

WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

MLK III calls out Trump on alleged immigration comments

WASHINGTON — Martin Luther King Jr.'s eldest son is calling out President Donald Trump following accusations the president used a vulgarity to describe African countries during a meeting last week and expressed a preference for immigrants from countries like Norway.

Martin Luther King III spoke in Washington today, the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

King says: "When a president insists that our nation needs more citizens from white states like Norway, I don't even think we need to spend any time even talking about what it says and what it is."

He says: "We got to find a way to work on this man's heart."

Referring to former Alabama Gov. George Wallace, King added: "George Wallace was a staunch racist and we worked on his heart and ultimately George Wallace transformed."

Trump spent Sunday defending himself anew against accusations that he is racist.

"No, No. I'm not a racist," Trump said, after reporters asked him to respond to those who think he is. "I am the least racist person you have ever interviewed. That I can tell you."

Trump also denied making the statements attributed to him, but avoided the details of what he did or did not say.

"Did you see what various senators in the room said about my comments?" he asked, referring to lawmakers who were meeting with him in the Oval Office on Thursday when Trump is said to have made the comments. "They weren't made."

Trump stands accused of using "shithole" to describe African countries during an immigration meeting with a bipartisan group of six senators. The president, in the meeting, also questioned the need to admit more Haitians to the U.S., according to people who were briefed on the conversation but were not authorized to describe the meeting publicly.

Trump commented as Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois, a Democrat, was presenting details of a compromise immigration plan that included providing \$1.6 billion for a first installment of the president's long-sought border wall.



Pasco County Fire Rescue

Flames engulf a boat ferrying patrons to a casino ship off the Florida Gulf Coast.

Woman dies after fire on casino boat off Florida's coast

TAMPA, Fla. — A casino company said today it never had a problem with the shuttle boat that erupted in flames off Florida's Gulf Coast, leading to the death of a female passenger.

Tropical Breeze Casino spokeswoman Beth Fifer said the company does not know what caused Sunday's blaze, which gutted the shuttle boat and forced about 50 passengers to jump into the chilly waters off Port Richey.

"We are deeply saddened for the loss of our passenger, the 14 injured and anyone else who was affected by this tragedy," Fifer said.

Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point spokesman Kurt Conover said today that the passenger arrived at the hospital's emergency room at 10 p.m. Sunday and died shortly afterward. He said she had apparently gone home after the fire but became ill. Eight other passengers were treated at the hospital and released.

Helicopter video taken by WTSP-TV early today shows the boat was burned down to its hull, with only an American flag on its bow uncharred.

The shuttle boat regularly carries people back and forth from the Tropical Breeze's off-shore casino, about a 45-minute ride into international waters. There, passengers can play games such as black jack, which is illegal at non-Indian casinos in Florida, and roulette, which is illegal statewide.

Officials said the shuttle vessel was headed out to the casino ship at the time of the fire. It caught fire about 4 p.m. Sunday close to shore near residential neighborhoods.

Twin bombings in Baghdad kill 38, shatter post-IS calm

BAGHDAD — Twin suicide bombings rocked Baghdad today, killing 38 people in the deadliest attack since Iraq declared victory over the Islamic State group last month, and raising fears ahead of national elections planned for May.

The bombers targeted the bustling Tayran Square, in the heart of the capital, setting off their explosive vests among laborers and street vendors during the morning rush hour. More than 100 people were wounded, according to police and hospital officials.

No one has claimed the attacks, but they bore the hallmarks of IS.

Iraqi forces have driven IS from all the territory the extremists once held, but the militant group has proven resilient in the past and is likely to continue carrying out insurgent-style attacks. That could undermine Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, who hopes to extend the country's newfound sense of pride and unity in order to lead a diverse coalition to power in May.

Iraqi Parliament Speaker Salim al-Jabouri denounced the attack as a "cowardly act against innocent people" and called on the government to take all necessary security measures. Al-Abadi met security officials in charge of Baghdad, ordering them to root out militant sleeper cells.

Hawaii missile-alert error reveals uncertainty about how to react

HONOLULU — When Jonathan Scheuer got an alert on his phone of a ballistic missile headed for Hawaii, he and his family didn't know what to do. They went to their guest bedroom, then decided it would be safer on the ground floor of their Honolulu home.

"What do we do?" he wondered. "Where do we go?"

Residents and tourists alike remained rattled a day after the mistaken alert was blasted out to cellphones across the islands with a warning to seek immediate shelter and the ominous statement: "This is not a drill."

The blunder that caused more than a million people in Hawaii to fear that they were about to be struck by a nuclear missile fed skepticism Sunday about the government's ability to keep them informed in a real emergency.

The erroneous warning was sent during a shift change at the state's Emergency Management Agency when someone doing a routine test hit the live alert button, state officials said.

They tried to assure residents there would be no repeat false alarms. The agency changed protocols to require that two people send an alert and made it easier to cancel a false alarm — a process that took nearly 40 minutes.

The error sparked a doomsday panic across the islands known as a laid-back paradise. Par-

ents clutched their children, huddled in bathtubs and said prayers. Students bolted across the University of Hawaii campus to take cover in buildings. Drivers abandoned cars on a highway and took shelter in a tunnel. Others resigned themselves to a fate they could not control and simply waited for the attack.

US wants to cut money for Palestinian refugees

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration is preparing to withhold tens of millions of dollars from the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, cutting the year's first contribution by more than half or perhaps entirely, and making additional donations contingent on major changes to the organization, according to U.S. officials.

President Donald Trump hasn't made a final decision, but appears more likely to send only \$60 million of the planned \$125 million first installment to the U.N. Relief and Works Agency, said the officials, who weren't authorized to publicly discuss the matter and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Future contributions would require the agency, facing heavy Israeli criticism, to demonstrate significant changes in operations, they said, adding that one suggestion under consideration would require the Palestinians to first re-enter peace talks with Israel.

The State Department said Sunday that "the decision is under review. There are still delib-

erations taking place." The White House did not immediately respond to questions about the matter.

The administration could announce its decision as early as Tuesday, the officials said. The plan to withhold some of the money is backed by Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Defense Secretary James Mattis, who offered it as a compromise to demands for more drastic measures by U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, the officials said.

Cranberries singer O'Riordan dead at 46

LONDON — Dolores O'Riordan, lead singer of Irish band The Cranberries, died suddenly today. She was 46.

O'Riordan died in London, where she was recording, publicist Lindsey Holmes said. The cause of death wasn't immediately available.

Holmes said the singer's family is "devastated" by the news.

Formed in Limerick, Ireland, The Cranberries became international stars in the 1990s with hits including "Zombie" and "Linger" that fused the alternative rock edge with poppy tunefulness.

The band split up in 2003 but reunited several years later. The Cranberries released the acoustic album "Something Else" in 2017 and had been due to tour Europe and North America. The tour was cut short because O'Riordan was suffering from back problems.

In 2014, O'Riordan was accused of assaulting three police officers and a flight attendant during a flight from New York to Ireland. She pleaded guilty and was fined \$6,600.

2 Koreas discuss Northern art troupe's visit during Olympics

SEOUL, South Korea — Officials from the two Koreas met today to work out details about North Korea's plan to send an art troupe to the South during next month's Winter Olympics, as the rivals tried to follow up on the North's recent agreement to cooperate in the Games in a conciliatory gesture following months of nuclear tensions.

In a development that still shows their bitter animosities, the North issued a veiled threat on Sunday indicating it could cancel its plans to send an Olympic delegation to protest what it called South Korea's "sordid acts of chilling" the prospect for inter-Korean reconciliation. The warning is relatively milder than the North's typical fiery, bellicose rhetoric and it didn't appear to put the recent signs of warming Korean ties in imminent danger.

"They should know that train and bus carrying our delegation to the Olympics are still in Pyongyang," the North's official Korean Central News Agency said. "The South Korean authorities had better ponder over what unfavorable results may be entailed by their impolite behavior."

KCNA criticized the remarks by South Korean President Moon Jae-in last week that credited President Donald Trump for getting the North to sit down with the South. It also accused Seoul of letting Washington deploy strategic assets like an aircraft carrier near the Korean Peninsula on the occasion of the Olympics. The United States is beefing up its presence around the peninsula in what it describes as routine training and scheduled upgrades.

During today's talks at the border village of Panmunjom, the two Koreas discussed when and where the North's art troupe would perform in South Korea and under what specific stage conditions, Seoul's Unification Ministry said in a statement. The talks were to continue later today, it said.

TV SCHEDULE MONDAY JANUARY 15. Includes logos for The Daily Astorian and TV, and a detailed grid of TV listings for various channels and times from 6 PM to 11:30 PM.