border and a long coastline, Texas is constantly faced with unique problems you don't find anywhere else," says Kevin Lemon, a TDEM technical operations specialist. "Therefore, we have to have unique solutions."



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Emergency management is the practice of formulating procedures with which communities and states can minimize the risk of hazards and disasters and cope with them more effectively.

Local governments, naturally, become the first lines of defense during a disaster. Mayors, county commissioners, municipal police and sheriffs' departments must alert citizens of imminent threats and take any actions within their means to ensure public order and safety.

For disasters exceeding their abilities and resources, however, a state may step in to provide logistical and financial assistance. In cases in which local and state resources prove inadequate, the state may request assistance from other states through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, or from the federal government.

In Texas, responsibility for emergency management lay solely with local jurisdictions until the Legislature enacted the Texas Civil Protection Act of 1951, the first law creating a state emergency management organization and statewide emergency management plan. The legislation established a Disaster Relief Council chaired by the governor and comprising various agency heads, each responsible for particular emergency management functions.

The 1951 act was replaced with the Texas Disaster Act of 1975, which further increased the state-local coordination of emergency responsibilities. By 2009, after several phases of reorganization, the Disaster Relief Council had become the Texas Division of Emergency Management within DPS.



The Texas Government Code requires the Texas Division of Emergency Management to prepare and keep current a comprehensive state emergency management plan.

TEXAS EMERGENCY MANAGE-MENT COUNCIL

The Texas Emergency Management Council (EMC) includes 39 state agencies and nonprofit emergency assistance organizations (Exhibit 2). State law established the council to advise and assist the governor in all matters related to disaster mitigation, emergency preparedness, disaster response and recovery.

The State Emergency Management Plan assigns 22 emergency support functions to the EMC member organizations, which identify, mobilize and deploy resources to respond to emergencies and disasters (Exhibit 3). The type and extent of a hazard or disaster determines which EMC agencies will respond.



Hurricane Harvey as seen from satel-

DISASTER DISTRICTS

Initial state emergency assistance for

local governments is provided through one of 24 Texas disaster districts, which manage state operations within their designated areas. Each district is led by a disaster district committee (DDC) and a committee chair. DDCs include local representatives of state agencies, boards. commissions and volunteer groups represented on the EMC. Each DDC provides guidance and administrative support for disaster response.

STATE OPERATIONS CENTER

In 1964, the SOC was established at DPS headquarters in Austin to serve as the state's disaster monitoring center. Its primary responsibilities include:

continuously monitoring threats through communications with local entities, news outlets and social media;

•providing notifications and information on emergency incidents to government officials;

•coordinating assistance requests from local governments through the DPS Disaster Districts; and

•allocating and coordinating state personnel and resources to local governments that can no longer respond adequately to an emergency incident.

The SOC maintains four levels of emergency response, categories used to notify and gradually increase the readiness of state and local emergency responders based on the degree and progression of specific incidents. The SOC operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, regardless of its emergency response level.

"During a disaster, the SOC uses a wide range of resources from academia, private-sector companies and local entities," Lemon says



IN THE BUNKER

As Hurricane Harvey bore down on the Texas coast in August 2017, Gov. Greg Abbott commanded the state's emergency response efforts from an underground post beneath the DPS building in north Austin. Located three stories below

ground level, the State Operations Center has been headquarters for state emergency response for nearly 60 years.



The State Operations Center underground post beneath he DPS building in north Austin during Hurricane

Harvey.

(Photo/Texas Division of Emergency

Management.)

While some vestiges of the SOC's mid-20th century origins can still be seen (a shower turned storage closet still has a "decontamination" sign over the door, for example), subsequent construction and renovations have turned the center into a modern facility with state-of-theart technology, safety features and communications capabilities.

During major emergencies, the governor activates the members of the EMC, who assemble at the SOC where they join its daily operations staff and TDEM members to organize a coordinated response. The SOC monitors and manages about 3,000 to 4,000 emergency incidents per

It's no surprise that Texas frequently experiences emergencies of one kind or another, simply because of its size and variable climate. What's more noteworthy, however, is the state's ability to respond to a plethora of potentially life-threatening incidents. By integrating the efforts of dozens of organizations, both public and private, and managing the complex logistics from a centralized command post, Texas sets a national example for statewide emergency management. (Courtesy https://comptroller.texas.gov/ economy)

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Watchdogs Say Trump Broke Law On Ukraine Suspension Of Military Aid

Senate Opens Trump Impeachment Trial



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

The Senate on Thursday officially opened the impeachment trial against President Trump, formally accepting a pair of articles presented by House Democrats.

Seven House Democrats serving as prosecutors — handpicked a day earlier by Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) — solemnly walked together from the House chamber over to the Senate to present the articles of impeachment, in a similar ceremonial display to when they delivered them to the upper chamber the previous night.

Stepping into the well of the Senate, House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) read the resolution naming the seven House prosecutors or "impeachment managers" and informing the Senate that that his chamber had charged Trump with high crimes and misdemeanors.



Schiff, the lead manager, then read the two articles of impeachment — abuse of power and obstruction of Congress — pertaining to Trump's efforts to pressure Ukraine to launch investigations into Democrat Joe Biden and other political rivals.

The ceremony, filled with pomp and circumstance, marked the official handoff of the months-long impeachment process from the House to the Senate, which in the coming weeks will vote on whether to end Trump's presidency.

Later Thursday afternoon, at 2 p.m. ET, the Senate will receive Chief Supreme Court Justice John Roberts, who will preside over the trial, so he can administer an oath to senators.



GOP leaders announced that Roberts will be escorted to the heavily secured chamber by a bipartisan quartet: Sens.

BUSINESS

Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.).

The substance of the trial is expected to start on Tuesday following the Martin Luther King Jr., holiday. It will begin with the Senate passing a resolution that establishes rules and procedures for the trial.

The Senate will then notify the president's defense team, which must be given at least two days' notice.

That means opening arguments from the Democratic managers and Trump's defense team may not occur until later in the week.

The House voted largely along party lines on Wednesday to send the articles of impeachment to the Senate, four weeks to the day after voting to impeach Trump.



Pelosi had declined to immediately send over the articles in an effort to pressure Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) to agree to allow witness testimony during the trial.

But McConnell – with the backing of his Senate GOP conference – refused to budge and maintained that any decisions on witnesses should come after the opening arguments.

Still, each day seems to bring new developments in the Ukraine scandal.

The presentation of the impeachment articles on Thursday came hours after the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the nonpartisan congressional watchdog, released a report concluding that the Trump administration violated the law by withholding military aid to Ukraine last year.

"Faithful execution of the law does not

permit the president to substitute his own policy priorities for those that Congress has enacted into law," the GAO said.



It also came after Lev Parnas, an associate of Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani, provided new documents to House impeachment investigators this week showing efforts to convince Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to announce an investigation into former Vice President Joe Biden as well as apparent communications tracking the movements of former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch.

One handwritten note from Parnas read: "get Zalensky [sic] to announce that the Biden case will be investigated."

Parnas also conducted an interview with MSNBC's Rachel Maddow that aired Wednesday night claiming that "President Trump knew exactly what was going on,"

"He was aware of all of my movements. He- I wouldn't do anything without the consent of Rudy Giuliani or the president," Parnas added.



Sen. Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) said Thursday the Senate should call Parnas to appear as part of the impeachment trial though GOP senators so far have been reluctant to say if Parnas should testify or if any of the new evidence should be considered.

"They are afraid of the truth," Pelosi said of GOP senators. "This is just another avoiding of the facts and the truth on their part."

McConnell, meanwhile, criticized Pelosi for holding a ceremony Wednesday evening to sign the articles of impeachment before the impeachment managers walked over to the Senate to deliver them. Pelosi used multiple pens – as is standard for such ceremonies to sign legislation – and handed them out to the impeachment managers.

"Well, nothing says seriousness and sobriety like handing out souvenirs. As though this were a happy bill-signing instead of the gravest process in our Constitution," McConnell said from the Senate floor. (Courtesy thehill.com)







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