

WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

Kim fires off insults at Trump and hints at weapons test

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has lobbed a string of insults at President Donald Trump, calling him a “mentally deranged U.S. dotard” and hinting at a frightening new weapon test.

The fact that it's the first time for a North Korean leader to issue such a direct statement has raised the international nuclear standoff to a new level.

Kim says in his Friday statement that Trump will “pay dearly” for his recent threat to destroy North Korea. Kim calls Trump “a rogue and a gangster fond of playing with fire.”

Kim's foreign minister later said North Korea may test a hydrogen bomb in the Pacific Ocean to fulfill Kim's vow to take the “highest-level” action against the United States.

Trump piles on new economic sanctions against North Korea

NEW YORK — President Donald Trump has added economic action to his fiery military threats against North Korea, authorizing stiffer new sanctions in response to the Koreans' nuclear weapons advances.

Trump's latest steps to punish foreign companies that deal with the North was the latest salvo in a U.S.-led campaign to isolate and impoverish the government of Kim Jong Un until it halts the missile and nuclear tests. Trump announced the measures Thursday as he met leaders from South Korea and Japan, the nations most immediately imperiled by North Korea's threats of a military strike.

“North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile development is a grave threat to peace and security in our world and it is unacceptable that others financially support this criminal, rogue regime,” Trump said as he joined Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and South Korean President Moon Jae-in for lunch. “Tolerance for this disgraceful practice must end now.”

Hours later, Kim branded Trump as “deranged” and warned that he will “pay dearly” for his threat to “totally destroy” the North if it attacks. The rare statement from the North Korean leader responded to Trump's combative speech days earlier where he not only issued the warning of potential obliteration for the isolated nation, but also mocked the North's young autocrat as a “Rocket Man” on a “suicide mission.”

Puerto Rico faces weeks without electricity after Maria

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — The eye of Hurricane Maria was nearing the Turks and Caicos early Friday as Puerto Rico sought to recover from the storm's devastation.

Two days after Maria ravaged Puerto Rico, flooding towns, crushing homes and killing at least two people, millions on the island faced the dispiriting prospect of weeks and perhaps months



Korean Central News Agency/Korea News Service
North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, center, visits a fruit farm in Kwail County, South Hwanghae Province, North Korea. Kim, in an extraordinary and direct rebuke, called President Donald Trump ‘deranged.’

without electricity. The storm knocked out the entire grid across the U.S. territory of 3.4 million, leaving many without power.

The loss of power left residents hunting for gas canisters for cooking, collecting rainwater or steeling themselves mentally for the hardships to come in the tropical heat. Some contemplated leaving the island.

“You cannot live here without power,” said Hector Llanos, a 78-year-old retired New York police officer who planned to leave Saturday for the U.S. mainland to live there temporarily.

Like many Puerto Ricans, Llanos does not have a generator or gas stove. “The only thing I have is a flashlight,” he said, shaking his head. “This is never going to return to normal.”

Search for Mexico quake survivors enters day 4, some success

MEXICO CITY — Survivors are still being pulled from rubble in Mexico City as rescue operations stretch into a fourth day Friday, spurring hope among desperate relatives gathered at the sites of buildings collapsed by a magnitude 7.1 earthquake.

Mexico's federal police said several people were lifted out of the debris of two buildings Thursday. Rescuers removed or broke through slabs until they found cracks that allowed workers to wiggle through to reach the victims, then lift them to safety. The city government said 60 people in all had been rescued since the quake hit at midday Tuesday.

Still, with the hours passing, fewer of the living were being found, and the official death toll rose to 273 in Mexico City and several nearby states, with 137 in the capital.

The time was nearing when rescuers would be replaced by bulldozers to clear rubble, but officials went to great pains to say it was still a rescue operation.

Mexico shocked by news: Girl trapped in rubble didn't exist

MEXICO CITY — Hour after excruciating hour, Mexicans were transfixed by dramatic efforts to reach a young girl thought buried in the rubble of a school destroyed by a magnitude 7.1 earthquake. She reportedly wiggled her fingers, told rescuers her name and said there were others trapped near her. Rescue workers called for tubes, pipes and other tools to reach her.

News media, officials and volunteer rescuers all repeated the story of “Frida Sofia” with a sense of urgency that made it a national drama, drawing attention away from other rescue efforts across the quake-stricken city and leaving people in Mexico and abroad glued to their television sets.

But she never existed, Mexican navy officials now say. “We want to emphasize that we have no knowledge about the report that emerged with the name of a girl,” navy Assistant Secretary Angel Enrique Sarmiento said Thursday. “We never had any knowledge about that report, and we do not believe — we are sure — it was not a reality.”

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