VOA NEWS

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VOA news. I'm Christopher Cruise reporting.

The nation has bid farewell to George H.W. Bush, the 41st president of the United States.

Associated Press Washington correspondent Sagar Meghani reports from the White House.

Under the Washington National Cathedral's soaring arches, a final goodbye to the 41st president.

"... the most decent and honorable person I ever met was my friend, George Bush."

Former Senator Alan Simpson among those eulogizing him. "To us, his was the brightest of a thousand points of light."

Son George W. Bush was among three former presidents at the state funeral briefly choking up in a eulogy that celebrated his dad's service, poked fun at his goofy side and paid tribute to his strong sense of family.

"The best father a son or daughter could have."

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday his country would start developing intermediate-range nuclear missiles if the United States leaves a key arms agreement and begins developing the weapons as well.

Putin told Russian news agencies that a U.S. withdrawal from the treaty would mean the U.S. has concluded it "has to have these weapons" and Russia then "will do the same."

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told NATO ministers in Brussels Tuesday that the U.S. will begin the six-month process of withdrawing from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in 60 days if Russia does not regain compliance with the treaty.

President Trump, who rattled global markets Tuesday after declaring himself "a Tariff Man," predicted in a series of tweets Wednesday that the United States and China would negotiate a new trade deal.

Trump said China is planning to resume buying U.S. soybeans and natural gas, which he said confirms his claims China had agreed to "immediately" start buying U.S. products."

This is VOA news.

European Union officials want Internet companies, including Google, Facebook and Twitter, to file monthly reports on their progress eradicating Russian-backed "fake news" from their platforms ahead of elections next year.

Associated Press correspondent Karen Chammas reports.

EU officials unveiled the measures as part of an action plan to counter disinformation in the lead up to the continent-wide vote in the spring.

The Internet companies will have to submit their reports from January to May, when 27 EU member countries are scheduled to vote.

The Commission singled out Russia.

Commission Vice President Andrus Ansip is quoted as saying, "There is strong evidence pointing to Russia as a primary source of disinformation in Europe."

Officials from the EU's executive commission said they'll add a "rapid alert system," beef up budgets, and add expert staff and data analysis tools to help combat fake news

The British Parliament has released 250 pages worth of documents that show Facebook considered charging developers for data access. The documents show internal discussions about linking data to revenue.

Facebook responded quickly, said the release was misleading. It said, "The facts are clear: we've never sold people's data."

A new study estimates 164 million people are migrating to foreign countries in search of work, an increase of 9 percent since 2013. That's when the International Labor Organization issued its first report on the global phenomenon.

Correspondent Lisa Schlein reports for VOA from Geneva on the release of the organization's second report.

The ILO reports the majority of migrant workers are men between the ages of 25 and 64, the most productive years of their lives.

While the number of migrant workers in upper-middle-income countries has grown, the report finds the vast majority continued to head for richer countries in North America, Europe and in the Arab region, particularly the Gulf States.

Most of the people who migrate for work are low skilled, and employed in fields such as construction, agriculture, the hospitality industry or as domestic help.

Migrant workers are a key factor in boosting the economies and development of rich countries and in the higher brackets of upper-middle-income countries.

A report released Wednesday by [International] Amnesty International said Iran is guilty of crimes against humanity for covering up the mass executions of at least 5,000 political prisoners 30 years ago.

Iran has never admitted to the killings, never has revealed the whereabouts of the bodies or the fate of those who disappeared.

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