VOA NEWS

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VOA news. I'm Christopher Cruise reporting.

Bombs and other suspicious packages targeting Hillary Clinton, former President Barack Obama and CNN seem connected.

According to some officials at the White House Wednesday, President Trump said targeting current and former high ranking U.S. government officials with explosives devices is "abhorrent" and "despicable."

The president said that a major federal investigation is under way to determine who sent the packages.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, the top two Democrats in Congress, issued a statement Wednesday afternoon, accusing Trump of fanning the flames of political unrest.

Associated Press correspondent July Walker reports.

Officials intercepted explosive devices sent to Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. In addition, a pipe bomb and white powder was sent to CNN, and earlier in the week, liberal billionaire George Soros was also sent a pipe bomb.

The NYPD's counter terrorism chief says the pipe bombs appeared to be the work of the same person.

Mayor Bill de Blasio says an atmosphere of hatred is contributing to the choices people make to turn to violence.

"To all public officials of all partisan affiliations, don't encourage violence, don't encourage hatred, don't encourage attacks on media."

President Trump addressed the attempted bombing, saying acts or threats of political violence have no place in the U.S.

Russian President Vladimir Putin warned of a new arms race if President Trump follows through on his threat to pull out of an arms control agreement signed in 1987.

In Moscow on Wednesday, Putin said Russia would respond "in kind" if the U.S. deploys intermediate-range missiles in Europe.

He also cautioned that European countries agreeing to host U.S. missiles would put themselves at risk of a Russian attack.

This is VOA news.

Another torrent of selling gripped Wall Street Wednesday, sending the Dow Jones Industrial Average plummeting more than 600 points and erasing its gains for the year.

Saudi Arabia's crown prince said on Wednesday that the case of journalist and Saudi critic Jamal Khashoggi was "painful", and "justice will prevail."

Khashoggi was killed at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul early this month.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said through an interpreter that the death is being investigated.

"The crime was really painful to all Saudis, and I believe it is painful to every human in the world. It is a heinous crime that cannot be justified."

President Trump told *The Wall Street Journal* newspaper that ultimately the Saudi crown prince bears responsibility for Khashoggi's death.

Pakistan is mediating between Iran and Saudi Arabia in an effort to end the war in Yemen. The announcement was made by Prime Minister Imran Khan in a televised address on Wednesday night.

Thousands of Central American migrants are still marching toward the United States.

Mexican officials said Wednesday that about 500 migrants had accepted an offer to be bussed back to their countries.

As another World Polio Day comes around, the World Health Organization reports three polio endemic countries - Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria - hold the key to the global eradication of this crippling disease.

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

The risk of the wild polio virus spreading across borders will continue until the disease is eradicated in the three endemic states of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria.

Afghanistan and Pakistan have each reported six cases of polio. No cases of the paralytic disease have been detected in Nigeria. But that does not mean there are no new cases of the disease there.

While polio virus is present in parts of Borno State in northeastern Nigeria, which are under the control of Boko Haram militant Islamists, this makes it too dangerous for health workers to conduct disease surveillance to see whether the virus is circulating.

Facebook on Wednesday revealed the existence of new software that flags user images of child nudity. It says the software helped the company take down 8.7 million such pictures in the last three months.

Facebook said the software has been rolled out over the last year, calls it a machine learning program that becomes increasingly better at identifying inappropriate content as it sifts through the massive number of photos on the site.

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