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11/6/23 Monday

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Massive Trove of 50,000 Roman Coins Spotted by Italian Diver - Photos

The Italian Ministry of Culture has announced the discovery of a massive archaeological find in the waters off the coast of Sardinia, an island in the Mediterranean.
According to Italian media reports, the treasure trove was found by a diver near the town of Arzachena, on the island's north coast. The diver reportedly made the discovery simply by spotting a shimmering metal while on a dive.
After the ministry dispatched its undersea archaeology department to investigate, they revealed the stunning scope of the find: at least 30,000 coins dating to the ancient Roman Empire, and possibly as many as 50,000.
The type of coin in the wreck is called a follis, it is made of bronze and a tiny amount of silver and was introduced by the Roman Emperor Diocletian around 294 CE as part of a broader monetary reform. Diocletian's reign helped end the Crisis of the Third Century, a series of colossal social convulsions and civil wars that laid the groundwork for the empire's eventual destruction two centuries later.
The coins are exceptionally well-preserved, with even the damaged coins remaining legible after 1,700 years.
"The restoration and conservation operations of the coins and materials found will allow us to expand and deepen our knowledge of the context of the finds from which a lot of information can still be extracted," the ministry explained in a news release.
Luigi La Rocca, the head of the Italian Directorate of Archaeology, said, "The treasure represents one of the most important numismatic discoveries in recent years and highlights once again the richness and importance of the archaeological heritage that hides in the depths of our seas."
At its height, the Roman Empire stretched from Great Britain and Spain in the west to Armenia and Babylon in the east, with a population of between 59 and 76 million people brought into what was effectively one giant economic sphere. The empire's coins are regularly found across Africa and Eurasia, as are the ruins of the many fortifications and settlements they used to maintain control.
Last month, some 2,000 Roman coins were found in a vase buried in a field near the Welsh town of Conwy.

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Anti-War Organizer: Being Pro-Palestine Isn't Anti-Semitic, But 'Pro-Justice

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A leading US pro-peace organizer told Sputnik that supporting Palestinian rights isn't anti-Jewish, as it's widely presented in the media, but pro-justice. The growing peace demonstrations are evidence that the narrative surrounding Israel and Palestine is changing in America, he said.

In Washington, DC, on Saturday, hundreds of anti-war organizations and pro-Palestine groups converged for what is almost universally agreed to have been the largest demonstration in support of Palestine in US history.

According to the organizers, roughly 300,000 people attended the protest, which filled Freedom Plaza and extended down much of Pennsylvania Avenue, as well as several surrounding streets.

However, the DC rally and march was just one of several around the globe, which still managed to eclipse the American demonstration. In London, perhaps twice as many rallied, and in Jakarta, an estimated 2 million people marched against Israel's monthlong bombardment of Gaza, which has killed more than 10,000 people.

Still, media reports gave vague numbers in their reports that downplayed the protest numbers, reporting only "thousands," and trying to recast the purpose of the demonstration as being to oppose US President Joe Biden, rather than to demand Biden's administration use its diplomatic weight to force Israel to accept a ceasefire in Gaza.

Rev. Graylan Hagler, a senior adviser for the Fellowship of Reconciliation and pastor emeritus of the Plymouth United Church of Christ in Washington, DC, told Radio Sputnik's Political Misfits on Monday that the demonstrations were an eruption of outrage driven by pain at what the Palestinian people have suffered since Israel's creation in 1948, when 700,000 Palestinians were forced out of the new country in an event they call al-Nakba: the Catastrophe.

"It was a massive march - hundreds of thousands, I don't know the number, but you couldn't easily walk down the street and you couldn't even hear the speakers, because there were so many people. The reality is that it was one of the largest pro-Palestinian marches in DC that ever happened," Hagler toldhosts Michelle Witte and John Kiriakou.

"Folks were calling for a ceasefire, calling to dismantle the Apartheid regime in Israel, calling for a free Palestine. It was young folks, old folks, families, everybody you can imagine," he said. "And the fact is, there was also a media blackout, by all means and purposes, here in DC, because the media didn't want people to know the extent of the march and the extent of the protest."

One of the chants at the protest, led by a prominent American Muslim leader, was that "in November, we remember" - that is, that American Muslims and Arabs should refuse to vote for Biden or the Democrats as punishment for their unflinching support for Israel.

"I think people are going to remember. There is a need for Biden to figure out: where is his administration's stance? They got blood on their hands, and blood is on the hands of the American people as we allow continued unbridled support for the genocidal enterprise that Israel is carrying out against Palestinians. People are going to remember."

"But for them to just reduce it to a political discussion that has ramifications on the elections in November is to try to diminish the impact of this march and what it means," Hagler said. "What it means is that the ideology in America is changing against Israel. We're starting to see Israel for what it is: it's an Apartheid state, it needs to be challenged, it needs to be deconstructed like we

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deconstructed South Africa in the anti-apartheid movement. There is white supremacy in Israel on steroids and it needs to be challenged."

Hagler said the White House's claims that there is nothing more it can do to influence Israel to halt its assault on Gaza "are enough to make a preacher cuss."

"The reality is, it's so ludicrous, because this administration needs to show some backbone, needs to try and be the purveyors of justice and morality that they want to be seen as. Right now, the blood is flowing and kids are being killed and families are being destroyed. I marched with a woman who was from Gaza on Saturday, who was a Palestinian Christian, born and raised in the church in Gaza that was just bombed. Her family went there for refuge and was bombed. That's what's going on. The Biden administration needs to understand that its hands are not tied, it's got to use its moral weight and it's got to use its legislative weight to change the course of this war."

The hosts asked Hagler about one news story dominating the headlines: a reported precipitous rise in antisemitism over the last month, presented in media reports and by pro-Zionist organizations as a consequence of the rising support for Palestine and criticism of Israel's attack on Gaza.

"Let's talk about language. One of the things when we talk about antisemitism. I went to a conference in Philadelphia a month and a half ago on Palestine Writes, made up of writers, poets, dancers, essayists. They were called antisemitic just for being Palestinians. They were called terrorists for just speaking out about the culture of Palestinians. And we forget that Palestinians are a semitic people. Somehow this term has been taken over, used, controlled, when in fact people have been fired because they are Palestinian. That's antisemitic. The writer of 'Mornings in Jenin,' her writer was fired from her job because her employers went back and looked at Facebook posts where she participated, as a Palestinian, in Palestinian marches, and so they fired her. That's antisemitic."

"Jews can't capture the term all by itself. The way the term is being used now is to try to silence folks, to tie down and to malign people who are engaged in talking about human rights, to malign people and to diminish the discussion of people who are talking about genocide in Gaza, and the number of people who are being arrested and imprisoned in the West Bank. To talk about Israel and to be critical of it is not to be antisemitic, but in fact it is to be pro-justice, pro-human rights, and pro-protection of life."

"We've been silent too long. We have not cried the tears for 75 years of Palestinian oppression, we have not been outraged for 75 years of Palestinian oppression, we have not been outraged over a blockade that has been imposed on Gaza since 2005. It's time to be outraged, not just for what happened on October 7, but to be outraged about what happened from 1948 on up to the present."

When asked about a bill introduced by US Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-MT) that would ban Palestinians from entering the United States and revoke the admittance of people with Palestinian Authority passports since October 1, Hagler replied: "it's called racism: that's what it is. There's no other word for it, it is basically racist in its character and in its supposition."

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Yellen Argues US Can Compete & Work With China Ahead of Meeting With Beijing's Economic Chief

Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng is set to travel to San Francisco in the United States later this week for another round of talks with US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen as the two economic and nuclear superpowers seek to manage their relationship, which has been fraught with conflict in recent years.

The two previously met in Beijing in July, where they emphasized the need to continue the rapprochement reached by the US and Chinese leaders at the Group of 20 summit in Bali last year, including maintaining and expanding communication and cooperation on a variety of global issues. Part of the November 9-10 meetings in California will aim at convening the new economic and financial forums launched last month between the US Treasury and China's finance ministry and central bank.

A senior US Treasury official who spoke with Chinese media suggested it was unlikely there would be specific "deliverables" after the meeting, saying it was not a "policy trade" situation "where we trade one thing for another."

Ahead of the meeting, Yellen on Monday penned an op-ed in US media in which she argued "economics is not a zero-sum game, and we seek healthy economic competition with China that can benefit both countries over time."

"As a foundation, our two nations have an obligation to establish resilient lines of open communication and to prevent our disagreements from spiraling into conflict," Yellen wrote. "But we also know that our relationship cannot be circumscribed to crisis management. Together, the United States and China represent 40% of the global economy. A constructive economic relationship can not only serve as a stabilizing force for the overall relationship but also benefit workers and families in both countries and beyond."

However, she also argued "healthy competition requires a rules-based, level playing field" and faulted Beijing for "unfair economic practices" that had allegedly fouled that scenario.

Yellen's position is an extension of that articulated by US President Joe Biden at the Bali summit in November 2022, when he told Chinese President Xi Jinping that the US intended to continue competing with China, but did not want a "Cold War" type of scenario that precluded cooperation where it was possible.

Their meeting comes ahead of another summit of the ministers and leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation countries hosted by Biden. According to media reports, Biden plans to meet with Xi at the summit.

On Monday, Chinese media reported He had been appointed to head of the office of the Central Financial Commission (CFC), China's financial regulator, as well as the Communist Party's lead at the Central Financial Work Commission (CFWC), part of an effort to strengthen the party's ideological and political influence over the financial system.

As a country continuing to emerge from a century's worth of domination by Japan and European imperial powers, China began in the mid-late 20th century to experiment with different forms of state-directed or state-managed capitalism to complement the planned socialist system put in place after communist victory in 1949.

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So-called “Socialism with Chinese Characteristics,” adopted in the 1980s, has proven to be a recipe for lasting success, allowing the country to rapidly industrialize while ensuring the Communist Party continues to direct the overall socioeconomic trajectory toward construction of a modern socialist society - which the party says it aims to complete by the centennial of the revolution in 2049.
However, since 2017, the US has regarded this trajectory as part of an attempt by Beijing and Moscow to overturn the “rules-based international order” and Washington has reoriented its global strategy toward what it calls “great power competition” with Russia and China.
That has included not just economic sanctions on both nations aimed at crippling leading parts of their economy, but also a vast expansion of military assets and provocations near both nations, including funneling more weapons to Taiwan, a Chinese province governing separately from Beijing.
In August 2022, US-China relations reached a nadir after then-US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, at the time the third-most powerful person in the US government, ignored Chinese warnings and traveled to Taiwan, where she denounced Beijing and hailed Taipei’s defiance. Massive Chinese war games near Taiwan followed, and the Biden-Xi meeting in Bali that November was aimed at repairing some of that diplomatic damage.

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Canada’s Top Diplomat Says First Group of Canadians Has Left the Gaza Strip

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - The first group of Canadian citizens and permanent residents have been allowed to leave the Gaza Strip through the Rafah border crossing into Egypt, Foreign Affairs Minister Melanie Joly said on Tuesday.
Last Friday, Joly said that she had received assurances from her Israeli counterpart Eli Cohen that Canadians trapped in Gaza would be allowed to depart soon.
"The first group of Canadians were evacuated out of Gaza. They were met by Canadian diplomats on the Egyptian side of the border," Joly said in a video shared via X (formerly Twitter). "I would like to thank my Egyptian, Israeli and Qatari counterparts for making this operation successful."
Joly said Canada looks forward to seeing all of its citizens and permanent residents evacuated from Gaza, pointing out that the course of action remains the Canadian governments’s main priority.
Earlier on Tuesday, media reported that a new document published by the General Authority for Crossings and Borders in Gaza contained the names of Canadian nationals, hinting to their possible imminent departure from the region.
At the onset of the Israeli-Palestinian war, 4,200 Canadian nationals were registered in Israel and 475 in the Palestinian territories. Ottawa tasked the Canadian armed forces with operating evacuation flights from Tel Aviv to Athens, which successfully airlifted more than 1,600 people.

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US Suspends Participation in European Armed Forces Treaty Effective December 7 - Sullivan

(Adds background in para 2, 8, 9, details in paras 4-5)

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) – The United States will suspend its participation in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe effective December 7, White House National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said on Tuesday.

Earlier in the day, Russia formally withdrew from the treaty. The UK then announced that it, alongside its allies, was suspending its participation in the accord and would work to implement voluntary stabilizing measures.

"Today, the Russian Federation withdrew from the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) ... The United States will suspend the operation of all CFE Treaty obligations between itself and every other State Party, effective December 7, consistent with our rights under international law," Sullivan said in a statement.

Sullivan stated that Russia's withdrawal from the CFE Treaty, combined with its ongoing special military operation in Ukraine, another CFE state party, has "fundamentally altered" the circumstances essential to the states parties' consent to be bound by the accord.

The development has also "radically transformed" the obligations under the treaty, Sullivan said.

Suspension of CFE obligations, which comes after "close consultation and coordination" with NATO allies, will strengthen the alliance's deterrence and defense capacity by removing restrictions that impact planning, deployments, and exercises, the statement said.

The US will continue to pursue measures that seek to bolster stability and security in Europe by reducing risk, preventing misperceptions, avoiding conflicts, and building trust, Sullivan added.

Russia suspended its participation in the CFE Treaty back in 2007 in protest of NATO countries refusing to ratify the 1999 Adapted CFE Treaty. At the same time, Russia remained a party to the treaty.

The Russian Foreign Ministry said earlier this year that Finland's NATO accession and Sweden's membership bid were "the last straw" that made Russia's exit from the treaty inevitable.

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Almost Three-Fourths of US Citizens Think Abortion Restrictions Hurt Health Care – Poll

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) – Almost three-fourths of American citizens expressed concern that restrictive abortion laws in some US states could put pregnant women’s health at risk, a new CBS News/YouGov poll showed on Tuesday.

The poll showed that 74% of people said they were concerned that pregnant women may face

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significant medical issues in states that have curtailed abortion rights.

Almost two-thirds, or 60%, said they were concerned that abortion restrictions could result in maternity center or hospital closures, while another 52% said they feared that doctors may leave those states.

The results of the poll come as Ohio residents vote on the so-called Issue 1, a ballot measure that, if approved, would enshrine protections for abortion access in the state's constitution.

Only 14 percent of those surveyed said that access to reproductive health care was getting easier, while 43% said it is now harder than before. At the same time, 57% of Americans said they supported legalizing abortion in all or most cases, while 42% said it should be illegal.

With regard to party affiliation, almost two-thirds of Democrats said they are worried about abortion restrictions, while only 29% of Republicans expressed the same opinion, the poll found. At the same time, 49% of Republicans and 23% of the Democrats said they would support anti-abortion laws at the federal level.

The poll was conducted nationwide from October 3 to November 3 among 2,185 US adult residents.

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US, Allies to Continue Freezing Russian Sovereign Assets - Multilateral Task Force

WASHINGTON, November 7 - Members of the Western-led Russian Elites, Proxies, and Oligarchs (REPO) Task Force said during a meeting on Monday that Russian sovereign assets within the task force's jurisdictions will remain frozen until Russia compensates Ukraine for war damages, according to a release.

"As Russia continues to commit flagrant violations of international law, REPO members remain united that, consistent with their respective legal systems, Russia's sovereign assets in REPO jurisdictions will remain immobilized until Russia pays for the damage it has caused to Ukraine," the release said.

The principals of the task force plan to convene again later this year, the release added.

REPO was launched in March 2022 in response to Russia's special military operation in Ukraine and consists of the United States, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the European Commission.

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House Republicans Want to Cut Budgets of Key Offices in Biden Administration - Reports

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - A host of House Republicans have demanded budget cuts for a number of offices in the Biden administration including the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the Treasury Department, and Vice President Kamala Harris' office, ahead of a crucial

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vote on the fiscal year 2024 appropriations package, Fox News reported on Tuesday.

Rep. Mike Collins submitted an amendment to halt funding of Kamala Harris' office, while Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene proposed reducing IRS Commissioner Daniel Werfel's salary to $1, according to the report.

Multiple amendments to the appropriations bill target the White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention's budget, the report said.

According to two other House Republicans, Greg Steube and Harriet Hageman, two departments at the US Treasury should receive less funding next year: the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility, and the Office of Personnel Management, the report said.

Another amendment by Rep. Russell Fry would cut funding to the Treasury's Climate Hub, the report added.

The US Congress is seeking to pass measures to fund the federal government before November 17 to avoid a shutdown after it failed to do exactly that before the end of the 2023 fiscal year on September 30.

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Biden Renews Pledge to End US Gun Violence on Massacre Anniversary - White House

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden on the fifth anniversary of a massacre that killed 12 people has renewed his promise to do everything he can to end the epidemic of gun violence across the United States, according to a White House statement on Tuesday.

"I am doing everything in my power as President to end the scourge of gun violence," Biden said. "I am taking every action that I can to save lives."

Biden listed his accomplishments in trying to achieve this goal, including the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, dozens of executive actions and the creation of the first-ever White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention.

"I am taking every action that I can to save lives. I've also continued to call on Republicans in Congress to help pass commonsense gun safety policies – like banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, and much more – that we know can save lives," he said.

Biden issued his statement on the fifth anniversary of the Thousand Oaks Grill Massacre in California in which 12 people were killed. The crime was perpetrated by US Marine Corps veteran Ian David Long, 28, who then shot himself.

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Jewish Man Dies After Injury at Israeli, Palestinian Protests in California - Police

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WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - An elderly Jewish died after being hit in the head during altercations between pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian protesters near Los Angeles, California, local police said in a statement.

"A 69-year-old man, identified as Paul Kessler, died as a result of injuries sustained during an altercation at a Pro-Israeli / Pro-Palestinian event, both of which were occurring simultaneously at the intersection of Westlake Blvd. and Thousand Oaks Blvd," the Ventura Sheriff's Department said late Monday.

Witness accounts from the protest, which took place on Sunday, indicated that Kessler got involved in a physical altercation with counter-protesters and fell backwards, striking his head on the ground, the statement said.

Kessler was transported to a nearby hospital for treatment, but died of his injuries on Monday.

An autopsy revealed the cause of death to be blunt force head injury, and police have declared Kessler's death a homicide, the statement said.

No arrests have been made in the case and police are still investigating the incident and have not ruled out the possibility of a hate crime, the statement said.

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US Exports to Russia Up to $38.4Mln in September - Census Bureau

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) – The United States exported $38.4 million worth of goods to Russia in September, up from $32.1 million a month earlier, according to data published by the US Census Bureau on Thursday.

US imports of goods from Russia decreased from $298.1 million in August to $252.3 million. This was the third-lowest monthly level in 2023.

In total, the US imported over $3.6 billion worth of goods from Russia in the first nine months of the year. Exports of goods to Russia over the same period amounted to $ 434.5 million.

The US trade deficit with Russia for 2023 exceeded $3.2 billion.

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Blinken, Japanese Counterpart Discuss Gaza Aid, Support for Ukraine - State Dept.

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) – US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Japanese Foreign Minister Kamikawa Yoko discussed increasing humanitarian assistance to Gaza and maintaining "strong support" for Ukraine as they met on Tuesday in Tokyo, State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said.

"Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken met today with Japanese Foreign Minister Kamikawa Yoko and discussed a range of bilateral, regional, and global issues, including the need to increase humanitarian assistance to Gaza and the importance of strong and sustained support

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for Ukraine," Miller said in a statement.

Blinken thanked Kamikawa for having denounced Hamas' October 7 attack on Israel and for offering her condolences for the US citizens who died in the attack, the statement said.

The secretary and his counterpart also discussed the "positive momentum" in US-JAPAN-ROK cooperation that followed the Camp David Summit. Blinken also commended Kamikawa and her team for organizing the G7 Foreign Ministers Meeting.

Blinken also reaffirmed the US's commitment to the defense of Japan, the statement added.

Japan is hosting the G7 Foreign Ministers Meeting in Tokyo from November 7-8.

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Yellen, Austin, Blinken Urge Congress to Approve $11.8Bln Funding for Ukraine - Treasury

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) – The US secretaries of the treasury, defense and state have urged Congress to approve a $11.8 billion in direct budget support to Ukraine, the Treasury said on Tuesday.

"Today, Secretary of the Treasury Janet L. Yellen, Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III, Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, and USAID Administrator Samantha Power sent a letter to Congress urging approval of the Biden Administration's request to provide $11.8 billion in direct budget support to Ukraine as part of the President's national security supplemental package comprising military, security, economic, and humanitarian assistance that aims to preserve U.S. national security interests at a time of global challenges," the Treasury said in a press release.

Direct budget support to Ukraine must pass as it is "inextricably" linked to the country's "success" on the battlefield amid its going conflict with Russia, the statement added.

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US Suspends Participation in European Armed Forces Treaty Effective December 7 - Sullivan

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"Today, the Russian Federation withdrew from the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) ... The United States will suspend the operation of all CFE Treaty obligations between itself and every other State Party, effective December 7, consistent with our rights under international law," Sullivan said in a statement.

Suspension of CFE obligations will strengthen NATO's deterrence and defense capacity by removing restrictions that impact planning, deployments, and exercises, the statement said.

The US will continue to pursue measures that seek to bolster stability and security in Europe by

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reducing risk, preventing misperceptions, avoiding conflicts, and building trust, Sullivan added.

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Biden Believes Re-Occupation of Gaza Not Good, US to Keep Telling It to Israel – Kirby

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) – President Joe Biden continues to believe that the re-occupation of Gaza is not a good idea, and the United States will keep having conversations with Israel on the matter, White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said on Tuesday.

"President [Biden] still believes that the re-occupation of Gaza is not good, is not good for Israel," Kirby told CNN.

The US will continue conversations with Israel on that, he added.

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Canadians Trapped in Gaza Could Soon Be Allowed to Cross Into Egypt – Reports

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) – The evacuation of Canadians trapped in Gaza might begin on Tuesday after the names of several Canadian nationals appeared on the list of foreign passport holders allowed to leave for Egypt, CTV News reported.

At the onset of the Israeli-Gaza war, 4,200 Canadian nationals were registered in Israel and

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475 in the Palestinian territories. Ottawa tasked the Canadian armed forces with operating evacuation flights from Tel Aviv toward Athens, which successfully airlifted over 1,600 people.

Last Friday, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Melanie Joly said that she had received assurances from her Israeli counterpart Eli Cohen that Canadians trapped in Gaza would be allowed to depart "soon."

A new document published by the General Authority for Crossings and Borders in Gaza contains the names of Canadian nationals, raising hopes that Canadian citizens and permanent residents might leave the region through the Rafah border crossing with Egypt soon, the report said.

Two women who left for Egypt trying to assist relatives in leaving Gaza said they had received information from Global Affairs Canada that Canadians would "tentatively" begin to leave the region via the Rafah crossing today, the report added.

On October 7, Palestinian group Hamas carried out a surprise large-scale rocket attack against Israel from the Gaza Strip and breached the border, killing and abducting people in neighboring Israeli communities. Israel launched retaliatory strikes and ordered a complete blockade of the Gaza Strip, home to more than 2 million people, cutting off supplies of water, food, and fuel.

On October 27, Israel launched a large-scale ground incursion inside the Gaza Strip to eliminate Hamas fighters and rescue the hostages. The escalation of the conflict has killed over 1,400 in Israel and over 10,000 in the Gaza Strip.

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Netanyahu Says There Could Be Temporary Ceasefire in Gaza for Release of Hostages

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in an interview that although he doesn't foresee the possibility of a general ceasefire in Gaza, he indicated there could be a temporary pause in its military operations in order to secure release of hostages held by Hamas.

"There will be a cease-fire for that purpose," Netanyahu told ABC News on Monday regarding whether a temporary ceasefire was possible in exchange for securing the release of hostages.

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US House Panel Says Disinformation ‘Pseudo-Experts’ Targeted Political Speech Online

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - US government officials used a government-linked group of disinformation pseudo-experts to launder the censorship of political speech online, the US House Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government said in an interim report.

The Election Integrity Partnership (EIP) - a group of purported disinformation academics led by

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the Stanford Internet Observatory - worked with US government officials to monitor and censor online speech ahead of the 2020 presidential election, the report, released Monday, said.

"This interim staff report details the federal government's heavy-handed involvement in the creation and operation of the EIP, which facilitated the censorship of Americans' political speech in the weeks and months leading up to the 2020 election," the report said. "This pressure was largely directed in a way that benefited one side of the political aisle: true information posted by Republicans and conservatives was labeled as 'misinformation' while false information posted by Democrats and liberals was largely unreported and untouched by the censors."

The House Weaponization Subcommittee released the report in conjunction with the House Judiciary Committee.

The EIP worked with the US Department of Homeland Security and other US government agencies to bypass First Amendment protections for speech through the consortium of disinformation "pseudo-experts," the report said.

The EIP was created at the request of the US Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, the report said. US government officials would submit misinformation reports to EIP analysts, who would then recommend censorship actions to tech companies, the report added.

An "untold number" of US citizens across the political spectrum were impacted by the censorship of true information, jokes and opinions, the report said.

The House committees' investigations into the weaponization of the federal government and violations of civil liberties remain ongoing, the report said. There is "more to come," Judiciary and Weaponization panel chair Jim Jordan also said in a statement via social media platform X.

The American people deserve to know whether they were targeted by the US government and affiliated disinformation pseudo-experts, Jordan added.

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Netanyahu Says There Could Be Temporary Ceasefire in Gaza for Release of Hostages

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in an interview that although he doesn't foresee the possibility of a general ceasefire in Gaza, he indicated there could be a temporary pause in its military operations in order to secure release of hostages held by Hamas.

"There will be a cease-fire for that purpose," Netanyahu told ABC News on Monday regarding whether a temporary ceasefire was possible in exchange for securing the release of hostages.

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Washington Extends APEC Summit Invitations in Compliance With US Laws - Official

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WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - The United States has extended invitations for the upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit in San Francisco, reaffirming its commitment to host the event in accordance with US laws and regulations, Senior Official for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Matt Murray said.

"I think we've been very consistent throughout the year and been very clear that participating in APEC will be in accordance with US laws and regulations, and we have been working towards appropriate participation of all APEC member economies," Murray said on Monday.

Regarding the United States sending a formal invitation to Russia, Murray underscored the commitment Washington made when it offered to host the APEC Summit.

Hosting the summit aligns with the spirit and principles of APEC as well as with adhering to US laws and regulations, including considerations related to sanctions, Murray said.

The US will host later this month the APEC summit in San Francisco under the theme "Building a Future of Sustainability and Resilience for Everyone." Since its inception in 1989, APEC has been a crucial platform for the United States to promote trade, investment and sustainable growth in the increasingly interconnected Asia-Pacific region.

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US Vice President Harris, Bahrain Crown Prince Discuss Gaza Situation - White House

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - US Vice President Kamala Harris and Bahraini Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa held a call to discuss the situation in Gaza and the need to prevent the forced displacement of Palestinians, the White House said in a statement.

“The leaders discussed the latest developments in Gaza and their shared commitment to facilitating the increased, sustained delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance to civilians,” the statement said on Monday. “The Vice President made clear it is critical to ensure that Palestinians are not forcibly displaced outside of Gaza and underscored that Israelis and Palestinians must have equal measures of security, prosperity, and freedom.”

Harris reiterated the importance of protecting civilian lives and respecting international humanitarian law, the statement said.

Harris and Prince Salman also discussed steps taken by the United States to strengthen its posture and bolster deterrence in the Middle East, the statement added.

Harris reaffirmed the close and enduring bilateral ties between the US and Bahrain, and the two officials agreed to remain in close contact, according to the statement.

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Number of Attacks on US Forces in Iraq, Syria Increase to 38 Over Weekend - Pentagon

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WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - The number of attacks against US forces based in Iraq and Syria increased to 38 over the last several days, Pentagon Press Secretary Brig. Gen. Patrick Ryder told reporters.

"Since October 17th Eastern Time, we've had 20 attacks in Iraq, 18 in Syria, a total of 38 of these...harassing attacks of drones and rockets," Ryder said on Monday.

The number of injured US troops from these attacks in Iraq and Syria increased to 45 in total, Ryder added.

The injuries are a mix of minor injuries and Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI), according to Ryder.

Moreover, Ryder said the deployment of an Ohio-class submarine to the Middle East is meant to further support US deterrence efforts in the region.

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UN Security Council Has Not Reached Agreement on Gaza Truce 'At This Point' - US Envoy

UNITED NATIONS, November 7 (Sputnik) - The UN Security Council has not yet reached a consensus on a resolution calling for a humanitarian truce in the Gaza Strip, US Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations Robert Wood said.

“There is no agreement at this point [on the Gaza resolution],” Wood said on Monday.

Wood sent a message to the residents of Gaza, saying that the international community is with them.

Earlier on Monday, French Ambassador to the United Nations Nicolas de Riviere said that French President Emmanuel Macron will organize a humanitarian conference in Paris on November 9 to support the people of Gaza.

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UAE Says There Will be UNSC Meeting on Gaza This Thursday

UNITED NATIONS, November 7 (Sputnik) - Next United Nations Security Council meeting on Gaza will be on Thursday, the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations Lana Nusseibeh told reporters.

"There will be a Council briefing I believe on Thursday but under the Chinese Presidency, we intend to call for regular briefings," Nusseibeh said on Monday.

Earlier today, the French Ambassador Nicolas de Riviere said that the French President Macron will organize a humanitarian conference in Paris on November 9 to support the people of Gaza.

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China Calls On UN Security Council to Adopt Meaningful Resolution With Urgency - Envoy

UNITED NATIONS, November 7 (Sputnik) - China calls on UN Security Council members to be swift and adopt a strong resolution, the Chinese Ambassador to the UN Zhang Jun said on Monday.

"We emphasize the need for the Security Council to act with urgency and adopt a meaningful and actionable resolution," Zhang Jun told journalists.

Earlier today, the French Ambassador Nicolas de Rivière said that the French President Macron will organize a humanitarian conference in Paris on November 9 to support the people of Gaza.

The UN Security Council is trying to reach an agreement and conclude a resolution on Gaza. The Council members have been working relentlessly, however, they were not able to reach a consensus. Some Council members would like to include language condemning Hamas for their actions, whereas others prefer to exclude that.

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Senate Republicans Demand US Border Measures as Part of Ukraine Aid Deal - Reports

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - Some Senate Republicans are threatening to withhold support for Biden's $106 billion request for supplemental funding for Ukraine and Israel unless their demands for a crackdown on asylum claims are met, The Wall Street Journal reported.

The group of Republican Senators responsible for the one-page proposal include Lindsey Graham, Tom Cotton, and James Lankford and represents the beginning of negotiations with the Democrats and the Biden administration, which has recently indicated a willingness to budge on immigration policy changes, the report said.

Biden's newest request for additional funds did not, however, include any immigration policy changes, and Monday's Republican proposal presented a slew of changes that the group would like to see to the immigration system - including some that would make it more difficult for migrants to make and win asylum claims in the US, said the report.

Additionally, the proposal aims to eliminate the use of an immigration tool called humanitarian parole, which allows migrants to make appointments to enter legal ports of entry.

These changes, the report said, would resurrect Trump-era programs that would require the government make asylum seekers stay outside of the US during their immigration cases, which often take months or years to complete.

Additionally, the proposal would remove the government's ability to bring in large groups of people lacking visas using humanitarian parole, which has been used in the past to resettled evacuated refugees, including over 150,000 Ukrainians fleeing conflict, the report said.

The Biden administration witnessed its third-consecutive record of yearly illegal crossings by migrants on the US southern border in fiscal year 2023.

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According to US Customs and Border Patrol data, some 2.4 million illegal migrants were encountered on the US southern border this fiscal year, which is measured from October 2022 to September 2023.

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France Calls for Immediate, Durable Humanitarian Truce in Gaza - Envoy to UN

UNITED NATIONS, November 7 (Sputnik) - France calls for an immediate humanitarian truce in the Gaza Strip that will be durable and sustained, the French Ambassador to the United Nations Nicolas de Riviere said.

"Given the gravity of the humanitarian situation and the scale of the needs of the Gaza population, France calls for an immediate humanitarian truce. This truce must be durable and sustained," Riviere told journalists on Monday following a closed UN Security Council meeting that largely focused on the suffering of the besieged Palestinian population in the Gaza Strip.

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Kratos Tech Wins $579Mln Contract to Maintain US Communication Satellites - Pentagon

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) -Kratos Technology & Training Solutions has received a $579 million US Air Force contract to maintain the Command-and-Control System Consolidated (CCS-C) Sustainment and Resiliency for telemetry, tracking and commanding of current and future military communication satellites, the Department of Defense announced in a press release.

"Kratos Technology & Training Solutions [of] San Diego, California, has been awarded a ....contract with a ceiling value of $579 million for the Command-and-Control System Consolidated (CCS-C) Sustainment and Resiliency," the release said on Monday.

The contract will sustain and provide post-production development for the current CCS-C system for telemetry, tracking and commanding of current and future military communication satellites, the release explained.

Work on the contract will primarily be performed at Schriever Space Force Base (SFB), Colorado; Vandenberg SFB, California; and Peterson SFB, Colorado over the next eight and a half years and is expected to be completed by May 30, 2032, the Defense Department said.

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Canadian Embassy in Nigeria Halts Operations, Issues Travel Alert - Statement

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - The Canadian Embassy in Abuja, Nigeria, announced that it has temporarily suspended operations until further notice.

"The High Commission of Canada to Nigeria, in Abuja, has temporarily suspended operations until further notice. For consular assistance, contact our 24/7 Emergency Watch and Response Center," the Canadian Embassy said in a post on Monday.

Canadians are strongly advised against non-essential travel to Nigeria, including in Abuja, due to the country's unstable security conditions marked by a significant risk of terrorism, crime, inter-communal conflicts, armed attacks and kidnappings, the embassy said.

Canadians alredy in Nigeria are strongly urged to avoid all travel to the north-western states of Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Sokoto and Zamfara; the north-central states of Plateau and Kogi; and the north-eastern states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa and Yobe, the embassy said.

Travel to the Niger Delta states of Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Bayelsa, Delta, Imo and Rivers is also discouraged due to the elevated risks of terrorism, armed attacks, kidnapping, inter-communal and sectarian violence, the embassy added.

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UN Says France to Organize International Conference on Gaza in Paris on November 9

UNITED NATIONS, November 7 (Sputnik) - France to organize an international conference on Gaza in Paris on November 9 to help dealing with the crisis between Israel-Gaza, the French Ambassador to the UN Nicolas de Rivière said on Monday.

“Given the urgency of the situation and at the initiative of President Emmanuel Macron, France is organizing an international humanitarian conference for the people of Gaza on November 9 in Paris,” Rivière told journalists.

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US Attempts to Talk With Russia From Position of Strength 'Doomed to Failure' - Antonov

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - Any attempts by the United States to have a dialogue with Russia from a position of strength are doomed to failure and until the US changes its approach toward Moscow, no stabilization of relations between the two countries is possible, Russian Ambassador in Washington Anatoly Antonov said.

"Attempts to conduct a dialogue with our country from a 'position of strength' are initially doomed to failure. Until this approach stops, we cannot talk about even the slightest stabilization of Russian-American relations," Antonov said on Monday. "Washington must understand that

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any unfriendly actions will be met with a tough and adequate response."

Antonov's comments come in response to an article by Peter Schroeder, Principal Deputy National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia at the National Intelligence Council in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), who wrote that "Many policymakers have drawn the conclusion that the best way to handle an opportunistic bully such as Putin is to show strength and resolve."

The Russian ambassador pointed out that Americans do not have a normal conversation with Russia at all.

"They curtailed contacts along all lines, believing in their ability to solve numerous international problems without Russia, including resolving regional crises," Antonov said. "We see the tragic consequences of the so-called American leadership in the events in Ukraine and the Middle East. Even local observers began to call Biden's foreign policy bankrupt."

Russia will never give up its national interests and Moscow has repeatedly proposed solving various problems on its western borders through dialogue, Antonov said.

"However, all our ideas were disdainfully rejected. The Americans, therefore, themselves provoked us to launch a special military operation, leaving us no choice," he said. "We have repeatedly conveyed to local officials the thesis that neither confrontation nor economic sanctions, much less attempts to undermine the unity of Russia, will bring the result Washington needs."

Antonov also said that Russia has never closed the door to diplomacy, but at the same time emphasized that progress is possible only through mutually respectful dialogue and finding a balance of interests on a strictly equal basis.

"The principle of indivisible security for all must remain at the forefront," Antonov added.

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SF Prioritizes Offering Safe Spaces for Homeless During APEC Summit - Spokesperson

SAN FRANCISCO, November 7 (Sputnik) - San Francisco's Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) has pledged to prioritize dedicated outreach interventions in the vicinity of the upcoming APEC summit, ensuring safe spaces for those experiencing homelessness, HSH Spokesperson Emily Cohen told Sputnik on Monday.

"When our community hosts events, like APEC, we want to put our best foot forward. Dedicated outreach interventions will be focused on the conference vicinity and offering safe places for people experiencing homelessness will be a priority," Cohen said on Monday.

Furthermore, Cohen said that the SF Homeless Outreach Team would be linking individuals who are homeless with services, shelter, and housing assessments on the spot while working in the field.

However, Cohen said that the HSH would not be opening any special shelter capacity for the APEC Summit and clarified that there was no budget allocated to increase shelter capacity during the summit.

"That said, we do have some already funded new capacity coming online this fall that will help

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support our community during APEC and throughout the winter," Cohen said.
The US is hosting the APEC Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in San Francisco on November 14-15 as part of APEC Economic Leaders' Week.

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US Congresswoman Greene Says Reintroduced Resolution to Censure Colleague Rashida Tlaib

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - US Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene said in a statement that she reintroduced a resolution to censure her colleague Rashida Tlaib, accusing her congressional colleague of anti-Semitism and sympathizing with terrorist groups.
"Today, I reintroduced my privileged resolution to censure Rashida Tlaib for antisemitism, spreading Pro-Hamas propaganda, and inciting an illegal occupation in the Capitol complex," Greene said on Monday. "The House will vote this week to hold her accountable for her actions."
Last week, the House of Representatives blocked the initial censure resolution offered by Greene. Nearly two dozen House Republicans joined Democrats to prevent the resolution from consideration on the floor.
Greene's resolution accuses Tlaib of inciting pro-Palestine demonstrations at the US Capitol Complex. The updated version of the resolution removes references to an "insurrection" and instead refers to the incident as an "illegal occupation" of the Capitol, Greene said.
Greene's resolution also condemns Tlaib for characterizing the pro-Palestine phrase "From the river to the sea" as a call for freedom and peace. Greene's resolution instead characterizes the phrase as a call for the elimination of Israel and death of all Jewish people
Tlaib "should be expelled" from her seat in Congress, Greene said. Censure in the House of Representatives is a largely symbolic rebuke of a member's actions.

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Blinken Discusses Worsening Humanitarian Crisis With Rwanda, DRC Leaders - State Dept.

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken discussed in separate telephone calls with the leaders of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo the worsening humanitarian situation along the border between the two African countries, State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said.
"Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken spoke separately with Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) President Félix Tshisekedi and Rwandan President Paul Kagame. With both presidents, the Secretary discussed the volatile situation and worsening humanitarian crisis along the border between Rwanda and the DRC," Miller said in a statement on Monday.

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Blinken advocated for a diplomatic solution to the tensions between the two countries and urged each side to take measures to de-escalate the situation, including removing troops from the border, the statement said.

Beginning in 2022, Rwanda and the DRC have been involved in a series of border clashes caused by the resurgence of rebels from the March 23 (M23) movement with the support of the Rwandan army. The M23 movement, which is fighting for the interests of the Tutsi ethnic minority, suffered a heavy military defeat in November 2013 and was disbanded. In November 2021, the rebels took up arms again, accusing the authorities of the DRC of violating agreements that provided for the integration of disarmed M23 rebels into the army.

In July, the DRC accused the Rwandan army of an incursion near Goma, with at least one Rwandan soldier dead in the clash.

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SPUTNIK TOP STORIES OF THE DAY

WASHINGTON, November 7 (Sputnik) -

ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

* The death toll from Israel's strikes in the Gaza Strip has exceeded 10,000, the Al Arabiya broadcaster reported on Monday, citing the enclave's Health Ministry.
* Thousands of seriously wounded civilians in the Gaza Strip no longer have access to hospitals, the violence against medical facilities in the enclave will lead to a grave loss of life, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said.
* The evacuation of wounded Palestinians from the Gaza Strip to Egypt through the Rafah checkpoint has been resumed, Egyptian broadcaster Extra News reported.
* The Lebanese group Hezbollah said that it had struck three Israeli targets on the border with Lebanon.
* The military wing of the Palestinian movement Hamas, the Al-Qassam Brigades, said that its Lebanese units fired rockets at the cities of Nahariyya and Haifa in northern Israel.
* UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres expressed concerns about the expansion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and noted that the Israel-occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem are at a "boiling point."

BIDEN-NETANYAHU TALKS

* US President Joe Biden discussed over the telephone with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu the possibility of Israel using tactical pauses during its military invasion of Gaza to allow civilians to leave areas where heavy fighting continues, the White House said on Monday.
* Biden and Netanyahu discussed efforts to free hostages and protect civilians, Kirby said.

CONFLICT IN UKRAINE

* Ukrainian Commander-in-Chief Valerii Zaluzhnyi confirmed on Monday the death of his

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assistant Gennady Chestyakov, who allegedly died from the detonation of an explosive device that was in a birthday gift that he received.
* The Russian military has repelled two Ukrainian attacks in the Donetsk direction in the past 24 hours and the Ukrainian military lost up to 220 soldiers and five pieces of military equipment, the Russian Defense Ministry said.
* The European Union should continue to support Ukraine as its counteroffensive is currently "facing hurdles," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said.

ATTACKS ON US BASES
* The Islamic Resistance in Iraq, which includes Shia militia groups, said on Monday that it had attacked four US bases in Syria and Iraq.
* The United States believes that the Iraqi government is able to hold the groups responsible for attacks on US military bases in the country accountable and such actions are already taking place, US State Department deputy spokesperson Vedant Patel said.
* At least 45 US military service members have been injured during recent attacks against US military bases in Iraq and Syria, which is two times more than the Pentagon previously informed, NBC News reported, citing US defense officials.

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Canada's House Votes Against Extending Carbon Tax Price Break to All House Heating

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) – The Canadian House of Commons (HoC) on Monday failed to adopt a non-binding motion introduced by the Conservatives asking the Liberal government to extend its carbon tax price pause to all forms of home heating.
A total of 135 lawmakers voted in favor of the measure, while 186 opposed it.
In late October, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that his government would give a three-year carbon tax break on home-heating oil, a measure that mainly benefits Atlantic provinces who have the highest percentage of households using oil for home heating in Canada and who also happens to be a Liberal stronghold.
The leader of Canada's official opposition, the Conservative Pierre Poilievre, tabled the non-binding motion at the HoC on November 2 amid nationwide outrage, requesting that the tax break apply to all forms of home heating. The Neo-Democrats who are in a coalition with the Liberal government had pledged to support the motion.

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US Seeks 3Mln Barrels by January to Help Refill Strategic Oil Reserve - Energy Dept.

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WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The Biden administration is looking to buy 3 million barrels of crude, to be delivered by January, to help refill the heavily-drawn US oil reserve, the Department of Energy said on Monday.

"The Department of Energy ... has a requirement to conduct a purchase of up to three (3) million barrels of United States produced sour crude oil for January 2024 delivery," the department said in a statement.

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Sanctions Reduce Efficiency of Energy Market - Kuwait Petroleum CEO

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - Sanctions reduce the efficiency and transparency of the energy market, Sheikh Nawaf al-Sabah, deputy chairman and chief executive officer of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation said on Monday.

When asked whether sanctions and embargoes are fragmenting the market and reducing efficiency, Al-Sabah said, "Yes it does."

"Anything that is not a completely free market does reduce efficiency and it does reduce transparency," Al-Sabah said during an event at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington D.C.

He went on to say that there has never been a single day in history that every producing country was producing freely, as there have always been always countries at war, under sanctions or other geopolitical influence.

The United States, by its anti-Russian sanctions, provokes imbalances on the energy markets, Russian Ambassador to Washington Anatoly Antonov said earlier in October.

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Less Than Half of US Adults Believe Death Penalty Applied Fairly - Poll

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - Less than half of adults in the United States believe that the country fairly applies the death penalty, according to a Gallup poll released Monday.

Half of all respondents, 50%, said that the death penalty is unfairly applied, while 47% said it was applied fairly, the poll report said. The figure marks the first time in the poll's history that more respondents have characterized the application of the death penalty as unfair than fair, the report said.

The proportion of Americans who believe the death penalty in the US is applied unfairly rose by five percentage points since 2018, the report said.

A majority of Republican respondents, 68%, believe the death penalty is fairly applied, in comparison to 28% of Democratic and 46% of independent respondents, the report said.

However, most Americans, 53%, support the death penalty in murder cases, the report said.

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The figure marks the lowest support for the death penalty in murder cases since 1972, the report added.

A majority of Republican and independent respondents support the death penalty in murder cases, while less than one-third of Democratic respondents support the practice, the poll found.

A plurality of Americans, 39%, believe that the death penalty is not utilized frequently enough, the report said. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of respondents said that the death penalty is used too often and an equal number said that it is used the right amount, the report added.

The question was posed as part of Gallup's annual crime survey, which polled 1,009 US adults between October 2-23. The poll maintains a margin of error of plus-or-minus four percentage points at a 95% confidence level.

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US Planning $320Mln Arms Deal to Send Israel Precision Bombs - Reports

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The United States is planning a $320 million transfer of precision bombs to Israel, the Wall Street Journal reported on Monday, citing US documents detailing the plan.

The report said the Biden administration notified Congress last week of its plans to send precision-guided Spice Family Gliding Bomb Assemblies weapons to Israel.

According to the report, the defense firm Rafael USA would send the precision Spice bombs to its Israeli parent company Rafael Advanced Defense Systems to be used by the Israeli military.

In 2020, the Trump administration tried to get congressional approval to send the same weapons to Israel, the report noted.

Earlier in the day, the Gaza Ministry of Health reported that more than 10,000 civilians in Gaza have been killed amid the Israeli bombardment.

Kirby said the United States could not verify the death toll number from the Gaza Health Ministry.

On October 7, Palestinian group Hamas launched a surprise attack against Israel from Gaza, killing and abducting people in neighboring Israeli communities. Israel retaliated with missile strikes and a complete blockade of the Gaza Strip, home to more than 2 million. On October 27, Israel launched a large-scale ground incursion into Gaza with the declared goal of eliminating Hamas and rescuing the hostages.

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Washington Believes Iraq Able to Hold Attackers on US Bases Accountable - State Dept.

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The United States believes that the Iraqi government

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is able to hold the groups responsible for attacks on US military bases in the country accountable and such actions are already taking place, US State Department deputy spokesperson Vedant Patel said on Monday.

"We believe that the government of Iraq does have the ability to hold those groups accountable and we believe that that work is ongoing," Patel said during a press briefing.

Patel added that Secretary of State Antony Blinken urged Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al Sudani to do exactly that during their meeting over the weekend.

Between October 17 and November 6, adversary military groups attacked US bases in Syria and Iraq 38 times resulting in a total of 46 troops injured, according to the Pentagon.

Blinken paid a visit to Baghdad on Sunday to meet with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al-Sudani. During his trip, the US secretary of state said Washington was not seeking a conflict with Tehran but it would do what is necessary to protect US personnel in the region from militias that it believes are allegedly backed by Iran.

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Biden, Netanyahu Discuss 'Tactical Pauses' to Allow Civilians to Depart Gaza – White House

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden discussed over the telephone with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu the possibility of Israel using tactical pauses during its military invasion of Gaza to allow civilians to leave areas where heavy fighting continues, the White House said on Monday.

"President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. spoke this morning with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel regarding the latest developments in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank," the White House said in a press release. "The two leaders discussed the possibility of tactical pauses to provide civilians with opportunities to safely depart from areas of ongoing fighting, to ensure assistance is reaching civilians in need and to enable potential hostage releases."

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US Urges Sides of Israeli-Palestinian Conflict to Drop Hateful Rhetoric – State Dept.

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) – The United States considers the words of Israeli Minister for Jerusalem Affairs and Heritage Amihai Eliyahu about the possibility of using nuclear weapons against Gaza unacceptable and calls on all sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to refrain from hateful rhetoric, State Department deputy spokesperson Vedant Patel said on Monday.

On November 5, Eliyahu said in an interview with Radio Kol BaRama that "one of the possible options" for Israel was dropping a nuclear bomb on the Gaza Strip. The minister also opposed allowing any humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip, saying that Israel "would not hand the Nazis

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humanitarian aid," and that "there is no such thing as uninvolved civilians in Gaza." Later, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu suspended Eliyahu from participating in government meetings until further notice.

"I'm sure you saw [Israeli] Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Israeli government have repudiated those comments which we also found as wholly unacceptable, and we continue to believe that it is important for all sides of this conflict to refrain from hateful rhetoric that is going to further incite tensions," Patel said during a press briefing.

On October 7, Palestinian group Hamas launched a surprise attack against Israel from Gaza, killing and abducting people in neighboring Israeli communities. Israel retaliated with missile strikes and a complete blockade of the Gaza Strip, home to more than 2 million. On October 27, Israel launched a large-scale ground incursion into Gaza with the declared goal of eliminating Hamas and rescuing the hostages.

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US Diplomats Express Concerns Over Israel Policy in Leaked Memo - Reports

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - State Department officials, in a leaked memo, criticized the Biden administration's approach to the Israel-Hamas conflict, calling for a more public condemnation of Israeli actions, Politico reported on Monday.

According to the report, the memo outlines two requests: endorsing a ceasefire and adopting a more balanced approach in public and private communications regarding Israel, including the open discussion of concerns about Israeli military tactics and the treatment of Palestinians.

Furthermore, the memo, authored by two midlevel staffers with Middle East experience, acknowledges Israel's legitimate right and obligation to seek justice against Hamas for the October 7 attack while deeming the subsequent high number of Palestinian casualties, mostly civilians and many children, as unacceptable, the report said.

However, the State Department refrained from providing a direct comment on the memo, the report added.

On October 7, Hamas launched a surprise large-scale rocket attack against Israel from the Gaza Strip and breached the border, killing and abducting people in neighbouring Israeli communities.

Israel launched retaliatory strikes and ordered a complete blockade of the Gaza Strip, home to more than 2 million people, cutting off supplies of water, food, and fuel. The blockade was later eased to allow trucks with humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip. The escalation of the conflict has resulted in thousands of people killed and injured on both sides.

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UN Chief Regrets Russia's Withdrawal From the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty - Spokesperson

UNITED NATIONS, November 6 (Sputnik) - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres regrets Russia's decision to revoke its ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), United Nations spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said on Monday.

"The Secretary General deeply regrets the decision by the Russian Federation to revoke its ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty," Dujarric said during a press briefing.

Russia had played a leading role in the efforts to bring the CTBT into force and the reversal of this trend has been troubling to observe, Dujarric said.

"The CTBT is critical for international peace and security. It is a central element of a world free of nuclear weapons," Dujarric added.

Last week, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a bill into law to revoke the ratification of the CTBT. However, Russian officials have said Moscow intends to continue to observe the moratorium on nuclear tests.

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UN Says Airdrops to Gaza Are 'Last Resort' Given Their High Price and Complexity

UNITED NATIONS, November 6 (Sputnik) - The United Nations air dropping aid is as of now considered to be a last resort given its complexity and high expense, the UN Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said on Monday.

"… Airdrops from the UN end are sort of a last resort when all other options have been exhausted, but they're also very, very expensive," Dujarric told a briefing. "It also involves deconfliction. I mean, we've used them in the past in Syria …if you remember with WFP a few years ago."

The airdrops demand a high and a complex level of deconfliction and since in Gaza the road access is possible, we prefer to expand that, he added.

Earlier today the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres called Gaza a 'graveyard for children', and called for immediate humanitarian access.

On Monday, fifty trucks carrying humanitarian aid entered the besieged Gaza Strip from Egypt.

On October 7, Palestinian group Hamas launched a surprise attack against Israel from Gaza, killing and abducting people in neighboring Israeli communities. Israel retaliated with missile strikes and a complete blockade of the Gaza Strip, home to more than 2 million. On October 27, Israel launched a large-scale ground incursion into Gaza with the declared goal of eliminating Hamas and rescuing the hostages.

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More Americans Expected to Evacuate From Gaza Later on Monday - White House

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - More Americans are expected to be evacuated from the Gaza Strip later on Monday, White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby told reporters.

"We do think that there will be more Americans coming out today," Kirby said during a press briefing.

However, Kirby said he could not provide a specific number of potential evacuees because plans for the evacuation were unfolding in real-time.

More than 300 Americans have been evacuated from Gaza over the last several days, Kirby added.

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White House Says No Solution Has Been Reached Yet on Governance of Post-War Gaza

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The United States and its partners have not yet come to an agreement about what governance in a post-war Gaza should look like, White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said on Monday.

"I don't believe any solutions have been settled...who's gonna do what and for how long, so that's an active discussion that we're having not only with Israel but other partners in the region," Kirby said during a press briefing.

Last week, media reported that the United States and Israel are looking into various options for dealing with a possible post-Hamas Gaza, which may include placing the enclave under temporary United Nations oversight or deploying a multinational force to maintain security

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that the Palestinian Authority taking over Gaza's governance and security would "make the most sense" after the current conflict with Israel ends. He added that having Hamas or Israel run Gaza were not options.

Kirby said the United States could not verify the death toll number from the Gaza Health Ministry.

On October 7, Palestinian group Hamas launched a surprise attack against Israel from Gaza, killing and abducting people in neighboring Israeli communities. Israel retaliated with missile strikes and a complete blockade of the Gaza Strip, home to more than 2 million. On October 27, Israel launched a large-scale ground incursion into Gaza with the declared goal of eliminating Hamas and rescuing the hostages.

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Father of Highland Park Shooting Suspect Enters Plea Deal, Will Spend 60 Days in Jail

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WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The father of Robert Crimo III, accused in the July 4, 2022 mass shooting in the US state of Illinois, has entered a guilty plea deal with prosecutors, according to a broadcast from the courtroom on Monday.

The shooting took place during the 2022 Independence Day parade in Highland Park, 40km from Chicago, Illinois, and claimed the lives of seven people. Police apprehended the suspected shooter eight hours after he opened fire at the parade and charged him with 21 counts of first-degree murder, 48 counts of attempted murder and 48 counts of aggravated battery.

US prosecutors accused the shooter's father, Crimo Jr., of criminally reckless conduct when he endorsed his son's application for an Illinois Firearm Owners Identification card that made it possible for him to acquire a gun several years before the shooting incident.

Crimo Jr. pleaded guilty to seven counts of reckless conduct, one count for each person killed by his son and agreed to spend 60 days in jail and be on probation for two years after his release. He will also serve 100 hours of public service.

Crimo Jr. will begin serving his jail sentence on November 15, while the trial date for his son is expected to be set by a judge in December.

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US Not Providing Israel Targeting, Tactical Advice in Gaza War - White House

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The United States is not providing Israel with any targeting coordinates or tactical advice amid its war against the Palestinian Hamas movement in the Gaza Strip, White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said on Monday.

"We are not doing their targeting for them, we are not giving them tactical advice on how to conduct their operations on the ground," Kirby said during a press briefing.

US military support in Israel includes sharing perspectives about urban warfare and providing the tools and capabilities needed to go after Hamas, Kirby said.

However, the United States will continue to urge Israel to be careful when conducting its airstrikes in Gaza, Kirby added.

Earlier on Monday, the Gaza Ministry of Health reported that more than 10,000 civilians in Gaza have been killed as a result of Israeli bombardments since October 7.

Kirby said the United States could not verify the death toll number from the Gaza Health Ministry.

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US to Keep Adjusting Force Posture in Mideast After Deploying Nuclear Sub - Kirby

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WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The United States will continue to adapt its force posture in the Middle East with a view toward protecting its troops and sending a resolute deterrent message, Coordinator for Strategic Communications John Kirby said on Monday when asked to comment on the US deployment of a nuclear submarine to the region.

US Central Command (CENTCOM) on Sunday said that an Ohio-class strategic nuclear submarine arrived in the Middle East. Last month, the United States sent the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower carrier strike group to the Middle East and deployed an additional 300 military personnel there as it expected a growing number of attacks against US forces in the region amid the escalation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

"I will just tell you that in broad brushstrokes we have and we will continue to adjust our force posture in the region, to make sure we can A, protect our troops, our facilities on the ground, and B, continue to send a strong deterrent message to any other actor, be it a nation state or a terrorist group," Kirby said during a press briefing.

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At Least 45 US Military Members Injured in Attacks in Iraq, Syria - Reports

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) – At least 45 US military service members were injured during recent attacks against American military bases in Iraq and Syria, which is two times more than the Pentagon previously informed, NBC News reported on Monday, citing US defense officials.

About two dozen service members are dealing with traumatic brain injuries (TBI) caused by the attacks, according to the report.

The Pentagon previously disclosed that just 21 service members got minor injuries during the attacks on US forces at al-Tanf in Syria and on al-Asad air base in Iraq in late October, the report said. However, the officials pointed out the increase in reports of possible TBIs from those incidents, it added.

Pentagon Press Secretary Brig. Gen. Patrick Ryder told reporters on October 25 that there have been 13 attacks against US forces in the Middle East over the past week, 10 in Iraq and three in Syria.

Two Republicans and one Democrat from the US House, Morgan Luttrell, Bill Johnson, and Ruben Gallego, sent a letter to US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin asking how the Pentagon protects service members from TBI.

"The Department must proactively work to reduce the risk to service members both to protect our men and women in uniform and to preserve the capability and readiness of forward operating bases," they wrote in a letter quoted by NBC News.

There are some 2,500 US troops in Iraq and another 900 in Syria, according to the Pentagon.

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US Will Continue to Push for Temporary, Localized Humanitarian Pause in Gaza - White House

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The United States will continue to push for temporary and localized humanitarian pauses in Gaza, White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said on Monday.

"We still believe that these are conversations worth having, and we're going to continue to have them with our Israeli counterparts, because we still believe in the value of temporary humanitarian pauses, localized for specific purposes, to get things in and to get people out including hostages ... I think we think we're at the beginning of this process not the end," Kirby said during a press briefing.

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Biden, Netanyahu Discuss Efforts to Free Hostages, Need to Protect Civilians - White House

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu discussed efforts to free hostages and protect civilians, White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said on Monday.

"[Biden and Netanyahu] discussed a whole range of issues; what's going on in the conflict between Hamas and Israel, obviously to include continued efforts to get hostages released, continued efforts to continue to get humanitarian aid and assistance in, and of course, the president reiterated steadfast support for Israel and the protection of Israeli citizens from Hamas and other events, while also of course, emphasizing the need to protect Palestinian civilians and to reduce civilian harm," Kirby said during a press briefing.

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Anti-Russian Sanctions Affecting Lives of Ordinary Canadians - Bank of Canada Official

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The economic sanctions Canada imposed on Russia are affecting negatively the lives of ordinary Canadians who wish to continue contacts with that country, Royal Bank of Canada Economic Sanctions global head Stephen Alsace said on Monday.

"It's actually perhaps easier to just de-risk and not process any transactions with certain countries because of the level of complexity that you have to implement ... It is a challenge especially when you look at the unintended consequences because you still have people, ordinary citizens who do want to be able to complete transactions, let's say in Russia, pension payments, it could even be hockey teams that we've seen where it's just a question about their

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payroll that it's being interrupted," Alsace said.

Alsace made the comments at a symposium on economic sanctions enforcement at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars think tank.

The Canadian government began to sanction Russian citizens and entities in 2014, following Crimea's reunification with Russia. The list has surpassed the 2,700 sanctioned benchmark since the onset of Russia's special military operation in February 2022, which now also includes alleged "enablers" in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova.

Canada imposed the latest set of sanctions on October 17 by designating nine individuals and six television stations in Moldova allegedly for being "Russian collaborators."

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UN Collaborates With Authorities to Provide Swift Aid to Nepal - Spokesperson

UNITED NATIONS, November 6 (Sputnik) - The UN is in close coordination with authorities to deliver rapid assistance, encompassing essential needs to those impacted in Nepal by the earthquake, Secretary-General spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said on Monday.

"The United Nations is working closely with authorities providing speedy assistance including food, shelter and medicine to those affected," Dujarric said during a briefing.

Furthermore, Dujarric said that the Secretary-General expressed his solidarity with the people and the Government of Nepal, offering heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and hoping for a speedy recovery for those who sustained injuries.

Earlier last week, the European-Mediterranean Seismological Center registered a magnitude 6.4 earthquake in Nepal. The quake hit the western area of Jajarkot district. At least 157 people died, and another 168 were injured.

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US Treasury Dept. Says Reached $206,213 Deal with DaVinci to Settle Sanctions Violations

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) said on Monday that it reached an agreement with daVinci Payments to settle liability for apparent sanctions violations.

"The US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) today announced a settlement with daVinci Payments (daVinci), which manages prepaid reward card programs. DaVinci agreed to remit $206,213 to settle its potential civil liability for apparent violations of sanctions on Crimea, Iran, Syria, and Cuba," OFAC said in a statement.

DaVinci Payments allowed reward cards to be redeemed by people in sanctioned jurisdictions between November 2017 and July 2022, the statement said.

The settlement amount reflects OFAC's determination that daVinci's actions were

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“non-egregious” and voluntarily disclosed by the company, the statement added.

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Anti-Militarist Youth Organizers Block Boeing Plant in Missouri in Call for Gaza Ceasefire

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - A group of youth anti-militarist activists called the Dissenters on Monday announced that they have blocked all entrances to Boeing manufacturing plant 598 in the US state of Missouri and are demanding that President Joe Biden and Congress stop arming Israel amid the Israeli Defense Forces indiscriminate attacks on the Gaza Strip.

"75 anti-militarist youth organizers are blocking all entrances to Boeing manufacturing plant 598 near St. Louis, MO. We demand Congress and Biden call for Ceasefire Now and Stop Arming Israel," the Dissenters said in a post.

The Dissenters have said their goal is to lead in the recovery of resources from the military industrial complex, redirect investments toward life-sustaining institutions and foster the mending of cooperative relationships with both the environment and people worldwide.

The group said their action comes two days after more than 300,000 people marched on Washington to demand peace and justice for Palestine, three days after 52 people demanding ceasefire were arrested in Democratic senators' offices and 12 days after more than 30,000 students across the continent walked out for Palestine.

The Dissenters noted that Boeing has consistently supplied military equipment to Israel since the nation's establishment on contested territory during and after the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in 1948.

After 75 years, Boeing remains involved in activities that are tantamount to genocide, the Dissenters said.

If Congress will not stop the bombs, the Dissenters will block the bombs, the group added.

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UN Chief Says 'Deeply Troubled' by Rising Antisemitism, Anti-Muslim Bigotry

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Monday expressed grave concern over the surge in antisemitism and anti-Muslim bigotry, with Jewish and Muslim communities worldwide living in fear for their safety.

"I am deeply troubled by the rise in antisemitism and anti-Muslim bigotry. Jewish and Muslim communities in many parts of the world are on high alert, fearing for their personal safety and security," Guterres said during a UN press conference.

Furthermore, Guterres emphasized the necessity of preserving our shared humanity while underscoring the need for an end to hateful rhetoric and the cessation of provocative actions.

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On October 7, Hamas launched a surprise large-scale rocket attack against Israel from the Gaza Strip and breached the border, killing and abducting people in neighbouring Israeli communities.

Israel launched retaliatory strikes and ordered a complete blockade of the Gaza Strip, home to more than 2 million people, cutting off supplies of water, food, and fuel. The blockade was later eased to allow trucks with humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip. The escalation of the conflict has resulted in thousands of people killed and injured on both sides.

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UN Chief Says Alarmed That West Bank, East Jerusalem at 'Boiling Point'

UNITED NATIONS, November 6 (Sputnik) - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Monday expressed concerns about the expansion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and noted that the Israel-occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem are at a "boiling point."

"I remain gravely concerned about rising violence and an expansion of the conflict. The occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is at a boiling point," Guterres said.

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Biden Admin. Unveils $16.4Bln for 25 Railway Projects on Northeast Corridor - White House

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden will announce $16.4 billion in new funding for 25 railway projects to improve and modernize the Northeast corridor connecting Boston and Washington with over 800,000 trips per day, the White House said on Monday.

“Today, President Biden is announcing $16.4 billion in new funding for 25 passenger rail projects on Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor, moving the United States closer to his vision for world-class passenger rail,” the White House said in a press release. “President Biden will travel to Bear, Delaware to make the announcement.”

The new funding will help rebuild 100-year-old tunnels and bridges, and upgrade tracks, power systems, and stations, with an aim to significantly improve travel times by increasing operating speeds and reducing delays, according to the press release.

More than half of the investment or $8.5 billion will be directed to either the rehabilitation or replacement of two large tunnels, the Gateway Hudson River Tunnel connecting New York City with the US state of New Jersey and the Frederick Douglass Tunnel in the state of Maryland. The total age of these two tunnels exceeds 250 years, the release said.

Susquehanna River Bridge in Maryland will receive $2.1 billion in a funding agreement to replace an existing 100-year-old rail bridge with two new two-track spans that will allow speeds to increase from 90 mph to 125 mph, and improve reliability and trip times, the release added.

The new funding is on top of Amtrak’s $9 billion fleet upgrade program, which will replace more

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than 1,000 old locomotives and coaches to make railway travel more convenient and climate-friendly, the release said.

In November 2021, Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) granting $1.2 trillion in federal infrastructure investment.

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UN Chief Says Gaza Becoming 'Graveyard For Children', Humanitarian Ceasefire More Urgent

UNITED NATIONS, November 6 (Sputnik) - The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Monday Gaza is becoming a graveyard for children and the the need for a humanitarian ceasefire is bigger than ever.

"Gaza is becoming a graveyard for children. Hundreds of girls and boys are reportedly being killed or injured every day," Guterres told journalists. "The unfolding catastrophe makes the need for a humanitarian ceasefire more urgent with every passing hour."

The parties to the conflict face responsibility for expanding the humanitarian aid to Gaza, he added.

Earlier today, the EU said that as many as 88 aid workers of the UN agency for Palestine refugees (UNRWA) have died during the ongoing escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since October 7.

On October 7, Palestinian group Hamas launched a surprise attack against Israel from Gaza, killing and abducting people in neighboring Israeli communities. Israel retaliated with missile strikes and a complete blockade of the Gaza Strip, home to more than 2 million. On October 27, Israel launched a large-scale ground incursion into Gaza with the declared goal of eliminating Hamas and rescuing the hostages.

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UN Chief Calls I For Humanitarian Funds of $1.2 Billion to Serve Whole Gaza Population

UNITED NATIONS, November 6 (Sputnik) - The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Monday that the UN and its partners are launching a humanitarian appeal for $1.2 billion to help 2.7 million people.

“Today, the UN and our partners are launching a $1.2 billion humanitarian appeal to help 2.7 million people – that’s the entire population of the Gaza Strip and half a million Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem,” Guterres told journalists.

The amount of aid going through the Rafah crossing of Egypt does not meet the needs of the people, he added.

Earlier today, the EU said that as many as 88 aid workers of the UN agency for Palestine refugees (UNRWA) have died during the ongoing escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

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New York Judge Engoron Asks Trump to Provide Specific Answers During Hearing

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - New York Supreme Court Judge Arthur Engoron on Monday asked former President Donald Trump to provide more specific answers and avoid lengthy speeches and political statements during the court hearing.

Engoron, who presides over the civil fraud trial of Trump, reminded the former president that the hearing is not a political rally as Trump began testifying in a lawsuit accusing him of inflating his net worth.

Trump was being asked to provide information on the Trump Organization's activities and was questioned about financial documentation from previous years.

At one point, Trump accused the judge of making decisions against him.

"We don't have time to waste. We have one day to do this," Engoron said, adding that Trump's answers were non-responsive and repetitive, instructing him to answer direct questions with "yes" or "no."

Trump said during the hearing that the court's estimate of his residence at Mar-a-Lago, Florida, is undervalued and exceeds 50-100 times the stated amount of $18 million.

Engoron is overseeing the case brought by New York Attorney General Letitia James against Trump, his two oldest sons, the Trump Organization and several executives in the New York State Supreme Court in Manhattan.

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US Military Numbers Declining, Slight Rise in Women Serving - Pentagon Report

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The number of personnel serving in the US armed forces declined by 2.7% in 2022 compared with 2021, and the proportion of women serving slightly increased, a new Department of Defense report announced on Monday.

"The Defense Department's newly released 2022 Demographics Profile of the Military Community shows the number of service members dropped 2.7% over the previous year while the percentage of women in the military inched upward," the Defense Department said in a press release.

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According to the annual demographics report, the active-duty and selected reserve population was 58,282 lower than in 2021, for a total of 2,077,630 service members, the release said.
However, "Over the same period, the percentage of women increased slightly – rising to 17.5% of the active duty force from 17.3% and 21.6% of the selected reserve from 21.4%," it said.
Since 2005, the percentage of active duty military women has increased by 2.9%, while the percentage of women in the selected reserve has risen by 4.4%, the report noted.

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Nashville Police Say Cannot Verify Reports Containing Apparent Copy of Shooter Manifesto

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The Metropolitan Nashville Police Department is aware of reports purporting to show a manifesto left by the shooter of a Christian elementary school in the city earlier this year but cannot verify their authenticity, a police department spokesperson told Sputnik on Monday.
"I can't [verify the reports]. I'm aware that someone has said that they have it, they're putting something out. I didn't exactly see what he put out," the spokesperson said, when asked about the veracity of the reports. "We're aware of what the assertions are and we're trying to assimilate what's going on right now, because we don't know what's out or where it came from at this point in time."
Earlier on Monday, US media outlet Louder With Crowder released a report claiming to contain three pages of a manifesto left by Aiden Hale, who shot and killed three children and three adults at Covenant School in March. Hale, a transgender male, was shot and killed by responding officers.
Investigators claimed to have found a manifesto written by Hale, although that characterization was later disputed. The document has never officially been released to the public.
The purported copy of the document included in the report features references to a desire to kill "crackers" and people with "white privileges" during the shooting. Hale reportedly wrote that he was "ready to die" and drafted a precise schedule for the shooting.
The report claims to have corroborated the three pages of the document as authentic.
US businessman and 2024 Republican presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy shared the reports via social media platform X, noting that he demanded the document's release in August.
"We can handle the truth," Ramaswamy said. "Be honest with the public - not just when it's easy, but when it's hard. Get to the root cause: the mental health epidemic. The path to truth runs through transparency."
The school and parents of children who attend it have argued in court against the release of the document, following the launch of lawsuits to compel police to disclose it.

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Pro-Palestine Protesters Paint White House Gates Red - Sputnik Correspondent

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The gates surrounding the White House remain covered with red handprints following pro-Palestinian over the weekend, a Sputnik correspondent reported on Monday.

Protesters late Saturday smeared red paint including hand-prints on the brick part of the gates at the main tourist plaza in front of the White House.

The protesters also plastered the walls with pro-Palestinian stickers with phrases such as "Free Palestine" and "Palestine will never die."

Other handwritten messages scrawled on the gates include "genocide," "shame" and "F--- Joe," an apparent reference to President Joe Biden.

Police have blocked off the plaza to pedestrian traffic, and workers with cleaning equipment appeared to be preparing to clean the gates.

The incident took place after mass protest in Washington DC on Saturday, which according to the organizers said drew at least 100,000 people from across the United States.

On October 7, Palestinian group Hamas launched a surprise large-scale rocket attack against Israel from the Gaza Strip and breached the border, killing and abducting people in neighboring Israeli communities. Israel launched retaliatory strikes and ordered a complete blockade of the Gaza Strip, home to more than 2 million people, cutting off supplies of water, food, and fuel. On October 27, Israel launched a large-scale ground incursion inside the Gaza Strip to eliminate Hamas fighters and rescue the hostages.

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US, Chinese Officials to Exchange Views on Arms Control During Talks This Week - Official

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - US and Chinese officials will meet this week to exchange views on issues related to the implementation of arms control treaties and non-proliferation, a Chinese official told Sputnik on Monday.

Last week, US media reported that US and Chinese officials are set to have a meeting on Monday for informal arms control talks focused on ways to reduce the risk of miscalculation.

"We're going to hold consultations with the US on arms control and non-proliferation at the director-general's level in Washington DC this week," the official said in a statement. "The Chinese delegation will be led by the head of the Department of Arms Control of China's Foreign Ministry. According to the agreed agenda, our two sides will exchange views on a wide range of issues such as the implementation of international arms control treaties and non-proliferation."

The White House and State Department did not respond to Sputnik's inquiries for comment on this matter.

The official explained that during the recent US visit by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, China and the United States agreed to hold a number of consultations "soon" including on arms control and non-proliferation.

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Arms control and non-proliferation are areas in which China stays in close contact with the world's major countries, the official added.

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Quebec Front Commun Informs of New Strikes on November 21-23 Unless Deal Achieved

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) – Unions in Canada's Province of Quebec will hold a second row of province-wide strikes between November 21-23 unless a deal on better salaries is achieved by then, the Front Commun said on Monday.

Since the early morning, the Front Commun (Common Front) which represent 420,000 public servants from some of Quebec's largest labour unions, began a province-wide strike demanding better salaries to offset the sparing cost of living.

"Today we're announcing the timing of the second strike sequence, which will be held over three full days. Our message this morning is clear: our negotiating teams are fully available for the next two weeks. The goal is to reach a win-win settlement for workers and services to the public. No one wants another strike, but we'll be ready if we have to be," the Front Commun statement reads.

The Front noted that the decision to strike is a proof of the public servant's determination to go all the way, event to consider the possibility of holding an unlimited general strike if the government does not come to an agreement with the unions.

On October 26, the Front Commun announced that it would hold the first of a series of strikes on November 6 due to the governments proposal to increase their salaries by only 9% over a five-year period.

Unions received a new proposal from the Treasury Council of Quebec on October 29 which increased the salaries by 10.3% instead of only 9%. The Front Commun rejected the offer for being "ludicrous."

The unions jointly determined that the proposed increased was insufficient, considering that inflation levels were set to grow to 18% over the same period. The increase was also contested due to Quebec's decision to increase the salaries of lawmakers by 30%.

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Pentagon Official to Visit Japan This Week for Discussions on Missile Defense Cooperation

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - A senior US defense official will travel to Japan later this ween to discuss bilateral cooperation in the space and missile defense domains, Defense Department spokesperson Jessica Anderson said on Monday.

"Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy John Plumb will depart for an official visit to Japan this week to deepen US-Japan Alliance cooperation on space, extended deterrence and

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missile defense," Anderson said in a statement.

While in Tokyo, Plumb will particularly emphasize in discussions with Japanese officials various cooperative initiatives in the space domain, the statement said.

Plumb will visit the Mitsubishi Electric Corporation facilities to receive an update on the integration of space surveillance payloads with Japan's Quasi-Zenith Satellite System, the statement added.

Plumb will also hold consultations with Japanese officials on other space initiatives as well as missile defense collaboration and extended deterrence policy, according to the statement.

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US Aviation Watchdog Says Scheduled Safety Meetings With 16 Airports Amid Incidents Surge

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said on Monday that it scheduled another series of safety meetings with 16 airports amid a surge in runway incidents.

“The Federal Aviation Administration continues to address runway safety risks with 16 runway safety meetings for the remainder of the year,” FAA said in a press release.

The upcoming safety meetings will take place among others at Boston Logan International Airport, Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, Newark Liberty International Airport, and Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, the press release said.

Since February, FAA conducted a total of 90 meetings across the country to boost safety and study existing risks after a series of so-called “close calls,” including a near collision between a Southwest Airlines Boeing 737 and a business jet in San Diego in August.

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DeSantis Says Would Encourage Israeli Leadership to Eradicate Hamas ‘Once and For All’

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - Florida Governor and 2024 Republican presidential candidate Ron DeSantis said on Monday that he would encourage Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to eradicate Hamas in its entirety if asked to advise the foreign leader.

Last month, Palestinian Hamas militants launched a surprise attack on Israel, sparking a state of war in the country that has left thousands of people killed in Israel and Gaza.

“I would tell him you have to finally end Hamas once and for all, and that means taking out all their terrorist infrastructure. It means eradicating the group from existence,” DeSantis said in an interview with the Media Research Center, when asked how he would advise Netanyahu.

Hamas would regroup and launch more attacks if Israel simply delivers “glancing blows,” DeSantis added.

The United States should publicly and privately support Israel in both word and deed, DeSantis

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said. Netanyahu should ignore criticisms of Israel and its actions, DeSantis also said.
The US would “end the problem immediately” if hit with such an attack, DeSantis said, questioning why Israel should be expected to act otherwise.

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Major Strike Begins in Canada’s Quebec as 420,000 Public Servants Demand Better Pay

WASHINGTON, Novembre 6 (Sputnik) – Canada’s Province of Quebec has entered a day of province-wide strike as 420,000 public servants from all the labor unions walked off the job to demand better salaries to offset the soaring cost of living.
On October 26, the Front Commun (Common Front) which represent 420,000 public servants from some of Quebec’s largest labor unions, announced that it would hold the first of a series of strikes due to the government's proposal to increase their salaries by only 9% over a five-year period.
Unions received a new proposal from the Treasury Council of Quebec on October 29 which increased the salaries by 10.3% instead of only 9%. The Front Commun rejected the offer for being “ludicrous."
The unions jointly determined that the proposed increased was insufficient, considering that inflation levels were set to grow to 18% over the same period. The increase was also contested due to Quebec’s decision to increase the salaries of lawmakers by 30%.

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More Than 9,000 People Seek Refuge From Sudan Fighting - UN Official

UNITED NATIONS, November 6 (Sputnik) - More than 9,000 people have been displaced since the outbreak of fighting between Sudan and South Sudan in April, UN Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix said on Monday.
“In Abyei, the Sudan crisis has resulted in an influx of displaced people. At Amiet Market, our humanitarian partners have recorded over 9,000 people who have sought refuge from the fighting,” Lacroix told the UN Security Council during a meeting on Sudan.
The UN Mission has also noticed an increase in the level of weapons circulation in Abyei, he added.
On April 15, violent clashes broke out between the Sudanese army and the RSF. Paramilitary commander Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo accused Abdel Fattah Burhan, the head of the Sudanese sovereignty council and commander of the armed forces, of being reluctant to hand over power to the civilian government. The parties to the conflict have since introduced a number of temporary nationwide ceasefires, but none has helped settle the conflict.
The UN estimates the death toll from the conflict in the hundreds, while the Red Cross has

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warned that extended hostilities risk crumbling the country's healthcare system.

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Trump Says Ready to Testify in New York Civil Fraud Trial, Calls Case 'Witch Hunt'

WASHINGTON, November 6 (Sputnik) - Former US President Donald Trump said on Monday that he is ready to appear in a New York courtroom to testify in a civil fraud trial against him, characterizing the case as a political witch to prevent his reelection.

"Getting ready to head to the Downtown Lower Manhattan Courthouse to testify in one of the many cases that were instigated and brought by my POLITICAL OPPONENT, Crooked Joe Biden, through agencies and surrogates, for purposes of ELECTION INTERFERENCE," Trump said in a statement via social media platform Truth. "A dark day for our Country. WITCH HUNT!"

Trump is set to testify in a civil fraud trial brought against him by New York Attorney General Letitia James for allegedly making false statements about the value of his properties.

New York state supreme court judge Arthur Engoron has imposed a number of gag orders in an attempt to prevent Trump and his attorneys from making statements that could potentially influence the case. Trump and his legal team have argued that the orders infringe on his First Amendment right to free speech under the US Constitution.

Trump arrived at the courthouse Monday morning and affirmed his readiness to testify. Trump also reiterated his criticisms of the case.

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