

WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

Obama and Trump hurled insults, now trade pleasantries

WASHINGTON — Did anyone see it coming, the apparent new rapport between President Barack Obama and President-elect Donald Trump?

Just a few months ago they were regularly flinging insults back and forth. Today they're trading phone calls and pleasantries.

Apparently, membership in one of the world's most exclusive clubs, the club of U.S. presidents, has a way of changing things.

On Wednesday, Trump talked about letting bygones be bygones.

"I've now gotten to know President Obama. I really like him," he said on NBC's "Today" after Time magazine announced him as its Person of the Year. "We have, I think I can say, at least for myself, I can't speak for him, but we have a really good chemistry together. We talk."



AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais
President Barack Obama meets with President-elect Donald Trump in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington in November.

Aid groups descend on Indonesia quake zone; deaths reach 102

MEUREUDU, Indonesia — Humanitarian organizations descended on Indonesia's Aceh province today as the local disaster agency called for urgent food supplies and officials raced to assess the full extent of damage from an earthquake that killed more than 100 people.

Volunteers and nearly 1,500 rescue personnel concentrated their search on the hard-hit town of Meureudu in Pidie Jaya district near the epicenter of the magnitude 6.5 quake that hit before dawn Wednesday. But the small number of heavy excavators on the scene meant progress was slow. Humanitarian assessment teams fanned out to other areas of the district.

National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said the death toll had risen to 102 and warned it could increase. Search teams were using devices that detect mobile phone signals within a 100-meter (yard) radius to help guide their efforts as they scoured the rubble. The disaster agency said more than 750 people were injured.

Those killed included very young children and the elderly. Mohammad Jafar, 60, said his daughter, granddaughter and grandson died in the quake but he was resigned to it as "God's will."

He was getting ready for morning prayers when the earthquake hit. He said he and his wife managed to push their way out through the debris. Another man said he found his 9-year-old daughter alive beneath a broken wall at his neighbor's house.

a mere 3,365 miles away on Route 20 westbound.

A similar sign will go up in Newport Thursday marking the same distance, 3,365 miles, to Boston should drivers want to travel the entire way eastbound on Route 20.

The road passes through 12 states on its path between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Portland OKs tax on companies with high-paid CEOs

PORTLAND — The Portland City Council has approved a first-of-its-kind tax on public companies that pay their chief executives vastly more than they pay an average worker.

The Oregonian reports that on Wednesday the council approved the plan, which targets publicly traded companies whose chief executives report salaries at least 100 times higher than the salary of a median worker.

Under the ordinance, a company with a CEO-to-worker ratio of at least 100-to-1 will pay a surcharge equal to 10 percent of the amount it pays for Portland's business tax.

Officials expect the tax to raise \$2.5 million year once it starts in January 2017.

Commissioner Steve Novick says he hopes the tax will discourage companies from paying disproportionate salaries to their CEOs.

ister Sergei Ryabkov as saying that Moscow and Washington are "close to reaching an understanding" on Aleppo but warned against "high expectations."

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met on Wednesday in Germany but didn't release any statements.

Ryabkov said the Kerry-Lavrov talks were extensive but said a final deal has not been worked out yet.

S. Korea's parliament sets up presidential impeachment vote

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea's opposition-controlled parliament introduced an impeachment motion today against President Park Geun-hye, setting up a likely vote Friday on whether to suspend her powers over a huge political scandal.

A parliamentary official reported the motion to a plenary session, which means an impeachment vote must take place between 24 and 72 hours. Friday is the final day of the current parliamentary regular session.

The motion needs two-thirds approval in the 300-seat single-chamber parliament to pass. The opposition and anti-Park independents have 172 seats and they appear to have secured enough support from ruling party dissenters to pass an impeachment, according to political observers.

If the vote passes, the country's Constitutional Court will have up to 180 days to determine whether to formally end Park's presidency. During that time Park would be suspended as president but not removed, with her duties, including commander in chief of South Korea's 630,000-member military, temporarily transferred to the prime minister until the court reaches a decision on whether her impeachment is constitutional.

Prosecutors say they believe Park colluded in the criminal activities of a longtime confidante to manipulate government affairs and extort businesses. The confidante, Choi Soon-sil, and two of Park's former aides allegedly linked to the scandal have been indicted. Park, who has immunity from prosecution while in office, has refused to meet with prosecutors investigating the scandal.

Signs to mark eastern and western ends of longest US road

BOSTON — Signs marking the eastern and western ends of the longest continuous road in the U.S. are being unveiled on both coasts.

Historic U.S. Route 20 runs between Boston and Newport, Oregon.

On Thursday, Massachusetts highway officials plan to install a mileage sign on the eastern end of the road in Boston's Kenmore Square. The sign will inform motorists that Newport, Oregon, is

Russian official: Russia, US near deal on Aleppo cease-fire

MOSCOW — A Russian deputy foreign minister says Russia is close to reaching a deal with the United States on a cease-fire for the besieged Syrian city of Aleppo.

The Syrian government and its ally Russia have rejected previous calls for truce for the war-torn city, keeping up the military offensive that has squeezed and forced rebels to retreat in several areas.

Russian news agencies today quoted Deputy Foreign Min-

Raging Oakland warehouse fire trapped victims in smoke

OAKLAND, Calif. — The fire that killed 36 people during a party at an Oakland warehouse started on the ground floor and quickly raged, with smoke billowing into the second level and trapping victims whose only escape route was through the flames, federal investigators said Wednesday.

"The occupants were consumed by smoke before they could get out of the building," said Jill Snyder, special agent in charge of the San Francisco office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

She also confirmed there were no sprinklers or fire alarm system in the building.

Officials previously said recovery efforts at the site had ended with the death toll remaining at 36.

Snyder reiterated that investigators were examining a refrigerator and other possibilities as a potential source of the fire but had not reached any conclusions. Investigators have not found evidence of arson, but she said they have also not ruled it out.

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100 Employment Information

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Published: December 8th, 2016

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