WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

Washington state denies sublease for coal export terminal

SEATTLE — Washington's outgoing public lands commissioner said Tuesday he is refusing to allow the state's aquatic lands to be used for a major coal-export terminal along the Columbia River. But the company behind the proposal insisted the decision would have no effect on its plans.

Millennium Bulk Terminals proposed building a terminal in Longview that would handle up to 44 million metric tons of coal a year. The coal would arrive by train from Montana, Wyoming and other states to be stored and loaded on ships for export to Asia.

Outgoing Commissioner Peter Goldmark announced Tuesday that he has rejected a request from Northwest Alloys — originally made in 2010 — to sublease the state's aquatic lands to Millennium Bulk Terminals for the project, which is on the site of a former aluminum smelter. His successor, Hilary Franz, has repeatedly said she opposes leasing state lands for fossil fuel projects.

Environmentalists greeted the decision with joy — one called it the "final nail in the coffin" for the project as proposed. But in an emailed statement, Millennium Bulk Terminals Chief Executive Bill Chapman cited a May 2013 letter from the state's Department of Natural Resources as evidence that the state had already recognized the company "as the operator of the port facility." He suggested Goldmark's announcement was merely a symbolic gesture.

"The decision today has no effect on the project moving forward and we look forward to permitting and operating a world-class port in Longview that will provide family wage jobs and tax revenues right where they are needed in Cowlitz County," Chapman said.

Gov. Brown's chief of staff resigns

SALEM — Oregon Gov. Kate Brown's chief of staff, Kristen Leonard, has resigned, effective only a day before the 2017 legislative session begins, Brown said Tuesday.

In a statement, Brown noted that Leonard began her job in late 2015, committing to serve for one year, and extended it to help oversee the completion of Brown's budget proposal. The resignation is effective Jan. 31.

Willamette Week recently reported that Leonard and her husband, Kevin Neely, had a financial interest in a book-keeping firm whose biggest client was Brown's re-election campaign, and that Neely's software company had a \$214,000 state contract up for renewal this year.

Brown spokesman Chris Pair said the resignation is unrelated to the reports.

Brown's communications office tweeted recently that Leonard had officially made the financial disclosures months before the press reports. The tweet provided a link to the information on the Oregon Government Ethics Commission website.

Former Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber resigned in 2015 amid suspicion that his fiancee, Cylvia Hayes, used her relationship with him to earn lucrative consulting contracts. The couple has denied wrongdoing. Brown, then Secretary of State, became governor, and on Nov. 8 won the gubernatorial election to finish the last two years of his term.

Pair said that in general, there is heightened sensitivity about transparency and preventing conflicts of interest since Brown assumed the state's top office.

The chief of staff manages employees in the governor's office and works with state agencies, other offices, and legislative leaders.

"Kristen executed this job with integrity and distinction, and I am grateful for her dedicated service," Brown said.

Trump questions US intelligence as governing challenges loom

NEW YORK — His inauguration less than three weeks away, President-elect Donald Trump is raising new doubts about the nation's intelligence community, tweeting fresh criticism at the same people who will help inform his most sensitive decisions once he takes office.



Filipino inmates remain in their cell at the North Cotabato District Jail in Kidapawan city, Cotabato Province, southern Philippines, after a massive jailbreak today. In one of the country's largest jailbreaks in recent years, nearly 160 inmates escaped after suspected Muslim rebels attacked the jail before dawn Wednesday killing at least six people as pursuing government forces traded fire with gunmen, officials said.

interference in the 2016 election had been delayed. "Perhaps more time needed to build a case. Very strange!" he wrote, using quote marks around the word "intelligence."

Trump's tweet, in line with repeated criticism of his nation's intelligence leaders, caused confusion among intelligence officials, who said there was no delay in the briefing schedule.

The fresh clash came as Trump took further steps to fill his Cabinet and key White House positions, with his attention shifting toward the challenges of governing.

Trump's plans for repealing President Barack Obama's signature health care law are expected to be the focus as Vice President-elect Mike Pence and secretary of state choice Rex Tillerson meet with top Republicans on Capitol Hill today.

Obama, Pence to Capitol as health care overhaul fight begins

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama is traveling to the Capitol to give congressional Democrats advice on how to combat the Republican drive to dismantle his health care overhaul. Vice President-elect Mike Pence is meeting with GOP lawmakers to discuss the best way to send Obama's cherished law to its graveyard and replace it with — well, something.

The separate strategy sessions were coming on the second day of the new, GOP-led Congress. In 16 days, Republican Donald Trump replaces Obama at the White House, putting the party's longtime goal of annulling much of the 2010 health care overhaul within reach.

Plenty of questions remain, including the repeal bill's details, costs and when it would take effect. Republicans also face divisions over the next step - replacement legislation - that will likely take months or years to resolve.

While they can hardly prevent the GOP repeal effort from proceeding, the president and House and Senate Democrats were meeting today to discuss how to best defend a law that's extended health insurance coverage to 20 million Americans and which Obama considers one of the proudest pillars of his legacy.

"The more the people understand what's included in the Affordable Care Act and how they benefit from it, the more popular the program is, and the harder it is for Republicans to have political support for tearing it down," White House spokesman Josh Earnest told reporters Tuesday, using the law's formal name.

Suspected rebels storm Philippine jail, 158 inmates flee

KIDAPAWAN, Philippines - More than 100 suspected Muslim rebels stormed a jail in the southern Philippines before dawn today, allowing 158 inmates to escape in what officials said was the biggest jailbreak in the country

being returned to the facility, said Senior Inspector Xavier Solda, spokesman for the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology.

Solda said the heavily armed gunmen emerged from a forest and attacked the North Cotabato District Jail in Kidapawan under the cover of darkness. Kidapawan city in Cotabato Province is about 930 kilometers (580 miles) southeast of the capital Manila.

"To my knowledge, this is the biggest jailbreak in the history" of the bureau, Solda said in a telephone interview.

Acting Provincial Jail Warden Supt. Peter John Bongngat Jr. said one of the about 20 prison guards on duty was killed and an inmate was wounded in an initial gunbattle.

Official: Charles Manson alive amid report he's hospitalized

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. - Amid reports that Charles Manson has been taken from his California prison cell to a hospital, a state corrections official would confirm only that the 82-year-old killer and cult leader was still alive.

Both TMZ and the Los Angeles Times reported Tuesday that Manson had been hospitalized. TMZ said he had been taken to a medical center in Bakersfield, about 60 miles south of Corcoran State Prison where Manson was being held.

Late Tuesday night, three vans from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation were parked outside Bakersfield's Mercy Hospital Downtown, where state prisoners have been treated before.

But CDCR spokeswoman Terry Thornton said only that Manson is still alive and still assigned to the prison in Corcoran. She declined to say whether he was at the hospital in Bakersfield, citing safety privacy laws prohibit her from discussing an inmate's medical situation.

Manson was convicted of orchestrating the 1969 murders of pregnant actress Sharon Tate and six others.

Cruise company Carnival gets personal with concierge tech

LAS VEGAS - What if your room on a cruise ship were to unlock automatically as you approach, or if the wait staff could bring your favorite cocktail before you even ask?

Carnival Corp., the operator of such cruise lines as Princess, Holland America and Carnival, wants to make that happen so it can get cozier with its guests and make cruises even more personalized.

Carnival is using the CES gadget show in Las Vegas today to unveil new concierge technology designed to help crew members anticipate and respond to passengers' needs. It will rely on sensors and wearable trackers, and is scheduled to debut on the Regal Princess cruise ship in November.

The leisure-cruise industry is playing catch-up with travel peers like hotels and airlines, which now let you unlock rooms with a smartwatch or fly with a boarding pass on your phone.

Personalization is important as cruise ships get bigger and come across as impersonal, said Mike Driscoll, editor-in-chief of Cruise Week, an industry publication. Personalization can also help cruise companies attract more first-timers, including tech-savvy millennials.

Turkey identifies club gunman; **Erdogan speaks to nation**

ISTANBUL - Turkey has identified the gunman in the Istanbul nightclub massacre, the foreign minister said today as the president vowed that the country won't surrender to terrorists or become divided.

The gunman, who killed 39 people during New Year's celebrations at the Reina club, is still at large. But Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said authorities had identified the man, without providing details.

"The identity of the person who carried out the attack on the Reina nightclub has been established," Cavusoglu told Anadolu in a live televised interview.

Turkish police, meanwhile, detained at least five suspected

Trump charged Tuesday on Twitter, without evidence, that the timing of an upcoming intelligence briefing on suspected Russian

Six of the inmates were killed in firefights with pursuing police and army troops, while eight others have been caught and were

Islamic State group militants believed to be linked to the attack, the state-run news agency reported.





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