VOA NEWS

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From Washington, this is VOA news. I'm Christopher Cruise reporting.

America's former first lady Barbara Bush has died at age 92.

A family statement says she died Tuesday evening with her family close by.

The family has given few details on her health, but said she suffered in recent years from congestive heart failure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

She recently declined to seek further medical treatment as her condition worsened in recent days.

She was the wife of former President George H.W. Bush and the mother of ex-President George W. Bush and former Florida Governor Jeb Bush.

President Trump said Tuesday that talks are underway to plan a meeting between him and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

The president's not saying whether he himself has talked with Kim, but during a meeting with Japan's leader in Florida, says his administration's in discussions with Pyongyang.

"We have had direct talks at very high levels, extremely high levels."

He says he is hoping to meet Kim Jong Un by early June.

The president says he is also giving his blessing for North and South Korea to discuss ending their decades-long war and is taking credit for the Koreas talking at all.

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

One passenger was killed and seven injured when the engine on a Southwest Airlines flight failed on Tuesday.

Officials from the National Transportation Safety Board have not said what the cause of the female passenger's death was. But witnesses said engine parts hit a window and the passenger was almost sucked out of the jet before pilots were able to make an emergency landing.

This is the first fatality on a commercial flight in the U.S. since 2009.

This is VOA news.

There was confusion Tuesday whether a team of international experts had arrived in the Syrian city of Douma to determine whether chemical weapons were used in an attack there 10 days ago.

Syrian state TV and the White Helmets volunteer rescue group said separately that a fact-finding team from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons had come to Douma.

But a U.S. State Department spokeswoman contradicted those reports on Tuesday afternoon.

The U.N. refugee agency says a sharp increase in inter-communal violence in central Mali has forced about 3,000 people to flee for their lives to Burkina Faso over the past few weeks.

Correspondent Lisa Schlein reports for VOA from UNHCR headquarters in Geneva.

The U.N. refugee agency warns inter-communal violence is on the rise between the Dogon and Peul communities in the Koro area of central Mali.

Since February, it says dozens of people have been killed and homes and other property destroyed as clashes between the two groups have increased.

UNHCR spokesman William Spindler says his agency fears more people will flee as extremist and inter-communal violence escalates.

Lisa Schlein, for VOA news, Geneva.

The new U.N. representative for Yemen, Martin Griffiths, warned the Security Council Tuesday that reports of a possible military operation [under] around a major urban center and a key seaport could ruin any hopes of ending the country's civil war.

A large American coffee company is going to educate its 175,000 employees to try to prevent more acts of discrimination.

AP correspondent Warren Levinson reports.

Starbucks says it will close its more than 8,000 stores in the United States for several hours the afternoon of May 29 for racial bias training.

The coffee chain says its 175,000 employees will take part.

The move comes amid rising anger over the arrests last week of two black men employees tried to eject from a Starbucks in Philadelphia.

CEO Kevin Johnson met with the men to apologize. He's called their arrests "reprehensible."

The company says the employee who called police on them no longer works there.

Warren Levinson, New York.

And our top story of the hour, America's former first lady Barbara Bush has died. She was 92 years old.

She is the mother of former President George W. Bush, the country's 43rd president, and former Florida Governor Jeb Bush and the wife of former President George H.W. Bush.

You can find more on these and other late breaking and developing stories, from around the world, around the clock, at voanews.com. From the world headquarters of the Voice of America in Washington, I'm Christopher Cruise, VOA news.

That's the latest world news from VOA.