

Stray bag of toys prompts scare at Trump Tower

NEW YORK (AP) — A stray backpack prompted the partial evacuation of Trump Tower on Tuesday, though bomb squad technicians quickly determined the unattended bag contained children's toys and was harmless.

Video posted online showed people running through the Manhattan skyscraper's public lobby as uniformed police officers waved them toward the exits.

Stephen Davis, the New York Police Department's top spokesman, said the bomb squad gave the "all clear" around 5 p.m. after examining the backpack left near the entrance to Niketown, a store in the building.

President-elect Donald Trump lives in the tower and has his offices there, though he was at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida when the



AP Photo/Craig Ruttle
New York firefighters, police officers and others stand outside Trump Tower lobby in New York, Tuesday. Police cleared the lobby to investigate an unattended backpack, only to find it contained children's toys.

bag was discovered.

His newly appointed press secretary, Sean Spicer, Tweeted that officials were "back to work" following the "false alarm."

Shoppers and visitors to Trump's namesake skyscraper described a chaotic scramble.

"It was hysteria," said Andy Martin, a 16-year-old from the New York City

suburb of Huntington.

"Police were shouting and telling people to leave."

Trump Tower, in addition to being the president-elect's home and business headquarters, contains residences, restaurants, retail stores — and a lobby that by law is open to the public to visitors daily from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Police receive about 42

reports every day of so-called suspicious packages, though that number can surge depending on current events. In the days after a pressure cooker bomb exploded earlier this year in New York City, police responded to more than 800 calls of "suspicious packages."

UPS expects 1.3M returns in one day

WASHINGTON (AP) — Christmas is the season of giving, and January the month of returns.

UPS expects to deliver 1.3 million packages back to retailers on Jan. 5, celebrated by the delivery service, but no one else, as "National Returns Day."

Surging online sales have been followed by a surge of returns by air and if UPS is right, it will be its busiest returns day ever, topping last year's 1 million.

By the end of January's first week, the Atlanta company said Tuesday that it

will likely have returned 5.8 million packages, topping last year's 5 million, which was also a record.

A survey by the National Retail Federation estimated that more than \$260 billion worth of merchandise was returned 2015.

Execution stay lifted for ex-soldier in military prison

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — A Kansas federal judge has lifted a stay of execution for a former soldier sentenced to death for two killings and a series of rapes, inching the man closer to becoming the military's first death sentence carried out in more than a half-century.

U.S. District Judge J. Thomas Marten last week sided with the U.S. government in denying a bid by former Fort Bragg, North Carolina, soldier Ronald A. Gray to block the military from pressing ahead with the

execution by lethal injection.

Since a military court sentenced him to die in 1988, Gray has been held at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where the military carried out its last execution when it hanged Army Pvt. John Bennett in 1961 for raping and trying to kill an 11-year-old Austrian girl.

No known execution date has been set for Gray as of Tuesday. Though Gray's attorneys have said in recent court filings that they plan to ask military courts to intervene, that status of those appeals was unclear Tuesday.

Gray, 51, is among six people on the U.S. military's death row, according to the Death Penalty Information Center, a nonprofit research group that opposes capital punishment. Those inmates, whose appeals are pending, include Nidal Hasan, an Army psychiatrist who killed 13 people in a 2009 shooting rampage at a Texas Army base.



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