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23 Houston-area children killed



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China's Huawei in unprecedented media blitz as it battles heightened scrutiny

HONG KONG (Reuters) - China's Huawei has launched an unprecedented public relations blitz, thrusting its low-key founder in front of international media as the telecoms firm seeks to ease concern among Western nations bent on shutting it out of their markets.

The move, along with significant personnel change in its 300-strong corporate affairs department, comes as the world's largest telecommunications equipment maker battles fear of Chinese authorities accessing its infrastructure for espionage.

In a 25-minute interview aired late on Sunday - his first with state-controlled China Central Television (CCTV) - Huawei Technologies Co Ltd [HWT.UL] Chief Executive Ren Zhengfei shrugged off the global push against his company, which has repeatedly denied any state links.

"If you do (your product) well, there is no need to worry about sales... It would be stupid on their part if they don't buy," the 74-year-old said in a one-on-one, adding to three group interviews last week with English, Chinese and Japanese media outlets.

"It would be their loss," Ren said, referring to the United States and other Western countries which have restricted Huawei in their markets.

Before last week, Ren had had no more than 10 interviews across media since founding Huawei in 1987, CCTV said. He last met international media at Davos in 2015.

"My public relations department forced me," a smiling Ren told CCTV when asked why he had opened up to the media. "I must make our clients understand us, make our 180,000 employees understand us, come together and get through this tough time."

PERSONAL ATTACK

The comments come as Polish authorities earlier this month arrested a Huawei executive on spying allegations, fuelling Western suspicion against Huawei on national security grounds.

While the Chinese national who was immediately sacked by Huawei denied the allegations, Huawei is bracing for potential fallout from its biggest Western markets as Germany debates whether to follow the United States and allies such as Australia in restricting Huawei's market access.

The firm has been shut out of Australia and New Zealand's markets for fifth-generation (5G) mobile telecoms equipment, while the U.S. President Donald Trump is considering an outright ban on all Huawei equipment with an executive order.

Huawei is nevertheless seeing fast growth, securing 30 contracts to supply 5G equipment and shipping 25,000 5G base stations already - up from 25 contracts in December, Ren told CCTV. A person close to Ren told Reuters that the CEO felt the need to talk to the media after the string of negative events overshadowed the company's business over the past year.

Among the most high-profile events was the arrest in Canada of Ren's daughter - Huawei Chief Financial Officer Meng Wenzhou - over alleged violations of U.S. sanctions on Iran.

"With all the attacks over the past year, now it got personal - when your daughter gets arrested," said the person, who was not authorized to speak with media and so declined to be identified. The arrest was made at the request of the United States, and further strained Sino-U.S. at a time when trade friction was already threatening to undermine ties.

China's economic growth hits 28-year low

Still, with his daughter released on bail and awaiting a U.S. extradition request, Ren, in an interview with international media last week, described Trump as a "great president".



FILE PHOTO: Huawei CEO and founder Ren Zhengfei walks inside Huawei's headquarters in Shenzhen

Report reveals an undeclared North Korean missile base headquarters

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - One of 20 undeclared ballistic missile operating bases in North Korea serves as a missile headquarters, according to a report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) published on Monday.

Intercontinental ballistic missiles are seen at a grand military parade celebrating the 70th founding anniversary of the Korean People's Army at the Kim Il Sung Square in Pyongyang, in this photo released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) February 9, 2018. KCNA/via REUTERS "The Sino-ri missile operating base and the Nodong missiles deployed at this location fit into North Korea's presumed nuclear military strategy by providing an operational-level nuclear or conventional first strike capability," the report said.

The discovery of an undeclared missile headquarters comes three days after U.S. President Donald Trump announced on Friday that he "looks forward" to another summit to discuss denuclearization with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in late February. CSIS, which last reported on the 20 undeclared bases in November, said the Sino-ri base has never been declared by North Korea and as a result "does not appear to be the subject of denuclearization negotiations."

The report noted that missile operating bases would presumably be subject to declaration, verification, and dismantlement in any denuclearization deal.

"The North Koreans are not going to negotiate over things they don't disclose," said Victor Cha, one of the authors of the report. "It looks like they're playing a game. They're still going to have all this operational capability," even if they destroy their disclosed nuclear facilities.

Located 132 miles (212 kilometers) north of the demilitarized zone, the Sino-ri complex is a seven-square-mile (18-square-km) base that plays a key role in developing ballistic missiles capable of reaching South Korea, Japan, and even the U.S. territory of Guam in the Western Pacific, the report said.

Do not hijack Brexit, minister warns Britain's parliament

It houses a regiment-sized unit equipped with Nodong-1 medium-range ballistic missiles, the report added.

The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Satellite images of the base from Dec. 27, 2018 show an entrance to an underground bunker, reinforced shelters and a headquarters, the report said.

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Houston's 'Boss Life' awards support education in low-income communities

Houston rapper and entrepreneur Slim Thug and the Boss Life Foundation hosted the 2019 Boss Life Ball at The Post Oak Hotel ballroom on Sunday, January 20th, 2019.

Proceeds from the event are set to fund scholarships for upcoming high school graduates who are set to enter college or a trade school. The foundation's goal is to raise \$100,000 in order to support students interested in pursuing higher education.

The Boss Life Foundation was founded in 2015 to focus greater attention on research and education, specifically in low income communities.

As part of their community involvement and Hurricane Harvey relief efforts last year, Boss Life gifted one family with a brand new home, and aided nine others with a gift of \$5,000 each

Invited guests of the 2019 Boss Life Ball included Mayor Sylvester Turner, entertainer Lil Duval, rapper Tobe Nwigwe, J. Mulan, DJ Mr. Rogers, jeweler TV Johnny, Chita Craft, attorney Justin Martin and more. The host of the night was TV personality Julissa Bermudez. She assisted Slim Thug in presenting several



awards to members of the Houston community who personify the Boss Life motto of excellence and community service. One of the honorees was Monja Willis, the mother of Houston Rockets' superstar James Harden, who received her award for the community service provided by the 3TheHardenWay foundation. Another honoree was Houston rapper Chamillionaire, who spoke about the lack of diversity in the board rooms and leadership of



Fortune 500 companies, urging more people to continue their education and set goals in order to achieve those positions of power. "We look forward to The BossLife Ball every year to celebrate our leaders, come together as a city, and bring Hollywood to Houston!" said Slim Thug, founder of The Boss Life Foundation.

23 Houston-area children killed by gunfire in the past year, including 3 already in 2019

Close to two dozen children were shot to death in 2018 and so far in 2019, according to a Chron.com analysis. Some of those children died in accidental gunfire, such as the case of 13-year-old Gabriel "Gabe" Fernandez who died Saturday near Pasadena.

Fernandez and a friend were reportedly handling a gun in the 2000 block of Linden Creek Lane when it went off, striking Fernandez in his head. He was rushed to an area hospital, where he was pronounced dead

Around the same time, a 17-year-old boy died by accidental gunfire in the 11600 block of Vinedale Drive in southwest Houston, according to The Gun

Violence Archive.

According to their website, "The Gun Violence Archive is an online archive of gun violence incidents collected from over 2,500 media, law enforcement, government and commercial sources daily in an effort to provide near-real time data about the results of gun violence."

Of the 23 children who have been killed by gunfire in the Houston area, seven of them were listed as accidental shootings, or about 30 percent.

The deaths come as Harris County officials embarked on a months-long billboard campaign to help parents understand the importance of keeping

their firearms safe and locked away.

The billboard itself shows a young child reaching for a loose firearm on top of a cabinet along with the words, "save a life - lock up your guns."

"As a gun owner, mother and prosecutor, I know the responsibility to keep children safe around firearms falls on us all and not doing so can have tragic results that forever destroy families," Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg said. "Using gun locks to safeguard weapons is simple, effective and should be embraced by everyone."

It is unclear if anyone has been charged in those cases.

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Editor's Choice



Italian composer Ennio Morricone conducts a concert in Berlin, Germany, January 21, 2019. REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch



FILE PHOTO: A Wetherspoons's logo is seen at a bar in central London March 13, 2009. REUTERS/Toby Melville/File Photo - D1BEUKMXKXAA/File Photo



Senator Kamala Harris (D-CA) speaks to the media after announcing she will run for president of the United States at Howard University in Washington



A boy from Honduras looks through the U.S. and Mexico border fence after being detained by U.S. Border Patrol in Tijuana, Mexico, January 21, 2019. REUTERS/Shannon Stapleton



FILE PHOTO: General view in a new A320 production line at the Airbus plant in Hamburg, Germany, June 14, 2018. REUTERS/Fabian Bimmer/File Photo



FILE PHOTO: The first Boeing 737 MAX 7 is unveiled in Renton, Washington, U.S. February 5, 2018. REUTERS/Jason Redmond/File Photo



Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari attends a campaign rally ahead of the country's election in Maiduguri



The Crystal Award laureates U.S. conductor Marin Alsop, Naturalist Sir David Attenborough, and Saudi Arabian director Haifaa al-Mansour pose with Hilde Schwab, Chairperson and Co-Founder of Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship and Founder and Executive Chairman of the WEF Klaus Schwab during an opening ceremony of the World Economic

After years of petitioning major retailers to stop selling products that contain Monsanto's toxic glyphosate herbicide it appears that Costco may be the first major store to remove this product from its shelves.

The use of glyphosate, which is the active ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup, has skyrocketed around the globe in spite of research outlining the harmful effects of this herbicide, including liver disease and cancer.

This is big news because in addition to the industrial use of glyphosate, the retail sale of glyphosate direct to consumers for use on home lawns and gardens is also a huge business.

"According to a 2015 article in National Geographic, Roundup is the second-best-selling herbicide in the U.S. for home lawn and garden use. Under a lucrative contract with Monsanto, Scotts Miracle-Gro owns the exclusive right to market Roundup in North America and much of Europe. Scotts distributes about \$154 million worth (5.5 percent of the company's total sales) of Roundup each year to retail giants, including Amazon, Home Depot and Walmart.

The Scotts deal with Monsanto would be a lot less lucrative if Amazon, Home Depot and Walmart took Monsanto's poison off their shelves—something retailers in other countries have already done."

The fact that retailers, or anyone, is having a difficult time deciding whether or not to sell this poison is quite absurd considering the ever-growing body of evidence showing how dangerous this stuff is. Just recently, plaintiff DeWayne Johnson was awarded a jaw-dropping settlement of \$289 million dollars after a California jury found that his terminal cancer was the direct result of exposure to glyphosate.



Costco warehouses will no longer be selling Bayer AG's lawsuit-burdened Roundup glyphosate formulation according to a recent interview with Mom's Across America founder Zen Honeycut, although there is not yet an official statement from Costco yet.

Could Home Depot And Lowe's Be Far Behind In Dropping Roundup?

COSTCO DUMPS ROUNDUP AS SCIENTIFIC FRAUD CONTINUALLY SPOTLIGHTED

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



After pressure from consumers, against a backdrop of Monsanto's now-public scientific fraud and growing lawsuits alleging the glyphosate-based herbicide has been responsible for a range of ill-health conditions, Costco has withdrawn the product. The active public now hopes to demand both Home Depot and Lowes remove Bayer's product from their shelves in what would likely be a crushing blow to the company's bottom line.

Bayer is already feeling the sting of its first multimillion dollar landmark legal loss from August 2018. The jury found Monsanto failed to warn plaintiff Dwayne Johnson of the health hazards of exposure also ruling that they were responsible for "negligent failure" and knew or should have known that their product was "dangerous". Johnson, a 46-years-old father, developed a severe form of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma while working as a California school groundskeeper. His case was a bellwether for more than 10,000 lawsuits which have claims pending against Monsanto and its herbicide product. At the time, news of the

verdict wiped 12 billion euros (\$14 billion) off the German drugmaker's market value - about 20 percent of the total value of its Monsanto acquisition. In December Bayer announced plans to cut 12,000 out of 118,200 jobs worldwide, or roughly 1 in 10 jobs, in hopes of cutting costs. 2016 saw the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) evaluate the herbicide publishing its Glyphosate Issue Paper: Evaluation of Carcinogenic Potential concluding that glyphosate is not likely to cause cancer in humans. A year later The International Agency For Research On Cancer (IARC) issued its report finding glyphosate "probably carcinogenic to humans." Who are we to believe? New research by Charles Benbrook, PhD published in the journal Environmental Sciences Europe is a major black eye for Bayer, Monsanto and the EPA. Benbrook's paper titled How did the US EPA and IARC reach diametrically opposed conclusions on the genotoxicity of glyphosate-based herbicides? reveals damning results. Benbrook found that while IARC referenced only peer-re-

viewed studies and reports available in the public literature, the EPA relied heavily on unpublished regulatory studies commissioned by pesticide manufacturers.



The EPA cited 109 total assays not included in the IARC report, 87% of which were regulatory studies commissioned by industry, and all but one was negative. In addition, IARC's analysis placed considerable weight on formulated glyphosate-based herbicides. Put simply, IARC studied the real life products as they are bought and used off the shelves by consumers. The EPA placed little to no weight on those formulated products instead focusing on just glyphosate and willfully ignoring Roundup's synergistic [toxic] formulation.

Benbrook's findings should both shock and alert humanity to the 'profits over people' agenda still in play with Bayer's product. Monsanto, aided by US regulatory agencies, has employed Big Tobacco's scientific manipulation on new generations yielding arguably more harm when calculating the toll of formulated Roundup and glyphosate-based products on the collective health of countries, along with their respective soil, air and water.

Much like Bayer-Monsanto, Johnson and Johnson is also going through a costly battle over its cancer-causing, asbestos-containing talc products. Recently being denied their bid to overturn a \$4.7 billion baby powder cancer verdict, Johnson and Johnson also faces an uphill battle against the corporate crimes and scientific fraud of their past.

Court discovery documents now show that with regulatory pressure coming down fast upon Johnson and Johnson's asbestos-containing talc powder at the time, a J&J applied research director in a "strictly confidential" 1975 memo to managers of the baby products division stated:



"Our current posture with respect to sponsorship of talc safety studies has been to initiate studies only as dictated by confrontation. This philosophy, so far, has allowed us to neutralize or hold in check data already generated by investigators who question the safety of talc. The principle advantage for this operating philosophy lies in the fact that we minimize the risk of possible self-generation of scientific data which may be politically or scientifically embarrassing."

Continual generations have now endured shorter lifespans and limited health in the name of corporate profits. Instead of putting humanity first, the history books are littered with late lessons from early warnings on blockbuster corporate products that have enjoyed little oversight or caution when ill-health effects are known. In the past, pioneers for truth fought against strong headwinds to take on industry titans with little fanfare, media support or momentum from greater society. The information age has changed the battlegrounds in favor of the individual and ideas aligned with justice. Personal choice for our families and communities can be made with continually new, vital information in near-realtime. Humanity no longer needs to wait until the notoriously slow churning of government regulatory agencies right the wrongs their predecessors allowed.



Viral social media ideas and relentless citizen journalism are the torches and pitchforks of the people. A time is fast approaching when no amount of corporate money will turn back the tide of distaste or silence the true nature of greed and human injury that has been allowed to operate in the corporate-sponsored shadows. As we are currently unraveling the scientific fraud by companies like Johnson & Johnson and global collectives such as Big Pharma and Big Agriculture, we see the same limited and tired playbook being foisted upon humanity. Bayer's current legal troubles and public pushback are symbols of a rising consciousness. The season to unravel and make public corporate wrongdoing is upon us. (Courtesy https://www.jeffereyjaxen.com/blog)

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Granting legal status to the illegal immigrants living in one of Texas' largest metropolitan areas would generate at least \$1.4 billion a year in revenue for state and federal agencies, with Social Security and Medicare being the largest potential beneficiaries, according to an analysis by a Houston business group.

The report, from the Greater Houston Partnership, says that the untapped revenue would be accessible if immigration reform — one that allowed illegal immigrants the chance to work legally and pay taxes — was realized.

Jeff Moseley, the chief executive of the 2,100-member group, said such reform makes sense in the current economy.

"The law is broken, and employers need to comply with the federal law," said Moseley, a former Denton County judge who ran as a Republican. "But at the same time, the law needs to be business friendly, and it needs to recognize that there is a job to be done and we depend heavily on these very important workers."

The partnership's members pay dues rang-



ing from \$550 to \$100,000. The higher dues are paid by executive partners, which include companies such as Reliant Energy, AT&T and ConocoPhillips.

But its report has drawn criticism from advocates of a stricter immigration policy. Maria Martinez, the executive director of the Immigration Reform Coalition of Texas, accused the partnership of being little more than peddlers of economic snake oil for neglecting to account for the financial drain of providing services to illegal immigrants. Martinez's group has supported a ban on so-called sanctuary cities in Texas, citing the need to preserve jobs for citizens and the potential financial benefits of removing illegal immigrants from Texas.

The partnership's revenue assessment is the result of calculating the additional contributions of the estimated 132,000 illegal immigrants in the Houston area if they and their employers had paid taxes on the estimated \$7 billion in salary and wages they earned in 2008. Social Security would receive \$852 million and Medicare would receive \$206 million. The Department of the Treasury and the Texas Workforce Commission would receive about \$336 million and \$33 million respectively.

The report focuses on the Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown metropolitan area, which includes 10 counties. But Patrick Jankowski, the author of the report and the partner-

A Divide Looms On The Payoff Of Legalizing Immigrants

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



ship's vice president for research, said the assumptions and methodology could be applied elsewhere because he used data from public sources — like the Bureau of Labor Statistics — and the Pew Hispanic Center.



The population is an estimate from 2008 based on information from the Pew Hispanic Center, and the analysis is based on that year's earnings.

"If my count on the amount of undocumented workers is too low, the contributions would actually be much higher," Jankowski said.

Martinez from the Immigration Reform Coalition of Texas, said the business group had simply found a way to create a study without including all the costs. "The finest business schools in the country train individuals, entrepreneurs, what have you, the importance of transferring costs upon an unsuspecting public," Martinez said. "That's what's happening obviously here with the Greater Houston Partnership."

Demetrios Papademetriou, the president and co-founder of the Migration Policy Institute, an independent research group in Washington, D.C., said the analysis lacked in two major areas, including that it did not account for how much illegal immigrants cost taxpayers for services. "You cannot

do any accounting exercises unless you work on both sides of the ledger," he said. Papademetriou said the study would have also benefited from analyzing what an "equally qualified" legal resident or citizen was earning in Houston for working the same position as the illegal immigrant.

For that, stakeholders must turn to a six-year-old study conducted by Carole Keeton Strayhorn, the former state comptroller. That analysis said that if Texas went without the estimated 1.4 million illegal immigrants who lived in the state in 2005, it would have lost about \$17.7 billion in gross domestic product that year.

Illegal immigrants also produced more in-state revenue, \$1.58 billion, than what they cost in state services, \$1.16 billion, although local governments lost about \$1.44 billion in health-care and law-enforcement costs that were not reimbursed by the state, according to the study by Strayhorn. A spokesman in the office of Susan Combs, the current comptroller, said the agency had no plans to update the study to show current figures.

Related

Trump Reiterates He Wants DACA As Long As It Comes With Border Wall

DACA Talks Back To Starting Line After Trump Meeting

Washington (CNN) After months of frenzied negotiations, talks on Capitol Hill on immigration policy were suddenly muted Tuesday, as lawmakers returned to face the continued controversy of over President Donald Trump's vulgar remarks and the looming threat of a government shutdown. Despite continued efforts by lawmakers

seeking a deal on the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy, including the introduction of a new bipartisan bill, talks seemed to return to the drawing board in the wake of the President's crude dismissal of the Senate "Gang of Six" bipartisan proposal.



"After the President pretty much be-smirched so many Americans and says they're from 'shithole' countries because they're from Africa and we need more people from Norway, that kind of put a damper on things, yeah," said Minnesota Democratic Rep. Keith Ellison.

"This has turned into an s-show and we need to get back to being a great country," Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-South Carolina, said during a charged Senate Judiciary Committee hearing Tuesday.

"Close this deal," Graham added, speaking directly to Trump.



Most of the effort is now being run through the meetings of the congressional No. 2's -- Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn, Senate Minority Whip Dick Durbin, House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy and House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer.

But despite mostly staff meetings, word of progress was scarce, even as government funding runs out at the end of the week and Democrats have demanded a DACA resolution before another funding extension.

"Everybody's still talking," Hoyer said of the group's progress Tuesday.

"We are working on a meeting tomorrow with the principals (members)," Cornyn said Tuesday. "Nothing is really going to get done until the principles are negotiating face to face. So that is the next step."

McCarthy briefed his Republican colleagues at a closed-door conference meeting Tuesday night, lawmakers said as they left. But details weren't fully discussed -- McCarthy told his conference that the group continued to meet and work on the four areas laid out by President Donald Trump the week prior: DACA, border security, curtailing family-based migration

and ending the diversity lottery. A bill from hardline conservatives in the House was discussed but not agreed to as the path forward, lawmakers said.

Pair Of Lawmakers Unveil Bipartisan DACA Plan

Meanwhile, a bipartisan group of lawmakers unveiled a narrow bill with some border security and a DACA fix. The proposal from Reps. Will Hurd, a Texas Republican in the nation's largest Southern border district, and Pete Aguilar, the Democratic Congressional Hispanic Caucus whip, was introduced with 50 co-sponsors Tuesday evening, which the lawmakers said were split between Democrats and Republicans.



Reps. Will Hurd, at left, a Texas Republican, and Pete Aguilar, a California Democrat.

But leadership and the White House has thus far withheld any support for the bill, and it's not clear how the rank-and-file effort has a path forward after Trump rejected the bipartisan proposal from Durbin and Graham.

"Well (conversations) continue, and there has to be something that the House, the Senate and the President can support," said Colorado Republican Sen. Cory Gardner, who worked in the group that developed the Durbin-Graham bill. "That was the goal all along and that's where we find ourselves now... We just got to keep doing the work."

One of the biggest setbacks, said Florida Republican Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart, wasn't necessarily what Trump said in the meeting, but the fact that it got out. Diaz-Balart was in the meeting where Trump reportedly used the words "shithole countries," but declined to discuss anything that was said in the meeting.

Booker slams DHS secretary's 'amnesia' on Trump's reported 'shithole' comment

"It wasn't helpful that we not only lost a few days, but that, look, in order to get anything (legislated)... you need to be able to sit down and have frank, sometimes difficult conversations without fear that someone will go out there and try to use it," Diaz-Balart told CNN. "So here's the question: Can we reengage?"

He remained optimistic it was possible, saying there was no other option.

"I think Kevin McCarthy has been doing a masterful job on trying to lower the decibels and move forward," Diaz-Balart said. "And I think if we can get back to the negotiating table quietly, calmly, I think we can get it done -- because we have no other option." (Courtesy <http://www.cnn.com>)

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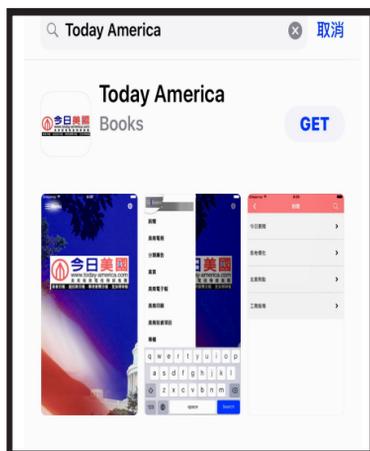
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