

Home, ankle bracelet for Huawei exec

● Meng faces more than 30 years in jail if convicted

● Freed on Can\$10m bail Tuesday night

● While on bail, Meng is required to wear an electronic anklet

AFP | Vancouver, Canada

Accused of sanctions busting and forced to abide by a curfew and wear an ankle bracelet as she awaits possible extradition to the United States, China's "Princess of Huawei" could be said to have fallen spectacularly from grace.

But Meng Wanzhou, heiress to her billionaire father's global tech conglomerate, is managing to surround herself with a few home comforts.

Huawei's chief financial officer was arrested on December 1 on a US warrant for alleged sanctions-breaking dealings with Iran, while changing planes in Vancouver.

She faces more than 30 years in jail if convicted, but was freed on Can\$10 million bail Tuesday



Pending the outcome of the extradition hearing could take months, or even years, if appeals are made in the case



Courtroom sketch of Meng Wanzhou

night pending the outcome of an extradition hearing, which could take months, or even

years, if appeals are made in the case.

The following morning, Meng was spotted answering the front door of her Vancouver house to three visitors bringing flowers who arrived in a sedan with diplomatic plates.

Outside, a handful of local residents walked their dogs past a group of journalists while a security guard watched from a car down the block.

Later, Meng stepped out to offer reporters slices of pizza that she'd had ordered in (they politely declined).

Meng's husband Liu Xiaozong in 2009 bought the six-bedroom house where she must stay in Vancouver's Dunbar neighborhood -- a leafy quiet enclave of single-family homes a few blocks from an urban forest.

While on bail, Meng is required to wear an electronic anklet and a security team paid by her has been assigned to monitor her movements in Vancouver. She also has an 11 pm to 7 am curfew.

Speaking through her lawyer, Meng said she looked forward to spending time in Vancouver with her family, and maybe applying for a doctorate program at the University of British Columbia while the extradition case plays out.



Meng Wanzhou (R), Chief Financial Officer of Huawei Technologies, answers the door for individuals carrying flowers after she was released on bail in Vancouver, British Columbia

Pelosi agrees to term limit to seal US House speaker job



US House Minority leader Nancy Pelosi

Washington, United States

Veteran Democrat Nancy Pelosi took a step Wednesday toward regaining her old job as powerful speaker of the US House of Representatives.

She did so by winning over a group of renegades in the chamber with a pledge to serve only until 2022.

The vote will take place on January 3, when the new House takes power under Democrats who ended Republican control of the chamber in November's mid-term elections.

The new assortment of lawmakers features more women and minorities and also a slew of younger representatives.

Pelosi, 78 and considered a master tactician and fund-raiser, held the job of speaker from 2007 to 2011. She was the first woman to do so.

Meditating monk killed in India leopard attack
New Delhi, India

A Buddhist monk has been killed by a leopard while meditating in a protected forest for the big cats.

Rahul Walke Bodhi was seated beneath a tree in Ramdegi forest in western India for morning prayers when the leopard pounced.

The 35-year-old monk was fatally injured.

Two other devotees meditating with him at the time escaped unscathed to alert police, who started a search for his body. "His badly mauled body was found further into the forest, indicating the animal tried to drag it along," Krishna Tiwari, a senior police officer in the region, said.

US claims Chinese intelligence behind massive Marriott hack

Washington, United States

The United States said Wednesday that China was behind the massive hack of data from hotel giant Marriott.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo confirmed to Fox News' "Fox & Friends" programme that the government believes China masterminded the Marriott data theft.

"They have committed cyber attacks across the world," he told the show.

The Marriott hackers, who stole detailed data on some

500 million customers of the world's largest hotel company, are believed to have been working for China's Ministry of State Security.

Washington sees them as part of an espionage effort that has targeted health insurers and the US civil service employment database. On Wednesday, US slapped a \$2.8 million penalty on a Chinese energy company, Yantai Jereh Oilfield Services Group, for violating US sanctions by shipping US-made equipment to Iran.

China probes second Canadian

Beijing, China

A second Canadian citizen is reportedly being investigated on suspicion of endangering national security, adding to tensions after Canada's arrest of a top Chinese telecom executive on a US request.

Michael Spavor, a China-based business consultant who facilitates trips to North Korea, was placed under investigation Monday by state security in the northeast city of Dandong, the official Liaoning province news agency said. His disappearance

emerged after former Canadian diplomat Michael Kovrig was detained by state security during a visit to Beijing -- also on Monday and under similar suspicions.

Kovrig's arrest was seen by experts as retaliation over Canada's arrest of Meng Wanzhou, the chief financial officer of Chinese telecom giant Huawei, at Washington's request.

Spavor is suspected of "engaging in activities that harm China's national security", the Chinese news agency added.

Based in Liaoning province, which borders North Korea,

he has met with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and famously arranged some of retired NBA star Dennis Rodman's visits there.

The Canadian govt had earlier reported that Spavor was missing in China after being questioned.

The Beijing News daily has reported that Kovrig, who works for the International Crisis Group think tank, was under investigation on suspicion of "engaging in activities that endanger China's national security;" -- a phrase often used in espionage cases.

Woman slams baby ads after stillbirth

Washington, United States

A woman whose child was stillborn has slammed the targeted advertising of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram after she returned home from the hospital and kept getting baby-related sales pitches.

Gillian Brockell, a journalist with *The Washington Post*, said that if those social media giants were clever enough to know she was pregnant they should also have figured out she'd lost the baby.

She shared the bad news last

month in a tweet.

"I know you knew I was pregnant," Brockell wrote to the companies in a letter posted Wednesday on *The Washington Post* and *Twitter*.

"It's my fault, I just couldn't resist those Instagram hashtags -- #30weekspregnant, #baby-bump. And, silly me! I even clicked once or twice on the maternity wear ads Facebook served up."

"But didn't you also see me googling 'braxton hicks vs. pre-term labor' and 'baby not moving'?", Brockell added.

"Did you not see my three days of social media silence, uncommon for a high-frequency user like me?"

"And then the announcement post with keywords like 'heartbroken' and 'problem' and 'stillborn' and the 200 teardrop emoticons from my friends?"

"Is that not something you could track?"

Facebook's vice-president of advertising Rob Goldman responded to Brockell apologetically, lamenting her "painful experience with our products."



Representative picture

N. Korea food production down in 2018: UN body

Seoul, South Korea

Food production has fallen this year in isolated, nuclear-armed North Korea, according to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization.

Rice and maize are the North's main staples, but rice output was expected to be below average because of erratic rains and low irrigation supplies, the FAO said in its quarterly report.

Unfavourable weather conditions also diminished maize

yields, it added.

As a result the country would need to import 641,000 tonnes of food in the coming year, up from 456,000 tonnes this year, when it bought 390,000 tonnes and received 66,000 tonnes in food aid.

There was a widespread lack of access to food in the North, it said in the document.

"Food insecurity continues to remain a key concern, with conditions aggravated by the below-average 2018 main season output," it said.